

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE
March 23, 2023
UC Sequoyah Room/Zoom
Minutes

Members in Attendance: Melita Rector (Chair), Mark Stotts (Vice Chair), Shirley Hatfield, Sharon Thomas, Heather Heinlein, Evie Deal, Merrium Carver, Kim Thomas, Jean Betters, Diane Perkins, Stuart French, Scott Sammons, Kim Sapp, Ann Laster, Laneeta Derrick, Mandy McAllister, LaDonna Spruill, Shari Kappel, Kelly Griffin

Others in Attendance: Robie Robinson, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Emergency Services; Nicole Gaines, Employee Relations Consultant; Logan Rader, HR Administrative Support Specialist; Sandy Dodd, Associate Bursar

Call to Order: Melita Rector called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Emergency Services Updates (Robie Robinson): Assistant Vice Chancellor Robie Robinson, Emergency Services, shared various updates with the committee regarding the overall safety of the UTC community.

- Access control in campus buildings is currently being updated campuswide with the implementation of new UTC ID cards and access devices. It is imperative that employees receive a new UTC ID from the Mocs Card Office in the University Center as soon as possible if they have not already done so. These new cards and devices, which are replacing the card swipe devices at most building access points on campus, rely on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID). Rather than using a magstripe for access to relevant buildings (and for the use of MocsBucks), the new ID cards interact with the new access devices via radio waves in close proximity. Simply hover your UTC ID briefly over the access device, and it will read it.

Additionally, there is an ongoing project to establish a system that will monitor all exterior doors on campus. This means that doors being propped open accidentally or purposefully can be identified from a central location, eliminating the need for security personnel to physically examine the entire space for safety.

UTC's camera system is also being assessed campuswide, and those in need of upgrades are being replaced with more up-to-date models and functionality.

Police Officer salaries have undergone an adjustment within the last year, and as of this meeting, the UTC Police Department is fully staffed, allowing for the

maximum utilization of police resources devoted to campus safety. The division of Finance & Administration is closely monitoring the needs that still exist with the coming fiscal year's budget.

The curriculum for active shooter/violent threat has been adjusted to more closely align with the language used across the entire UT System. It has been changed from "Avoid, Deny, Defend" to "Run, Hide, Fight." This both maintains consistency across the UT System and simplifies the language for employees acting in the event of a dangerous and physical threat, if one should arise. All campus spaces are different, so employees are encouraged to reach out to Marion Perkins to schedule a space assessment so that UTC PD can identify safety and lockdown procedures in the event of an active threat as they relate to their particular building or area on campus. A mobile application is currently being developed to establish another channel of top-down communication in the event of a security threat in the area.

Procedures during an Ongoing Threat (Robie Robinson): In light of the recent robbery attempt at Regions Bank on Market Street downtown, Mr. Robinson shared the procedures taken by UTC Police when a potential threat to campus has been identified. In the event of a developing situation involving potential threats to campus, Chattanooga Police issue a Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) card, which allows dispatchers to record incidents in a detailed manner and effectively notify and identify emergency personnel during an ongoing event. Communication is then sent to the entire UTC community imploring action if a potential threat poses a direct danger to campus. Additionally, UTC is governed by the Jeanne Clery Act, which requires colleges and universities to report campus crime data, support victims of violence, and publicly outline the policies and procedures they have put into place to improve campus safety.

Other Safety Matters:

- UTC Police Dispatch is able to lock and unlock almost all access points instantly and remotely. For those few areas that do not yet have that capability, security officers will assess the area to make sure all access points are locked to entry when appropriate.
- It was hoped that with the update to access points and UTC IDs, the old database of employee access could smoothly transition to the newly updated one. At the time of this meeting, that is not the case, so access must be granted on an individual basis. Work is being done to mitigate these issues.
- When an allegedly active threat is reported on campus, UTC Police coordinates with various parties in Emergency Services and Safety & Risk Management to conduct an initial assessment and identify the facts of the situation. Once the threat has been identified, communication is sent via all platforms (email, text,

UTC Alert, social media), the contents of which depend on the identified threat. UTC Police Officers are quickly dispatched, and Chattanooga City Police are on standby, blocking access points to campus as the situation develops and converging if necessary. Officers' primary focus when there is an active threat is to stop the situation from escalating first and conduct damage control after the removal of the threat.

- Doors being propped open by UTC community members presents a significant issue on campus. Not only is it a security concern, but it can cause damage to existing access points, rendering them ineffective. The upgrades to security systems mentioned above, especially the implementation of a monitoring system for exterior access points, aim at fully resolving this issue. Employees are encouraged to report these incidents to Facilities or email Mr. Robinson directly for follow-up (Robie-Robinson@utc.edu).
- Safety & Risk Management and Facilities, Planning & Management are the primary points of contact for concerns regarding safety/evacuation routes and the posting thereof throughout campus facilities.
- As of this meeting, there is no definitive date for the access control upgrades to be complete campuswide.

Blue Ribbon Award – February 2023 (Melita Rector): Ruby Jordan, Senior Custodian with Facilities, Planning & Management, is the recipient of the Chancellor's Blue Ribbon Award for February 2023. The committee congratulates Ms. Jordan on this award and her terrific work.

Other Matters:

- ParTNers for Health has a new website, so employees are encouraged to visit <https://www.tn.gov/partnersforhealth.html> to learn more about updates to UTC's current health and other benefits.
- Annual performance reviews are due to Human Resources on March 31, 2023.
- Employees are encouraged to attend as much training as possible. Development opportunities are available on [K@TE](#), on campus, and elsewhere.
- As of July 1, 2023, the minimum hourly rate is projected to move to \$15.00 per hour. Once applied to the relevant positions, a 4% salary increase will be applied as well to those who qualify. In collaborative efforts with Budget & Finance, Human Resources is continuously working to address salary compression at the lower market ranges that can occur as a result of this increase. These budget recommendations are contingent on the approval of the UT Board of Trustees.
- The Annual Budget Town Hall will be held May 8th from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m. EST in the UC Auditorium. Employees are strongly encouraged to save this date on their calendars and attend to learn more about the FY24 budget proposal and university priorities.

Adjournment: Melita Rector adjourned the meeting with a motion from Shirley Hatfield, seconded by Heather Heinlein, with no objections at 9:13 a.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 20, 2023