EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
September 18, 2014
Fortwood Room, University Center

Members attending: Donna Adams, Terri Bearbower, Pam Blevins, Pat Boyer, Jennifer Faires, Adam Groves, Valerah Hodges, John Johnson, Kellie Karaky, Debbie Mirra, Jack Pitkin, Melita Rector, Diane Reed, Frankie Roeser, Julia Romeo, Sue Stephens, Roberta Thurmond, Jean Walston, Baley Whary, Cindy Williams.

Others in attendance: Dan Webb, Director, Human Resources; Melanie Sadler, Administrative Specialist, Human Resources.

Call to order: Ms Hodges called the meeting to order.

Minutes: A motion was made and seconded to approve minutes of the July 17th meeting. (The ERC did not meet in August.)

Guest: Terry Denniston, Chief of Staff, Office of the Chancellor

The annual summer picnic will shift to May, beginning in 2015, when the weather is cooler and more departments can attend. The exact date has not been decided but Ms Denniston said it would be held before commencement and a location is yet undecided. A member suggested the Greenway at the new library, if it is completed by then. Ms Denniston asked members to complete an online survey of the picnic.

In 2010, President Jan Simek established a Diversity Advisory Council at the system level to view recruiting and retaining diversity among faculty, staff, and students. While UTC has had diversity committees in the past, system has asked all campuses to establish a council to work in conjunction with system’s council. Each college would have its own diversity plan that would address diversity in campus culture.

Chancellor Angle is assembling the committee and members interested in serving should email Ms Denniston or Ms Hodges to place their name in consideration.

The committee will be comprised of all deans, 4 tenured faculty, 2 members from the ERC and 2 from the ESC, 3 students (2 undergraduate and 1 graduate), Assistant Provost for Enrollment Services (Yancy Freeman), Director of OED (Dr. Bryan Samuel), 2 reps from Student Development, 2 from FOIT, 1 from Athletics, and 1 from Human Resources. Ms Denniston and Courtney Hoss, Assistant General Counsel, will serve as ex-officio members. Dr. Valerie Rutledge will serve as the first chair and the chair will be selected on an annual basis by the chancellor. Faculty appointments will rotate.
The chancellor met with the full faculty this week and discussed the budget and is seeking input from the ERC and ESC. The timeline for next year’s budget is being pushed forward. (Since the meeting, Dr. Angle held a combined meeting of the ERC and ESC to discuss the budget.)

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

State law requires the university to close its books in the black and Dr. Brown said every division did well last year. The budget office will continue to monitor the budget every quarter to help with financial forecasting. He encouraged members to visit the BudgetChatt website.

Statute requires the state to fund K-12 education; prisons; infrastructure; public safety; TennCare. Funding for higher education is discretionary spending and the university must prove to the state that its programs are valuable and that public universities are drivers of the economy. The state has notified UTC that is should expect fewer appropriations this year.

Last year, under the Complete College Act, the Knoxville campus ranked #1 in the state in the number of graduates, UTC was #2, and Martin was #3. This outcome based funding formula represented $2.5 million for UTC. A 6% tuition increase this year is unlikely next year and is expected to be 3-4%. There were 4 fewer students this year and UTC lost 147 FTEs, or full-time enrollments, resulting in $1.1 million.

The university must offer more degrees that can be completed online. The TN Promise, which offers a free two-year college education to high school seniors, might impact the university but Dr. Brown believes that UTC can remain competitive. It is expected that funding for the Hope Scholarship will be reduced. Billboards in Nashville, north Georgia, Shelby County, and Franklin County are going up and the university will advertise on TV.

Approximately $500,000 of recurring revenue has been recommended and approved for market/equity adjustment and non-recurring funds of $500,000 for performance bonuses will be administered again this year. A deficit of $840,000 for tuition fee waivers required some one-time funds to close the gap.

Almost $1 million was spent on computer technology last year. If the university had a centralized purchasing to secure technology with other campuses, the cost could’ve been 30% lower. Ways to lower the cost for videoconferences through the use of internet for phone services is also being investigated.
The university is expected to hire an outreach coordinator to strengthen ties with corporate partners and producing new revenue streams through non-credit programs in the College of Business.

Dr. Brown said there is some talk of reopening adult services and the university must continue reaching out to adult students and veterans. Within a 5-mile radius, there are approximately 100,000 residents with a 2-year college degree or less.

Buildings to be demolished include Frist and the Doctor’s Building. An announcement is expected soon about a 600-bed private development of new student support housing, at Douglas and 10th Street. Dr. Brown said ML King corridor is in the university’s Master Plan and he predicts that a big box pharmacy and some mixed-use spaces could locate within the 400 block of ML King from Douglas to Mabel Street.

The United Way campaign will begin soon and every dollar donated goes is dispersed to United Way agencies. An endowment covers operating costs and salaries. Dr. Brown serves on the United Way Board of Directors.

Tour of New Library

Ms Hodges relayed information from Ms Lane about a tour of the new library for the ERC and ESC, date to be determined. There will not be access to the elevator and staff must be able to walk up 5 flights of steps, wear a hardhat, sign a waiver of consent, and wear closed-toe shoes.

Chancellor’s Christmas Party

Ms Hodges said the annual Christmas party for ERC/ESC/Faculty Senate, could possibly be held in the new library this year.

Employee Engagement Survey

An open forum with Chancellor Angle and Rich Boyer, ModernThink, will be held October 14 from 3-4 pm. The survey will be administered November 3-21. A task force has been assembled to administer using information gained from survey results.

Employee Relations Advisory Board Meeting

Ms Hodges said he ERAB will meet in Knoxville this month. Among the agenda items are discussion of fee waivers.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.
Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Sadler
Administrative Specialist, Human Resources