

University Operations

Employee Relations Committee
Tuesday, September 3, 2013, 1:30-3:00
Hodges Library, 6th Floor Conference Room

MEETING MINUTES

Present Anthony Aparijo, Brian Browning, Robert Bryant, Marilyn Butler, Rick Gometz, Karen Hackworth, Mike Herbstritt, Dave Irvin, Mary Lucal, Ed McDaniel, Julie Monday, Claudine Nagel, Megan Redmon, Ed Roach, Lisa Turner, Thelma Vandergriff and Mike Werley

Absent Tom Anderson, Dan Berryman, Rose Rita Cooper, Robert Dykes, Joe Gardner, Eddie Golden, Troy Grant, Sharon Jackson, Jeff Maples, Rick McCarter, Randy Miller and Patrick Smith

Welcome

Mike Herbstritt, Human Resources, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

New Business

1. Repaint Crosswalk – Marilyn Butler

Q: An employee asked about the status of the crosswalk across Volunteer Blvd. between Henson Hall and the new Student Union construction site. The crosswalk is very worn-out and nearly impossible to see. Are there plans to paint it?

A: Dave Irvin said this is a city street and the issue has been reported to the city for review. However, UT plans to take ownership of this street and once that happens UT will update the area.

2. Clean Bridge at Henson Hall – Marilyn Butler

Q: Can the bridge at Henson Hall be cleaned to better represent campus?

A: Dave Irvin shared upgrades are scheduled for this bridge along with the reopening of Strong Hall. Upgrades include cleaning the bridge and making it ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant.

3. Traffic Flow from Kingston Pike Building (KPB) – Megan Redmon/Marilyn Butler

Q: An employee read the following recommendations on the FAQ's University Commons website:

Recommendations:

- Reconstruct the traffic signal at Cumberland Avenue/Metron Center Way to align with the proposed access road on the west side of the railroad.
- Close the eastern lane of the existing Metron Way Boulevard at Cumberland Ave.; stripe the western lanes of Metron Way as a two-way street. Shift the Cumberland

Ave. westbound stop bar at Metron Way closer to the intersection in order to provide additional left-turn storage for vehicles entering the site.

- Provide separate left- and right-turn lanes from the proposed access road to Cumberland Avenue at Metron Center Way.
- Permanently close the existing driveway from Cumberland Avenue to the development on the east side of the railroad.

Employee Concerns:

Basically, it looks as if we will lose the lane going into the KPB. The current exit lane will become a two-way road which broadens into left- and right-hand turning lanes.

- Will we be losing our KPB entrance sign?
- The loss of a whole lane will make the two-way entrance/exit quite tight and potentially even more dangerous than it is currently.
- How will the increased volume of pedestrians be handled?

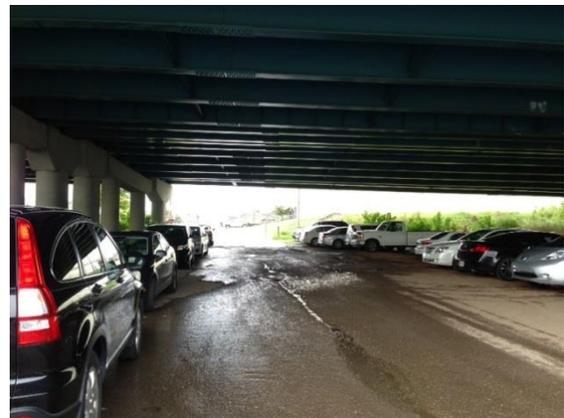
Other issues concerning Back Entrance:

The UT KPB building has one other possible exit at the back onto Concord Street. This entrance may be vital during the construction period.

- It is a poorly maintained gravel/ asphalt/ pothole street underneath the Alcoa Hwy. viaduct. Tyson Park also uses this entrance/exit.
- Area under viaduct is also used as a parking lot.
- Cars parked near the University's gate often impede traffic flow.

Employee Recommendations:

Road from Concord Street to UT fence be repaved, marked, and parking areas defined. Below are current photos of the area.



