

Operating Staff Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday, February 11, 2009

Members in Attendance: Janice Aviza, Ann Boylan, Slava Bruder (Vice Chair), Monique Couillard, Matty Leighton (Chair), Patrice MacNevin, Janice Pierson, Sandra Reynolds, Toni Searles, Brian Tobin

Members Not in Attendance: Laurrie Anne Malizia

Guests: Sharon Demers, HR; Jodi Record, Campus Journal; Lonn Sattler, SPCC

Agenda Items

Welcome/Approval of Minutes – Matty Leighton

The council review the minutes for November, December, and January. The November minutes were approved by acclamation with a clarification to Item 4 on page 2 (sick pool). The December minutes were approved by acclamation. The January minutes were approved by acclamation with edits.

Retreat Follow-Up – Matty Leighton

Matty asked the council members for the feedback on the retreat. Comments were:

- The last portion of the retreat, after the three action items had been identified, sort of fell apart. The voting system was confusing, and there was no clear way to decide which council would be responsible for driving joint council work on which issue.
- Before voting on the final three initiatives at the end of the group brainstorming, they should be weeded out to the top six or eight to make it easier to decide.
- The speakers were all very good and the subjects were relevant, but they were just too much. We should spend far more time interacting with the other councils and less listening to speakers.
- OS council members would like to know more about the other councils and their representatives – who are they, what do they do?
- The icebreaker exercise should occur as people are arriving, so they are mixed together with people from the other councils when they sit down.
- Two years ago the retreat included a game that helped people learn about how the UNH administrative processes work. It was fun, and the attendees also learned a lot. We should try a similar exercise next year.

Three objectives were identified at the end of the retreat, and the council wanted to add a few more from the ideas generated by the Benefits Fair contest. The objectives for 2009 and the council members who wish to work on them are as follows:

- Creating a Mediation Board (continued from 2008) – Janice Pierson, Slava Bruder, Patrice MacNevin, Mary Essly (PAT Council)
- Reducing Unwanted Mail/Paper – Patrice MacNevin, Janice Aviza
- Encouraging Carpooling/Creating Park-N-Rides with Bus Service – Tracy Gagnon (Transportation Policy Committee rep)

- Providing More Support for Professional Development Activities
- Promoting from Within – Matty Leighton, Sandra Reynolds, Mary Essly (PAT Council)

President’s Budget Letter

Matty asked the council representatives what sort of feedback, if any, they were receiving in the wake of President Huddleston’s budget letter. Several reps reported a generalized anxiety in the employee population, and Ann Boylan mentioned that job security continues to be a concern for non-status employees in Housekeeping, who fear they will lose their jobs in three years if they don’t go to work for the outsourcing vendor. Patrice submitted the following constituent questions, which were answered by Sharon Demers:

Q: How soon might we be implementing more summer programs?

A: Not this summer. This would happen in 2010 at the earliest.

Q: Will the staff get raises this year?

A: Nothing has been determined yet, but it seems clear from the state of the budget so far that raises will not be large.

Note: An announcement was made a few weeks after the meeting that **senior-level management** will receive no raises at all this year.

Q: Will there be another opportunity for employees to cash out earned time to offset the rising cost of benefits?

A: There are no plans for another cash-out opportunity at this time, although HR is aware that it was a popular option with employees.

Q: Is the Peter Paul College of Business Hotel/Conference Center that’s being planned for the current ATO fraternity location a sure bet?

A: This is still under discussion. It’s unclear whether this would be a joint venture with private parties or strictly a UNH operation, but it’s strictly still in the planning stages.

Task Action Group Reports

Communications - Matty Leighton

Matty has updated the Blackboard site for the council by adding all the current members, attaching all the minutes that are available, and creating discussion for working groups. Council members were adamant that the Blackboard site should stay as simple as possible.

Upward Review – Laurie Anne Malizia

Representatives from the other councils have finally been identified and Sharon will be convening this HR-backed task force.

SPPC Update – Lonni Sattler and Janice Pierson

The SPPC is still working on several initiatives that have been discussed previously. They continue to draft and modify language for the teleworking policy; most recently they added language that will allow campuses to make their own local policies. It’s also clear that employees will have to accept that this will not be an option that will be open to all – the opportunity to telecommute will be very dependent on the nature of an employee’s work. The partial leave policy, which was discussed making the OS policy equitable with the leave policy for PAT. Finally, the SPPC continues to review the tuition benefit policy. Some ideas include 1) increasing the tuition benefit for children when both parents work for the university; 2) extending the tuition benefit to a widowed spouse for a certain number of credits after an employee dies; 3) allowing payroll deductions for dependent tuition, rather than requiring payment in a

lump sum; 4) addressing concerns about tax implications of the benefit; and 5) rethinking how to compare the monetary value of credit and non-credit courses. Finally, Janice told the council that she's working on an initiative to allow employees to pay for New Horizons courses with the tuition benefit.

Long-Term Care Benefit – Sharon Demers

The university now offers an optional long-term care insurance plan through RetirementGuard. Individuals who would like to speak with a representative may call 1-888-793-6111 for a phone consultation or to schedule a one-on-one conference. One-on-one conferences will be available (by reservation only) at the Durham campus, MUB Room 304, on Wednesday, March 11.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM.

The next OSC meeting will take place from 1:00 – 2:30 PM on Wednesday, March 11th in the Trustees' Board Room in T-Hall. OS Council meetings are open to all operating staff.

OS Council web site: <http://www.unh.edu/os-council/>

PAT Council web site: <http://www.unh.edu/pat-council/>

SPPC web site: <http://www.usnh.edu/hr/sppc.html>