



University Operations

Employee Relations Committee
Tuesday, October 6, 2015 1:30-3:00

MEETING MINUTES

Andy Holt Tower, 8th Floor Conference Room

Present

Tom Anderson, Brian Browning, Robert Bryant, Chris Cimino, Rose Rita Cooper, Robert Dykes, Rick Gometz, Holly Harmon, Mike Herbstritt, Dave Irvin, Sharon Jackson, Chip Kain, Kayla Kirkland, Debbie Lane, Mary Lucal, Charlene Laughlin, Jeff Maples, Ed McDaniel, Rick McCarter, Randy Miller, Lori Ownby, Ed Roach, Dennis Saben, Josh Smyser, Karen Valero, and Mike Werley

Absent

T.J. Cansler, Carmella Ford, Beverly Johnson, and Tim Widener

Welcome

Dr. Mike Herbstritt, Executive Director of Compensation, Employee Relations, and Recruitment, welcomed everyone to the group. Dr. Herbstritt welcomed Vice Chancellor Chris Cimino to the meeting as well.

New Business

1. ERAB Report – Tom Anderson

Tom Anderson shared that President DiPietro shared that UT Knoxville enrollment has grown this year, but other campuses have seen decreases.

The Request for Information regarding facilities management at state institutions was discussed. There was not much new information shared. Mr. Anderson stressed the issues of withdrawing at a later point in the process. A good conversation occurred between the President and representatives. Some of the other campuses were not as aware of the process as UTK.

Information was shared regarding insurance changes for open enrollment. A new Health Savings Plan will be offered. This may be beneficial for some employees with low health care costs. Information is available through the Payroll & Insurance Office. There is an online research which guides employees through the different options offered. The deadline to make changes to insurance is October 15th. A 3.5% increase in premiums is expected in 2016. A Benefits Fair will be held where employees can speak with vendors for insurance and other benefits. Dr. Herbstritt shared that it will take place October 8th at Thompson-Boling Arena. Insurance staff will be present. An agreement was reached between Cigna and UT Medical Center as an in-network provider. Mike Werley asked if

employees have to clock out to attend the event. Jeff Maples, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance & Administration, answered that plans should be made to ensure coverage in areas but that employees do not have to clock out to attend this event. Dr. Lucal confirmed that this event is just like Picnic on the Plaza. Employees can attend as part of the workday. Dr. Lucal shared that approximately 60 vendors are expected. Flu shots will be offered, but employees should plan for long lines. Deborah Higgs-Thomas asked if there would be a large crowd for this event. Dr. Lucal shared that this event is expecting a large turnout from employees. Lori Ownby shared that last year the Healthways representative was very helpful in resolving an issue with her biometric screening results not being received.

2. Finance and Administration Update

Jeff Maples deferred to Vice Chancellor Cimino for the update. Vice Chancellor Cimino gave an update on the possible outsourcing situation. Dave Irvin, Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities Services, is working on the core committee two days a week in Nashville. The Vice Chancellor is serving on the steering committee as well. The committee met in September and the October meeting has been delayed. There will be no decision point this month.

Dr. Lucal asked if the Tennessee Board of Regents (TBR) is in partnership with UT in this process. Vice Chancellor Cimino shared that they are. TBR also pressed data sharing with the state. TBR and UT are at the table together in this process.

Tom Anderson asked if the peripheral costs and other costs that would be incurred through outsourcing are being considered in the decision making process. The Vice Chancellor answered that they are. The state has given Texas A&M as an example of outsourcing. The media shared that costs were cut, but campus level reports indicate that additional costs were extensive.

Mike Werely asked what the legislators' part was in this process. Vice Chancellor Cimino shared that they do not have final say, but that legislators are aware of the process and now will be given a chance to review the Request for Qualifications once it is completed by the core committee. Awareness is growing across the state. Employees can contact their legislators as private citizens and share their feelings on this issue. Mike Werely asked why awareness was so low across the state.

Vice Chancellor Cimino shared the Request for Information (RFI) needed more communication across the state.

Mr. Maples shared that undergraduate enrollment is at approximately 21,800 which is up around 500. The soft target is 22,300 for 2016. Freshman and transfer student enrollment was up. Retention has also improved.

There have been commuter parking challenges due to the fact that student's spaces are not located where they would like them. This will be alleviated by the garage being built on the Stokely site and the Lake Avenue garage planned to be open by 2017. Both will provide approximately 1,000 new spaces.

Many streets are coming into UT's possession from the city. Alleyways in the Melrose Avenue area are coming into UT's possession and Volunteer Boulevard is slated to come into UT's possession in stages.

The Strong Hall location building is currently on schedule. The Facilities Management building is slated to open in May 2016.

Chip Kain asked if UT plans to take all of Volunteer Boulevard or only part of it. Mr. Maples shared that the only area in question is near the railroad which will take time to negotiate. The current progress will allow UT to accomplish the desired changes to Volunteer. Vice Chancellor Cimino shared that the process of transferring ownership is slow, but the agreement is in place.

Old Business

None

Announcements & Other Comments

- ❖ Tom Anderson shared that the United Campus Workers would be holding an Opt Out event Friday at noon along Joe Johnson Drive.
- ❖ The Fall Benefits Fair will be taking place October 8th at Thompson-Boling Arena. The format will be similar to last year's events with insurance providers, vendors, etc. present to share information about services and to hand out swag. The event will take place from 11am to 2pm on the 8th. Make plans to stop by especially if you have questions regarding Open Enrollment.
- ❖ The Open Enrollment Period for Insurance changes will be September 15 through October 15th. There have been changes to the insurance offerings, so make sure that you take time to review your options and respond. The information presented in our meeting today should be helpful in this decision making process.

Distributions

- ❖ Meeting Agenda

Next Meeting

Tuesday, November 3rd, 2015, from 1:30-3:00

Andy Holt Tower, 8th Floor Conference Room

Submit agenda items to Jonathan Ramsey at jramse17@utk.edu or 974-8299.