Minutes

UWF Staff Senate

Meeting

via in-person and Google Meet

University of West Florida

September 8, 2026

The meeting of the UWF Staff Senate was called to order at 1:30 pm by Staff Senate Vice President Zachary Farrington.

Attendance was taken by sign-in of Senators, guests and online participants via Google Meet. The following Senators were present:

Jen Andrews, Olivia Ashcraft, Chip Chism, Zachary Farrington, Jenny Feysa, Ann Gilbar, Abbie Hopper, Brooke Karas, Sarah Madaris, Alex Miller, Keyaundra Mobley, Angei Morris, Billy Nelson, Zackary Newman, Carly Richards, Pam Scapin, Sandra Taylor, Megan Veach.

Proxy Attendance: N/A.

Absent: Marisa Elmore, Ethan Henley; Angie Quenan; Ivan Zarate Rosas.

Guests: Dr. Dallas Snider, Vice Provost; Christian Cosner, Director of Institutional Reporting and Strategic Research; Regina Murphy, Academic Program Manager – Public Health.

1. **Administrative Reports**
    a. Executive Report – President Manny Diaz.
        a. President Diaz delivered an Administrative Update. The Fall semester is off to a great start. Enrollment is 15,827. He thanked the staff for all their hard work and efforts. Applications are up 51%. Engagements are up, which leads to increased retention and increased Alumni support. Partnerships with the community are also up. The switch to Division 1 has led to increased enrollment. The exposure value from the switch is estimated to be worth $5 million.
        b. Campus areas are being improved and upgraded. There's a new patio by The Commons and better landscaping is being installed. Native Trees are being planted. Lighting is being upgraded on campus. Argo Blvd is in the planning stages. Proposed attractions include retail spaces, a new Visitor Center, and a new bookstore.
        c. Deferred Maintenance is an ongoing issue. 12% of Carry Forward Funds will go towards Deferred Maintenance.
        d. The BOT has selected a 10th Metric: internships.

e. Thanksgiving week and Spring Break are now official holidays.
f. Lobbying efforts in both Tallahassee and Washington D.C. are showing positive results. Construction continues on the new stadium, the new water tower, and the new Synapse building. We will start marketing UWF in new areas across the U.S.
g. Sandra Taylor asked about tailgating. President Diaz said the tailgating area is near the Fieldhouse. The new stadium will include a Stadium Walk which will be a great place for tailgating. Storage areas for Fraternities and Sororities will be installed near the stadium for tailgating equipment storage.
h. Angei discussed the new Housing plans included in the Argo Blvd project. 300 beds will be added. President Diaz said the campus is large, over 1,600 acres, but much of it is protected land. UWF will maximize the center core of campus. A new Student Union is being planned. A new mural spot will be added.

2. Guest Speaker
a. N/A

3. Approval of Minutes and Treasury Report
a. Motion to approve August minutes: Sandra Taylor.
b. Second: Megan Veach.
c. Motion passed unanimously.
d. Brooke Karas, Staff Senate Treasurer, - No updates to the Treasury Report.

4. Supervisor of Elections
a. Sandra Taylor, Supervisor of Elections – All committees are fully staffed.

5. Committee Reports
a. Emergency Fund Committee–Brooke Karas - No updates.
b. ERAP- Sandra Taylor – ERAP is being planned. Meetings were held with Anamarie Mixson to discuss a joint venue week. ERAP will likely be in April. Dr. Dallas Snider said there will be multiple events that week, which means the set up costs can be shared. There is a Donor Dinner the same week. Megan Veach said a Dinner set up, with tables instead of bleachers, could create visibility issues for some. There are issues to be worked out for ERAP, but options are being considered and contingency plans are being developed.
c. Hand to Paw- Alex delivered a Hand to Paw update. The committee was working on a kickoff event but the Humane Society backed out of the event. The committee will meet later to discuss participation by other animal welfare groups. There was crosstalk about switching between The Humane Society and other agencies, such as PetSmart every year, but no decision was made. The committee will report back.
d. Holidayfest– There was no Holidayfest update, other than a renewed call for volunteers to help break down the tables and chairs after the party.

e. Textbook Scholarship Committee: Chip presented an update on the Employee Textbook Scholarship fund. The application portal is open and applications are being submitted. More at the October meeting.

6. **New Business**
    a. Sandra discussed a possible Tailgate Event at the Homecoming Football Game in October. More on this will be presented at the October meeting.
    b. Angei discussed Housing Housecalls Sessions. Volunteers are needed to assist. During the session Housing Staff stops at each room in each Residence Hall to talk to residents and gain feedback.

7. **Old Business**
    a. N/A.

8. **Open Forum**
    a. N/A.

9. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Quenan – Secretary

Staff Senate Executive Board
President- Ethan Henley
Vice President – Zachary Farrington
Supervisor of Elections- Sandra Taylor
Secretary- Angie Quenan
Treasurer- Brooke Karas
Senator at Large- Chip Chism
Communications- Olivia Ashcraft