A: Brian Browning said the Office of Finance & Administration meets monthly with the developers for this area. The existing sign will be removed, however; the developer will fund a new sign. A crosswalk and appropriate signs will be installed for pedestrians. Updates will be communicated as they become available. Ms. Butler asked if a copy of the plan is available to the public. Brian Browning stated he will check with the developers to see if a proposed traffic plan is available to share with the public.

Brian Browning shared the concerns regarding the back entrance will be sent to the city. Repaving will likely be added to the city's project list, but perhaps the city can address the pothole issues quicker.

4. Parking Lot 30 – Megan Redmon

Q: This lot is very close to the stadium. Employees who are dropped off at work are having a difficult time getting into the lot to be dropped off on Thursdays and Fridays before football games. Is there a vehicle pass or area where employees may be dropped off without hassle?

A: Dr. Herbstritt will ask Mark Hairr, director of Parking & Transit Services, for a response to include in the final minutes.

*After the meeting Mark Hairr reported the following:

This one is a bit perplexing since we do not have parking attendants on this lot except during the first 5 days of classes (dates were Aug. 21, 22, 23, 26 & 27) to help "protect" the lot for S30 permit holders. Perhaps there was an issue on Tuesday, the 27th, when an attendant was screening those entering S30. From this point forward, there should be no problem with accessing this lot on Thursdays and Fridays before game days. If someone has an issue, call our office at 974-6031 so that we can address the issue immediately.

Part of the issue may be with the sandwich board signs we place on this lot mid-week when there is a football game that states it is used for football parking on game day so vehicles must be removed by 8:00 p.m. on Fridays. On the reverse side of these signs facing motorists as they leave the lot, a sign states "No Drop-Offs," which is turned around at the parking lot entrances and used on game days to notify individuals that they are not allowed access to drop off things. We are trying to save paper, time & effort by having a dual use for these signs, but perhaps they are causing some confusion during the week before the games.

5. Workers' Compensation – Anthony Aparijo

Q: An employee was injured during the Fall Festival last year on campus. The workers' compensation claim was denied because the injury occurred during a UT event and not during actual work. Why would this claim not be covered? What are the workers' compensation guidelines, and where can employees find more information? Mr. Aparijo added that the Risk Management Office is very helpful. Knowing how to contact this office would be beneficial for employees.

A: Dr. Herbstritt will contact the Risk Management Office for clarification on this issue.

*After the meeting Judy McGhee, Office of Risk Management, shared the following: Just because an employee is injured at work or on the employer's premises does not automatically mean that a Workers' Compensation claim is compensable. There are not "workers' compensation guidelines." Workers' Compensation is actually a law. Recent

changes in the Workers' Compensation law have more narrowly defined "causation" to include an injury is compensable only if it arose "primarily" in the course and "scope" of the employment. Without knowing the name of the employee and the details of the injury, I am not able to comment on "Why would this claim not be covered?" If the employee was actually working the Fall Festival and was injured, we would have an argument that the employee was injured in the course and scope of employment. However, if the employee was a participant or attendee at the Fall Festival, the injury would be considered non-compensable because it did not arise "primarily" in the course and "scope" of the employment.

For more information regarding Workers' Compensation, visit <http://riskmanagement.tennessee.edu/>. Contact The Office of Risk Management at (865) 974-5409 with any questions.

6. Merit Raise Criteria in Facilities Services – Anthony Aparijo

Q: What are the merit raise criteria for Facilities Services? The communication between supervisors and employees has been unclear.

A: Dave Irvin said a letter will go out this week, by shop explaining how merit was awarded. The original letter did not go out sooner because not all the information was included and the letter was confusing. The revised letter will go to employees this week.

7. Merit Raise Letters – Tom Anderson (Mr. Anderson was absent, and Dr. Herbstritt shared these questions on his behalf.)

