



STAFF SENATE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 12, 2026 - 10:00 AM ITS Conference Room

- I. Call to Order was promptly at 10 a.m. Anna Crawford
- II. **Roll Call:** Buck Billings, Kenneth Roach, Corey Anthony, Austin Gregory, Anna Crawford, Karen Petit, Pleshette Elmore, Wyatt McInerney, Talia Samard

Excused absences: Perrin Rickenbaker, Grant Stone, Anthony Lepore, Kendra Rodgers, Brittany Brissey.
- III. **Administrative Report:** Taylor Cook, former senior director for development for the Wilbur O. and Ann Powers College of Business at Clemson University, was named Lander's Vice President for University Advancement in July. He oversees all fundraising, alumni relations and advancement activities and also serves as the executive director of The Lander Foundation.

Cook said, "The staff and the dedication it takes to run this institution don't go unnoticed."

Cook discussed his priorities, which include growing programs, such as the Curtis G. Shaw Pre-Law Society, supporting student success throughout the University, supporting Lander's athletic programs and planning for the University's first major capital campaign. "We want to show the impact that philanthropy can make," he said.

The University boasts an impressive number of alumni who have remained in South Carolina "Eighty-two percent of alumni are in South Carolina, where they are making a difference in their communities and our state," he said.

- IV. **Approval of Minutes:** A motion was made by Kenneth to approve the minutes of the January meeting, with a second by Pleshette.
- V. **Chair Report:** Anna reported that Enrollment and Access Management was unable to provide a nomination for the Staff Senate vacancy from their division.
- VI. **Division Announcements:** 1) Athletics – Paul Leese has been named Head Coach for the men's soccer team; 2) Finance and Administration – Graduate applications have opened for the spring and summer semester. The Graduate Career Fair will be held March 17. 3) Marketing and Communications – the new Lander Magazine has been printed and is being distributed throughout campus and to the community. 4) Dean of Students: a) Housing – Returning student applications have opened. The \$250 deposit will go toward a student's housing fees. A Feb. 25 deadline given for priority slot selection. Recruitment is underway for the CARE team.

Staff Senate Mission Statement

The Lander University Staff Senate exists to enhance the welfare of its staff; to serve as a liaison between staff, administration, faculty, and students; and to advise the administration on matters concerning the staff. This focus provides staff a voice to promote a positive, respectful work environment that sustains both personal and professional growth. In support of the university's strategic plan, specifically the goal of remaining an employer of choice, the senate strives foremost to contribute to the overall success of Lander University and its students.

- VII. Adjournment:** A motion to adjourn the business session and begin the executive session was made by Wyatt, with a second from Kenneth.

Executive Session

- I. Staff Senate Vacancies:** Anna said Jake Lucas has resigned from Staff Senate. Vacancies in Staff Senate include 1) Enrollment and Access Management has one vacancy. Two people nominated from the division decline; 2) Finance and Administration has one vacancy. A request is being made for a Vice Presidential appointment for this position.

Anna reported that Adam Taylor has requested that Staff Senate be more involved in Staff Appreciation Day.

- II. Committee Updates:** Anna presented a calendar outlining the months in which committees will have responsibilities: These include:

January-March: Professional Development Planning (Lead Committee, Professional Development).

April – May: Employee Appreciation Day (Lead Committee, Employee Appreciation)

June – August: Professional Development Workshops (Lead Committee, Professional Development)

September–October: Fall Festival Planning (Lead Committee, Employee Appreciation – assistance from Communications)

November: Bear Necessities Food Drive (Lead Committee, Communications)

December: Reflections of the Year, left by the Staff Senate Chair

Kenneth reported that the Professional Development Committee met January 14, and discussed the following topics for professional development workshops: AI Tools for Everyday Efficiency; Computer Skills; Career Mapping; Communication Basics, In-Person Meditation.

- III. Open Discussion and Planning:** It was discussed that a Staff Senate Newsletter would be produced quarterly. Among the highlights: Staff Feature, with photo; Key Division Highlights; VP Corner – Q&A done with a Lander Vice President; Upcoming Staff Senate Initiatives, and winners of the Office Spotlight and Employee of the Month awards.

- IV. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 11 a.m.

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Kenneth reported that the Professional Development Committee would meet later in the month to discuss professional development events for the year.

Staff Senate discussed the launch of a newsletter and how often it should be published. Karen volunteered to assist with the newsletter but would need assistance with formatting.

Discussion included what should be included, including a Vice President's section in which interview questions could be sent and then put in the newsletter, as well as staff accolades, the Office Spotlight and Employee of the Month.

V. Open Discussion and Planning:

Staff Senate discussed planning activities for the year, including Professional Development (January – March); Employee Appreciation Day (April – May); Fall Festival Planning (September – October); Bear Necessities Food Drive (November), Reflection (December).

VI. Adjournment: Staff Senate adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

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