

# **Tulane SPHTM Staff Council**

## **Meeting Minutes**

May 1, 2025

**Present:** Tom Augustson, Susan Barrera, Ben Bratcher Amy Carreras, Kathy Carneiro, Brendan Carter, Farhana Chaudhry, Michael Fox, Marjola Hotchkiss Carrie Moulder, Shelby Olin, Shelby Ruiz, Elizabeth Tierney, Nichole Valenzuela, Phillip Williams, Caleb Wilson

**Absent:** Lisa Paterson, Avery Peterson, Kijuana Yarls

Call to Order: 11:39 a.m.

### **1. Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes**

The meeting minutes from April 2025 were reviewed and approved.

### **2. Old Business**

**Easter Egg Hunt (April 15, 2025):** The event went smoothly with a stuffing session held on April 14, 2025. Several staff members participated and donations of \$5–\$10 gift cards were collected for prizes.

**Munch & Mingle (April 30, 2025):** A casual lunch event at Wave City Market, well attended, aimed at fostering staff engagement.

**Green Wave of Service (April 16, 2025):** Staff were encouraged to participate in community service activities. Participation was strong, and many staff contributed to various local causes.

**Provost Meeting:** The meeting discussed plans for an upcoming staff engagement session with the Provost, focusing on open communication and future campus developments.

**Cards:** Several cards were sent, including welcome back cards for new staff and condolence cards for staff members experiencing loss. Kelly Hall to receive a welcome back card after her maternity leave.

**Give Green Winners:** The winners of the Give Green campaign, which included a drawing for swag bags and whiskey glasses, were Dean Communications, Abby from Career Services, and Jay Silverman from SBPS.

### **3. New Business**

**a. Guest – Jeffrey Benjamin, VP of Facilities and Campus Development:**

Unfortunately, Mr. Benjamin was unable to attend the meeting. His scheduled discussion on downtown campus development and green space plans will be postponed to a future meeting.

**b. Council Summer Elections:** The summer election cycle was discussed, with half of the council's seats up for election. Phillip Williams will revise the list of representatives whose seats are up for election and will share further details about the election process and the timeline for nominations.

**c. Goals for the Council:** Staff Council discussed upcoming priorities, including increasing engagement with staff, enhancing communication with leadership, and exploring opportunities for staff professional development.

### **4. Staff Council Committees**

**a. Retreat (Janel Fielding, Brendan Carter):** The retreat planning is ongoing, with a tentative date of October 3, 2025. Discussions with TULI are ongoing. The idea of a LEGO-focused session received strong support from the Council.

**b. Outreach and Community Service:** No updates

**c. Health and Wellness (Nichole Valenzuela):** The committee discussed the success of the Munch & Mingle and Wave of Service events. A future Windows on Canal walking tour will be announced soon. Nichole also encouraged further participation in the upcoming health initiatives including Move you Brass in City Park, 6pm on Wednesdays.

**d. Staff Appreciation (Phillip Williams):** The committee is planning for future appreciation events, including a snowball event to drum up interest in the upcoming council elections. Wave of Difference award will be moving to the new recipient next week.

- e. **Staff Concerns (Farhana Chaudhry):** The committee is continuing to work on the organizational chart update and the virtual comment box. An onboarding mentorship program is also moving forward, with a mentor form being circulated to staff. The committee will liaise with SLA about how they manage onboarding.

## 5. Reports

- a. **Executive Faculty:** The Executive Faculty meeting discussed the ongoing federal funding issues, updates on the site visit for the upcoming accreditation process, and the new plans for space allocation. The committee also covered staff updates, including staffing challenges and upcoming planning efforts.
- b. **Staff Advisory Council (SAC) (Kathy Carneiro):** Kathy shared that SAC is currently in its election cycle. The council is focusing on improving communication with HR, particularly regarding wellness programs. Kathy also noted that SAC is working on new initiatives to enhance staff benefits communication across campuses.
- c. **Academic Standards:** No update.

## 6. HR Announcements

- a. Julio Diaz provided written updates to remind staff to nominate for the President's Staff Excellent awards. Nominations are due May 5.
- b. Applications for TULI's ELP and ILP are open until May 2.
- c. Mental Health First Aid sessions are open. Sign up details are in the OIE newsletter.
- d. Tuition waiver program for Summer 2025 is open until July 5.
- e. Staff are reminded to use their floating holidays by June 30, 2025, and to check their vacation accruals.
- f. The university's holiday schedule for 2025–2026 has been finalized and will be released next week.

## 6. Other Business – No other business

## **7. Action Items Recap**

- **Phillip** will prepare information for the summer elections and the nomination process.
- **Nichole** will continue discussions with Carrie regarding potential legislative engagement. Will also draft cards to send out to graduating staff send in a shout out to Tidewater Times. Will also send one to Alisha for the Humility training Farhana recognized.
- **Farhana** will reach out to SSE and SLA to discuss onboarding strategies.
- **Tom** will send contact info for Brendan Green.
- **Brendan** will continue planning for the staff retreat.

## **Adjournment**

- **The meeting was adjourned at 12:42 PM.**

## **Next Meeting:**

- **June 5, 2025**