University Staff Council Meeting Minutes  
Zoom Meeting  
Tuesday, 1:30 - 3 p.m., 10/20/20

I. Call to Order – Kristina Ballard

II. Roll Call of Members - Sally Yang  

Absent: Jill Lee, Kamola Owens Milton, Flora Reeves, Shelby Herbert, Alicia Meza  

Recognition of visitors: Jan Shaw, Yvette Shaffer  

Welcome to new ex-officio members: Kelli Isaacks - Agrilife Agencies; Annie Crump - Former USC Chair; Hank Lawson - TEEX; Kenny Kimball - CSBA; Alicia Meza - TAMU Systems Staff Council; Dr. Debjyoti Banerjee - Faculty Senate; and Elizabeth Henderson - TEES

III. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting Minutes  

Motion – Brittany Ramsey; 2nd by – Cindy Hurt

IV. Update on Monthly Meeting with Vice President for Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness  

A. Discussed our meeting with Elizabeth Schwartz, from HROE – she has great experience and guidance on matters like the recognition of state/federal comp time. She is going to reach out within her own circles to find out what other universities and local HRs are doing with comp time, like keeping track and how to use. Hope to follow up with her in the coming weeks.  

1. Sarah Franke and members of the Work Life and Benefits committee will be researching how this is handled in peer institutions.  

B. Discussed the Executive Committee’s recent meeting with transportation services. The overall conclusion for that discussion was to spread awareness that staff can return their permits if they choose, but no guarantees can be given on getting that same lot in the coming year. If you return your permit from a highly requested area, it will be offered to an individual on the waitlist.  

C. RIFs – have not heard of any RIFs beyond those known in Agrilife due to restructure.  

D. Annual leave and rollover cap – HROE will reach out to the Systems Office on this topic for staff.

V. Reports  

A. Inquiries – Cynthia Billington  

1. Request for information on our system/program used for the USC newsletter.  

2. Recommendation to change highlighting colors in the newsletter for easier reading.  

3. Various others all in the realm of transportation and parking.

B. Internal committees  

1. Inclusion, Equity and Respect in the Workplace – Brittany Ramsey  

a) Goals for AY20-21  

b) Magnify diversity resources on USC site  

2. Professional Development – Natalie Shaw
a) Discussed what our goal should be as the PD committee for the new year. We also discussed the need to make sure all committee members and USC representatives have taken the Strengths test.

3. Staff Emergency Fund – Flora Reeves
a) The fund update includes numbers for 2020 September:
   (1) Provided/paid this period: $00.00
   (2) Donations received: $95.00
   (3) Balance: $15,836.08

4. Work Life and Benefits – Sarah Franke
a) Where we’ve been: 2017-2018 Survey conducted to determine how benefits provided to TAMU employees compared to those offered to staff at peer institutions. The research was conducted, results were compiled and combined into a single document by Work Life & Benefits committee members in FY20. Overall assessment of benefits was very comparable to our peers with minor differences (both benefits better than or slightly less than TAMU).

b) After reviewing the report, there was consensus amongst the attending committee membership that most items had been addressed (either due to the passage of time since the information was gathered or by proactive discussions with HR Benefits). We discussed a realistic perspective moving forward based on current budget constraints and the possibility of additional budget limitations in future budget cycles.

c) Current issues on our plate:
   (1) Employee parking remission for those with AWL
   (2) Dental night guards – already moved forward to SEBAC
   (3) Comp Time policy – will continue conversation about standardized interpretation with HR partners

C. External Committees
1. Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Kristina Ballard and Vernon Camus
a) Attended two well-attended meetings that gave us a great deal of useful information surrounding the following questions:
   (1) How can you enhance the Aggie experience for all to have a more inclusive and respectful environment?
   (2) How do we help TAMU evolve while maintaining our unique values?
   (3) What do respect and integrity look like at Texas A&M? How should it look?
   (4) What do symbols, like the Sul Ross statue or building names, mean to you?
   (5) What innovative suggestions and solutions should we consider for DEI at TAMU?
   (6) Is there anything else you’d like the Commission to know?

b) We will also have another for former students and for current students. Commission is moving into 4th and final phase. Our deadline is the first week of November for the final report to be turned in. More information on our findings and activities can be found here: https://president.tamu.edu/committees-task-forces/commission-on-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/commission-activities/index.html

2. Council for the Built Environment - Jill Lee and Monica Hartman
a) The CBE on October 13th. The first item for discussion was the College of Engineering’s HBT Detonation Research Test Facility by Easterwood Airport. The CBE voting members approved the proposal unanimously with discussed caveats.
b) The second item for discussion was the College of Architecture’s request to place a facility across from the Texas A&M Hotel & Conference Center (south of the ILSB). A vote was not taken, but a preemptive discussion took place. The university architect will look into this project in more detail.

