



# University Operations

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

## **MEETING MINUTES**

Fred Brown Hall, Rooms 146 A&B

### **Present**

Tom Anderson, Brian Browning, Robert Bryant, Robert Dykes, Rick Gometz, Holly Harmon, Mike Herbstritt, Deborah Higgs-Thomas, Chip Kain, Kayla Kirkland, Debbie Lane, Mary Lucal, Charlene Laughlin, Ed McDaniel, Rick McCarter, Randy Miller, Lori Ownby, Sammy Parcell, Ed Roach, Dennis Saben, Steve Smith, Josh Smyser, Karen Valero, Mike Werley

### **Absent**

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

### **Welcome**

Dr. Mike Herbstritt, Executive Director of Compensation, Employee Relations, and Recruitment, welcomed the group to the meeting and introduced Dr. Steve Smith as guest speaker.

### **New Business**

#### **1. Milestone Review – Dr. Steve Smith, Dean & Professor UT Libraries; Serena Matsunaga, Consultant for the Provost & Vice Chancellor; and Dr. Mary Lucal, Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources**

Dr. Smith shared that Dr. Mary Lucal has been serving on the VolVision committee with him and many others. Dr. Smith shared that he arrived at UT Knoxville as VolVision started. This has contributed greatly to his experience on campus. The hard work of so many at UTK is inspiring. Last December Provost Martin approached him about chairing this review committee. There are 20 members that represent faculty, staff, and students. The group begins by reviewing the progress to date and then they will look forward. Currently the process is in the listening phase. If employees Google VolVision 2020 they will discover a webpage available with a draft report where they can provide their feedback anonymously. This feedback is important so that all voices are heard in the process. Not all requests will be possible, but the feedback is taken into consideration. The individual impact on the strategic plan is vital. The engagement phase will wrap up in December.

The 5 priorities of the VolVision 2010 were: undergraduate experience; graduate education experience; faculty and staff experience; research; and infrastructure and resources. Rick Gometz asked for examples of peer institutions. Dr. Smith shared that Texas A&M, Georgia, Clemson, and Michigan State were considered.

Dr. Smith shared that 2015 is seeing a 6<sup>th</sup> priority derived from its presence in other aspects. Diversity has become a separate priority due to its importance to UT Knoxville's strategic goals.

Ed Roach asked what the plans for retention improvement were. Dr. Smith shared that UTK must become an employer of choice. The business model must be adjusted to accomplish this. Competitive benefits are helpful toward this end. Dr. Lucal shared that total compensation must be considered. Dr. Smith added that competitive salaries are vital. Training should be able to assist employees with goals for movement at UTK.

Ed Roach asked how outsourcing might impact these goals. Dr. Smith shared that Texas A&M saw issues of implementation when they outsourced facilities management. This process may negatively impact the VolVision goals.

Dr. Smith shared that the committee's recommendations are expected in early 2016. Dr. Lucal stressed that the committee has met with groups across campus like this one.

Dr. Smith asked the group to share some accomplishments over the past 5 years at UTK: newer facilities, training in-house and other opportunities, and raises.

Dr. Smith asked what makes UT special or distinct: better distribution of work than other employers, benefits, improved recognition of staff and appreciation through events and activities for staff. Dr. Lucal added that many of these changes are a result of the Employee Engagement Survey.

Dr. Smith asked for opportunities: better defined career paths, better vocational education opportunities and technical courses.

Dr. Lucal encouraged everyone to share other ideas with her ([mlucal@utk.edu](mailto:mlucal@utk.edu)). Dr. Smith thanked everyone for their time and feedback.

## **2. Finance and Administration Update**

Brian Browning, Executive Director of Auxiliary & Support Services, shared that Vice Chancellor Cimino will be meeting with the steering committee regarding possible outsourcing later this month. January is now the next possible decision point for state entities. Dr. Lucal asked if the RFQ phase was underway. Mr. Browning shared that the committees are working toward that phase.

Tom Anderson shared that employees visited the State Capitol to present a petition to the Governor's office. Ed McDaniel shared that many state legislators are not in support of outsourcing. Campus support of facilities employees is appreciated.

## **3. ERC Holiday Luncheon**

The ERC Holiday Luncheon will be held December 1<sup>st</sup> from 11:30am to 1:00pm in the Ray Mears Room of Thompson-Boling Arena. Invitations have been sent via email. Physical invitations are being sent to employees who prefer to receive information through campus mail. Please RSVP to Sarah Hoel once the invitations have been received.

## **Old Business**

## **Announcements & Other Comments**

## **Distributions**

- ❖ Meeting Agenda
- ❖ Mobile Mammography Flyer

### **Holiday Luncheon**

Tuesday, December 1st, 2015, from 11:30 to 1:00

Ray Mears Room, Thompson-Boling Arena

Submit agenda items to Jonathan Ramsey at [jramse17@utk.edu](mailto:jramse17@utk.edu) or 974-8299.