

Operating Staff Council Meeting Minutes Wednesday, October 8, 2008

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

Members Not in Attendance: Lisa Wilder

Guests: Susan Crockett-Pelletier, Constituent; Sharon Demers, Human Resources; Dianne Hall, OS Liaison to TPC; Janice Hughes, Potential Council Member; Marcia Parma, Constituent; Steve Pesci, Special Projects; Jody Record, Campus Journal; Lonn Sattler, SPCC; Dirk Timmons, UNH Transportation Services

Agenda Items

Approval of September Minutes – Matty Leighton

The minutes from the September meeting were approved by acclamation.

Introductions – Matty Leighton

Matty introduced the numerous guests:

Susan Crockett-Pelletier – Susan, who attended as Matty’s guest, is a Business Services Assistant in the College of Health and Human Services BSC. Susan has formerly served on the President’s Commission on Women as well as the Administrative Office Professionals Committee, and she received a Women’s Commission Award in 2001 as a result of her work with the AOP.

Dianne Hall – Dianne is a Grants and Contracts Administrator with the Office of Sponsored Research and serves as one of two Operating Staff representatives on the university’s Transportation Policy Committee.

Janice Hughes – Janice is an Administrative Assistant with the UNH Foundation who believes strongly in employee representation and is interested in joining the council. This was her first OS Council meeting.

Marcia Parma – Marcia is a Food Service Shift Supervisor with UHS/Dining who works in Holloway Common. Marcia is concerned about transportation and parking issues that affect UHS/Dining employees.

Steve Pesci – Steve is Project Director for Special Projects with Campus Planning. He is a UNH alum (1983, 1992G) and has been a consistent advocate of sustainable transportation planning at the university. Most recently, Steve directed the restoration and remodeling of the UNH Train Station and Dairy Bar.

Dirk Timmons – Dirk is Director of UNH Transportation Services.

Presentation on Transportation and Parking – Steve Pesci and Dirk Timmons

Steven Pesci started the presentation with a short discussion of how the current transportation policy has evolved. The university first began taking a “macro” view of transportation, viewing it as a cohesive system, in 2001. Since then Transportation Services has worked to create a system that is sustainable both fiscally and environmentally. UTS tracks many types of data, including permit sales, fines, availability of parking spaces, ridership of various bus and shuttle routes, and more. In addition, they

recently completed a user survey. Right now, data shows that permit sales are flat, parking fines are down, and the availability of parking space in outlying lots has increased. Safety is also improved. UNH Transportation is now the number one transportation system in the state, with 1.2 million riders in 2008! In addition, these transportation services are delivered at a very low cost to the consumer. Because UTS and Campus Planning has been very aggressive about pursuing federal funds and creating private/public partnerships, only twenty cents of every dollar spent on capital purchases (i.e., buses) comes from riders.

Going forward, challenges will include:

- Keeping the momentum moving in terms of increasing bus and train ridership, encouraging carpooling, securing funding, etc.
- Paying for the system, since costs are rising but revenues remain flat.

Future plans include:

- Increasing frequency on existing routes, where overflow ridership is currently causing cost overruns.
- Offering runs at earlier times.
- Expanding routes to service areas such as Rochester.
- Expanding campus shuttle service year-round.
- Continuing the Main Street Project improvements west of the Field House out to West Edge.
- Implementing a Rail Cat program that allows UNH ID holders to ride the Downeaster to and from Dover and Exeter, Monday through Friday, for free.

Both Dirk and Steve emphasized that they would like students and employees to view transportation as a high-value package that includes parking, free transportation, and carpooling, all delivered in an environmentally responsible, sustainable manner.

Dirk also mentioned the added value of the Guaranteed Ride Home program, which offers a ride home within a forty-mile radius to any faculty, staff, or student commuter who has taken Wildcat Transit, a carpool, or a vanpool, and experiences an emergency that requires a ride home. This service is offered to make it easier for commuters to use one of the several alternate transportation programs to campus, without fear that they will get "stuck" at UNH in an emergency.

There was a question and answer period after Dirk and Steve finished their presentation. Questions included:

Q. What about flexible bus service for workers in areas such as Dining and Housekeeping who work very early or late shifts?

A. While not all shift workers can be accommodated by bus routes, the new GoLoco carpooling services might help shift workers arrange alternative transportation. More information is available at www.goloco.org.

Q. How does carpool parking work?

A. Right now, employees who carpool must bring BOTH their valid hang tags and show them at the entrance to the carpool lot. There was some confusion last week with an employee who didn't understand the procedure, but that has been resolved. However, UTS is considering moving to a system where carpoolers pre-register and receive a special carpool permit.

On a related note, because campus is growing and spreading out, UTS is considering putting a second carpool parking lot on the west side of campus.

Q. Why does the university keep taking away faculty/staff parking spaces?

A. Actually, in the period since 2001, faculty and staff have gained spaces. However, this may not be immediately evident, since the effort has been to consolidate F/S spaces together in one place rather than spreading them out in ones and twos over many lots. Also, because of the construction closures, it may appear that there are fewer spaces. However, when all lots are open, net F/S spaces have actually increased in number.

Q. Currently there are Dining employees who work at Holloway Commons and begin their shifts near the middle of the day. Because parking is so tight at that time, they are forced to park at West Edge and take a shuttle to HoCo. This isn't a problem; however, some of these same employees remain at work as late as midnight or 1:00 AM, when a shuttle isn't available, and walking to West Edge is unsafe. As a result, employees often spend their whole mid-shift break taking the shuttle bus to West Edge and relocating their car closer to HoCo so they can be safe when they get off work. What can be done to accommodate these employees? Can spaces be designated for them in Lot D?

