EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Thursday, September 15, 2016
Fortwood Room, University Center

Members attending: Pam Blevins, Merrium Carver, Karla Evans, Anne Jay, Anna Lane, Kathy Lindsey, Marion Perkins, Laura Perryman, Melita Rector, Samantha Skidmore, Joanna Stephanos, Sharon Thomas, Roberta Thurmond, Jean Walston.

Others in attendance: Laure Pou, Interim Director, Human Resources; Melanie Sadler, Administrative Specialist, Human Resources.

Call to Order: A motion was made and seconded to open the meeting.

Approval of Minutes: A motion and second to approve the minutes of the July meeting.

Blue Ribbon Award: Bengt Carlson, Walker Center for Teaching & Learning, is the recipient for July.

Guest: Kathy Taylor and Jecobi Swafford, Human Resources

Annual Enrollment for insurances changes begins October 3rd and ends October 14th at 5:30 pm. Staff and faculty should make changes during the first week of annual enrollment to avoid any difficulties logging in and receiving computer assistance. Changes made will become effective January 1, 2017. Employees should've received a 2017 Decision Guide at their home address but copies may be obtained in Human Resources. Ms Taylor urged members to read the decision guide that would answer many questions they have about insurances. She reminded members that annual enrollment is a good time to review their benefits to make sure beneficiaries are up-to-date.

Changes include the addition of another health insurance provider; a no-Partnership Promise; increases in health insurance deductibles, copays, coinsurances; increase in dental premiums; increase in pharmacy copays; new EAP provider will be Optum. Wellness doctor visits will continue to be paid at 100%. Prudential will continue to be the long term disability provider. The sick leave bank referred to in the Decision Guide is for state employees; UTC has their own sick leave bank. Short term disability will not be offered this year.

The 2017 Partnership Promise includes an online wellness assessment; biometric screening; coaching, if called; keeping contact information up-to-date. Lifestyle coaching will not be required but health coaching for disease control will be required. If a member or spouse did not complete the Partnership Promise in 2016 they will be shifted to the no-Partnership Promise.

Premiums are paid one month in advance and employees will notice the new premiums deducted from their December paycheck. Employees paid biweekly may complete a holdback form to deduct health insurance premiums from two paychecks/month instead of one. Ms Pou told members that exempt employees transitioning to nonexempt (as mandated by new FLSA rules), may remain monthly paid if they wish.

Enrollment in Flexible Benefits Plans is October 1 through October 31, 2016. This benefit does not renew automatically and requires enrollment each year an employee wishes to participate. There will be no grace period this year, so monies deferred in 2017 must be used by December 31, 2017.
UT Compliance Hotline

Ms Pou is chairing the Institutional Compliance Committee for the UTC campus. The system committee is chaired by Bill Moles. The hotline is an anonymous way to report fraud, waste, abuse, and compliance. Complaints may still be reported to an employee’s supervisor or Human Resources. Employees may provide their contact information or remain anonymous.

Complaints about Human Resources would not route to HR but to a triage system at the system level, where the committee would come together to best decide how to review a complaint. Reports of discrimination should be reported to Office of Equity & Diversity and reports of sexual misconduct should be reported to Stephanie Rowland, Title IX Director. Since the rollout of the hotline in February or March, no reports have been submitted for concerns on UTC’s campus.

ERAB Meeting

Ms Lane will attend the Employee Relations Advisory Board meeting in Knoxville next week. Members were asked to forward agenda topics to Ms Lane. The meeting should include an update on outsourcing and FLSA.

Mocs Games Review/Suggestions

Ms Lane solicited members’ comments of the Mocs Games (picnic) held this week. Some said they thought that departments were going to be asked to volunteer when ERC members were asked at the last minute; difficult to attend in September due to the business of the semester; would like to see the picnic moved to spring or fall break; having a band provide music, similar to Nightfall. Ms Lane said she would follow up with the Chancellor’s office.

Conflict of Interest

A reminder of the Conflict of Interest was emailed to employees. The process now mirrors the processes on other UT campuses where employees are required to submit the form annually. The form is not required for term employees, only regular faculty and staff who are benefits eligible. Employees will need their personnel number to pre-populate and complete the form. If a potential conflict arises, the Conflict of Interest committee would meet with members, who have various areas of expertise, to discuss and decide upon any further action needed.

Next Meeting

The ERC will meet October 20, 2016 with Chancellor Angle schedule to speak.

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Sadler
Administrative Specialist, Human Resources