

# LSU | Staff Senate

MEETING MINUTES  
February 21, 2024

President Joshua Duplechain presided over the February 21, 2024; Staff Senate meeting held in the Capital Chamber Room in the LSU Student Union at 10:30 a.m.

Unclassified

Executive/Administrative/Managerial

P - Tammy Millican ('24)

Professional/Non-Faculty

Pr - Bonner, Amber ('24)

A - Breaux, Kevin ('25)

P - Campen, Ryan ('24)

P - Canady, Robyn ('26)

A - Carney, Mo ('24)

P - Compton, Skylar ('26)

P - Duplechain, Joshua ('24)

P - Ferguson, Amanda ('24)

P - Gresham, Deanna ('24)

P - Guttner, Ginger ('25)

P - Hicks, Emmy ('24)

P - Jeffcoat, Danielle ('26)

P - Kennison, Jennifer ('25)

P - Lee, Quinneka ('24)

P - Martin-Whitaker, Neely ('25)

A - Miller, Cassaundra ('24)

P - Mimms, Anissa ('26)

P - Oster, Anthony ('24)

P - Owens, Jace ('26)

P - Phelps, Olivia ('26)

A - Rafati, Karina ('24)

A - Robison, Becca ('26)

P - Smith, Henri ('24)

A - Trahan, Amy ('25)

Pr - Washington, Valori ('26)

P - Waters, Bradley ('26)

P - White, Dayton ('25)

Counted

P - Williams, Amberlon ('24)

A - Williams-Carter, Tyrslai ('24)

P - Williamson, Jeannie ('26)

Classified

Skilled Crafts

P - Constance, Taylor ('25)

P - Corbitt, Brent ('24)

Technical/Paraprofessional

P - Matkovic, Igor ('26)

P - Nehlig, Mark ('24)

Clerical/Secretarial

A - Jensen, Jerri ('26)

P - Smith, Celeste ('26)

Service/Maintenance

A - Robertson, Winkeyssa ('24)

P - Indicates Present

Pr - Indicates Proxy

A - Indicates Absent

A/P – indicates Absence not

## **GUESTS:**

Anzie Gilmore, Facility & Property Oversight  
Emily Smith, Facility & Property Oversight  
Tracy Blanchard, Student Advocacy & Accountability  
Jennifer Popov, Human Resource Management  
Eddie Manes, College of Engineering  
Jennie Stewart, Division of Engagement, Civil Rights & Title IX  
Kamryn Gaines, Office of Disability Services  
Dawn Cornwell, Family of Benjamin Cornwell  
Kourtney Bell, Office of Disability Services  
Angela Neel, Office of Disability Services  
Katherine Michot, Office of Disability Services  
Jesse Downs, Olinde Career Center  
Rebecca Caire, Humanities & Social Sciences  
Jaelyn Hickman, Office of Disability Services  
Dan Bureau, Division of Student Affairs  
Julie Hupperich, Student Health Center  
Buddy Ethridge, Division of Engagement, Civil Rights & Title IX  
Clint Bordelon, Information Technology Services  
Bella Voyles, Information Technology Services  
Emily Hester, Student Affairs  
Adam Singer, Student Affairs  
Elizabeth Hebert, LSU Student  
Keirsten Elliott, Campus Federal Credit Union  
Zacki Soliman, Campus Federal Credit Union

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by President Joshua Duplechain at 10:30 a.m.

## **ATTENDANCE**

There was a quorum with two proxies noted.

## **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Senator Neely Martin-Whitaker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – January 25, 2024, Staff Senate Meeting**

A motion to accept the minutes was made by Secretary Quinneke Lee. The motion, seconded by Senator Deanna Gresham, carried.

## **PRESENTATION OF FLAG TO THE FAMILY OF BENJAMIN CORNWELL**

President Joshua Duplechain announced that the Staff Senate would like to present the flag honoring Mr. Benjamin Cornwell.

Benjamin passed away on January 9, 2024. He served at LSU as the Associate Dean of Students and Director of Disability Services. He had over 24 years of service to LSU. Benjamin earned his bachelor's degree from the University of New Orleans and his master's degree from Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center. He loved day trading, art, photographing, and college football especially LSU.

