**DRAFT**

**Staff Work Life Committee Minutes**

**Thursday, October 21, 2021**

**1:00 p.m. (Zoom)**

Attendance: Rita Mannelli, Jon Fleming, Thomas Keilman, Jazzmyn Ivery-Robinson, Stacey Stehle, Lynne Vick, Valarie Wilson, Colleen Leonard, *ex officio,* Patrick Richey, *ex officio*,

Cathy Stevens, *ex officio*

Guest: C. Yousuf George, Associate to the President

The meeting was called to order by Chair Rita Mannelli at 1:00 p.m.

1. Welcome to new member, Lynne Vick, School of Health & Human Services. Lynne will fill in Ann Knack’s vacated term.
2. “Breathing Room”

In considering the question posed by President Paul at the Town Hall on September 23rd: *“How do we find ourselves some short-term breathing room in this complex and unchartered territory we are all living through?”*

The SWLC was asked, among other committees and stakeholder leaders, to think and recommend short-term breathing room actions that could be taken that won’t interfere with student learning, support, and success that are within Nazareth’s resources. Yousuf George was tasked to meet with members of the community and gather feedback from faculty and staff.

At the meeting, Yousuf apprised the committee on suggestions for College-wide adoption including:

* Calendar changes for the fall semester: Details to be announced by the President on her weekly email to faculty and staff.
* Foster a humane theme environment; make sure to take your lunch breaks and intentional breaks, take a walk around campus
* Schedule “send” work emails during office hours: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
* In the work: include flexibility and hybridity to support the work and effectiveness of each area in fulfilling the College mission.

The committee thanked Yousuf for the feedback.

1. By-laws Working Group:

The current by-laws need updating to reflect divisional changes at the College and ensure representation from each division. There is also an urgency for these updates due to the upcoming election of new membership and chair of the committee in May 2022. Stacey and Jazz will work on the revision and will consult with the SVP for Finance for President’s approval.

1. FYI:

* Rita informed the committee that she has been asked to sit on the Administrative Council to bridge the groups.
* To try and check the newly launched ***Flyer Forum***, a community building platform for faculty and staff to connect and collaborate.

1. Survey Summary (last meeting’s note) – Stacey Stehle is going “*to package”* the survey for submission to the President.

6. Suggestions Discussions:

***Even though some questions here may have been already addressed by President Paul through her regular email, the Committee would like to show that the suggestions received are discussed and being disseminated to the proper channel.***

* I expect that in the near future we will learn that healthcare premiums are increasing. I would like to suggest that the increased cost be tiered in connection with each individual’s salary, perhaps on a percentage basis as pay rises are.

It occurred to me that if this is not the case, and everyone’s premiums went up the same dollar amount, lower wage workers would be disproportionately impacted. Depending on the amount of the increased premium the cost may well be more than the 2% pay rise received this year. This could leave some employees financially worse off than they were a year ago, before factoring in inflation.

Again, I have made some assumptions here, and I recognize that this issue is likely more complex, but I thought your group might be the appropriate place for discussion.

***Nazareth Open Enrollment is November 5 to 9, 2021. An email with more details coming from HR Department*.**

Another item is the percentage that one has deducted for retirement. Is it set on base pay or is it adjusted on hourly employees to reflect overtime? ***It is set on base pay.***

* How can the Staff Work Life Committee assist with so many staff positions vacant here at Nazareth? Can there be a town hall with college staff and the committee members? SWL is the main group right now that can assist since HR has a lot on their plate.

**Importance:**

I feel that there should be a mechanism for staff to feel their voices to be heard since so many of our colleagues (and dare I say friends) that have left the college or feel over worked and underpaid. I do not have all of the answers, but after talking with my staff colleagues across the college, I feel like something could be done. "The Great Resignation" is a national trend, but if we say that we are a community of care, let's try something out for our colleagues. I just care about the college, its mission and the people who do great work for our students.

**Desired Outcome:**

A mechanism for staff voices to be heard; a way for the committee to potentially help staff besides coffee hours or s'mores (which have their place); for administration to continue to understand staff needs overall. This user wants to be contacted at *itolber3@naz.edu* with a response.

***Currently, Beth Paul is having “Coffee and Conversation” on various dates and times with faculty and staff.***

* Salary range question: If our minimum wage is going to be $15/hour, shouldn't the supervisors of any student workers be making more than that, enough to make a difference? I know someone who has been at the college for 25 years, and is only making $18/hour. Current salaries matter too.

**Importance:** Retention of good employees.

**Desired Outcome:** Retention of good employees.

***Patrick Richey announced that the College will be engaging in total Compensation Benchmarking Review in 2022. This would take time as it is an involved process.***

* I think the staff morale is pretty low, with all the staff leaving, and the remaining staff doing multiple jobs. Many of us are considered "essential" enough not to be able to work from home as others could over the past year, and feelings are down.

Can something be done besides a social event that can only be attended by those who aren't overwhelmed with too much to do? It seems as if there are a lot of people on this committee, and not a lot to show for it, to be honest...

***Work plans that include some flexibility and hybridity defined intentionally to support the work and effectiveness of each area in fulfilling our mission is being discussed at the Cabinet level. Please see #2 “Breathing Room”.***

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erminda Hugh