

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
STAFF SENATE MEETING**

Tuesday, September 9, 2025
3:00 – 4:30 p.m.
PRESIDING: Chris Burkett, President

Call to Order – *Chris Burkett, President*

Roll Call/Attendance Report – *Michaela Taylor, Secretary*

Secretary Taylor checked the roll after taking attendance. The meeting started at 3:00 PM. According to the attendance report, 52 senators were in attendance, 9 senators were absent or online, and no senators gave proxies.

Establish Quorum – *Jessica McCormick, Parliamentarian*

Based on the attendance report, Parliamentarian McCormick declared a quorum was established and declared business could be conducted.

Approval of Minutes – *Chris Burkett, President*

There were no changes to the August 12, 2025, staff senate meeting minutes. Senator Chambers made a motion to accept the general body staff senate minutes as written. Senator Miles seconded the motion to accept the minutes as written. All senators were in favor. The motion was adopted and carried, and the minutes were accepted as written.

President's Update – *Chris Burkett, President*

President Burkett welcomed the new senators to the general body meeting.

Information

- USC Employee Survey next step is upcoming. Look for a town hall to be announced in October.
- Parking Services is working on a mobility plan with a consulting group. Vice President Reid will serve as a Staff Senate representative.
- President Burkett has continued to meet with university leaders to share Staff Senate news and receive information

Upcoming Staff Senate speakers include the following:

October: Staff Ombuds Person, Dr. Robynn Pease

November: Director of Parking, Joe Favela and the Executive Director of Community Engagement, Dr. Theresa Harrison

January/February 2026: USC President, Dr. Michael Amiridis

Senators can request a potential guest speaker through the Executive Committee.

Opportunities

- Staff Senate day at the Columbia Fireflies is Sept. 11, 2025.
- [2025 State of the University](#) is scheduled for Wednesday, September 17 at 10 AM. In the Russell House Ballroom
- Mammogram Van on campus on September 25. Will be located on Greene St. in front of Petigru
- Save the date | [HR/Well-Being Expo](#) is set for September 30 from 8 AM to 2 PM in Russell House
- Alumni Association Event on the [Horseshoe during Homecoming Weekend](#) (October 24).
- Don't forget to volunteer with the community projects team!

Celebrations

- Senator Williams has filled the student affairs seat and we welcome Senator Allen (School of Medicine Greenville) and Senator Ashford (Provost reporting offices).
- Stay tuned for new Garnet and Great cards for Staff Senate to share among themselves and others

Connect. Empower. Lead

- A reminder to continue to connect with your constituents and meet with leadership.

Guest Speakers –

Jeremiah Donati, USC Athletics Director

USC Athletics Director shared updates from university athletics.

- Starting July 2025, athletics has to distribute \$20.5 million in revenue directly to USC student-athletes. This number will increase by 4% annually.
- In addition to the revenue share, student-athletes can continue to earn additional revenue through traditional third-party NIL deals.
- Williams-Brice stadium renovations are forthcoming. Bathrooms, concessions, seating, premiere suites and infrastructure are all being targeted with a 350 million budget.
 - o Huge emphasis on enhancing the student experience at football games
- Continue to work and build the athletics brand to be consistent across the university.
- New partnership with Nike coming July 2026.

Budget Review – Manda Tuk, Staff Senate Treasurer

- Treasurer Tuk shared a historic review of Staff Senate operations and revenues
- We have 15K in our Foundations account
- Requesting another 41K for the 2026 Staff Appreciation Day
- Slides can be found in the Staff Senate Teams channel

Reports of Committees:

Membership – Katie Annan

- A [survey for current senators is available](#) to gather information about your readiness to serve. We will use this information to inform our decisions moving forward.

- Our next meeting is Tuesday, September 16th. We will be joined by past presidents of Staff Senate to ask about what they've learned and experienced in regard to membership.

Communications – Emily Miles & Thom Harman

- Working to enhance communications across university staff. Analyzing previous survey results on communication within units.