Benjamin was preceded in death by his stepson, Luke Branch; maternal grandparents, Urbin Pierre Tregre and Lelia Marie Tregre; and paternal grandparents, Mary Frances Cornwell, and Charles Murray Cornwell. He is survived by his loving and devoted wife of 10 years, Dawn Cornwell; stepdaughter, Carrie Branch; grandson, Waylon Luke Jackson; parents, Ben, and Briget Cornwell; brothers, Blake Cornwell (Cherafia Chermaie), Brad Cornwell, Brent Cornwell, and Brian Cornwell; cousin, Tregg Wilson; his best friend Kingston Eversull, III; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Duplechain didn't have the chance to interact with him on campus, but several people have contacted him about his passing and shared what an amazing person he was. He touched a lot of lives.

Benjamin was quoted on the Disability's Website as saying, "I like knowing that I am able to help other people with disabilities get an education and opportunities for gainful employment. The people who ran the Office of Disability Services when I was in college were invaluable to my success and to where I am now. They also gave me an opportunity to work for the office as a student worker and as a graduate assistant which allowed me to see and be part of the positive effect and changes which we make possible in the lives of students with disabilities."

His co-workers, Dan Bureau, Brandon Common and Emily Hester send the following remarks, Benjamin shared 24 years of his life with the LSU community helping to improve the experience of students with disabilities. He was a great partner for faculty and staff who wanted to best serve students. He made a difference in the lives of so many.

Benjamin's best advice for everyone was to keep trying to be creative when trying to get something done. Do not assume you cannot because that is what has been expected or what you have been told but and don't be too disappointed when situations where you do not succeed.

Benjamin's wife, Dawn along with friends, accepted the flag, which was flown on February 16, 2024, over the Parade Grounds in his honor. She thanked the LSU Staff Senate for this heart-warming gesture for her husband, Benjamin Cornwell.

#### **GUEST SPEAKER – ANZILLA “ANZIE” GILMORE, FACILITY & PROPERTY OVERSIGHT**

President Joshua Duplechain introduced Anzie Gilmore who serves as the Associate Vice President for Facility and Property Oversight.

Anzie Gilmore thanked the Staff Senate for the opportunity to speak today.

Gilmore has more than 23 years of experience in architecture, facilities planning, and project management, and in 2004 became the first female African American registered architect in the city of Houston and the fifth in the State of Texas. Anzilla worked in traditional practice in Waco and Houston. She is an active member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) and established the first NOMA chapter in Houston in 2005. She also served as director on the first board of the Architects Foundation (AF), the philanthropic arm of the AIA, leading the rebranding of the AF Diversity Advancement Scholarship and founding and launching the AF's diversity scholar's mentorship program.

Prior to her extensive career at Rice University for over 16 years, she worked in Facilities Planning & Construction for the University of Houston System and in Architectural Services for Charles D. Gooden Consulting Engineers in Houston.

She earned a bachelor's in architecture from Prairie View A&M University, a master's in architecture from the University of Texas at Arlington, a graduate certificate in equality, diversity and inclusion from Boston College and is a doctoral student in leadership and learning in organizations at Vanderbilt University.

Gilmore has enjoyed her time at LSU so far, the people are amazing, and she is passionate about people. She dedicates herself to knowing who is in the room. Throughout her career, she has come to love project management. She mentioned that nothing is different with regards to facilities at LSU. They are working at being better communicators with response to workflow and training. She would like to grow the staff within her department internally who are dedicated and tapping into their interest for advancement.

Gilmore has been meeting one on one with the staff in her area to get to know them. She would like to expand training staff members to help retain them. They are creating apprenticeship programs to help grow people in some areas. Gilmore would like to work more closely with building coordinators for support. She would like to also mentor students who are interested in working in facilities to help them gain some knowledge while earning their degree.

The floor was opened for questions.

President Duplechain thanked Anzie Gilmore for attending today's meeting.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Joshua Duplechain reviewed relevant meetings in which he attended.

- Duplechain attended a campus safety meeting. C.J. Avory and Symantha Dandreano have been invited to guest speak during the March General Meeting to provide updates of what is happening on campus.

