

# LSU | Staff Senate

## MEETING MINUTES

April 21, 2021

President Jonathan Levesque presided over the April 21, 2021, Staff Senate meeting held by Zoom Video Conferencing at 10:30 a.m.

### Executive/Administrative/Managerial

P – Reonas, Barbara ('21)  
P – Tammy Millican ('23)

### Professional/Non-Faculty

P – Aslin, Jessica ('21)  
P – Baldrige, Samantha ('21)  
P - Braden, Laurie ('21)  
A – Bonner, Amber ('21)  
P – Dawan, Hope ('21)  
P - Ghebreyessus, Walta ('21)  
P - Henry, Rachel ('21)  
P – Lane, Madison ('21)  
P – Olson, Darcee ('21)  
Pr - Rafati, Karina ('21)  
P - Cummings, Ellen ('22)  
P – Garner, Karen ('22)  
P – Herman, Catherine ('22)  
P – Lee, Mark ('22)  
P – Levesque, Jonathan ('22)  
P – Nickerson, Jon ('22)  
P – Roth, Nicole ('22)  
P – Clemmons, Jill ('23)  
A – Kimmell, Alyssa ('23)  
P – Harb, Ryan ('23)  
P – Lewis, John ('23)  
P – Marrero, Ali ('23)  
P- Sansoni, Gerald ('23)  
P – Shows, Haley ('23)  
P – Slocum, Jenee ('23)  
Pr – Stone, Megan ('23)  
P – Wilson, Derek ('23)

### Service/Maintenance

### Skilled Crafts

P – Corbitt, Brent ('22)

### Technical/Paraprofessional

P – Matkovic, Igor ('23)

### Clerical/Secretarial

A – Salesneves, Sarah ('22)  
P – Salvadras, Amber ('22)

A – Indicates Absent

P – Indicates Present

Pr – Indicates Proxy

## **GUESTS:**

Robert Dampf, LSU Board of Supervisors  
Rebekah Spiers, School of Social Work  
Jason Walker, Facility Services  
Chelsea Santangelo, Facility Services  
Ryan Greer, Office of Sponsored Programs  
Susannah Knoll, Faculty Senate  
Roxane Berthelot, Campus Federal Credit Union  
Brian Ainsworth, Campus Federal Credit Union

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by President Jonathan Levesque at 10:30 a.m.

## **ATTENDANCE**

There was a quorum with two proxies noted.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Treasurer Catherine Herman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – March 17, 2021, Staff Senate Meeting**

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Treasurer Catherine Herman. The motion, seconded by Senator Tammy Millican, carried.

## **GUEST SPEAKER – ROBERT DAMPF, LSU BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CHAIR**

President Jonathan Levesque introduced Robert Dampf who is the Chair of the Board of Supervisors at Louisiana State University.

Mr. Dampf is a partner in Perry Dampf Dispute Solutions, a mediation and arbitration company headquartered in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. This company is proud to have been recognized by the LSU 100 for being owned and lead by LSU Graduates. A native of Baton Rouge, Mr. Dampf attended public schools in East Baton Rouge Parish. In 1976. He received a Bachelor of Science degree with honors from SMU. In 1979, he received a Juris Doctorate from the LSU Law Center.

Within the Louisiana State Bar, he has served as a Bar Greater, Member of the House of Delegates, Member of the Board of Governors and Treasurer of the Association.

In addition, he has been a frequent seminar speaker for the State Bar on Maritime Law, Mediation and Ethics and Professionalism. He has spoken on these topics for other organizations from Los Angeles to Dublin. Mr. Dampf welcome.

Mr. Dampf mentioned that we've got exciting times going on at LSU. It's a lucky year to be Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. We've had some interesting things happen, which I'm sure you all are familiar with. He has been Chairing the Board for about seven months with about five months left on his term as Chairman.

Dampf mentioned that all members on the board serve as volunteers. They all have day jobs and as introduced, he is in the mediation arbitration business which gives him a little bit of calendar flexibility so he's been able to cut back to about 60% of his normal workload for this year as he serves as Chairman.

It has been a pretty time consuming enterprise, probably the most pressing thing at this moment is the presidential search. Tom Galligan has done a phenomenal job. Dampf mentioned that we have pretty effectively worn him out with all that he has had on his plate this year, so he has decided, not to be a candidate.

The search process is coming to a rapid close. He has appointed a committee of 20 members to bring candidates to the board. There are five board members on that committee, but he is not one of them which was deliberate. Dampf thinks it's important that the process be independent because he does not want to have any influence.