3. COVID-19 Advisory Group Diversity Operations Committee – Cynthia Billington
   a) The COVID-19 Advisory Committee met on September 24. The major issue that arose from that discussion outside from updates was the mental and physical health of our students as they are not getting enough exercise. Energy of those on both Zoom as well as in the classroom is much lower than we have seen. Random testing numbers have decreased; campus occupancy should increast in the SPRING. Staff can also go to REC center for COVID testing.

4. Diversity Operations Committee – Marcos Mendez
   a) Dr. Iris Carrillo, Assistant Director, Counseling Services presented on “The Connections Between Mental Health and Social Justice Work”

5. The President’s Sustainability Advisory Council – Nikki Cavender
   a) Presentations given on updates to Sustainability Master Plan, Social Sustainability and student success, hours of community service per full time equivalent enrollment commensurate with Texas A&M Core Value of Selfless Service, leveraging institutional purchasing dollars to advance a sustainable supply chain, and increasing the percentage of students who take a course with a sustainable learning outcome. (I missed part of the meeting, so this is taken directly from the agenda.)

6. Task Force on Campus Emergencies – Sarah Franke
   a) Opening remarks were made by Christopher Meyer, Associate Vice President for Safety & Security
   b) Code Maroon Alerts
      (1) Monica Martinez reported that since the last meeting in February 2020, there have been two instances where the Code Maroon System was activated.
      (2) April 24 – Non-credible Bomb Threat
      (3) August 20 – Fall 2020 COVID-19 Emergency Notification
   c) Code Maroon System Update
      (1) Marlin Crouse provided an update on the status of implementing the new emergency notification system through AppArmor. He also discussed delivery statistics of monthly tests and the upcoming release of the Texas A&M Code Maroon App.
   d) Infectious Disease Update
      (1) Dr. Dannenbaum presented an update on current trends in infectious diseases, including COVID-19. See attached presentation for additional details.
   e) COVID-19 Response
      (1) Chris Meyer provided an overview of the University’s response activities to the COVID-19 pandemic to date. A timeline of events can be accessed here: https://rise.articulate.com/share/U16Y0AcUWPI1oLL-mCbG4Y1mvjqrMq/
   f) Fall 2020 Football Operations
      (1) Kevin Hurley discussed changes to the 2020 Football Operations due to COVID-19. Key points include, testing for all student athletes, measures for social distancing in the stands, enforcement of the mask policy, and no campus tailgating.

7. SEBAC – Sarah Franke
   a) For employees covered under the TAMUS Employee Health Insurance Plan:
All co-payments, co-insurance, and deductibles for COVID-19 testing consistent with the guidance issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have been waived by all A&M System health plans. This benefit has been extended through 1/31/2021.

A&M Care COVID treatment cost share waiver has been extended through 12/31/2020.

A&M Care health plan members can receive telemedicine services from their network physicians for medically necessary, covered medical and behavioral health services for a $0 copay. The claim must indicate services were provided via telemedicine/telehealth to qualify. This benefit has been extended through 12/31/2020.

New services available for covered employees/dependents:

(a) Livongo – available program for those diagnosed or being treated for hypertension or diabetes. By invitation only based on health insurance claims/diagnosis codes. Hypertension program provides a blood pressure monitor and digital app to help patients manage blood pressure and communicate (if desired) blood pressure results to the medical provider. Diabetes program provides upgraded blood glucose monitor and unlimited testing strips, etc. Also incorporates a digital app with alerts, dietary suggestions, etc.

(b) Omada—available for patients at risk for hypertension or diabetes https://omadahealth.com/. Individuals can apply to be part of this program by answering a brief questionnaire regarding risk factors. This program focuses on lifestyle changes. Provides a digital scale that links to an app, a dedicated coach and community support.

(c) Both programs have received excellent feedback from early users.

(d) Hinge Health—available for members with ongoing or chronic musculoskeletal health issues https://hingehealth.com/tamus. Currently focuses on the following chronic pain areas: hip, back, shoulder, neck and knee pain. Members can be invited based on their health insurance diagnosis or claim history OR can self-refer to the program. Provides a tablet and electronic sensors to wear (specific to pain area of focus) while performing virtual PT exercises. Also provides one on one health coaching.

(e) Ovia Health—program focusing on fertility, pregnancy & parenting (download app). App provides three separate programs with extra benefits for those enrolling and indicating TAMUS employment & BC/BS health insurance enrollment.

Enhancements and Extension of existing benefits programs:

(a) MDLive – provides telemedicine benefits to enrolled members. Employees are encouraged to enroll before needing to use the service to make securing treatment faster and more efficient, but it is not required. Benefits has seen an increased enrollment and usage of this service during the COVID-19 pandemic. Estimated savings over traditional office visits is estimated at over $361,000. Registration was boosted by making enrollment part of the Two-Step Evive checklist in FY20.

