

University Operations Employee Relations Committee
Tuesday, March 6, 2012 – Room 237 University Center

MINUTES

PRESENT Tom Anderson, Jill Brown, Brian Browning, Jim Buchan (Alternate), Randy Clowers, Robert Dykes (Alternate), Bonnie Frank, Eddie Golden (Alternate), Sharon Jackson, Jeff Maples, George McGhee, John Seivers, Tim Shields, Tom Spoon, Ron Tredway, Karen Valero, Fred Wolfenbarger and James Yarber (Alternate). Guest: Dave Irvin, Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities Services.

ABSENT Rose Rita Cooper, Travis Godfrey, Troy Grant, Larry Holbert, Jeff Jones, Christian McDaniel, and Mark Wagner.

WELCOME

Jeff Maples welcomed everyone to the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Change in Health Insurance Rate – Jill Brown
Q: Will health insurance be going up again this year?
A: Rob Chance in payroll was contacted and reported that the insurance premiums have not been released yet for next year.
2. Graphic Arts and Mail Services – Tom Spoon
Q: Where are we in the process of outsourcing graphic arts and mail services?
A: Jeff Maples reviewed the next steps for the possible outsourcing of graphic arts and mail services. Mr. Maples noted that they have started the bidding process and are clarifying and finalizing the RFP (Request for Proposal) for distribution in the 3rd or 4th week of March. Vendors would then have 30 days to respond. Tom Anderson asked why the process was started. Mr. Maples said the suggestion came out of the Efficiency and Effectiveness Committee of the Board of Trustees. He continued that they are trying to evaluate and compare the costs of the current processes against bids from new contractors and a committee of 6-8 people will be setup in the next few weeks to continue the process.
3. Parking – Jim Buchan
Q: Jim reports years ago when a generator was placed in their Parking Lot 26, it was changed to a service lot and facilities staff had to find other places to park. Can facilities have their parking lot back?
A: Jeff Maples reported that the change in the stadium parking lot has been put on hold and he would review alternate parking areas for facilities as appropriate. George McGhee asked for more motorcycle spots in their Parking Lot 22. Mr. Maples will follow-up on his request.
4. Facilities uniforms – Jim Buchan
Q: Jim wants to discuss uniforms and money for uniforms.

A: Dave Irvin responded to the question about uniforms and explained that he is reviewing current practices and policies and has now settled the contract with a vendor. Mr. Irvin will be reviewing all aspects of standard uniform components, including boots and warmer coats for the winter. He's working to add more money for uniforms to next year's budget.

OLD BUSINESS

None

COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. UT Alert System/Emergency Plan – Sharon Jackson and George McGhee

Q: Ms. Jackson raised the question about the UT Alert system for tornado warnings and how it applies to students and staff dining at President Court. Recently, only office staff went to the basement after the UT Alert. Mr. McGhee related a situation that occurred in his area where not all elevators go to the basement and some people were waiting for the elevator in exposed areas when they were supposed to be in a secure place.

A: Jeff Maples agreed to follow-up with UT Dining management. Mr. Maples appreciated the feedback on both these situations and said that tornado warnings should be taken seriously. UT is developing a better response system with updating their emergency plan with their emergency management officers and the Environment, Health and Safety Office.

2. Facilities Job Openings - George McGhee

Q: Mr. McGhee asked about the facilities job openings and how to apply.

A: Dave Irvin responded that information on how to apply for Facilities Services positions was distributed electronically, in hard copy and on the web. In addition, the Facilities Services Directors met with each area to detail the specifics of each job, the requirements for each, how to apply and the process by which those applications would be evaluated. This information included the application sheet employees should fill out and where to send it. As a follow up, open sessions are being held where employees that still have questions can come to get answers and decide how they want to proceed.

3. Full-time hours and retirement calculations – Sharon Jackson

Q: Ms. Jackson has a concern about being paid just less than 40 hours a week, i.e. 39.7, (to keep from getting overtime) and being considered "full-time" even without the exact 40 hours per week and how that might affect retirement calculations?

A: Jeff Maples will follow-up with Aramark.

Mike Herbstritt reported that according to policy, to be full time, employees must be scheduled to work 40 hour per week. If an employee works less than 40 hours periodically it does not affect their full time status. The hours worked will affect their pay since they are paid for the hours they work. It may also have an impact on their retirement contribution since it is based on the gross salary paid to the employee. If they have a smaller check, the contribution will be less.

In addition, Ron Tredway spoke with Jon Gushen, Team Leader of Benefits and Retirement, and here is his response to the impact on retirement. The working of less than 40 hours per week does have an effect on an employee's retirement, although in a very small and insignificant way. Years of service is one of the factors used in determining Eligibility for retirement under the UT

retirement plan, and is based on actual time worked. Working less than 40 hours per week would simply require a slightly longer period of working to reach full eligibility, as compared to one working 40 hours per week. For example, a person working on average, 39 hours and 55 minutes per week, over a 30 year period, would need to work 16 days and 2 hours longer than the person working exactly 40 hours per week on average over the 30 year period, to have the same eligibility. This seems to follow common practice among other employers with similar retirement plans. Mr. Gushen did not identify any other retirement eligibility impacts associated with employees who are asked to work slightly less than 40 hours per week as a part of normal operation of the institution.

4. Updates/Announcements – Jeff Maples gave an update on campus constructions projects and noted the new Cone Zone website is: <http://conezone.utk.edu>. Mr. Maples also expressed his optimism about next year’s budget, saying it looks like the best in many years.
5. Items for next agenda – Please submit questions to: Bonnie Frank, 825 Andy Holt Tower, or email: bfrank1@tennessee.edu, or call: 974-8170.

DISTRIBUTIONS

Minutes – University Operations ERC Meeting on January 10, 2012
Handout – Mobile Mammography 2012 Schedule
Handout – EAP Family Financial Well-Being

Next Meeting:
Tuesday, April 3 at 1:30 p.m. in Room 237 UC