The Board of Supervisors has 16 members with 1 student member. 15 members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate. Members come from different parts of the state. They have six year terms, the leadership consists of a Chair, Past Chair and Chair Elect. Members are interested in higher education and have the time and energy to deal with some of the issues which varies from political items to chilled water. They work hard and love the university.

Most of us think of LSU as a cultural epicenter of our state which is pretty important. We're proud of the people we have on our administration, faculty and staff. We have roughly 50,000 people between students, faculty and staff.

Some bad things have happened in the past which has been in the news lately but we are doing our best to aggressively fix it. There were some decisions made by folks years ago that were not good decisions. We didn't properly deal with those issues but we are being very transparent in acknowledging those mistakes of the past and moving forward in trying to fix them.

The floor was opened for questions.

Q: How did you come to serve on the Board of Supervisors and what role do you feel the Chair of the Board of Supervisors plays in the operation of LSU?

A: Dampf wanted to be on the board. When he was in law school, his roommate, Jay Dardenne was Student Government President and he was on the board. Jay is his lifelong very good friend and a candidate for LSU President and that's another reason why Dampf had absolute hands off in that selection process. When Governor John Bell Edwards got elected, Jay who is

the Commissioner of Administration spoke with Edwards about appointing him and gave him Dampf's resume. He got appointed on the board about two and a half years ago.

Q: What role do you see as the Chair place for the operation of LSU?

A: That is a great question and a challenging question, it seems simple the Association of Governing Bodies rules and the accreditation agencies say that we are not to be in the minutia, we are not to be in the weeds, we hire a President and the President run the university. The Constitution says that we're management and we're to supervise the university. There is a little bit of a conflict between some of the accreditation rules and how some people interpret the Constitution. He thinks in the right scenario they are a broad policymaking body. His role as Chairman is to facilitate. He gives everybody a chance to participate and share the workload. He tries to be as neutral as he possibly can on issues so that everybody gets their views across. He is at the University Administration Building daily and involved as much as he can be.

Senator Samantha Baldrige thanked Mr. Dampf for taking the time to meet with us today, especially while you're with your family, I have little ones, I know how crucial that time is together. I wanted to ask is that since board members are appointed, what is the board doing to make sure that diversity, equity and inclusion are a part of the framework by which they make decisions?

Mr. Dampf mentioned that that has been an extremely important part of their focus. We have four African American board members out of 16 which is about 25%. That's a commitment that the Governor has made. They have three women on the board which are underrepresented in that sense. They have a subcommittee on inclusion and if you look at the hiring practices just in the last three years, he thinks they've done pretty well but we can always do better. You pick the best people for the best jobs. LSU is moving in the right direction.

Past-President Rachel Henry mentioned that she has been a staff member on the LSU campus for the past 15 years and a Staff Senator for the past five years and with her experience, she thinks that he is the first Board of Supervisors member who has spoken at a Staff Senate meeting or had any interaction with us at all. She thinks there's a massive disconnect between staff and the board, we all serve at the pleasure of the board but we don't really know anything about board members or what their policies are or how decisions are made other than watching a monthly board meeting. What are some ways that we could better work as partners with the board so our voices can be heard as we all work towards making sure LSU is heading in the right direction?

Mr. Dampf mentioned that those are good points. He is thrilled to have been invited to speak with the full senate. He thinks a quarterly meeting with the full senate would be a great idea. He also mentioned that most of what you read in the newspaper is absolutely inaccurate. Theoretically, the only people that are authorized to speak for the university are the LSU President and the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. He rarely speaks to the media and he absolutely doesn't leak to the media, because he would put his name on it, if he feels strongly about something. When you watch the board meetings that's all there is. There is no secret backdoor stuff that's happening.

Henry mentioned that there is the Council of Staff Advisors, but that is basically just a meeting with staff members from the campuses within the system. Could that group have more interaction with board members themselves? He thinks board members would be very open to that.

President Levesque mentioned that we've been fortunate to have a number of our senior leadership guest speak at our meetings. We really do appreciate the time to meet with you. Levesque wanted to discuss some of the Title IX agenda. How do you see the Board of Supervisors role in the accountability piece for Title IX and how are they going to ensure that our university doesn't fall out of compliance for future issues with Title IX?

Mr. Dampf mentioned that they are committed and that there are companies that will come in and do an audit. The Husch Blackwell report had 18 specific recommendations which they presented to the legislature, along with this very specific timeline. They have accomplished 5 of those recommendation and have 7 that will be done in the next three weeks. They will also hire an audit firm to come in maybe every six months just to see that we are accomplishing the things that we said we would accomplish. Some of the things are relatively simple, hire more people and communicate better but just even the physical location of the Title IX office was terrible which needs to be in the center of campus so that to me is simple but really important. They have also appointed a Timeline Subcommittee that Mary Werner is Chairman of which will be a permanent committee soon that will be involved in the audit as well.