- Duplechain along with members of the Executive Committee met with Provost Roy Haggerty, Jane Cassidy, and Jackie Bach for a quarterly meeting. Topics of discussion included:
  - Parental Leave Policy as it relates to faculty and unclassified staff members. Provost mentioned that the administration is in favor of it, but they are waiting on the Governor. Feedback was shared. A policy is pending.
  - Dean Search Committees and Staff Senate's seat on those search committees. The staff member selections were discussed. Senator Neely Martin-Whitaker is serving on the search committee for the Dean of Coast & Environment.
  - Waiving Tuition Exemption Fees which are on the Provost's radar, and he hopes to bring that to fruition as well as Online Tuition 100% Waiver.
  - Engagement on campus was discussed with regards to how it will affect how the Caucuses operate.
  - The importance of the Administration presence at employee events.
  
- February 7 – attended the Executive Committee meeting in preparation for the January General Meeting.
  
- Duplechain provided an update on the retirement legislation which allow a one-time switch from ORP (Optional Retirement Plan) to TRSL (Teacher's Retirement System of Louisiana) without carrying any funds over to TRSL for up to one year. If an employee has over 10 years of service, it would not be beneficial but for someone who has less, it would be. The bill is pending in legislation.
  
- Duplechain attended the University Council Meeting where a budget update was provided.
  
- Duplechain announced that Giving Day is March 27. The Staff Senate Executive Committee would like to receive at least 20 donations for Staff Senate initiatives. Marketing for this goal will be sent out.
  
- Duplechain has been asked to draft the criteria and suggest nominees for the selection committee for the Staff Engagement Awards by the end of February. If anyone has suggestions for the criteria and/or interested in serving, please let him know.
  
- Duplechain would like to see more participation on Staff Senate Committees. We have about 40 Senators who represent about 4,000 staff members who depend on us to do the work that is happening. There is only a few who attend committee meetings where more participation is needed to get that work done. He mentioned the committee charges outlined for the spring semester. Please communicate with your committees on work that you can help with even if you are unable to attend the committee meetings. He thanked everyone for their service.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Staff Appreciation and Events**

Senator Deanna Gresham mentioned that Staff Appreciation Week will be held April 22-26. Below is an outline of events being planned:

- Monday – Treasure Hunt and Brain Teasers
- Tuesday – LSU vs Nicholls with a baseball tailgate
- Wednesday – Deans, Directors, and Department Heads departmental staff appreciation
- Thursday – Seafood Boil on the Parade Grounds
- Friday – Happy Hour

The New Staff Receptions will be rescheduled in the fall due to location availability.

## **LIAISON REPORTS**

Secretary Quinneke Lee reported that the Black Faculty & Staff Caucus met on January 31, to kick off Black History Month for the month of February. Kelli Bates became their Member-at-Large. They are selling apparel if anyone is interested in purchasing. Proceeds go towards their Black Scholars Gala event. They are also planning a Founders Day Celebration that is scheduled at the end of May.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Staff Senate Budget**

Treasurer Henri Smith provided a written financial report for February that was included in the meeting packet for Senate review.

### **Senator Portraits**

President Duplechain announced that Eddie Manes is here to take photos for Senators who need to take a professional head shot.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **General Election Timeline**

Staff Senate General Elections – 2024

February 23, 2024 - Staff Employee Lists requested from HRM.

March 4, 2024 - Call for Nomination (Candidacy Form on the website)

March 15, 2024 - Deadline for nomination forms to be returned to the Staff Senate office.

March 22, 2024 - Deadline for nominees to withdraw.

March 29, 2024 - Ballots distributed to Staff (per Category)

April 12, 2024 - Deadline to return ballots to the Staff Senate office.

April 15, 2024 - Tabulate results; notify winners.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Staff Senator Birthday**

Staff Senator February Birthdays:

- Senator Skylar Compton celebrated her birthday on February 3.
- Treasurer Henri Smith celebrated her birthday on February 9.
- Senator Jennifer Kennison celebrated her birthday on February 11.
- Senator Igor Matkovic celebrated his birthday on February 12.
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Happy Birthday!

**MOTION TO ADJOURN** – With there being no more business, Past-President Tammy Millican made a motion to adjourn. The motion, seconded by Senator Bradley Waters, carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Quinneka Lee, Secretary

QL/mm