Staff Senate Chair Dane Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:15pm. He introduced the two guest speakers, DeShawn Warrick-Johnson and Starlett Sinclair, from the Human Resources Department. DeShawn reported on the employee merit pay increase. The Employee Performance Evaluation (to be filled out by each supervisor) and the Employee Self-Assessment Form (to be filled out by each employee) will form the basis of the merit increase. Copies of each were passed out to the attendees. DeShawn mentioned that the self-assessment was a way for each employee to let his/her supervisor know what he/she does on the job. It would be a chance for each employee to brag a little and also to find out h/h weaknesses and suggestions for improvement. A question was asked whether the form would be subject to change at any time. DeShawn said this present form was a first step, and that eventually the Human Resources Department hoped to reach a “360°” assessment, which would include expanded input from employee peers, customers and students. DeShawn requested that employees not call the HR Department with questions on individual increases, but to check with his/her supervisor.

Starlett Sinclair spoke on the upcoming 2003-2004 Wellness Fair (scheduled for October 29 from 11:00am – 3:00pm) and the Benefits Open Enrollment period (scheduled for October 27 – November 14). As in the past, the Wellness Fair will provide the chance for employees to ask questions of the various health vendors represented. The Benefits Open Enrollment will allow employees to make changes in their benefits or providers. Starlett reported that: (1) this year, employees making changes in benefits would receive a notice from HR, confirming the changes in writing (2) the benefits year has been changed from the December-through-November to the January-through-December time frame, to conform to the calendar year (3) medical rates have again risen, with the result that out-of-pocket charges will probably go up for everyone (4) flu shots will again be offered at the Wellness Fair, free to those who carry Alliance Health & Life plan. The cost for those not on the AHL plan will be $17.00. The question was raised whether LTU would consider joining a consortium of organizations/schools to get a lower group rate. Starlett said this idea had been looked into in the past, but that the challenge was to find one insurance carrier and one set of standards that multiple institutions could agree on.

The business portion of the meeting began with the approval of the September 9th Meeting Minutes. Dane announced the inception of the new Staff Person of the Month award, to be nominated by the staff members and chosen by the Staff Recognition Committee. The award will be presented at the monthly Staff Senate meeting. The August/September 2003 award was presented to Gabe Sauvie of the Registrar’s Office. He was given a certificate, flowers, and a gift certificate from Borders Books. Articles about Gabe and the award will be featured in the Tech News and the e-tech news. Rochelle invited staff members to fill out the Staff Recognition form with their nominees for the October award. Nomination forms are available on the Staff Senate Blackboard site.

Dane reviewed the new Staff Senate committees and their Chairs: Communications & Programming (Linda Wareck), Community Outreach (Nancy Catalina), Legislative (Tracy Kash),
Social (Joyce Wolka), Staff Development (CharMaine Hines), Staff Recognition (Rochelle Bogan-Marion), Facilities (Dane Johnson).

Dane displayed a new Facilities Request form prepared by the Facilities Committee, also passing around copies of the form. The Facilities Committee is attempting to document ongoing facilities problems on campus, as well as create an inventory of workspace improvements desired by staff members. Dane suggested that after completion of the inventory, Lee Johnson may be asked to tour workspaces that demonstrate health and safety problems. Frank DeHesselle and Marilyn Hotaling requested that their names be added to the Facilities Committee.

Joyce Wolka re-introduced the By-Laws for voting. Each of the 14 by-laws was read and voted on by a verbal yes or no. Three by-laws were sent back to the Legislative Committee for rewording.

The next Staff Senate meeting is scheduled for November 11. The guest speakers will be Virginia Parker, who will talk about “Multi-Tasking with Less Stress,” and Dr. Lewis Walker, LTU’s new Executive Vice President/Provost.

A comment was made requesting an opportunity to ask questions across a broader range of Human Resources issues than was possible during this meeting. Dane suggested that the HR reps’ appearance was a first step, and that he hoped one or both representatives would be able to return to discuss staff concerns at some future meeting. Dane mentioned that he had had some good meetings with Dr. Lee Johnson. Some of the issues from the meetings were: (1) a traffic island will be constructed, to be located between Lots C and F (near the field house) (2) Campus Security will be moving from the Housing Office to the former mailroom in the Buell Building (3) two representatives from the staff are being invited to serve on the LTU Capital Request Committee.

Dane said the issue of job titles was discussed, with Dr. Johnson explaining that Human Resources works with each department to determine appropriate job titles and comparable pay rate/range. Each department is responsible for funding jobs through its departmental budget. Dr. Johnson said if a staff member is not satisfied with h/h rate or title, the matter should be brought to the attention of h/h supervisor. The employee and supervisor should review the current job description for accuracy. If applicable, the supervisor may also initiate the following: (1) update the job description (2) forward the job description to Human Resources (3) request HR to perform a job analysis and salary benchmark.

A comment was made about the awkwardness of entry of sick and vacation time in WTE (Web Time Entry). When there are changes to be made after the online WTE has been submitted, an e-mail has to be sent to Tina Tyrer in Business Services. It was suggested that problems with Banner be reviewed.

It was noted that the Staff Handbook is now online on the LTU website, but that the new version has not been updated from the previous version (our present handbook is 6-8 years old). Dane will investigate to ascertain the process for creating updates to the online handbook.

The Communications & Programming Committee conducted a free raffle at the meeting, with all staff members in attendance invited to participate. Thirty-five people entered and the winner of the drawing was Joyce Wolka, who received a seasonal centerpiece donated by Linda Wareck’s sister-in-law, Michele Wareck.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm.
Submitted by Marilyn Hotaling, Secretary