Senator Tammy Millican mentioned that she has been with LSU for 24 years and on Staff Senate since 2010. We are all in agreement that the Title IX office needs to be in a better location other than the University Administration Building. One of the other things that has changed is our Ombudsperson office which used to be split between two locations, the Student Union and the University Administration Building but now it is only at the University Administration Building which can be intimidating for a staff member who needs to go and talk with the Ombudsperson. What are your thoughts about having a second location for the Ombudsperson? The other part of her question is that, in terms of the Presidential Search Committee, a resolution was passed a couple of years ago that would have guaranteed Staff Senate a seat on any critical higher search committee and we were not included in the Presidential Search Committee, so is there an update on where we are on that search and what you expect next steps to be?

Mr. Dampf was unaware of that resolution. They did include staff members from some of the other campuses, one of which is the President of the Council of Staff Advisors who is also the Staff Senate President for LSU Alexandria. With regards to the location for the Ombudsman, it may be a function of personnel but he also thinks that the President's office should be there which should also be much more centrally located. He does think that there's a difference between a student walking in there and a staff member who can maybe navigate some things that might be a little more challenging for students, so I don't see it quite the same way with staff, as I do with students.

Past-President Rachel Henry asked if Mr. Dampf could provide an update on the Presidential Search Committee and the ways that staff can voice opinions, if necessary.

Mr. Dampf explained that the applications closed yesterday, and he thinks there were roughly 23 applications. They have a professional search firm that's a real leader in higher education searches. The Parker Group located in Atlanta have narrowed it down to six top tier candidates that should be interviewed. There was a story that came out in the Baton Rouge Business Report that was completely inaccurate and as a result of that story, some of our top flight candidates withdrew their names which happened yesterday evening. And that's a real bad situation because that is somebody leaking inaccurate information to the media. He has no idea what their motivation for doing that is but several top flight candidates are no longer included for consideration. He knows that we have two or three really strong candidates that are going to be considered. He regrets losing two or three due to a news article. Dampf would like a process that's fair, open, transparent and gets us a great leader.

Robert Dampf thanked the Staff Senate for the opportunity to speak with the group today.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Jonathan Levesque reviewed relevant meetings in which he attended.

On March 26, he participated as a judge for the Tiger 12 Award. LSU has some incredible students on campus and he wishes we would do more to highlight their accomplishments

The Executive Committee participated in the interview processes for both the Dean of Mass Communications and the Veterinary School.

On April 8, the Staff Senate hosted a new hire event. Shoutout to everyone who helped set it up and who volunteered that day. We had every senior level leader attend the event and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

LSU will be hiring a new parking director and he was recently asked to join their hiring committee.

On April 17, Senators Tammy Millican, Madison Lane, Karen Garner, and Laurie Braden and he participated in the LSU annual Geaux Big volunteerism event. Our assignment was the Baton Rouge Food Bank where we assembled meal boxes for 740 families. The event was incredible and well organized. He would love for the full Staff Senate to consider volunteering at the food bank next year. It very rewarding.

While we were drafting the resolution on Title IX, he reached out to our peer governing organizations of Faculty Senate and Student Government. They have been given a copy of our resolution and have expressed support. Dr. Mandi Lopez has shared a resolution that the Faculty Senate will vote on tomorrow expressing "No Confidence" in the LSU Board of Supervisors.

That concludes the president's report.

## **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

## **Community Engagement**

President Levesque reported that the Community Engagement this month was Geaux Big by volunteering at the Baton Rouge Food Bank.

Senator Samantha Baldrige thanked everyone who has sent in nominations for the Staff Spotlight. She mentioned one note, is that if you do send one in, please let her know why you're nominating that person. Also if there's a new staff member joining your department or your unit, they love to welcome them to campus and let them know that Staff Senate is thinking of them so keep those in mind to.

Staff Senate Administrative Coordinator Melonie Milton mentioned that Senator Baldrige may want to reach out to Human Resource Management to get a monthly list of new hires who attended orientation to catch all of those new employees. HR Generalist Brian Vermeire would be a good person to contact. Past-President Rachel Henry mentioned to reach out to Liesel Walker who oversees orientation. She and Rachel recently discussed partnership opportunities.

