

**APA Executive Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 15, 2022 - WebEx Meeting**

ROLL CALL:

Present: William McQuitty, Douglas Mathews, Elena Wood, Jackie Michels, Val Horwath, Malia Roberts, Julia Primavera Kuntz, Teri Schrimpf, Eleonora Philopoulos, Sara Volmering, Laura Ciccantell, Michelle Loedeman, Phillip Koch, Jordan Olson, Jhauncey Jacobs, Ariel Palau, Valaree Kyser, Erica Martinez

Absent: Jennifer Clements, Brianna Galli, Bonnie Pfigst

Guest: Dr. Edward Montgomery, President of WMU

Land Acknowledgement Statement: “We would like to recognize Western Michigan University is located on lands historically occupied by Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodewadmi nations. Please take a moment to acknowledge and honor this ancestral land of the Three Fires Confederacy, the sacred lands of all Indigenous peoples and their continued presence.”

Call to Order and Agenda: William McQuitty, President, called the meeting to order at 11:32am. The agenda was approved.

OFFICERS’ REPORTS (Round 1):

President:

Visit from Dr. Montgomery: William reviewed the agenda for today’s meeting with the President, including handling of introductions.

NEW BUSINESS –

Guest Speaker: Dr. Montgomery joined the meeting. Following introductions of all Board members, the conversation covered the talking points collected at the Board’s Retreat on June 8, 2022. The following list of topics were covered in a Q&A type of discussion.

- Retention – Ways to counter a staff exodus
 - Staff appreciation – Dr. Montgomery acknowledged that more activities to celebrate staff are needed. The hope is that the employee survey will provide some data on this and allow for more activities to address it.
 - Gratitude for the additional summer flex time – William relayed our appreciation for the flex time; Dr. Montgomery feels this is a step in the right direction in supporting those who worked long and hard through the pandemic.
 - Idea: Recognition when a staff member receives a degree from Western – Dr. Montgomery agrees this is good idea and will add to the list of activities to investigate. He welcomes suggestions and thinks there should be a consistent policy on this.
 - Comprehensive Job Description (JST) Review (Compensate those who have taken on significantly more responsibilities; Divide up excessive responsibilities into new positions) - Dr. Montgomery noted that an upcoming AON compensation study should provide some benchmarks for evaluation of jobs and roles, as well as address how

compensation is on track, needs adjustment, and addresses inflation. This should allow for more self-evaluation of workloads, unit flexibility in hiring, and trade-offs in benefits vs. pay as compensation.

- Staff development and progression – Dr. Montgomery noted that the leadership course is restarting. There will also be efforts to determine what kinds of training should be offered to employees to fit their needs.
- Staff wellbeing and emotional support – Dr. Montgomery acknowledged that the pandemic has affected not just student mental health on campus, but employee mental health. He mentioned an undertaking within Dr. Diane Anderson’s office to address this and suggested that employees should supply input to her. There will be upcoming sessions allowing for more input as well.
- Recruitment – Attracting new talent
 - Funding disparities (Units with more resources can increase starting salaries; those with less are finding it difficult to recruit talent) – Dr. Montgomery noted that departments should use all options available when posting and attracting new talent (e.g. grade bands are not finite). He is aware of this issue, and is working with a team to identify the extent of this problem and to develop solutions.
 - Parental Leave Policy – This was noted as a “perk” to attract employees, but there is no plan to revisit this policy at this time.
 - Telecommuting – According to Dr. Montgomery, the 3/2 schedule for summer was an interim measure to address this. This is another tool to use in recruiting, noting our flexibility, but Dr. Montgomery also stressed that WMU “sells” a residential experience, which should include “staff in residence”.
- Transparency, Communication, & Cooperation
 - What are the President’s goals for 2022-23? Dr. Montgomery’s focus is on “all may learn” through....
 - Recruitment and retention (increasing yield rates in students)
 - Post-COVID re-engagement on campus
 - Employee Morale (both on the job and personally)
 - Racial Justice goals (identify and implement those that better allow us to reach our potential)
 - Implementation of a Strategic Plan
 - Managing the physical infrastructure on campus
 - Executive Staffing (including replacement of the Provost and General Counsel)
 - How can APA act as a partner in upcoming projects? Dr. Montgomery suggest ongoing dialogs, suggesting ideas, and reaching out to Administration. He noted this is an area that needs work.
 - Concern with lack of current staff representation in the Provost search – Dr. Montgomery noted there will be stages where input is requested during the preliminary interviews and later visits.
 - More information on Do Less Better initiative – Dr. Montgomery was not aware of a program by this name.
 - Collecting and using exit interview data – Dr. Montgomery acknowledged that this is important data to collect. The APA noted a lack of consistency in collecting it and feel

that more effort should be put into using it, managing it, and determining how to handle it better.

OFFICERS' REPORTS (Round 2):

Vice President (Julia Primavera-Kuntz): No report.

Treasurer (Jennifer Clements): No report.

Recording Secretary (Jackie Michels): The previous meeting minutes were posted and approved in TEAMS (some changes), and finally included in the TEAMS files. Once posted from this meeting, twelve approvals are needed before final posting.

Corresponding Secretary (Val Horwath): No report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Membership (Sara Volmering): A casual summer meet-up is being discussed and plans to come.

Nominations & Elections (Malia Roberts): Malia introduced our newest Board member (Ariel Palau), and noted that returning member Janice Quakenbush will be joining us at the July meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS –

Next Board Meeting: Wed. July 13, 2022 11:30-1pm

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 1:16 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jackie Michels, Recording Secretary