(b) Evive – Two Step Checklist has been enhanced for FY21 with new & diversified options to qualify for health insurance premium reduction. Participants completing the checklist now can impact both this year’s premium reduction as well as next year’s premium reductions. Securing a flu shot from a clinic or medical provider who bills BC/BS or from one of the TAMU flu shot clinics is a qualifying activity for FY21. Be advised that if you secure your flu shot through a TAMU flu shot drive thru vaccination clinic, it will take some time for Evive to recognize completion (a list of participants will not be provided to Evive until the last clinic has taken place).
(6) Former USC representative Barbara Schumacher requested SEBAC investigate the possibility of including dental/occlusal night guards to be considered for coverage under Delta Dental benefits. Research on this request has yielded the following:
(a) Both the night guards and electric toothbrushes/replacement heads are eligible charges for the medical flexible spending account.
(b) System benefits partners will be meeting with representatives from Delta Dental to explore what the cost and premium charges would be to include this item as part of preventative coverage. Decisions will be based on a cost-benefit analysis.
(c) Electric toothbrush coverage cannot be added to the Delta Dental plan but they do have a partnership with Philips Sonicare which provides a discount for covered members. Visit www.brushsmart.org and enter your name, date of birth and state of residence in order to qualify for a 20-25% discount on purchases.

(7) Contracts being reviewed for renewals/renegotiation:
(a) 2nd MD
(b) Express Scripts prescription service

8. TAMU President Search Committee – Kristina Ballard
a) The search committee met in a kickoff meeting on Sept 25. Since then, the search firm has been facilitating conversations with leadership and administrative stakeholders. There were three opportunities in early Oct. for the university community (faculty, staff and students) to participate. The forums were recorded and will be made available on the search website soon. Also, the search firm is transitioning from Isaacson, Miller to R. William Funk and Associates due to scheduling challenges.

9. Transportation Services Advisory Committee (TSAC) – Lisa Pierce & Tamra Young
a) The first of the 35 buses we will be receiving from the grant last year should ship on October 19th. The remaining 34 busses will ship before the holiday break. The 3 Proterra electric buses will start in January 2021 with projected delivery in March 2021.

b) Revenue projections continue to be a concern. Transit ridership and special event/visitor revenue is at less than 20% of normal. They are tracking $16 million in losses, and will run out of money this spring. Asking for a $1.25 million loan this fiscal year and $1.25 million for the next fiscal year.

c) Discussed the permit refund policy. That parts of campus have plenty of parking (For example: the GSC) if a person turns in their permit for the GSC lot 88 it would be easy to return a permit back to them for lot 88 when needed, Where a lot like 54 or 55 have large waitlists and the person wouldn’t be able to get that permit back for that specific lot, it would be lot 51 or something similar.

d) Transportation will be providing complimentary voter parking at Stallings Blvd Garage starting Tuesday, October 13th and will run through Election Day. Will also provide transit service, first to the MSC for early voting and then to Rudder Exhibit Hall.

e) Polo Road Garage (PRG) has been open and operational since the beginning of the fall semester. Transportation Services along with 5 restaurants, and Rec Sports will be moved in and operational by the beginning of the Spring Semester and lot 50 will be returned for regular parking.

10. University Dining Services – Lana Nixson
a) First meeting was on 9/22/2020
b) Social Distancing Measures in Place: Floor vinyl spacing, face coverings for workers, hand sanitizer stations, attendant served stations with Plexiglass
c) Quarantine Feeding & Delivered Meals: Partnering with Residence Life by serving breakfast, lunch & dinner. Currently 100-300 students being served approximately 200 meals a day. Also accommodating special diet requests.

d) New food locations at MSC: Chick-Fil-A, Spin N Stone Pizza, Jason’s Deli, Cabo Grill, Pom & Honey, and newly renovated Aggie Express renamed Market at Lamar

e) For those residing at White Creek Apartments new meal plan this semester “White Creek Plan”

f) Convert one meal swipe per day to a retail swipe equivalent to $7.50 implemented instead of meal trades. Get $7.50 value at retail places like Chick-Fil-A, Panda Express, Jason’s Deli.

VI. New Business
A. Flu Vaccine Clinics
B. Voting Leave Includes Time Off for Early Voting - Eligible employees are entitled to take paid time off to vote in state or national elections, including early voting, with supervisory approval. Eligible employees may use this time off in those instances where they are not able to vote before or after their scheduled work shift. Voting leave is one of the categories in Workday for Leave of Absence with Pay. See online information. Questions on voting leave should be submitted to benefits@tamu.edu or hschr@tamu.edu.

VII. Old Business
A. Bylaws proposal to create a new committee representing the branch campuses. USC members voted and approved the proposal.
B. Sul Ross Statue survey – Eric Webb presented the results of the survey, 50.3% of 3,656 staff responded to the questions in the survey. Kristina is going to write a memo to the Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion identifying the results of the survey and the representative’s recommendations for staff.

VIII. Announcements
A. Next USC Meeting: November 17, 8:45 a.m.
B. https://tamu.zoom.us/j/95301464909?pwd=MzFXYIy1Qzl2WmVwbkIvMV01PbUx3QT09
C. Meeting ID: 953 0146 4909 Passcode: 225212