## **Long Range Review & Planning**

Senator Nicole Roth reported that the committee has been working on updating the LSU Staff Senate Strategic Plan for 2020-2025. There was a copy attached in the meeting packet which has since been updated again. She suggested that we send out the updated version with new formatting for everyone to review. She encouraged any feedback to be sent to her within the next two weeks, so any further updates can be included and reviewed for next meeting. We can then have a dynamic strategic plan and begin implementing it.

## **AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Staff Appreciation**

President-Elect Amber Salvadras sent "Thank yous" to everyone who participated in the event. She appreciates everything that everyone did to make it a success.

The second quarter Staff Stripes Award nominations is open right now. Once nominations close, the committee will review and announce who those recipients are in June.

President Levesque mentioned that we delivered the leftover food to LSU Police Department who were very grateful. Great job everyone!

### **Scholarship**

President Levesque announced that the committee received the list of recipients for the scholarship awards. We plan on recognizing those recipients during the next meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Staff Senate General Election Results**

Staff Senate Administrative Coordinator Melonie Milton announced the newly elected Senators for 2021.

**Unclassified**

Dr. Tyrslai M. Williams- Carter with the Office of Strategic Initiatives  
Mo Carney with LSU Athletics  
Joshua Duplechain with Communications in the College of Engineering  
Quinneke Lee with Residential Life  
Jorge Garza with Graduate Admissions  
Emmy Hicks with the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion  
Shemeka Law with Physics & Astronomy  
Samantha Baldrige with Residential Life  
Henri Smith with Sponsored Program Accounting  
Lindsay Sarkissian with Human Resource Management

**Classified**

Donna Sparks with Communication Studies  
Mark Nehlig with LSU Police  
Christopher Hopkins with Building Services

Those results will be posted on under announcements on the website.

President Levesque is really encouraged with the diversity of our new senators coming in just from the schools and departments that they represent. He thinks that we have fulfilled our goals with the constitutional amendments to ensure that our Staff Senate is representative of everybody on campus.

**Staff Senate Budget**

Treasurer Catherine Herman provided a written financial report in the meeting packet for review by the full Senate.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**LSU Staff Senate Resolution 21-01 reads as follows:**

**LSU Staff Senate Resolution 21-01**  
**Staff Recommendations in Response to the Husch Blackwell Title IX Report**  
*Senators R. Henry, T. Millican, M. Lane, H. Dawan, W. Ghebreyessus, and S. Baldrige*

**WHEREAS**, one of the primary charges of the LSU Staff Senate, the elected representative body for staff members, is to advocate for staff and serve as a bridge between staff and administration on matters of importance and concern; and

**WHEREAS**, the Husch Blackwell report, subsequent Louisiana legislative committee hearings, and various local and national news articles have uncovered numerous failures across the LSU campus related to Title IX and sexual assault response; and



**WHEREAS**, the University released an action plan based on eighteen recommendations from the Husch Blackwell report to include appropriate staffing of a new Civil Rights & Title IX Office, as well as improved Title IX and sexual assault response training, support, and resources. Although recommendations for disciplinary consequences for named staff within the report did occur, termination was not a consequence; and

**WHEREAS**, while LSU Staff Senate is charged with advocating for all staff, we also believe we have the responsibility to hold all fellow staff members accountable for providing high standards of service excellence to our students, faculty, and colleagues. We support LSU Student Government Resolution 24 and agree that the University should hold any employee accountable that violates Title IX procedures, as these actions threaten the safety of our students, damage the University's reputation, and carry potential financial impact and liability for LSU; and

**WHEREAS**, the recent communication has been clear as to which LSU staff members are considered responsible parties or mandatory reporters, the consequences for mishandling reports or failing to report incidents related to Title IX remain vague and unclear; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a perceived lack of viable options for staff experiencing sexual harassment, as the current possible avenues have assumed challenges or consequences including, but not limited to, confidentiality and retaliation; and

**WHEREAS**, the LSU Board of Supervisors is a constitutionally empowered board granted the authority and responsibility to supervise and manage Louisiana State University campuses and is composed of one selected student member and two members from each congressional district, with three members from the state at-large appointees selected by the governor with confirmation of the Senate. As the Board of Supervisors' charge indicates, this governing board has significant influence in all decisions across campus, including those related to Title IX; and

**WHEREAS**, the make-up of the LSU Board of Supervisors does not appear to accurately reflect the LSU community in diversity of gender, race, thought, or industry. Specifically, the 2020 LSU Fall Facts report that more than 54% of the LSU community identify as female and there are currently only three female LSU Board of Supervisors. Additionally, the occupations of the members are primarily in law and business with few members having a background in academia or higher education management