A. Unfortunately, Lot D is one of the few lots on campus that has been designated for use when spaces need to be blocked off for events. Therefore, trying to accommodate Dining employees in that lot would be impractical, as they would frequently be displaced. However, there are some other options that can be considered:

1. There is a shuttle to West Edge until 11:00.
2. There is a shuttle that services the entire campus until midnight, and this can take employees to West Edge.
3. It may be possible to arrange some sort of on-demand service to employees who get off work when the shuttles have stopped running. Marcia Parma will work with Dirk to find a solution.

Note: If for some reason there is a parking emergency after the hours the parking office is open, commuters should call the main UTS number, 2-2328.

Task Action Groups

Upward Review – Laurie Anne and Slava have completed contacting comparator institutions, which included Oregon State, University of Vermont, and University of Washington. However, both Oregon and Washington are very interested in hearing about our activities, as they are also hoping to include upward review as part of their supervisor assessment procedures.

Mediation Board – Janice deferred the Mediation Board report until the next meeting due to lack of time.

Constituent Communications – Matty reported on her success in holding a face-to-face meeting with a group of constituents. She provided coffee, donuts, and bagels, and attendance was very good. Although the meeting was originally intended to last about 15 minutes, the discussion went on for closer to 45 and constituent input was candid and helpful. After the meeting, attendees indicated that they found the session helpful. Some of the issues that came up included the cost of benefits, the length and repetitiveness of the performance assessment, the lack of defined opportunities for advancement for OS, the fact that degrees or other educational achievements are not counted towards base salary, the lack of equity between faculty and staff benefits, the restrictions on how employees can use sick pool time, and the use of supplemental pay for some OS and PAT while others work extra hours without compensation.

Because of the positive response, Matty encouraged other council representatives to hold face-to-face meetings, even if they are only brief stop-ins with one or two employees.

Benefits Fair – Matty Leighton

As discussed at the last meeting, the benefits fair is scheduled for Tuesday, October 28th, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM in the Granite State Room. Matty will distribute a request for staffing via e-mail, and she will deliver business cards to the reps prior to the fair.

In addition to the items already agreed upon for the booth, the council agreed to distribute information on Transportation Services options and copies of the “Learn About Learning at UNH” piece that was recently posted on the communication boards.

As a prize for the constituent idea contest, Patrice will get UHS/Dining to provide some baked goods and Matty will find a basket.

Logo Ideas – Sandra Reynolds

The council reviewed the updated designs and voted on the two options – the results were 3 in favor of the pen and 10 in favor of the bridge. However, the group also agreed that the slogan needs to relate directly to the image of the bridge and what it means in relation to the council. Some council members also thought we might be able to find a better bridge image.

Over the next month, council members will submit slogan ideas to Matty and a final vote will be taken at the November meeting.

SPPC Update – Lonni Sattler

Lonni gave the council a very brief overview of two proposed employment policies that the SPPC took a first look at last month. One involved benefits for individuals entering into civil unions, while the other regarded teleworking (often called telecommuting), which could allow some UNH employees to work from home. Because OS staff members are paid hourly and have to report the number of hours they work, the process would be a little more complicated for them, according to Sharon Demers, assistant vice president of human resources. The SPPC is addressing three types of teleworking: emergency short-term teleworking chosen by the employee, emergency (short or long-term) teleworking required by the institution, and regularly scheduled teleworking. Demers wanted to make sure the council recognized that even if a policy is approved, not all jobs at the university would accommodate teleworking due to the nature of the work required (i.e., being present to answer phones and greet visitors).

Sick Pool – Sharon Demers

Sharon submitted an alternate proposal for adding language to the sick pool enrollment policy rather than changing it (attached as Appendix A). Her proposal would affect the UNH campus only and would not require SPPC approval. The council was in consensus that this was the best way to approach the issue, with the caveat that employees should have the opportunity to change their conversion month if they change jobs.

Earned Time Rollover at Retirement – Janice Pierson

Janice and a number of other council members wanted to know if it would be possible to allow OS to roll the pay-out for remaining earned time into a tax-sheltered plan at retirement. Right now, earned time is paid in a lump sum that incurs a tax burden. Sharon replied that unfortunately because earned time includes other types of time besides vacation time (sick time, military leave, bereavement, etc.), the IRS does not allow this. It is worth noting, however, that because this option is not available to OS, PAT are not allowed to roll over their vacation time at retirement either.

Staff Development Grant Committee Representative – Slava Bruder

Slava asked for a volunteer to serve as the third Operating Staff representative on the Staff Development Grant Committee. This representative does NOT have to be a council member. Susan Crockett-Pelletier volunteered and was accepted.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:35 PM.

The next OSC meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, November 12th at 1:00 PM in MUB Room 321. 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>

Appendix A

Sick Leave Pool

11.5.1 Description. The Sick Leave Pool is intended to provide additional security by allowing staff members the opportunity to exchange Earned Time hours for Sick Pool hours at the equivalent rate of three Sick Pool hours for each hour of Earned Time. Each institution establishes a one-month period once each year for "open enrollment" in the Sick Leave Pool. ~~In addition,~~ A newly hired employee who completes her/his initial introductory period will then be allowed a 30 day period to convert accrued Earned Time hours to Sick Pool Time.

Proposed UNH Campus Policy:

Employees may select either the month of October or May as their conversion month.
Employees will not have the option to change conversion months from year to year.