Q: In the last meeting of Facilities Services ERC reps with Dave Irvin, we were told that letters would go out in the next couple of weeks and would include a process breakdown and the system used for distribution. None of these letters have been distributed. When some supervisors were asked about them, the response was one of confusion as if they'd never heard of any such plan. There seems to be a wide discrepancy in distribution that doesn't fit with any set step plan we were told would be used. One specific example: two employees with the same score in the same shop received different merit raises with no explanation.

A: The letters mentioned in the response to item 6 should clarify these issues. However, employees with specific questions/concerns are encouraged to bring those issues forward for review up the chain of command.

Anthony Aparijo asked if employees should expect the guidelines to remain the same for next year. Mr. Irvin said the approach should be similar. However, the size of the merit pool may change, depending on funding/availability.

Rick Gometz shared the confusion in his shop was due to raises taking effect before issuing letters. Many employees do not understand the rationale behind the decision to award or deny merit. The letters should clarify things for employees.

8. Career Path Raises – Tom Anderson (Mr. Anderson was absent, and Dr. Herbstritt shared these questions on his behalf.)

Q: We were also told that separate letters explaining the situation with the career path raises would be going out by the end of August. Are these letters going out? If so, when?

A: These letters will be issued this week. The raise will be retroactive to July 1, 2013, for those who qualified and were approved.

9. Performance Evaluation Issues – Tom Anderson (Mr. Anderson was absent and Dr. Herbstritt shared these questions on his behalf.)

Q: Employees in some departments are having issues getting copies of their evaluations. Some departments distribute them automatically, some at request, and some can't seem to get copies of them at all. Employees deserve to get copies of their completed evaluations automatically, especially as they are vital to submitting rebuttals and to appeal merit raise decisions.

A: Employees should be able to receive copies of their performance reviews automatically or by request. If an employee has not received a copy of his/her performance review, he/she should contact his/her supervisor or director.

10. Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) – Tom Anderson (Mr. Anderson was absent, and Dr. Herbstritt shared these questions on his behalf.)

Q: Mr. Irvin said in his written response, included in the last meeting's minutes, these PIPs are not optional in Facilities Services, indicating that anyone with a poor performance rating will receive a PIP. A couple of issues have arisen. First, no one has heard anything about getting these plans, or even that they're being worked on, nor has there been any mention of them anywhere outside of our last ERC meeting. Second, it has yet to be explained what score within Facilities Services qualifies as a poor evaluation score that will trigger the PIP. A follow-up question on this point: What are the repercussions for supervisors who fail to fill out and follow the PIPs?

A: The process regarding the administration of Performance Improvement Plans (PIP) in Facilities Services did not change in the 2013 performance review cycle from what was done in 2012 performance review cycle. Any employee who received an overall rating of less than 10 was to be put on a PIP and the Across-the-Board (ATB) increase was to be withheld. If the terms of the PIP were met, the employee would be given the ATB increase effective the first of the month following successful completion of the PIP.

If any employee receives an overall rating of less than 10 and is not given a PIP, they should contact speak with their supervisor and address their concern. If they feel their concern is not being addressed, they should contact their Director and discuss their concern. Dave Irvin expects all Supervisors and Directors to follow those guidelines and if an employee speaks with both their Supervisor and their Director and feels these guidelines have not been followed, they should contact Dave to discuss their concerns.

11. Position Description Questionnaires (PDQ's) – Tom Anderson (Mr. Anderson was absent, and Dr. Herbstritt shared these questions on his behalf.)

Q: We'd like to request that the system of regular review be reinstated. This process is a valuable tool for departments to update job descriptions that change over the years as systems and processes are changed. The current reorganization in Facilities Services is a prime example. While we're sure there has been some attention paid to this issue, there is no way to catch everything and this review process would catch most of what may have been missed. The reason for ending the process was budget cuts and the recession, but renewed investment in new buildings, annual deferred maintenance, and huge administrative raises indicate those days are behind us.

A: Dr. Herbstritt said the system-wide reviews are no longer being conducted. However, individual departments may request review of PDQ's for that department to ensure they are up to date. Approval for these reviews must be made up through the appropriate vice chancellor. HR would then work with the department to ensure accuracy. Dave Irvin added that some PDQ's have already been revised in Facilities Services in the wake of the Facilities Services' reorganization.

