

# USG Staff Council Meeting Minutes

February 19, 2020

- I. **Call to Order/Welcome** .....Lashica Thomas, Chair
  - Meeting called to order at 10:00am
- II. **Approval of minutes** .....Lashica Thomas
- III. **USG Well-being Presentation** .....Ms. Farrah Williams  
System Wellness Benefits Program Mgr.
  - Farrah Williams gave an update on the USG Wellbeing program
  - New vendor chosen – Virgin Pulse. Everyone must re-register with the new vendor
  - There are now multiple opportunities to earn the \$100 credit
- IV. **Financial Report**.....Jasper Stewart, Treasurer
  - The USG Staff Council Treasury Account has to move from an agency account to a Fund 1400 account
  - Changes to reimbursements through USGSC – If requesting a reimbursement, Any reimbursement from the USGSC has to Changes-Home Institution Responsible
- V. **Chair Report**.....Lashica Thomas
  - The USGSC Website is now updated. [https://www.usg.edu/staff\\_council/](https://www.usg.edu/staff_council/)
  - The USGSC Executive board is creating procedures and guidelines to assist future executive teams
- VI. **Old Business** .....Lashica Thomas
  - *List of Concerns for the system-Feedback*
    - Top 5 and the leads who will take them on
      1. Well-being items – Lead: Valdosta
      2. TAP changes – Lead: Georgia Southern
      3. Benefits Changes – Lead: Columbus State
      4. Professional Development/Career Pathing – Lead: GT/GGC
      5. Bereavement Leave – Lead: Georgia State BOR Updating the website and USGSC committee update bylaws
    - Juanita Hicks addressed the top 5 concerns of the USG Staff Council:
      - i. Action Item 1 – Well-being items
        1. Could employees submit a wellness exam for a 5-8% discount? Looking at plan options and offerings across the state. But participating in DPP and well-being programs could prevent conditions and keep costs low. Also working on educating population on lower costs of care, e.g., using urgent care instead of emergency room.
        2. Could well-being incentives be raised to \$200? Need to evaluate the results, the impact and ROI before making that decision. Will consider the credits for new plans in 2021.
        3. Could employees have 90 minutes per week to be released for wellness activities? Potential conflict with Gratuities policy. Will need to review with USG legal office for advisement. Potential solution: utilization of flex-time. SC could

- develop a program proposal/template for institutions that gives guidance on the use of flex-time for wellness. Potential partnership with USG Well-being liaisons.
  - ii. Action Item 2 – TAP for Dependents and expansion to technical skills certificates
    - 1. USG HR reviewed this request from staff council in the past few years. Two challenges with dependents:
      - a. Conflict with Gratuities policy (considered a thing of value/gift in which no services are provided)
      - b. Budget Concerns – direct dollars not sent to institutions for TAP and loss of income to support programs for institutions
    - 2. Funding for technical skills certifications would need to come from department/institutional budgets
  - iii. Action Item 3 – Benefits Changes
    - 1. Can Kaiser be offered to all USG employees? No, due to location of Kaiser providers and facilities
    - 2. Can leave be transferred to another employee? Not equitable; can be based on popularity. Most institutions have a shared sick leave program.
  - iv. Action Item 4 – Professional Development/Career Pathing;
    - 1. There's no well-defined training program for trades people to transition to management
      - a. Possible opportunity to reference Georgia Tech's efforts to answer this issue
      - b. Statewide initiative in unison with Georgia Gwinnett College
    - 2. Current career development opportunities may include, but are not limited to:
      - a. TAP
      - b. Courses offered through Continuing Education
      - c. Courses offered through a TCSG institution
      - d. External professional programs and conferences
      - e. System-wide or institution faculty and staff professional development programs
    - 3. Each USG institution shall commit an appropriate amount of funds for faculty and staff development, which will be matched by state appropriated funds to the extent that funds are available.
    - 4. Potential solution:
      - a. Staff Council could develop a program template for institutions/employees that gives guidance on developing professional development proposals
      - b. Most institutions have online training
      - c. Potential partnership opportunity with USG Office of Leadership and Institutional Development
  - v. Action Item 5 – Bereavement Leave
    - 1. USG would have to measure our leave benefits against other higher education systems, K-12 systems and other employers.
  - vi. Next steps are to determine what proposals are viable for continuance and establish a work team to complete a full proposal.
- All Institutional Staff Councils now have individual email accounts set up to make it easier each year when council members transition on and off.
- The USG 2019 Strategic Plan is completed. The website is up and running with established measures for the goals [https://www.usg.edu/strategic\\_plan/strategic\\_plan\\_2024](https://www.usg.edu/strategic_plan/strategic_plan_2024)

VII. **New Business**

- USG Update .....Dr. Juanita Hicks  
Vice Chancellor for Human Resources
  - i. Dr. Hicks discussed the Critical Hire process and also provided responses to the Top 5 list of concerns.
  - ii. See detailed answers for list of concerns under Old Business
- 2020-2021 USGSC Elections .....Lashica Thomas
  - i. Staff Council elections are upcoming. The deadline to nominate someone is March 20<sup>th</sup>. Nomination form here: <https://forms.gle/Si5iX69bsxgm7MJY8>
  - ii. The slate of candidates will be sent out to the USGSC by April 1<sup>st</sup>
  - iii. Voting will occur at the May meeting
  - iv. The election committee will consist of Current Chair and 3 appointed members of the USGSC
- Future USGSC conferences .....Lashica Thomas
  - i. Fort Valley State University – October 8-9, 2020
  - ii. Georgia Tech 2021
  - iii. Georgia Gwinnett College 2022
  - iv. Augusta University 2023
  - v. Apply to host 2024-link is up  
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeb1UuSNY4FC0n4s7v2pcTrT3OtfB2eJKp-drvVhKLQL2ztMA/viewform?usp=pp\\_url](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeb1UuSNY4FC0n4s7v2pcTrT3OtfB2eJKp-drvVhKLQL2ztMA/viewform?usp=pp_url)
- Advisory Council for hosting conferences .....Lashica Thomas
  - i. The Executive Board is setting up an Advisory Council to assist Institutions who are hosting Staff Council conferences. The initial schools involved will be Georgia Southern, Fort Valley and Georgia Tech.
- USG Staff Council Strategic Plan Discussion .....Lashica Thomas
  - i. *Revisit the Goals- Action Plans*
    1. *Short Term Goal-Mentors for new staff council and season staff councils*
    2. *Long Term-Goal Creating a plan to address morale, physical and mental health*

VIII. **Institution Reports** - 2 minutes .....All Institutions

IX. **Adjournment**

**Important Dates:**

Meeting Dates	Times	Location
May 20, 2020	10:00 AM to 2:00 PM	Hatcher/MGA
July 15, 2020	10:00 AM to 2:00 PM	Hatcher/MGA

**Recorded Video**

[https://columbusstate.zoom.us/rec/share/3ZxHKJb-zmpLRY3RxI3BdKoZM4H4aaa8gCZK\\_PdZzE67CX7uSA3mdlUetsXZunda](https://columbusstate.zoom.us/rec/share/3ZxHKJb-zmpLRY3RxI3BdKoZM4H4aaa8gCZK_PdZzE67CX7uSA3mdlUetsXZunda)