

**Staff Council Meeting Minutes**
March 9, 2022 | Wednesday | 1:00pm | ONLINE (Zoom)
Participants: Professional Staff of University of Hartford

**Welcome:** **Lisa Wollenberg, Staff Council Chair**

The previous Chair, Kate Darcy Hohenthal, has resigned her position. Following procedures in the Bylaws, I as Vice Chair have assumed the role of Chair. If you had any open business with Kate that is not yet resolved, we want to make sure it is not lost in the transition. Email staff@hartford.edu or reach out to me directly: Lwollenbe@hartford.edu, 860.768.4840.

**February 9, 2022 - General Meeting Minutes**

* Discussion and approval of the minutes from previous general meeting
* Change minutes to reflect that Floyd Cooper has passed
	+ Allison Poulin voted to approve the Minutes as written; Cindy Oppenheimer seconded this motion
	+ Approved with 15 votes in favor and 2 abstentions

# **Guest Speaker: *President Gregory Woodward***

* President Woodward has been going on a conversational road show with cabinet, deans and campus community on the financial sustainability plan. The university is in a pretty solid place – there were fewer students this year, but we had planned for it. We are on target with are budgets and will be on target next year.
* Main focus needs to be on increasing enrollment and retention. At the February Board of Regents, he presented a 3-part proposal to the board which was approved.

**Compensation**

* + Three-year compensation package starting this summer with 2% merit increment pool as a minimum each year.
	+ Set aside additional funds for adjustments to salaries to address salary compression and bring salaries up to the minimum or median. It would take 5 to 6 million dollars to bring everyone up to the median level. The hope is to put $500,00 in every year. Salaries that are the furthest away from where they should be will get the increases first.
	+ If there is a surplus of money this year it will be divided up amongst every employee.

**Physical Improvements to Campus**

* Board approved 20 million dollars in loans and gifts to renovate the Village Apartments. Attracting more upperclassmen to live on the campus. They hope the renovations will be finished by fall 2022.
* Up to 10 million dollars is allocated to continuing renovating the 1st and 2nd year student residential halls and Park River. Not putting any money into Regents as they will eventually be knocked down.
* Construction of track for track and field sports and also for faculty, staff and student use. Inside area of track will be able to be used by varsity teams and intramural club practices.
* Budget for these improvements is separate from the operating budget with staff salaries, etc. We need to take advantage of our financial stability and borrow money while rates are low, to keep up with peer institutions.

**Investment**

* Additional staff for Tutoring, Center for Student Success, Career Center and Institutional Advancement
* University will need to go into the red in order to make changes that will enhance enrollment and retention. Four-year models were done of best and worst case. Worst case 2 years in the negative then 2 years in the positive, with 11 million dollar surplus at the 4th year. Best case 1st year negative, remaining 3 years positive by 4th year we would be 20 million in the positive. The surplus can then be reinvested in staff, faculty, programs, facilities, etc.

**Questions**

* Will there be raises this year? And if so, what type and how much?
* This was already answered in the presentation.
* Will there be retirement packages offered this year
* No, there won’t be. Data and research shows we need to sit tight on retirement for now.
* Can you speak about the aspect of Financial Sustainability of Online Learning?
* We have a financial plan for online learning – building an office for online learning with dedicated staff that develops courses, certificate programs.
* What have you done to enhance student experiences on campus?
	+ - Dean Isaacs has done a lot of programs and updates to the quads and will continue to do so.
		- Looking into why the retention of students in Hawk Hall is 90% compared to the rest of the campus at 73%. Has to be the sense of community – looking to do more learning communities and little suites for faculty/staff to live in and be a mentor.
		- CSS has increased 1st year retention from 73% to 81%
* How is the financial model which has evolved under your tenure during the past 4 years sustainable, especially when compared to our immediate competitors? (Quinnipiac is up 2200 students and Hartford is down almost a thousand students). What are you going to do to compensate for the decreased enrollment that might occur in the College of Education, Nursing, and Health Professions because of Hartford Healthcare’s new five-year contract with Quinnipiac, which makes the students in the school of medicine, nursing, and health sciences immediately eligible for employment within the Hartford Healthcare network?
* His information is that Quinnipiac is actually down 6000 students.
* Hartford Healthcare has enough of a need for nurses that there would be jobs for all of our nursing students. This year we had 1,300 applicants for nursing and accepted 100
* Hursey Center will enhance our enrollment.
* Healthcare needs are high now and Hartford Healthcare is not our only partner.
* Covid is not quite over, Yale, Wesleyan and Trinity have had outbreaks. We will be reassessing the mask policy after spring break.

## **Delegate Reports**

**Treasurer’s Report:** (Linda Zigmont) Balance is $1,422.98

* + No change

**Benefits Taskforce:** (Cindy Oppenheimer/Desirée Kleykamp)

* **COVID Over the Counter Test**
• Federal government announced on Jan 12, 2022 that as of Jan 15, 2022 private
insurance carriers had to pay the cost of over the counter Covid tests. Carriers were
given no advance warning so they have been scrambling to set up a process.
• Aetna on 2/17/2022 shared their proposed process with employers, UNotes posted on
1/27 regarding reimbursement: At-home COVID Test Kit Reimbursement for Aetna
members.
* Although the tests are “free” to individuals, they cost the University and in turn increase
claim cost. Please do not stock up on tests, they have an expiration date of less than a
year and having to toss them is a waste of tests and money.
* **Connecticut Paid Family Leave**
• Administered by AFLAC for the State of CT
• Claim processing by AFLAC/State has slowed and is causing delays in payments to
individuals
• If you are going out on disability or Family Leave contact HRD as soon as possible.

**Resource Planning & Priorities Committee (RPPC):** (Laura D’Angelo-Gohn/Ben Ide)

* The meeting was cancelled this month because, although the Board of Regents supports the
broad outlines of the budget, some discussion still needs to take place to approve the specifics.
There is some good news, though. Despite the expected drop in spring enrollment numbers,
retention from fall to spring held right at the estimated 93%. community.

 **Fundraising**

* No Change

**Ways and Means** (Ben Ide)

* No change

**Faculty Senate:** (Rachel Yacouby)

* The SGA representative reported that after Spring Break, Moe’s will be open extended hours, to 6pm, to accommodate those who are on campus later in the day. Did not meet this month.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force** (Desirée Kleykamp/Lisa Cote)

* No change

## **Community Representative Reports**

**Institutional Advancement:** (Victoria Sandoval)

UHart’s Day of Giving is coming up on Wednesday, March 23rd. We hope all staff will feel
encouraged and inspired to participate and follow the day’s progress with us!! There will be
several associated event:

* Hawk Pride and Seek Virtual Scavenger Hunt, March 18-20.
* Day of Giving In-Person Launch Party, March 22, 5-8pm Location: Pratt Street Hartford
* Day of Giving Virtual Kickoff Party, March 22, 8pm.
* Day of Giving, March 23

## **Upcoming Staff Council Meetings**

April 13, 2022 (Annual meeting)
May 11, 2022
June 8, 2022
July 13, 2022
August 10, 2022
September 14, 2022