1. Welcome – Chair, Shannon Taylor

2. Land Acknowledgment – Katie Schafer

3. Questions for the President, Agata Jagielska

Q1: Is it possible to have a designated gym space for staff only? Or, for staff having cancer.
A: There is a program on campus for staff with health concerns. Through the Staff Excellence Fund, you can apply to bring forward that initiative. We can also reach out to Athletics (Jane Arnem) to see what we can do. Jane can provide membership options to staff.

Q2: With the changing landscape at UWaterloo, specifically the changing staff cohort (people are retiring and we are seeing an increase in younger staff working at UW), do we need to start re-examining what staff want in terms of ‘benefits’? Is it time to think about making potential changes again to our benefits package?
A: Collecting and looking at data on this. Working closely and regularly with Pension and Benefits Representatives. The benefits plan is under Pension & Benefits Committee, our representatives are Lily Hua and Melissa Graham. UWaterloo has one benefit plan.

Q3: How might UWSA work with the university to improve talent retention at the university? HR has been deteriorating in capacity and quality of work, which has systemic implications for the university’s status as a good employer.
A: UWaterloo has undertaken a project with Strategic Talent and Performance Management, which is overseen by PACSC (Provost’s Advisory Committee on Staff Compensation). There are four phases and the goal is to attract, train and develop employees. They are securing an advisory company;
PACSC is working hard to make sure this is something that is worked on and will make more sense than the current system.

Q4: May begins the last year of the 1% negotiated pay raise. Who/how/when is the next 3 year negotiated pay raise determined?
A: Negotiation starts next fall at PACSC. The Staff Compensation Committee has also been formed to discuss the results from the survey and identify non-monetary items to be included. Bill 124 is undergoing appeal process, bringing this discussion to PACSC next week. Need more voices at the table, look for vacancies. One member at large vacancy is opening up.

Q5: Campus Housing – Residence Hospitality Experience has implemented a change that now sees the department as an essential service during campus weather closures, which appears to be contrary to the Secretariat’s Weather Closure Guidelines. The term Hospitality Experience does not reflect the image of an essential service. Can RHE unilaterally designate a department as an “essential service”? Can a whole unit be deemed essential under the guidelines?
A: Unfortunately, do not have a full answer today. I will look into it and follow up with a better an answer.

Q6: Has anyone ever considered/looked into sick days being tied to USG levels?
After a major surgery, I was forced back to work after 90 days because I am USG 4. USG 5 and lower get 90 days and higher USGs receive 180 days.
A: This is an item I will follow up on, no answer today.

4. Questions for the Board of Directors

Q1: What can the UWSA do to improve the working conditions, benefits, and access to services and resources of part-time and contract UW employees? Contract staff/part-time staff don’t receive the same treatment as other staff members.
A: Hearing there is a lot of frustration growing with contract staff. The first step is to bring the staff members into the Staff Association. With the new MOA, we are now able to speak on behalf of contract staff and can now start pushing for changes. All new contracts are being examined for pay grade and are now slotted into USG. We have been able to advocate and change policy for stitching vacation entitlement together. One of the major things we’re working on is new mandatory manager training.

Q2: The new drug provider Greenshield is not covering the same drugs or at the same percentage amount as before. They are also paying less percentage for services such as massages. We were promised otherwise by HR. What is being done about this?
A: We are sharing messages from staff with HR and the provider. We have been able to work with individuals on cases and most cases have been resolved. We have also asked for sessions and clarifying language from HR so we know how the issues will be resolved. Please reach out with issues.
- Related question, has the EAP changed?
  A: No, the EAP is separate. You can contact Homewood and they help figure out what you need and will connect you to the service. This is separate from Greenshield. Homewood is anonymous and HR doesn’t get any identifying information, only aggregate data.

5. Closing Remarks
Consider the format going forward – back in person, online, or hybrid meetings.
Next meeting: Thursday May 11th, 2023 at noon.

Chair: Shannon Taylor
Minutes: Carly Richardson