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved; the LSU Staff Senate hereby proposes the following recommendations and requests:

- Clear communication and clarification of staff consequences for not participating in mandatory trainings, mishandling Title IX reports, or not reporting incidents related to Title IX. Additionally, having clear examples and definitions of behavior classified for each level of consequences (i.e. first decisional, second decisional, and termination).
- Ensuring the updated Title IX training is accessible and available to all staff members, regardless of title or classification. Although the annual sexual harassment training is set

to be updated, the mentions of targeted training for certain areas of campus could lead to further inconsistencies. We ask that the same training be available to all staff, as any staff member has the possibility or opportunity of interacting with or being approached by students of concern or staff members that have been sexually harassed or assaulted.

We support the need for topic specific training, but we ask that be available to all employees.

- Establish a timeline for Title IX investigations that eliminates unnecessary waiting for all parties involved and requires a formal resolution to each investigation.
- Additional support and resources for staff experiencing sexual harassment. At this time, staff members are limited to reporting these issues to Human Resources or the Ombudsperson. However, staff are not always comfortable reporting to either entity due to current location of the Ombudsperson's office in the University Administration Building (UAB) or the formality of the reporting process. We suggest expanding support services such as Lighthouse and Safe Space to include services for staff and also providing an additional campus office for the Ombudsperson to privately meet with staff.
- Diversification of the LSU Board of Supervisors to be more representative of the LSU Community, including but not limited to become more inclusive of gender, race, thought, and industry. As Title IX decisions have great impact on students, staff, and faculty, it is imperative that the board be representative of our diverse community. We propose a staff representative on the board with full privileges, including voting, that rotates among the LSU campuses to ensure that the perspective and concerns of staff are properly considered.
- Request for transparent reporting of progress of the eighteen recommendations of the Husch Blackwell report, as well as full transparency on acquisition and allocation of funding resources for the Civil Rights & Title IX office.

**THEREFORE**, be it further resolved, that a copy of this resolution be sent to Robert Dampf, Chair of the LSU Board of Supervisors; Thomas Galligan, Interim LSU President; Stacia Haynie, Executive Vice President and Provost; Donna Torres, Interim Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration/CFO; Clay Jones, Associate Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer; Mandi Lopez, Faculty Senate President; Takeyra Wagner, Council of Staff Advisors Chair; and Javin Bowman, Student Government President.

After some discussion, a motion to adopt Resolution 21-01 as written was made by President Jonathan Levesque, The motion, seconded by Senator Darcee Olson, carried.

The Staff Senate approved the Resolution with one abstentions.

### **Executive Officer Nominations**

The Staff Senate Executive Officer Call for Nominations is now open. The nomination forms will be circulated to all Senators electronically in the meeting packet. The deadline to return your nominations is April 28.

### **Future Guest Speakers**

President Jonathan Levesque announced that we will have Executive Officer Election speeches in May.

Please submit any suggestions for future guest speakers to the Staff Senate Executive Committee.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Senator Tammy Millican announced that the third panel discussion from the Pregnancy and Parenting Committee will be held on Thursday, April 22, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

They have a great group of panelists, Tracy Blanchard, Troy Blanchard, Aaron Cherry, Trey Jones, Roland Mitchell and Jennifer Norman. They will be discussing the experience of starting a family and that work balance. And then also being on the other side of it, to make sure you know what you do to ensure that it is a welcoming environment for those who are starting families. If you need a link to the event to register, please let her know and she will send it to you.

Past-President Rachel Henry announced that the LSU Student Union has set up the encouragement wall during finals week. They have not been able to do this for the past few semesters, but she is very proud to announce it is coming back next week.

So if you happen to be in the Union during finals week she would be very appreciative if you could stop by the encouragement wall which will be in the Center lobby on the second floor and just write a little note and give students some encouragement and pin it on our encouragement wall. The whole point is for students to give some encouragement, or they can take some encouragement.

Senator Darcee Olson announced that the ADA Compliance Stakeholders Committee has completed the ADA Compliance report a little ahead of schedule and it will be available soon. The next step is to secure funding to write the RFP for the Transition plan.

### **Staff Senator Birthday**

Staff Senator April birthdays:

- Senator Jill Clemmons celebrated her birthday on April 7.
- Senator Sarah Salesneves celebrated her birthday on April 12.

Happy Birthday!

**MOTION TO ADJOURN** – With there being no more business, Past-President Rachel Henry made a motion to adjourn. The motion, seconded by Senator Jenee Slocum, carried.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Jessica Aslin, Secretary

JA/mm