EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE RETREAT
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
January 22, 2016
Chattanooga Rooms B & C, University Center

Members Attending: Vickie Adkison, Terri Bearbower, Pam Blevins, Sheila Cagle, Sue Carroll, Merrium Carver, Karla Evans, Jennifer Faires, Sharon Hardy, Heather Heinlein, Donnie Hodge, Anne Jay, John Johnson, Sandra Jones, Kellie Karaky, David King, June Knowles, Anna Lane, Renee Liang, Kimmera Parks, Marion Perkins, Laura Perryman, Melita Rector, Julia Romeo, Samantha Skidmore, Sue Stephens, Joanna Stephanos, Sharon Thomas, Roberta Thurmond, Jean Walston, Cindy Williams.

Others in attendance: Dr. Steve Angle, Chancellor; Dr. Jerald Ainsworth, Provost & Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; David Blackburn, Vice Chancellor & Director of Athletics; Dr. Richard Brown, Executive Vice Chancellor for Finance and Operations; Dr. John Delaney, Vice Chancellor for Student Development; Terry Denniston, Chief of Staff, Office of the Chancellor; Kirk Englehardt, Vice Chancellor for Marketing & Communications; Laure Pou, Interim Director, Human Resources; Melanie Sadler, Administrative Specialist, Human Resources.

Call to Order: Ms Lane called the meeting to order.

Guest: Dr. Steve Angle, Chancellor

Dr. Angle said the ERC is critical to serving as a conduit for information and urged members to be involved and engaged. He said the senior administration would communicate clearly when responding to questions members may put forth.

A year after the library’s grand opening, the ground floor was flooded and may not re-open until summer. However, the rest of the library remains open. Retention from junior to senior year has improved but enrollment is down 165 FTE. freshmen enrollment from Hamilton and Bradley counties experienced a decline.

A proposal has been put forth that would split the governance for TBR schools (TN Board of Regents) from UT schools. Dr. Angle said UTC benefits from having its own identity and brand and billboard signs have been installed around town, highlighting students from the area, about their reason for choosing UTC. He added that recruiting international students enriches the campus.

A member asked for an update on the governor’s plans for outsourcing management of facilities. Dr. Angle said TBR Chancellor Morgan has opted out and Dr. DiPietro has said outsourcing does not make good business sense. Dr. Angle said some outsourcing is already being done. A member said talk of outsourcing has made it difficult to recruit for 10 open positions in Facilities. Members were urged to contact Ms Denniston if they have questions.

The #2 project for capital projects is renovating the library and Fine Arts. The state office building should be ready by the fall and will house departments currently located in Holt when it is renovated, except for Biology labs. The Mapp building is now home to Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy and will soon be home to Continuing Education and a
fabrication lab. The building is named after James Mapp, a prominent civil rights leader, and will be dedicated on March 24th.

Recent hires include Kirk Englehardt, Vice Chancellor for Marketing & Communications, and Dr. Daniel Pack, Dean of the College of Engineering and Computer Science. Dr. Angle said other members of the Executive Leadership Team that were unable to attend the retreat are Dr. Bryan Rowland, Vice Chancellor for Advancement, and Dr. Joanne Romagni, Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School.

**Guest: Dr. Jerald Ainsworth, Provost & Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs**

Enrollment is down 116 credit hours, the equivalency of less than 10 students. The university has come through the VRIP (Voluntary Retirement Incentive Plan) and budget rebalancing, which reallocated funds allowing the university to function better. Two graduation ceremonies are scheduled this spring for 1,600 students.

**Guest: Dr. Richard Brown, Executive Vice Chancellor for Finance, Operations & Information Technology**

Dr. Brown noted several changes in his division – specifically the retirements of Jim and Cindee Pulliam and Ms Pou’s appointment as Interim Director of Human Resources. Dr. Brown serves as Chair of the UT CAB (Compensation Advisory Board) and said he is focused on compensation going forward, using an outside consultant to benchmark data.

He remains optimistic about the budget and capital projects saying the library renovation remains a priority on the capital project list. State revenues have increased and planning for the university’s 2016-17 budget is underway.

A $70 million student housing project has begun. A new value lot has been added at Engel Stadium for half the cost of a general decal. Plans include adding another value lot on the west side of campus and addressing visitor and internal parking.

