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# University of Idaho

## Staff Council

### Staff Council Talking Points

#### Dates:

Nov. 11, 2020 - [Recording of Zoom meeting](#)

Dec. 9, 2020 - [Recording of Zoom meeting](#)

[Archive of all Staff Council meeting agendas, recordings and minutes](#)

Staff Council met on Nov. 11, 2020 and Dec. 9 for all-Zoom meetings.

### November Staff Member of the Month

Staff Member of the Month for November 2020 is Sean Sullivan – Technology Solutions Partner 3, ITS. Sean was nominated by Charles Hatfield, Facilities Customer Service Representative, who said, “Sean has a very good rapport with customers, employees and visitors and can smooth the waters with even the most frustrated person. Sean has a can-do attitude which helps put people at ease as he works on your issue. Sean's experience and knowledge of campus and of his services help get answers quickly and efficiently for the customer and those using his department’s services. Sean really is a great asset when it comes to the University of Idaho and it is a true joy to work with him. If it was up to me, I would be happy to give him a 50% pay increase and a three-week paid vacation to anywhere in the world that he wants to go; he deserves it!”

### December Staff Member of the Month

Staff Member of the Month for December is Kris Baird-Anderson – Graduation Specialist, Registrar’s Office. Kris was nominated by Lana Unger, Manager of Graduate Student Services, College of Graduate Studies, who said, “I would like to say “thank you” to Kris Baird-Anderson. She is literally doing the work of three people and still manages to respond to each of my requests and inquiries in a timely manner. She is a dedicated employee who really knows how to put

students first. The College of Graduate Studies appreciates her dedication to making the “graduation experience” a positive one for students at the U of I. I don’t know what we would do without her.”

## **Financial Review**

Brian Foisy, VP of Finance and Administration, updated Staff Council on various financial details of the University of Idaho. The big news: the university has moved from two consecutive years with \$20million operating losses to an operating surplus of \$1 million in FY20.

## **Enrollment**

While total student enrollment (including dual credit and non-degree seeking students) was down 10%, full-time enrollment was down only 2-3%.

## **WUE Program**

The decision to participate fully in the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) program means reduction in tuition of 50% for some current non-resident students. Budgeting for the long-term reduction has created a \$2.9 million one-time benefit for FY21.

## **CEC Funding, Furloughs and Holdbacks**

Money was allocated by the state for raises, but then withheld due to the budget situation. Because of a state record surplus, the President’s Leadership Council is composing a letter for the SBOE requesting all or some of the current 5% holdback be returned and passed along to the employees who had to take furloughs.

## **P3 (Public Private Partnership) Overview**

U of I granted the rights to a consortium to run the steam plant facility for 50 years in exchange for \$225 million up front to be received via wire transfer before Dec. 31, 2020. U of I will use these funds to pay off some existing debt and then will invest \$190 million in the U of I Foundation. The funds will be set up like an endowment that will generate a rate of return (assuming 5%). Projections show U of I receiving \$6 million in earnings annually from this investment, which will be reinvested in student scholarships, online infrastructure, research efforts, grant writing, RAs/TAs, marketing, student

recruitment, etc. U of I will be able to pay back the concessionaire with interest and still earn excess revenue projected at \$351 million (conservative estimate) to \$1.1 billion (expanded estimate) of net gain over the 50-year life of the partnership. The funds generated from the investments will not be held by U of I: a new legal non-profit identity, The Strategic Investment Fund, will have a one member (the U of I President) and an independent governing board.

Twenty-one U of I employees will be transferred over to the operator payroll. President Green has committed to being generous with these employees. Impact for them is top of mind. There will be a comprehensive transition plan, to be released soon, for each employee.

## **Preferred Names**

There is a priority project to allow Preferred Name to be added to Banner and all U of I technologies that use student and employee names. This will allow employees and students to identify a preferred name for system and institutional use. ASUI and Faculty Senate have been drivers behind this effort.

## **Staff Awards**

There was not a Staff Awards Ceremony this year due to COVID. Longevity gifts were available at the VandalStore on December 3-4. If you did not pick up your gifts at the VandalStore, your gift can be delivered to your office.

## **Staff Survey Re COVID-19**

In November, Staff Council distributed a survey to staff about issues around COVID-19 and the university's response. Results are in and have been communicated with leadership.

## **Online Education White Paper Review**

Chandra Zenner Ford presented the white paper produced by the Online Education Working Group. The group recommends a centralized administrative unit and migration to Canvas Learning Management System (as the State of Idaho is trying to standardize on Canvas). The P3 (Steam Plant) project will provide \$1 million per year to build the infrastructure.

## **AbilitiCBT**

Brandi Terwilliger, director of Human Resources, presented on the possibility of adding AbilitiCBT to our suite of benefits. AbilitiCBT is a clinical tool that offers cognitive behavioral therapy on a digital platform. It would be relatively cheap for the university to add this benefit.

## COVID-19

The COVID-19 advisory committee has been planning the implementation of a graphical dashboard to better envision university COVID-19 statistics. Staff Council voted to support implementation. Also, a Staff Council survey of staff showed that the biggest concern is staff not knowing how to access resources, or knowing what resources are available.

## President Green

President Scott Green visited the December 2020 Staff Council meeting. He thanked U of I staff for all we've did in 2020. He noted that Spring 2021 semester will be similar to Fall 2020, with COVID-19 testing and course delivery.

He sees expanding online class offerings to create new opportunities across the state for high school students and for teachers seeking continuing education.

The P3 Steam Plant deal will not directly help with market-based compensation, as we cannot use P3 monies directly for staff salaries unless there is a revenue component to it. Using the funds to make a stronger institution could have a ripple effect of improved compensation down the road.



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