However, if employees feel there are specific positions that need review, they are encouraged to bring those forward for consideration. However, keep in mind volume is not a factor. Additional knowledge, skills, and abilities would be examples that might warrant a PDQ review.

12. Minimum Starting Pay Rate – Tom Anderson (Mr. Anderson was absent, and Dr. Herbstritt shared these questions on his behalf.)

Q: There has been talk going around that UT is considering raising the minimum starting pay rate to \$10.50/hour. We acknowledge that this is another step in the right direction for folks at UT who make the least and is welcome and much needed. What we'd like to know is if there is any work on the compression issue that raising the minimum starting pay rate creates? According to the Compensation Advisory Board website currently, it is not on their list of considerations.

A: Dr. Herbstritt said discussions are taking place about raising the entry-level rate. The amount has not been finalized. The adjustments may cause some compression issues. Compression means that employees with more years of service may make the same amount as those new employees hired in at the new minimum starting pay rate. The goal is to raise the minimum starting pay rate to become competitive and appropriately address compression issues.

13. Vol Card Entrance Update – Mike Werley

Q: Is there an update on the new Vol Card entry system?

A: Dave Irvin shared the new cards are being phased in. The devices are working properly, but the software to run the devices has some issues. Buildings are being phased to the new system and cards. Issues are being addressed as they arise, and the process will be gradual.

14. Radio Frequencies during Football Saturdays – Ed Roach

Q: Employees working on football Saturdays are using the same radio channel, which causes a lot of radio traffic. It becomes difficult to get a message through. Could emergency crews have a separate frequency to ensure a timely response?

A: Dave Irvin will investigate this issue and report the findings at a future ERC meeting.

15. Parking & Transit Services – Anthony Aparijo

Q: Some employees are receiving parking hang tags late. If employees obtain another parking tag and then still receive the original, what should be done with the original hang tag?

A: Karen Hackworth said the original hang tag should be returned to Parking & Transit Services.

16. One-Stop Shop – Lisa Turner

Q: Are there any updates regarding how the One-Stop Shop did during orientation and the start of the semester?

A: Dr. Herbstritt said we will get someone from the One-Stop Shop to attend a future meeting and share updates with the ERC.

Old Business

17. Security Changing Lights – Lisa Turner

At a previous meeting, Lisa Turner reported there is a problem with changing ballast lights at Warehousing near Stephenson Drive. Since the meeting Ms. Turner was informed that some of the lights have been replaced, but there are several that still need attention. Also, employees said that at the recent Surplus Auction, customers / bidders were very frustrated with the lighting. It is difficult to see in some areas of the warehouse. *What is the status update?*

Dave Irvin will investigate this issue and report the findings at a future ERC meeting.

18. Fence Repair at the Kingston Pike Building (KPB) – Marilyn Butler

At a previous meeting, Marilyn Butler said the fence on the northeast side of the KPB along the railroad track (across from the front parking area) has a wide section of fence that has been knocked down. *If/when is it going to be fixed? Moreover, does UT or the railroad track company own that fence? What is the status update?*

Marilyn Butler reported the fence has been repaired and looks beautiful – thank you!

Announcements & Other Comments

- ❖ Mark your calendars for the annual UT Fall Festival for faculty and staff!
What: UT Fall Festival- Healthy You. Healthy UT.
When: Friday, October 18, 2013, from 11:30-3:00
Where: RecSports Plaza and Practice Field
- ❖ Mark Hairr, director of Parking & Transit Services, is scheduled to attend the October ERC meeting to share updates on the First Transit System and various Parking Services initiatives.

Distributions

- ❖ August 6, 2013, Minutes
- ❖ Fall Festival Flyers

Next Meeting

Tuesday, October 1, 2013, from 1:30-3:00
Hodges Library, 6th Floor Conference Room

Submit agenda Items to Julie Monday at jmonday@utk.edu or 974-6452.