**Guest: Dr. John Delaney, Vice Chancellor for Student Development**

The Racquet Center has been demolished to make way for construction of a 600-bed housing unit. The university is looking at a comprehensive Health Services to build upon. Dr. Delaney said many students want to stay in Chattanooga after graduation and Career Services can help in recruiting students.

**Guest: David Blackburn, Vice Chancellor and Director of Athletics**

Mr. Blackburn said he wants Athletics to achieve excellence, not just competence. The GPA for student-athletes has grown each year from a 3.04 to 3.113 grade point average for the fall. Eleven of fourteen teams had perfect NCAA APR (Academic Progress Rate) scores of 1,000, which Mr. Blackburn said is equivalent to scoring 100. The multi-year APR is in great shape and no sports are in danger.

**Guest: Kirk Englehardt, Vice Chancellor for Marketing & Communication**
Mr. Englehardt said he has been at UTC less than a month and would like to return to the ERC to hear about information members would like and how he may help them do their job. He said everyone is an ambassador for the university.

**Recognitions**

Ms Pou presented certificates of recognition to outgoing members for their service to the ERC.

**UT Policy and UTC Guidelines for Employee Relations Committee**

The purpose of the Employee Relations Committee is to provide a direct channel of two-way communication between University administration and regular non-exempt employees for information and advisory purposes. All UT campuses have a board representative that attends Employee Relations Advisory Board (ERAB) meetings, four times a year, to provide communication between campuses and system administrators.

Non-exempt employees are elected to represent units, which are determined by geographic location and/or job group. A representative and/or alternate from each area is expected to attend meetings, held monthly, except August. Representatives may miss no more than four regularly scheduled monthly meetings during a calendar year. A representative’s absence is excused if the alternate attends in their place.

Representatives elect a Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair serves as liaison to the Director of Human Resources, collaborates with the Director of Human Resources in determining meeting agenda, presides over meetings, and attends system-wide Employee Relations Advisory Board meetings. The Vice Chair will assume the duties of Chair in his/her absence. The Director of Human Resources, the Chancellor, and retiring ERC Chair will serve as ex-officio members of the Employee Relations Committee.

**Election of Chair & Vice Chair**

Members eligible to serve as Chair must currently be serving as an ERC representative or alternate and must have served for at least one year as a representative or alternate within 10 years prior to the election, according to ERC By-Laws. The Chair will begin his/her term immediately after election for the next two years. Officers can serve no more than two consecutive terms.

The floor was opened for nominations for Chair. Ms Lane was nominated. With no other nominations, a motion was made and seconded to cease nominations. By acclimation, Ms Lane was elected Chair.

The floor was opened for nominations for Vice Chair. Ms Karaky and Ms Rector were nominated. A motion was made and seconded to cease nominations. By secret ballot, Ms Rector was elected Vice Chair.

**Other Issues**

Ms Lane said monthly ERC meetings consist of a speaker, who is generally an upper level administrator, followed by an exchange of information and concerns. The ERC Chair serves on the ERAB (Employee Relations Advisory Board) that all system ERC chairs attend. ERC members may be asked to
serve on other university committees and monthly meetings provide good networking opportunities. Members may not miss more than 4 meetings in a calendar year. The ERC does not meet in August and generally does not meet in December.

When asked how representatives would know who they represent and how to disseminate information, Ms Sadler said she members could set up an address book from the list she would email to members. Representatives could then email minutes, when approved, to those they represent or send a link to the ERC website. Ms Karaky said in the past she emailed a flyer with information. Members may share their concerns with Ms Lane, Ms Rector, or Ms Sadler.

Long Term Disability open enrollment has begun and ends February 15th. Members may apply or go up a level without providing answers to proof of good health.

Annual Performance Reviews (SPDR) are due in Human Resources by March 31st. The Performance Review Summary is required and other forms may accompany it. SPDRs may be sent via email to Ms Pou. Periodic reports will be sent to senior administrators. Training sessions will be held in March and April.

Rollout of Haven training for faculty and staff is forthcoming and 100% participation is expected. This is a system initiative, regarding Title IX, similar to student online training. The course takes approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete and plans include classroom-led sessions for staff without computer access.

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Sadler
Administrative Specialist, Human Resources