

Staff Advisory Committee
PCR Meeting
October 27, 2022

Members Present: Eric Carlile, Amy Foster, Birgit Hoffman, Bethany Jones, Andrea Kruszka, Charlene McClain, Jessica Morgan, Amanda Ramsey, Gary Stafford, Sarah Starkey, Denette Way

Members Absent: Margo Dirkson, Shana Eads, Regina Gragg, Joni Gilmore, Corinne Johnson, Autumn McDaniel, Lisa Rice

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

Summary:

Approved Agenda

Approved September 22, 2022 minutes

Nominated Vice Chair

Discussed Staff Day 2023

Discussed Summer Hours Update

Discussed Parking Committee

Comments by the President

Proceedings:

Chair Bethany Jones called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Andrea Kruszka motioned to approve the agenda for May 5, 2022. Sara Starkey seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Andrea Kruszka motioned to approve the September 22, 2022 minutes. Amy Foster seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Chair Jones asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Kruszka motioned to elect Sarah Starkey. Amanda Ramsey seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Jones stated it was decided to just have a half day for Staff Day 2023. Those interested in being on the planning committee or had ideas for the Staff Day were to email Jones. The Staff Day was well received by the majority of the staff and Jones added that many departments on campus had said they would like more interaction with the group.

Amy Foster asked if it would be in the morning and would we still do a lunch? Jones replied the morning would be best and there would be some food at some point, this can be decided with the committee. Jones stated that the committee would start planning by the end of January.

Kevin Vedder updated that Summer Hours were being looked at with different options. It was still on the forefront and should have some resolution around the first of the year. Jones reviewed to the committee that the university was looking at options for the campus to adjust hours in the summer, yet still be functional with alternating schedules. Other universities around the state have changed their hours for the summer. Vedder added that the week of any holiday would have to go back to a normal work week schedule due to the complexity involved.

Foster shared there was a parking committee when the rates were established and then it was disbanded afterwards. If we want to bring up a proposal of new rates it would go to Dr. Stinson. Kruszka proposed that the C & S Staff be able to do monthly payments. Vedder and Lee Wray confirmed that next academic year the cost would be able to be spread out over nine months.

Jones commented that if we wanted to go forward we would need support and ideas. Sarah Starkey added that consideration based on salary would be good. Foster said a proposal would need the support of the whole committee. Is that where we want to go? Charlene McClain asked once it goes to Dr. Stinson where does it go from there? President Oldham said it would eventually come to him and would depend on what the tradeoffs were. Amanda Ramsey said we could stair step the rate. Oldham added that it will depend on the complexity of the system and encouraged the committee to make recommendations as they see fit.

Foster asked for those who want to meet and brainstorm to contact her and they will bring it back to the committee in January.

President Oldham commented the energy on campus was fantastic and the fall semester has gone very well thanks to all of you. The street projects that are going on would be completed within a year. The Ashraf Islam Engineering Building would be completed in about 15 months. Renovation of Johnson Hall would need to go through the design phase along with the demolition of Foster Hall. The design selection was going on now for the new Advanced Construction Manufacturing Engineering Building. The Football Stadium project have architects selected.

Oldham stated that the Budget was in good shape, the large freshman class had helped. Tennessee Higher Education Commission, this time of year, makes a request to the state for next years budget along with a range of tuition increase. If the state invests a large amount in higher education than there may be no tuition increase. TN Tech came out good on THEC's ranking of Capital Projects and Capital Maintenance Projects with replacement of Matthews, Daniels & Crawford Halls ranking third in capital projects. There are many Capital Maintenance Projects on the top of the list this session.

October is the time for revised budget and it is in good shape. With reallocation of funds the Police Department was able to get another position. Two Hundred and Sixty Thousand Dollars were reallocated to the Library for materials. The next Board of Trustees Meeting is December 1st and they will approve the revised budget at that time.

Other Such Matters: Kruszka asked if there was an update on the status of the Higher Education Administration PhD? The President replied that the proposal has gone to THEC and they have asked questions, it is still in the approval process.

McClain thanked the President for getting the lights working on University Drive.

Starkey asked if the compensation study was still in the process? Vedder replied that it was one of four strategic focuses of HR, which are: Total Rewards, Training and Development, Employee Satisfaction, and Workforce Assessment. Vedder stated that Tech was moving forward with a dedicated position for Training and Development. Vedder also added that TN Tech would be receiving proposals from external entities to partnership with HR and other members to conduct a compensation study. The study should start the beginning of 2023.

President Oldham added that it would be a six to nine-month process once it got started. Vedder commented that the study would look at faculty and staff compensation. Oldham added that he would expect at the end of the study to have sufficient information to set strategic priorities as a campus as to where we want compensation levels to go in the future. It may be a multi-year strategy. Oldham also added that compensation is one component to employee satisfaction.

Vedder stated that employee engagement and satisfaction is critically important as well and Tech would put an engagement survey out to the workforce on an annual basis to give us a pulse of what are we doing right and where we need to improve. Vedder added he believed that we are doing many things right thanks to a lot of people here and that we continue to earn the recognition as an employer of choice. Everyone has an opinion on compensation and may never get an agreement on it. It is a highly competitive labor market and many factors involved. TN Tech will try to be all we can to be in front.

Ramsey commented that the state of Tennessee was talking about passing minimum wage at \$15.00 an hour. If that would happen what would happen here if students are getting paid more than some of our staff. Vedder said we would have to take a look at it. Foster added that student graduate workers were trying to get their pay increased and it would have been more than Tech was paying some staff. Vedder replied that in the summer the undergraduate hourly student workers were put on a guideline depending on the type of job they did, this helped Tech be competitive with local employers.

Kruszka commented that their department depended on student workers and some are doing projects that do make more, the pay does vary and the guidelines were helpful. Jones pointed out that the students are not getting benefits and some people forget to look at the total package. Vedder added that Tech is partnering with Regions Bank to offer some Financial Wellness sessions on a voluntary basis. It would be virtual workshops on retirement and other topics.

McClain stated that our Food Pantry was being used daily and running low on supplies and asked if you are able to please donate. Food is a necessity and the students don't like to ask for food. Donna Schrock mentioned that she gets a monthly email asking for specific items to be donated that month to the Food Bank, she will forward to the group. Schrock takes her items to HR in Derryberry Hall. McCain added that Michelle Huddleston is in charge of the Food Bank and brings items to the library. Jessica Morgan mentioned that Athletics has had food drives where they asked people to bring an item to a game for the Food Pantry. Kruszka suggested that we make it part of the Staff Days, to bring a can of food or have it as a topic.

There are two Food Pantries on campus, Tech Village and the Library. Starkey suggested that we make a competition between buildings. Vedder suggested partnering with the Student Government organization. President Oldham said you can make a cash donation through University Advancement. Ramsey suggested a food drive through Tech Times. Just to make people aware of the need. Wray mentioned the Fraternities had food drives at homecoming up until COVID then they stopped. Oldham suggested we have Michelle Huddleston come to a committee meeting to talk to us about the Food Bank.

Morgan invited everyone to come out tonight to Purple Paluzza, bring kids to trick-or-treat. Kruszka invited everyone to come to graduation. Congratulations Andrea and Bethany! Vedder gave an HR public service announcement to remind people to report any injury that happens on the job within 24 hours to HR.

Kruszka motioned to adjourn. Eric Carlile seconded. Adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Documents on file:

Agenda October 27, 2022
Minutes, September 22, 2022

Donna Schrock, recorder