

TEXAS  STATE<sup>®</sup>  
STAFF COUNCIL

**AGENDA**

April 12, 2022

10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

[ZOOM Meeting](#)

*Staff Council Meetings are available via*  
[Zoom](#) Passcode: Council

*The mission of the Texas State University Staff Council shall be to promote and enhance the status of university staff, ensure the effective contribution of staff expertise toward university goals, and act as the liaison between the university president and staff.*

*The Council shall represent the collective body of the staff and shall report directly to the university president.*

**Note:** Minutes for previous Staff Council meetings are available [on the Staff Council Website](#).

**ACTION**  
(10:00)

**Call to Order**

Brandi Martinez, Chair

Members in attendance: Jen Aguirre, Katie Alonzo, Carlos Baca, Cynthia Balboa, Dr. Harlan Ballard, Jayme Blaschke, Nabila Cook, Veronica Fernandez, Anita Ford, Noel Fuller, Victoria Gonzales, Heather Kristoff, Brandi Martinez, Mayra Mejia, Jennifer Small, Daniel Vasquez, Bailey Verschoyle, Illona Weber, Rachel Weldon-Caron, Amy Wong, Martin Zavala

**GUEST**  
(10:01)

**Dr. Denise M. Trauth, President, Texas State University**

President Trauth came to discuss the letter Staff Council sent on January 28th and the additional email questions sent on April 6, 2022. Dr. Lisa Lloyd and Eric Algoe were also in attendance.

Discussion topics included:

- **Pay Increases / Merit Increase**  
President Trauth and Eric Algoe provided more details about the 3% one-time bonus.

Texas State administration had originally planned to submit some modest tuition and fee increases in order to generate new revenue and fund 3% pay increases for Texas State staff. However, at the November Board of Regents meeting, Texas State University had to resubmit the budget proposal to remove increases in fees at the direction of the Governor. Because they had to remove those fee increases from the proposed budget, they also had to remove the 3% pay increase in order to submit a balanced budget.

While there wasn't enough for 3% pay increases, there was enough in the budget to allow for a 3% one-time bonus to staff this year.

In the email sent to staff, the phrase 'long-standing practice' should have referred to 'merit' and not to 'bonus.'

Administration is also looking at the potential of enhancing other non-monetary employee benefits as well; this includes some options that would require cabinet approval and/or those not requiring that approval.

Enrollment has been flat (students are graduating faster and taking fewer courses). If fees don't increase, Texas State can potentially award merit increases but have to make those enrollment targets first.

- **Employee Turnover**  
President Trauth and Eric Algoe also discussed employee turnover, and agreed that it's an ongoing issue (at Texas State, and across the United States).

To address some of these issues, they identified 6 categories of jobs with the highest rates of turnover / unfilled positions (security guards, dispatchers, police officers, residence hall directors, grounds workers, and academic advisors) and worked to try and

increase salaries in those positions when possible.

- **Staff Ombuds Services**  
President Trauth announced Dr. Stella Silva as the Staff Ombudsperson. She'll be able to start in that role in mid-June once the Vice President of Institutional Inclusive Excellence is hired.
- **Energy Conservation Days**  
President Trauth and Eric Algoe discussed Energy Conservation Days.

Offices will need to follow the remote work policy that's already been approved.

Offices that are designated as 'essential offices' during that time period are required to be physically open; however, remote work approvals (via the remote work policy) are allowed during this time to enhance services offered but not to replace in-person services.

Eric Algoe addressed the issue of heating/cooling of buildings during Energy Conservation Days. This shouldn't be too much of an issue moving forward, since Texas State is upgrading buildings to have more control over heating and cooling.

Staff Council also gave President Trauth a retirement gift, to thank her for her hard work and dedication to Texas State.

**UPDATE**  
(10:30)

**Item 1: Treasurer's Update**

Carlos Baca, Treasurer

There wasn't much new to report from last month, other than that the permit raffle has started (with a new online option for permit sales).

Natalie Davis also mentioned that the Scholarship expenses account that Council is trying to close is getting interest adjustments, which means that Council will need to find a way to spend down those dollars so that the account can be closed.

Brandi Martinez also mentioned that some subcommittees are coming up with ideas for how that account can get spent down (receptions for awards and scholarships, welcoming new incoming Staff Council members, etc.).

**UPDATE**  
(10:40)

**Item 2: External Committee Updates**

a) Campus Facilities

Illona shared an update about a previous staff concern regarding sandbags, flooding, and accessibility around Commons. There is now a contract, and work is scheduled to start at the end of May. If anyone has questions, they can reach out to Illona.

b) Miscellaneous Discussion – Campus Recreation

Illona asked about an option to run the Campus recreation Center membership for staff pilot in the summer instead of during April/May.

