

K-State University Support Staff Senate Minutes

May 6, 2015, 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Executive Council 12:00

Cottonwood Room, KSU Union

**I. President, Kerry Jennings, called the meeting to order at 12:35 pm**

**II. Roll Call**

**Present:** Amy Capoun, Susan Erichsen, Carrie Fink, Janet Finney, Doris Galvan, Brittany Green, Steve Greinke, Kerry Jennings, Emily Johnson, Gina Lowe, Carol Marden, Cheryl Martin, Felisa Osburn, Lesa Reves, Rob Reves, Michael Seymour II, Janice Taggart, Becki Bohnenblust (in for Lindsay Thompson), Heather Tourney, Pam Warren, Julie Wilburn, John Wolf, Kari Zook

**Excused:** Michael Ashcraft, Sharon Maike

**III. Guest Speaker, Danielle Dempsey-Swopes, Human Capital Services**

- There have been many changes in the area of discrimination since she was here originally in 1996. With the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) being created from the Office Affirmative Action there have been many added responsibilities.
- Many people ask how a supervisor is involved with or how to help with investigations. Under the new policy a supervisor now has two main responsibilities.
  - 1) Understand that you are a mandated reporter. If an employee says anything questionable about discrimination, follow the chain of command or contact OIE directly. Starting fall 2015 the training will be more extensive.
  - 2) The supervisor will have no investigation responsibilities unless you are part of the administrative review team.
- Supervisors do not investigate. You don't even have to decide if what is being said is actually discrimination. The OIE offices will make that determination.
- **Steve Greinke** stated if after a report has been made, separation can be difficult. **Danielle** responded that it is always okay to send them home for the day or have them step out to gain composure. **Steve** added that sometimes the employee may start over sharing information. **Danielle** suggested being supportive and to tell them thank you for reporting this to me but you will have to repeat all of this to the investigator as part of the investigation. This process will not be over just by telling me this.
- Student employees are included. When in doubt, report it. There may be an investigation, there may not be.
- It was asked to define supervisor: Any one that has the ability to exercise authority over employees.
- **Becki Bohnenblust** asked if OIE is still part of HCS and if so what happens if there is a complaint within that group. **Danielle** responded that OIE is still part of HCS so if there is a complaint within HCS they cannot investigate it. The complaint would be referred to another entity.
- **Cheryl Martin** asked what actually happens in an investigation. **Danielle** responded that it depends on the situation. It could be looking at text messages, twitter feed, etc. We try to keep interviews as few as possible to keep confidentiality intact and to not drag it out

- **Janice Taggart** asked what if someone reports something to you and you aren't a supervisor, what do you do? **Danielle** responded that if you aren't a supervisor you aren't a mandated reporter but do encourage them to speak at HCS or their supervisor.
- **Steve Greinke** stated that in the past, when ART members are selected to be on the ART committee those people may be loose lipped and not unbiased. What then? **Danielle** responded that someone else in that supervisory chain can be selected to keep the integrity intact for that investigation.

#### **IV. Minutes**

The April 1, 2015 minutes were reviewed, John Wolf moved to accept the minute as written. Janice Taggart seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### **V. Budget/Treasurer's Report**

Susan Erichsen reported the budget as of May 5, 2015. Foundation Account (C-21151-CS) has a balance of \$1,435.47; Foundation Account (C-21155-CS) has a balance of \$427.01; Foundation Account (C-23750-CS Awards Ceremony) has a balance of \$1,871.19; State Account (NMAF205629) has a balance of \$601.79; for a total of \$4,335.46.

