



**Professional Staff Organization
Meeting Minutes from
February 19, 2009**

Introductory Business:

Twenty-one PSO members attended the February meeting and watched the third installment of the video entitled, "Stop Me Before I Strangle Someone". In this segment, comedienne and motivational speaker Meagan Johnson talked about "making it work"—altering your statements to handle unpleasant situations. She reminded us that humor can sometimes diffuse situations. When we respond emotionally, we may seem powerless in the situation. Keeping a sense of humor when possible will help to control the situation or, at least, control our response to the situation. This video is available for check-out from Julie Crea.

Guest Speaker:

Chet Herbst, Vice President for Finance and Administration, updated us on the budget situation. We are experiencing "tough, tough times", even though there is a small stabilization surplus in the state coffers. Everyone is wondering about the stimulus payment and what it really means to Idaho and how it will affect us.

On Feb. 13, Governor Otter set forth the following restrictions:

- Hiring freeze – vacant positions will be left unfilled
- Over-time – none will be compensated without approval from the Division of Financial Management (DFM)
- Employee compensation – no bonuses, no merit pay
- Travel – DFM approved only
- No "stocking up" spending

While higher education is exempt from the reporting requirements, we are **not exempt from the 'spirit'** of these restrictions. Chet reminded us that all spending should be and is under careful scrutiny; spending patterns of higher ed institutions are under a microscope right now.

The stimulus package is \$787 million, but how much to Idaho? It will be approached as "one-time money" and not for new programs. The Governor has 45 days to accept/participate in the stimulus package. Indirect benefits could be PELL grants, Perkins Loans, workforce training (WFT), improvement of infrastructure—i.e. "shovel-ready" projects, and K-12 stabilization funding. All requests for a piece of the pie must be made through the Governor's office. March 4 is the deadline for requests. There is no direct applying for federal funding. *Limited* service employee can only be paid through stimulus funds.

From the Legislative Service Office:

- State agencies are in "survival mode" – no new capital projects and no raises for FY10
- Health insurance for FY10 will include a decline in employer benefits; agencies will not get to keep benefits.
- A 5% reduction in salaries—as an across-the-board pay cut—is on the table for discussion. The Governor must approve it through an executive order, but it's skeptical that he would issue such.

Our local legislators – Joe Stegner, John Rusche, and Liz Chavez—are VERY SUPPORTIVE of LCSC!

Student fee hearing will occur this spring. LCSC is requesting a 9% student fee increase.

General Announcements:

On March 9, the PSO website will open for nominations for new PSO officers. Members can vote beginning March 16, and voting will close at the end of the day on Friday, March 27. The results will be announced at the March 31st meeting.

Nominations for PSO Employee of the Year will open March 2 and remain open until close of business on March 27. Voting will begin the following week. The winner will be announced at the April 30 campus social. For more information, contact Diane Douglas, current PSO Employee of the Year.

Old Business:

Minutes were amended, and then a motion to approve the February 19 meeting minutes was made by Matt Graves; Nikol Luther seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

- The Treasury committee is meeting and discussing a budget structure to bring to the general membership for consideration and approval.
- The By-law revision committee is in the process of reviewing the by-laws.
- Professional Development Day will be held Wednesday, April 22, on campus. Patty Shea from AVISTA Corp in Spokane and Brad Cannon from Cannon Building Materials in Lewiston will be speaking. Cost is \$35 for LCSC employees.

New Business:

Dawn Byers and Julie Crea are the PSO representatives on the CRC committee. The committee is concentrating on non-monetary compensation; e.g. alternative work scenarios, as described in the following options:

- Four 10-hour days with closure on Friday, or stagger workweek so the campus remains open M-F.
- Four 9-hour days and one 4-hour day on Friday with the campus closed Friday afternoon; summer hours model used year-round.
- Telecommuting (working from home) for employees whose work would allow it. Would require a VPN (virtual private network). The Governor will have guidelines for telecommuting for state employees.

Jerry Hindberg is doing a feasibility study on telecommuting for LCSC. He is looking at issues such as Datatel access, FRx access and work phone access. Also, a good network is absolutely necessary.

PSO members are encouraged to look at the CRC website for more information and feedback. The committee wants to know what employees want and how we feel about the issues. Supervisors' input is especially crucial when thinking of alternative work situations and how it may impact their areas.

For the Good of the Order:

VOTE!

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Ruddell