EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COUNCIL MEETING
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Thursday, October 17, 2019
Fortwood Room, University Center

Members attending: Shirley Hatfield, Melita Rector, Anna Lane, Debbie Giles, Andrea Evans, Heather Heinlein, Vickie Adkison, Jennifer Faires, Sharon Thomas, Ann Laster, Mark Stotts, and Jean Betters.

Others in attendance: Julie Brown, Manager of Employee Relations, Human Resources; Tina Camba, Manager of Total Compensation, Human Resources

Call to order: Ms. Lane called the meeting to order at 2:00.

Minutes: The minutes for the September 2019 meeting were submitted and approved electronically with no changes needed.

Blue Ribbon Award: Sue Culpepper, Director of College of Business Student Success Center and Jaclyn York, Program Director for Rollins Scholar and Career Services Internship Coordinator were co-recipients of the October Blue Ribbon award.

Some committee members shared that non-selected recipients should be considered for the following months instead of being resubmitted each month. Members asked if there was a rubric for evaluating nominees and had general questions regarding the process. Add Blue Ribbon Awards process to November’s agenda.

Guest Speaker: William Walker, Resident District Manager, Aramark

Mr. Walker discussed current and future dining services. Mocs Dining has added two P.O.D. [Provisions on Demand] pantries in Hunter and Metro to include healthier options such as salads, sandwiches and wraps. The goal is to have a total of 4-6 pantries on campus. The Pantry currently in Hunter will be relocated to MAPP when Hunter goes under construction next summer. Chick Fil A expanded into the Steak ‘n Shake space to allow for additional menu option. Mobile ordering has been approved for Panda Express and Which Wich and should roll out at the start of the spring semester. The goal is to add Chick Fil A mobile ordering Fall of 2020.

Mr. Walker encourages all customers to complete the Voice of the Consumer cards. Aramark appreciates positive feedback with a goal rating of 9s and 10s. The responses are read by management daily. Mocs Dining will has doubled the number of events across campus this fall to engage more students. To get updates about events, follow @MocsDining on Twitter and Instagram.

He discussed the new faculty/staff meal plans:
- 15 meals/swipes = $6.67
- 30 meals/swipes + 3 Mocs Swaps = $6.36
- 45 meals/swipes + 5 Mocs Swaps = $6.00

Mr. Walker also reminded everyone about $5 Friday’s at Crossroad

FLSA Exempt Salary Threshold

It was announced on September 24th that the Department of Labor has moved forward with the new salary exemption threshold of $35,568.00 with an anticipated effective date of January 1,
2020. HR has made a preliminary identification of all currently exempt regular UTC employees under the $35,568 salary threshold. Because the proposed threshold is much more reasonable than the $47,476 proposed in 2016, only a total of 24 regular (benefits-eligible) employees may be impacted on our campus, the majority of which exist within Athletics and Enrollment Management & Student Affairs.

As HR did in 2016, we will need to review the position description for all 24 employees to determine (1) if content justifies maintaining exemption status and justifying a salary increase to $35,568 or beyond, or (2) if the employee should be transitioned to non-exempt status.

Ms. Camba shared that exemption is determined by the Position Description, not by the pay grade. There will be fewer job families and no pay grades within the families. A few committee members expressed concerns about classification, performing additional duties without ADA pay, and having to go to a different department for advancement opportunities.

**Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program (VRIP)**

The October 15 application deadline for employees interested in taking advantage of the VRIP has now passed. Of the 176 eligible employees, those that submitted an application by the required deadline will now receive follow up communication from HR to request that they return a signed Retirement Incentive and Agreement Release Form by November 15 to confirm their participation in the program. HR will disclose participation to respective Vice Chancellors once the November 15 deadline has passed. HR received a total of 48 applications of interest in the program by October 15.

**UT Position Review/Compensation Freeze**

- **The UT Compensation Project is in its final phases to enhance the position classification and compensation process, which includes the following changes:**
  - New Job Family structure and job titles for classifying all non-faculty staff positions.
  - New salary schedule and market ranges (paygrades) assigned to all job titles to represent market-competitive salary figures.
  - Enhanced ability to benchmark positions and conduct equity analyses.

- **All UT HR Officers and Compensation Specialists have requested a position review/compensation freeze October 1 through January 2020.**
  - The UTC campus alone averages a minimum of 30 position review/compensation review requests per month for new and existing positions, and those figures are met or exceeded at other UT locations.
  - Holding off on processing hundreds of current position changes system-wide will enable the system compensation group to complete the following final phases of the project:
    - Map all current position classifications to the new Job Family structure.
    - Confirm mapping allocations and assign new market ranges (paygrades).
    - Finalize new position benchmarks for salary survey participation in November.
  - The freeze will not include review and classification of NEW positions for recruitment purposes.
  - Any review requests already initiated with HR will continue as planned.
  - Any mission-critical evaluation requests from the appropriate Vice Chancellor will continue as requested.
In late 2019/early 2020 campus compensation teams will begin meeting with administrators to communicate the new structure, meet with employees as requested, and begin accepting position review requests for allocating to the new structure.

Example of a job title mapping allocation: Current Director job title for a Student Affairs unit, Paygrade 41, in the Executive/Administrative job family may be mapped to a job title of Student Services Management 1, Market Range 9, in the Student Services job family.

ERC Bylaws Change

The committee is approaching election time. Representation was reviewed to see if changes were necessary. A change was made to allow areas with 25-30 employees to have two alternates. This change resulted in Facilities having more representation. The alternate does not have voting rights and the representative is considered absent of an alternative is not present. The committee voted to proceed with the changes.

Other Issues

- Committee member shared concerns regarding communicating information obtained during the meetings to their respective areas. The question was raised about how information is being communicated. This topic will be added to the next meeting’s agenda for discussion.

- If any member is no longer interested in serving on the committee, then that member should notify Jan Michaels. The Chair recommended that prospective representatives understand the role and responsibilities involved with being a committee member.

- A member suggested that the meeting minutes be approved HR. The Chair will talk with Jan Michaels regarding the approval of minutes and how they are currently communicated.

- Committee member asked if staff can be allowed to take an extended lunch (90 minutes) to exercise. Suggested that Laure Pou be invited to talk about the possibility of having longer lunches for wellness. A member mentioned that there are no wellness incentives, and another member shared that there is a wellness incentive [Partners for Health Wellness Program]. Member recommended that Charlene Ragland be invited to talk about the program as an avid participant.

Next Meeting

The ERC will meet November 21st at 2:00 in the UC Fortwood Room.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:16.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie G. Brown
Manager of Employee Relations