

**Staff Advisory Committee**  
PCR/Virtual Meeting  
March 24, 2022

**Members Present:** Chrissy Derlinga, Margo Dirkson, Shana Eads, Kathy Faulkner, Amy Foster, Joni Gilmore, Carrie Harris, Susan Henry, Michelle Holm, Corinne Johnson, Bethany Jones, Andrea Kruszka, Charlene McClain, Waldhys Rodoli, Angie Wells

**Members Absent:** Shana Eads, James Goad, Kim Meredith, Sarah Starkey

**Others Present:** President Oldham, Lee Wray, Kevin Vedder, Rob Owens, Donna Schrock

**Summary:**

Approved Agenda

Approved January 27, 2022 minutes

Introduced New Members

Discussed Employee Parking

Discussed Job Duties, Classifications and Salary Scale

Discussed People over Process

Discussed International Students / Office

Comments by the President

Discussed Staff Retreat Planning

**Proceedings:**

Chair Andrea Kruszka called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. Bethany Jones motioned to approve the agenda for January 27, 2022. Angie Wells seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Carrie Harris motioned to approve the January 27, 2022 minutes. Jones seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Kruszka welcomed new members and started introductions that went around the room.

Jones brought questions from other employees about employee parking and the Master Plan. It was felt that employee parking was not a concern for Tennessee Tech and that the proposed

garages were student based. There was a concern that all of Peachtree will be greenspace, the employees will have to park further away and use shuttles with multiple stops. Jones noted the price point for employee parking continued to go up with the parking going further out.

President Oldham stated that the parking garages were still being evaluated. It was student driven with student interest in the garages being built. The Peachtree Project was eminent, the bids were opened. The Pit would be closed for approximately 18 months during the project starting sometime in May. Oldham added that parking behind Henderson would be closed during the summer and reopen in the fall.

Jones mentioned there were employees that would not go out for lunch because parking was hard to find when they came back. Also noted the price for parking was steep compared to other campuses in Tennessee and other campuses had parking in front of buildings or gated areas close by. Jones pointed out the possibility of caves underground and that the hospital was not able to put up a parking garage for that reason. Kathy Faulkner asked if the entrance would change location. Oldham replied that the Pit parking and Henderson parking would all become one lot with it all becoming green space in the long term.

Kruszka suggested that the cost for the parking become a monthly payment instead of twice a year. Jones added that TSU only paid \$185 for premier parking. Oldham replied that other universities partially fund parking off mandatory student fees, it comes down to how you distribute the charges. There was no state funding for parking, the fees also were used for the upkeep to the parking spaces. Lee Wray will investigate a monthly charge option for parking fees.

Chrissy Derlinga asked Kevin Vedder if a salary scale was meant to be used only upon onboarding or if it was a growing scale that an employee could move up on depending on the number of years worked, from minimum to midlevel and then maximum. Vedder replied the scale was put together by many data points to be used as a baseline of salary for a given classification. Vedder added that with Performance Based Pay as we reward performance an employee can move across that range of pay. There was not a set number of years that would align with someone on that scale.

Derlinga asked if there was a process to look at for an employee who had been there a number of years and had not gone up on the scale? Vedder replied that it would fall into an equity analysis and compression analysis. Human Resource does look into this annually. An individual can also bring it to HR's attention. Amy Foster mentioned an experience that she then questioned where Tennessee Tech put its value of its staff. Another employee received a reclassification but was not really offered more money. Derlinga added that for Tennessee Tech to grow as an institution it was necessary to keep the clerical support and not have such high turnover. Charlene McClain said that salary based was the reason we lose so many employees.

There was discussion on the supervisor's role in recognizing that an employee was doing more and to recommend an increase. When an employee leaves, many times the job gets reclassified and a new person would come in at a higher rate. Immediate supervisors can only give the rating but had nothing to do with the raises. It was the supervisor's role to initiate the reclassification.

Vedder added there can be misunderstanding between being very involved in the work employees were doing and doing new types of work and responsibilities. Need to look at within the parameters of a given job, what were the duties and responsibilities. If the work was outside those parameters then it needs to be looked at, not just if someone was working very hard. An employee can come to Human Resources to have them look at the job that was being done.

Derlinga discussed the many processes that Tennessee Tech had to get a job done and suggested there be clerical support staff when a new staff was hired to assist in training so a new hire understood how the training applied to their role. The President commented that he had challenged senior leadership for areas of process improvement. An employee's perspective on the process might vary depending on the department the employee was in. It was a complex matter and important to keep priorities where they belong. Ultimately it was the people we work with and serve that were the most important. The President stated that there were concerns that the onboarding training period was a problem and was not being paid enough attention to, he thought it was something that could be addressed.

Derlinga stated there were concerns the international students had that they were paying higher tuition fees than their American counterparts and how it made them feel walking into the Office of International Education, the only area of Derryberry not updated. Enrollment Management requested funds to update the International Education offices and Derlinga requested that the project be put on Tennessee Tech's list of updates in the near future. A quote was given to Wray. The President stated a prior request had not been brought to his attention. Wray commented that many times funds were reallocated for projects within the division.

President Oldham gave a quick overview of the Governor's proposed budget which was likely to be approved. Capital Projects; a complete renovation of Johnson Hall, demolition of Foster Hall and a second new Engineering Building. There was funding for the Craft Center, Rural Reimagined and Cyber Security. Tennessee Tech tries to maximize funds by matching up the needs with opportunities. There were criteria that need to be met.

The President commented there would be no increase in tuition fees for next year. State support provides 35% of Tennessee Tech's annual funding then tuition and fees provide most of the rest of the annual funding. Tennessee Tech budgeted conservatively with flat enrollment expected for next year along with increasing costs. There will be an average 4% salary increase and the state would only fund half of that. Oldham added there was a two-million-dollar gap between funding and budget. Freshman applications were up 10% over historic highs and applications were up 12% over historic highs. Overall enrollment should be flat.

The President stated the Master Plan was approved by the Board of Trustees. It was a living breathing document and would continue to evolve even if approved. The Master Plan gives you an idea of what may happen in the future. Some additional Capital Projects in process were the New Engineering Building and West Stadium. Construction costs continue to increase.

Other Such Matters: Charlene McClain commented that there were lights out on campus and was really worried for the students who were walking home at night past the construction site. The President replied that the city will repair some of them and the lights that were currently out

will be replaced. There were many delays on campus in getting supplies. McClain added that the students were delighted that the back-door entrance to the Library was now useable.

Kruszka updated the committee on the Clerical and Staff Day, the date was set for July 15<sup>th</sup> in the Stonecipher Lecture Hall. Kruszka asked if anyone wanted to help the next planning meeting was Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

Other Such Matters: Kruszka mentioned for the next meeting, May 5<sup>th</sup>, that members bring nominees to be appointed to the Administrative Council. The committee would vote for one person for a three-year term.

Wells motioned to adjourn. Jones seconded. Adjourned at 2:44 p.m.

Documents on file:

Agenda March 24, 2022  
Minutes, January 27, 2022  
Staff Retreat Planning Notes, February 7, 2022

Next Meeting: May 5, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

Donna Schrock, recorder