

**MINUTES**  
**University Operations - Employee Relations Committee**  
**August 2 @ 1:30 PM –237 University Center**

**PRESENT** Jill Brown, Brian Browning, Rhonda Cowden, Robert Dykes (alternate), Mike Herbstritt, Sharon Jackson, Jeff Jones, Jim McCarter (alternate), George McGhee, Angie McLemore (substitute for Bonnie Frank), John Seivers, Tim Shields, Tom Spoon, Ron Tredway, Karen Valero, and Mark Wagner.

**ABSENT** Rose Rita Cooper, Travis Godfrey, Troy Grant, Larry Holbert, Christian McDaniel, and Fred Wolfenbarger.

**WELCOME** Mike Herbstritt welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Concern about requirements for receiving insurance discount with new insurance plan (Partnership Promise) – Rhonda Cowden  
One employee is concerned about losing insurance discount because of recommendations not being covered under plan. Will the employee lose his insurance discount because he cannot afford out-of-pocket expenses?  
RESPONSE: Mike Herbstritt said he would invite Rob Chance or Jamie Wilson from Payroll to the next meeting to answer questions and concerns regarding insurance.
2. Clarification of annual leave and sick leave policies – Rhonda Cowden  
Employees are complaining about using annual leave and sick leave then being punished during their annual performance reviews. Are guidelines different in every department?  
RESPONSE: Mike Herbstritt explained how annual and sick leave accrue and are to be used. Annual leave must be approved in advance. If employees are being penalized for using annual leave, they should contact Mike Herbstritt.
3. Quality Improvement Program – Rhonda Cowden  
Could a Quality Improvement Program be implemented for Facility Services?  
RESPONSE: Brian Browning stated a new associate vice chancellor of Facilities will be hired shortly, and he will be reviewing the entire operation of Facilities Services.
4. Employees request copy of merit increase policy – Rhonda Cowden  
Could employees receive a copy of the merit increase policy?  
RESPONSE: Mike Herbstritt explained the merit pay guidelines were distributed to supervisors by Chris Cimino's office. Employees with ratings of "fully achieves and occasionally exceeds expectations," or better, were eligible for consideration for merit raises. Employees currently in active disciplinary action are ineligible for consideration. Ron Tredway stated that President DiPietro and Chancellor Cheek

wanted to reward good performers, above and beyond the across-the-board raise by the state. He stated even the governor now seems to be emphasizing pay for performance. Each department was given 3 percent pools (exempt, non-exempt and faculty) for merit raises. The amount of money was determined by the salaries in each department. Mike Herbstritt stated departments submitted their plans and recommendations to Chris Cimino by Monday, August 1. The plans will be reviewed, approved and then released to the department heads. Ms. Cowden asked about the timeframe for supervisors to notify employees. Mike added that employees should know the results by the middle of the month. Pay raises will be retroactive to July 1 and should be in the August 23 paycheck for bi-weekly paid employees and the August paycheck for monthly-paid employees.

5. Employees request a review of their merit increase as to why or why not they qualify for the merit raise – Rhonda Cowden

Will the employees be notified of results?

RESPONSE: Mike Herbstritt agreed that supervisors should notify employees via a letter of the result of merit review. Ron Tredway stated it would be appropriate, once merit/equity raises are approved, for employees to ask their supervisors about their consideration for a merit raise. Supervisors should be able to explain the rationale and eligibility for raises based on the guidelines.

6. Any word on the wage analysis study – Rhonda Cowden

Has the study been completed yet?

RESPONSE: Ron Tredway stated results are not completed yet, as far as he knows. The statewide Compensation Advisory Board is comparing wages and benefits at other companies of similar size, as well as other higher educational institutions. Mike Herbstritt explained the results of the study would not mean the compensation would automatically be implemented. The university will review a plan to move toward being more competitive in the job market.

7. Update on optional vision plan – Rhonda Cowden

This topic will be addressed to Payroll at the next meeting.

8. Update on new associate vice chancellor for Facilities timeline – Jim McCarter (for Tom Anderson)

Do you have any updates about new associate vice chancellor for Facilities?

RESPONSE: Mike Herbstritt said the three finalists have been to campus for interviews. The finalists are from South Carolina, Clemson, and the University of Houston. Forums were held to meet employees and employee relations groups. The hiring decision will be left to Chris Cimino.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None.

## **COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. Updates/Announcements – Brian Browning stated that fall semester starts on August 17. Brian made several announcements about building and road projects on campus.
  - a. The University Student Health project should be completed in mid-October. The University Center phase one project is scheduled to start in March 2012 and last 24 months.
  - b. The second phase will include the University Center's destruction and renovation. The entire project should be completed in four years.

- c. Construction of the parking garage on staff lot 9 should commence around December 2012 and be completed by August 2014.
  - d. The cones on Lake Loudoun should be moved, and road construction on Neyland Drive at Henley Street should be completed before fall semester.
  - e. The Henley Street project is scheduled to be completed prior to the first football game and Boomsday.
2. HR Announcements– Mike Herbstritt announced the **Fall Festival** will be held on **Friday, September 30**.
  3. Items for next agenda– Please forward at any time during the month to: Bonnie Frank, 825 Andy Holt Tower, or email: [bfrank1@tennessee.edu](mailto:bfrank1@tennessee.edu) or call 974-8170.

*With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.*

#### **DISTRIBUTIONS**

1. Minutes of University Operations ERC meeting on July 5, 2011

**NEXT MEETING:**  
**Tuesday, September 6, 2011 at 1:30 PM**  
**Room 237 at UC**