Staff Policy and Well-being – Kelsey Chambers & Caroline Hulett

- HR Transformation Updates: About to hire 3 new HR business partners for three groups of areas (ex: parking, facilities, and similar areas are grouped). The Goal is not to replace HR directors but to improve overall HR access for all, consistency, and ability to build career pipelines

- Pay Band Alignment - Moving to SC's state pay bands by Feb. 01, 2026 and continue with market structure. Will use state's pay 4 structures: General, Law Enforcement, IT, and Clinical- All that do not fit the last three will fit into General. An advisory group will be formed to assist with the transition
- Data from those who separated from USC as of July 01 to be reported at the end of the first quarter (end of September) as it relates to Return to Campus
- Shared updates on wellness spaces for faculty and staff
 - Met with Jim Walczyk (Campus Recreation), Amanda Castles (Employee Well-Being), and John Brey (NexPlay) to discuss topic in spring 2025
 - Campus Recreation & Employee Well-Being agreed to take lead on project, with the Staff Policy & Well-Being Committee offering input, advocacy, and support; will likely employ NexPlay to design and transform spaces
 - August 2025 Update – Campus Recreation is working on a renovation study, which includes identifying space in Blatt or Wellness & Fitness Center; we will wait for this step to be completed to move forward

Professional Development – Jalen Fuller & Brett Williams

- Met with Kim Pruitt, Director of Organizational and Professional Development. Discussed OPD's role at the University, how they plan to address professional development for our employees, and how they would like to interact with the Staff Senate committee. Working on next steps.
- Met with the Scholarship and Fundraising Committee and the Executive Committee to discuss a collaboration between the PD and SF committees. Findings from this meeting will be discussed at our next committee meeting on Tuesday, September 16th via Teams at 2:00PM.

Community Projects – Amanda Minnet Colie & Alexis Watts

- Join us Friday, September 19 for a special lunchtime (12:30- 1:30) clean up hour Millwood at Devine Street. We will meet at DUNKIN DONUTS located at 3303 Devine St, Columbia, SC 29205 around 12:30 and start pick up
- FOOD DRIVE- Bring Food donations to the next meeting! OR Senator Richards is going to check into placing the box right outside of the 8th floor elevator.
- Upcoming October volunteer dates with Cocky's Reading Express
 - o October 24, 8:00am-1pm: Carver Lyon Elementary (program)

- October 27, 7:15am-12pm: LW Conder Elementary (program)
- November 10, 8am-1pm: Annie Burnside Elementary (program)
- [Sign up here](#)

By-Laws – Stephanie Richards

- Senator Richards started her updates with an educational segment to clarify absence reporting procedures and key points from the bylaws, including a pop quiz question about who to contact when absent (*Answer: It's Secretary Michaela Taylor*)
- Encourage all committees to review the language in the bylaws describing their committee's responsibilities to ensure accuracy and alignment with current practices
- Next committee meeting date- Thursday, September 11 at 2pm on Teams with special guests Leena Holt & Angela Wright

Staff Appreciation and Recognition Committee – Adrienne White & Brian Shelton

- Discussed the survey results from 2025 Staff Appreciation Day to see what worked and what we can improve.
- Discussed possible locations and themes for the 2026 event and came across an idea that we really liked.
- Met with Aramark to discuss some possible food options.
- Also began preliminary discussions on how we can recognize those on campus with military service.

Scholarship and Fundraising Committee – Savannah Britz & Terrence Gilmore

- Working on hosting a cornhole tournament before Thanksgiving break among USC staff to raise funds. Hope to share more information soon.

Order of Business

None

Announcements / Good of the Order

- Student Affairs Golf Tournament [information](#).
- A huge need for donations and [volunteers at the CommUnity shop](#). Any support is valuable to faculty, staff and students at the university.

Adjourn

Senator Brown made a motion to adjourn. Senator Miles seconded the motion to adjourn. All senators were in favor. The formal meeting adjourned at 4:31 PM.

Next meeting of the new Staff Senate term: Tuesday, October 14 at 3:00 p.m. in the Lumpkin Auditorium, Close-Hipp Building, 8th Floor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michaela Taylor

Secretary
Staff Senate