

University Operations Employee Relations Committee
Tuesday, May 1, 2012 – Room 202 University Center

MINUTES

PRESENT Tom Anderson, Randy Huelsman, Sharon Jackson, Tim Shields, Tom Spoon, Karen Valero, Robert Dykes, Jim Buchan, Ed Roach, Jeff Maples, Mike Herbstritt, Ron Tredway, and Julie Monday (on behalf of Bonnie Frank)

Guests: Dave Irvin, Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities Services

ABSENT Jill Brown, Rose Rita Cooper, Robert Frick, Travis Godfrey, Troy Grant, Larry Holbert, Jeff Jones, Christian McDaniel, John Seivers, Mark Wagner, Fred Wolfenbarger, and Brian Browning

WELCOME

Jeff Maples welcomed everyone to the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Update on Raises – Robert Dykes

Q: We would like to have an update on the possibility of additional money for raises this year.

A: Jeff Maples stated that the budget was passed on April 30, 2012. There is a possibility of additional money for raises. The amount is still under review at this time. This will go to the Board of Trustees in June for their approval. At this time, the desire is to have a percentage of the funding set for across-the-board raises and a percentage set for merit. The merit pool will be a combination of merit, market and equity raises. Jeff Maples shared that Dave Irvin will present to the Vice Chancellor a plan for raises in Facilities Services. Dave Irvin shared that feedback from the University Operations ERC will be taken into consideration as the plan is developed.

2. Discussion on Equal Pay Raises – Karen Valero

Q: We would like to know the reason why the university is so opposed to an equal dollar pay raise. What are the reasons for employees not receiving the same dollar amount (exempt and nonexempt) instead of a percentage of his/salary?

A: Jeff Maples stated that it takes away from an incentive program. Using merit raises utilizes a performance based system. There may be a combination in that there would be an across-the-board set amount and in addition to that there would be a merit raise for performance. Ron Tredway added that this keeps with market standards by utilizing a performance-based system.

Tom Anderson added there is a significant pay gap at the university and an equal dollar raise could address that issue in a direct way. It could also address pay gaps between male and female employees in the same position. Ed Roach asked if there are significant differences in pay for men and women in the same position. Dave Irvin stated there are differences in various areas across campus, although it is not as prominent in Facilities Services. Mike Herbstritt reported that an equal dollar raise doesn't close a pay gap although it doesn't widen the pay gap either. Dr. Herbstritt stated it is possible, as in prior years, that a minimum will be set for the 2.5% raise, for example \$1,000 or 2.5%, whichever is greater.

Jeff Maples shared that several years ago departments were given the option to use across-the-board or merit raises. And at one point, ERC reps voted to use merit instead of across-the-board increases because issues were raised regarding fairness. Some employees felt that it was not fair to give a high performing employee the same raise as a low performing employee. Randy Huelsman added that while the university isn't financially able to pay more competitive wages, it still offers a good benefits package. Benefits are a large incentive that the university offers. Jeff Maples added that employees also receive longevity pay to recognize their years of service. Mike Herbstritt stated that the university spends about 30% of the employee base pay for benefits.

Tom Anderson reiterated his point that an equal dollar raise rather than a percent increase could help those people that are hurting the most in a more fair way. He added that the poverty issue should be addressed first and then the merit issue second.

Randy Huelsman mentioned that the rating scale for last year's merit raise had a set cutoff. This year's rating scale seems to be based on ranges. He said that several managers misunderstood and assumed that they are not allowed to rate employees above a certain level.

Dave Irvin responded that performance review training sessions were open campus-wide and that this training was required for managers and supervisors in Facilities Services. Within the current review process, when a manager gives an employee very high ratings, documentation should be provided to support that rating. A performance review containing only numbers, with no explanation of observed performance and the associated rating, the review may be sent back from HR. Supporting documentation is important to understand why someone received certain ratings. Ron Tredway added that the university is incrementally improving its performance management system. Dr. Herbstritt also shared that President DiPietro and Chancellor Cheek both have spent countless hours in Nashville lobbying for pay increases for employees – which is their top priority.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Update on Time clocks at Aramark and the finger scan concerns – Sharon Jackson
Jeff Maples reported that the Aramark employees would use the new time clock and the university employees would continue to use the old time clock. Sharon Jackson shared that the old time clock has been removed from the University Center and it is unclear how employees are tracking time.

COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Sharon Jackson asked when the University Center will be closed. Dave Irvin said that will be phase two of the construction project which is tentatively slated for the summer of 2014.
2. Facilities Updates/Announcements – Dave Irvin shared that facilities would take over custodial services for another batch of buildings on June 1st, with another batch to follow in July. Dr. Herbstritt shared that the Conference Center Building (which has the new services) has seen major improvements. Mr. Irvin said that “before and after” photos have been taken.

Ed Roach asked if custodial employees will be offered positions at UT. Dave Irvin said that positions are available to non-managerial custodial staff who pass a background check. Mr. Roach also asked if someone would be on call 24/7 or only during certain shifts. Dave Irvin responded that several meetings will take place with departments to understand the daily cleaning needs of the building then a building-specific plan will be implemented.

3. Updates/Announcements – Jeff Maples
 - a. A new transit RFP was issued yesterday (for the transportation system on campus). Six companies attended the mandatory pre-bid meeting and bid documents will be submitted later this month.
 - b. Philip Fulmer Way from Cumberland Avenue to Gate 21 will close on **May 28** and will reopen on **August 15**.

4. HR Updates/Announcements – Mike Herbstritt/Ron Tredway
 - a. Reminder: 2012-2013 *Sick Leave Bank* Open Enrollment dates are April 1-June 30, 2012. Completed application forms must be returned to HR Employee Relations by **June 30, 2012**.
 - b. The *Career Development Expo* is scheduled for **May 4**. This is a free event but registration is required. Call 974-6657 to register.
 - c. The annual *Fall Festival* is scheduled for Friday, **October 12**, 2012. More information will be communicated as we get closer to the event.
 - d. The results of the *Employee Engagement Survey* for Knoxville will be shared during two open forums on **May 8** at 9:45 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. in the UC Ball Room

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 from April 3, 2012, University Operations ERC Meeting

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, June 5 at 1:30 p.m. in UC Executive Dining Room 337