Carole Clerie indicated that HR wanted to have a pilot that ran outside of the summer (during the academic year) to gauge interest during that time instead. HR is using it as a data point to help with future decision-making regarding staff benefits/perks – for instance, to determine if this would be something that's financially sustainable or viable to offer either with free access or with a subsidy.

**DISCUSSION**  
(11:00)

**Item 3: Subcommittee Updates**

a) Fundraising

Martin Zavala indicated that the permit raffle has raised 1,060 to date on parking permit sales. Martin is also available if Council members have tickets or money to turn in.

There is also an online option for selling tickets now, so you can share the link with other staff members to purchase a ticket.

The plan for the drawing next month is to hopefully get the people who donated the permit to do the drawing (in person, but connected via Zoom for the meeting).

b) Elections

Elections met last week, and should be ready to go to send nomination forms on April 18. They'll let nominations run for 2 weeks, then follow up and confirm with nominees prior to voting.

c) Compensation and Benefits

*Recycling Bins for Offices*

There was a staff concern regarding offices needing to pay for recycling bins for offices. Waste Management and recycling representatives confirmed that recycling bins (rolling carts and containers) are offered free of charge to departments.

If offices reached out and got a different answer, they can follow up with Waste Management again for assistance.

*Maternity Leave / FMLA*

There was a staff concern regarding maternity leave / FMLA and how it is handled at Texas State University.

Carole Clery provided more details about maternity leave and FMLA. FMLA is a federal law passed in the 90s that allows individuals who meet certain criteria to take up to 12 weeks of leave – it doesn't cover that person's pay, it just protects that individual's position (or equivalent), rate of pay, and benefits while they are on leave.

There are also state rules that apply (particularly to pregnancy and maternity leave) that are written into the leave policy as well.

For more information, staff can look at UPPS 04.04.30. For specific questions or concerns about maternity leave / FMLA, staff should reach out to HR.

Heather Houston also shared that Texas State University can't add

leave options that aren't granted to all state employees. Any changes to those policies would actually have to come from the state level (the state legislature).

**UPDATE**  
(11:20)

**Item 4: 2022-2023 Scholarship Recipients**

Noel Fuller, Chair of Scholarship and Awards

See handout from the meeting for more details. Congratulations to our Staff Council Scholarship Recipients:

**Staff Council Miguel Hernandez Undergraduate Scholarship**

Melissa Rector, Administrative Assistant III, Office of Curriculum Services

**Frances Padilla Estavillo and Theadocia Hodges Richey Staff Council Endowed Scholarship**

Iza Martinez, Program Coordinator, Institutional Effectiveness

**DISCUSSION**  
(11:40)

**Item 5: Announcements**

Brandi Martinez, Chair

- a) Staff Shout-Out: James Natal – Facilities Maintenance Worker I, Department of Housing and Residential Life
- b) Staff Shout-Out: Jennifer Metcalf – Accountant I, Student Center
- c) Staff Shout-Out: Raechel Kepner – Assistant Director, Department of Housing and Residential Life
- d) Staff Shout-Out: Michelle Hageman – Academic Budget Specialist, Computer Science
- e) Staff Shout-Out: Nina Camacho – Administrative Assistant III, McCoy College of Business Administration
- f) Staff Shout-Out: Lori Kinser – Human Resources Representative, Human Resources
  
- g) Student Recreation Center Pilot Program  
Brandi encouraged staff members to use the Recreation Center (if possible) as a part of this pilot program.
  
- h) Environmental Service Committee Fund Request Application  
<https://www.txstate.edu/esc/application0.html>  
Applications are currently being considered for funding for environmental improvement projects at Texas State University.
  
- i) Retired Faculty and Staff Scholarship Application  
<http://www.finaid.txstate.edu/scholarships/boss.html>  
This is a \$1,500 scholarship offered to family members of a retired or current Texas State faculty/staff member. Applications are due on June 30, 2022 through the BOSS system.

**UPDATE**  
(11:55)

**Item 6: Pending Items**

Brandi Martinez, Chair

- a) May 2022 General Meeting – Chief Carmichael Guest Speaker
- b) Staff Concern: FMLA

**ACTION**  
(12:00)

**Adjournment**

Brandi Martinez, Chair

Motion passed to adjourn the meeting.

Texas State staff are welcome to attend any Staff Council meeting. The list of meeting dates and locations can be found on the [Staff Council Website](#).

If there is a specific issue or concern you would like Council to address, please complete this [form](#). When submitting the form, you can remain anonymous if that is your preference.

All statements made during meetings of the Staff Council shall be privileged communication and remain confidential. Members and guests shall not be subject to retaliation or disciplinary action as a result of expressing their views at Council meetings.

Staff Council meetings are recorded. Guest speakers and associated Q&As may be posted to the Staff Council website. All other recorded portions of the meeting are used to ensure accuracy of transcript data for meeting minutes purposes.

**MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

This message was sent to all members of a mailing list established and maintained by Texas State University. Your inclusion in this list results from your relationship and status with the University and is not optional.