

Staff Senate Chair's Report 11/09/2009
October 12, 2009 – November 9, 2009

Time flies when you are having fun! We are almost to the halfway point in our Senate year and we still have much to do. Since our last Senate meeting, you have probably had more Staff Senate listserv e-mails than most any other month. I truly appreciate everyone's help getting the word out about open enrollment, plan changes, informational sessions, etc. We have received a number of positive comments and even compliments about our educational efforts helping staff to understand their health plan choices. Thank you, thank you, thank you is all I can say. Your executive committee worked diligently to get out good information to staff.

Over the last three weeks the executive committee has also interviewed the last two candidates for the VPHR position (on the 20th and 28th of October). There was agreement on the candidates and I have provided the Executive Committee's review to the administration and the Search Committee.

On the 20th of October, UofL recognized 4 categories: student, faculty, staff and community partner. Again, I would like to extend the Senate's heartiest congratulations to Senator Beth Hobson, who was recognized with two other staff members for their community engagement raising cancer awareness and money for cancer research.

For our Green minute this month, we had campus sustainability day on October 21 under a tent in the quad on Belknap Campus. Justin Mog and the Sustainability Council had a sustainability pledge along with a great group of other green exhibitors. The Partnership for a Green City had its energy pledge there. It is also available on line at:
<http://www.jefferson.k12.ky.us/Departments/EnvironmentalEd/GreenCity/greencityPledge.html> Sign up for this year's pledge to be eligible for energy efficient door prizes to be drawn on December 8th.

On Monday the 26th, the Executive Committee met with Mike Curtin and Susan Ingram to review Scenario B of the 2010-11 budget. The Consensus Forecasting Group has revised the projected budget shortfall for the current year, but there may not be any decisions on the current year budget until after the long session of the General Assembly is completed in April. We will keep you informed as we know anything.

On Thursday the 29th, I attended a Smoke-Free Campus Policy meeting. We are on track to start phasing in smoke free status on November 19th – the day of the great American Smokeout. Temporary smoking areas will be created soon and you will notice that ash trays will be disappearing from around building entrances. Look for more information in the very near future.

On November 4, I attended the Sustainability Council Steering Committee meeting. There are so many things going on sustainability wise at UofL, I could not be more pleased. If you have ideas on "green" things that you would like to see UofL doing, please let me or Justin know. You can also forward your ideas through HR's idea rewards program if you believe the idea to be a money saver.

After the Sustainability Council meeting, the Senate officers had their monthly meeting with Mr. Owsley. We have created an issues tracking spreadsheet – each time someone contacts the Chair, an officer or the Senate Office, we will enter the issue on the spreadsheet. One of the issues we are trying to move ahead is the north campus traffic situation. Others include: an evacuation plan of the HSC that would include a downtown evacuation plan for emergency purposes, raises for employees who started in 2008 and have received nothing, the Crawford pool that is closed, the alleged sexual assault of a student, and H1N1 shots. Mr. Owsley is working on something to help the north end traffic situation along with the

downtown evacuation plan. We will keep working on doing something for the employees who have not received raises. The Crawford pool will remain closed; FEMA will not help reopen it.

On Thursday, November 5th, the Executive Committee had a working lunch with the President, Provost and Mr. Owsley. Our agenda follows:

Budget - we just had an update from Mike Curtin and Susan Ingram. The President confirmed the state's budget issues and the uncertainty of when the shortfall will be addressed. It may be after April when we know more.

What can the Senate do to help? – At this point, the executive committee and the senators may be asked to think of new ways to save money.

VPHR Search - is there anything the President and Provost would like to know about our thoughts The President received our review of the VPHR candidates and this part of the meeting was somewhat tense. I understand that the Search Committee will meet before the Senate does on the 9th and I am uncertain how this will be resolved.

Health Insurance Plan Changes- We need to ensure Staff Senate has a chance to review and comment on plan changes. The President and Provost had been told that everything had been presented to the Senate and there were no negative comments. We tried to let them know that we saw an unexpected PowerPoint presentation that not everyone could see and what was presented and we were told it was pretty much a done deal. We will continue working to ensure we have time to comment and that this does not happen again.

We also would like to work to improve communications at open enrollment. We will work with HR to make sure communications are in a form that is helpful to staff members as they make their choices.

Smoke-free campus update – Things are on track to go smoke free November 19th.

Flood recovery update. All the buildings are back in operation and most all are in great shape. There is an air quality issue in part of Houchens that is being addressed.

Thanks for the extra two days off. We also expressed our appreciation at the two extra days off. People continue to express – in lieu of a raise, paid time off with their families is the next best thing.

On Friday, the 6th, Tammy Lawson and I, along with a selected group of faculty staff and administrators, met to review the applications for disaster relief. We had a number of applicants asking for differing amounts of relief. With a limited amount of money, we were not able to award the exact amounts that some asked for, but we were able to provide some relief to almost everyone.

While this report over the last month is shorter than many other months it has certainly been action packed. If you have any questions about anything, please let me know.

Respectfully,

Brent