Three meritorious service awards were awarded at \$200/ each. The only bill paid so far towards the Award Ceremony from last month is to caterer. The remainder of the bills are outstanding. Steve Greinke moved to accept the minutes as presented. Cheryl Martin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

#### **VI. Human Capital Liaison**

- Victoria Young, OIE Investigator, started last week. Travis Gill, the Director of the Office of Institutional Equity started Monday so lots of new faces. They are working on interviews for the Assistant Director Compensation and Organizational Effectiveness. They hope to make offers soon. They are working to start interviews for the Assistant Director of Employee Relations. The goal is to have candidates in to interview by the end of May.
- **Gina** presented the senate with a Peer Review Committee (PRC) graph in hopes to compare how the peer review process was before and after the conversion to USS since there seems to be some misunderstanding between what was promised and what is being executed.
  - Old process: (for terminations) PRC could hear, if it was upheld it would go to Appeals board.
  - New Process: PRC wouldn't hear it. It would go straight to KSU appeals board
  - The appeals board will strictly appeal the process that occurred with the Director of ER. The committee and the board would not hear the same case.
- **Steve Greinke** asked if the President still have the authority to overturn a decision from PRC? Gina responded if President Schulz thought he needed to be involved, he could have a discussion with Cheryl Johnson to overturn.
- **Michael Seymour II** stated that if I felt I was being discriminated or harassed by a member of HCS I couldn't bring it up to the OIE because of the conflict of interest since the final say goes with VP of HCS (who OIE reports to directly) so there is no neutral outside entity. **Gina** shared that she will let Cheryl know our concern. **Janice Taggart** asked what we would do if that were an issue. **Gina** shared that with certain issues you could go to the EEOC or get an attorney. **Cheryl Martin** expressed this is why USS people feel lied to and deceived because we were promised one thing and then they changed it after everyone voted.

- **Carol Marden** stated that originally Cindy Bontrager was the final decision maker but once Cheryl Johnson came on board, she became the final decision maker, keeping it in the same department as OIE. It should stay under Cindy as was originally planned. In the meeting that was held with Cheryl, Cindy and Charlotte, it was stated that Charlotte is the appointed authority to make the decision but the overall decision would go to Cheryl. The concern with this is that Cheryl is Charlotte's supervisor. It is perceived that Cheryl would of course defend Charlotte as she is her employee. **Cheryl Martin** stated that USS employees are sorry that they changed to USS and are nervous. They feel that no one has their back and feel exposed. **Carrie Fink** stated that she has been having many conversations with various constituents that they feel as though HCS is out to get them. They feel tricked and deceived. There are lots of feelings of mistrust. They don't even know where to go for information. A problem with FAQ's that are being released is that they are so general and USS employees read more into it than is intended. The FAQ talks about when CBIZ is done there may be salary reductions. Again, causing feelings of deception since before the vote, we had been told that there would not be a reduction of pay or benefits and now there is talk of a reduction. **Gina** will ask for them to clarify those concerns and that future reductions more than likely would not affect USS employees, it would be more for unclassified employees that are 50% over the pay grade maximum.
- **Janice Taggart** asked if it is possible for senators to get an update on CBIZ? **Gina** asked if we would you like Derek to send an email update? **Kerry Jennings**: Yes
- **Cheryl Martin** brought up the concerns from employees that they are already below the costs of living, what if CBIZ were to decide that that person is paid too much and received a reduction. What do we tell them? **Gina**: Let them know that they will not have a decrease unless they are 50% over the pay grade maximum.
- **Gina** stated that they are working to redo the HCS website and hope to have it launched sometime in July and hope for it to be easier to find things.
- **Amy Capoun** asked how the current position description will weigh for the CBIZ project? **Gina** said that what you answer in the survey will help create a new position description.
- **Carrie Fink** said it was rumored that FTE monies that was unused from unfilled positions was sent back to HCS. Is that accurate? **Janice Taggart** said that would be the budget council that manages that and we are in limbo until the State sets the budget.
- **John Wolf** asked about the House and the senate passed the bill for reclassifying classified employees, will that affect us? **Kerry** stated the governor has not signed the bill and we aren't classified any more so it will not affect us.

## VII. Executive Council Report

Nothing

## VIII. USSS President's Report

- A letter of agreement for city/university funds proposal was signed last Tuesday. It lays out a process where we start the process earlier to designate where the money from the tax dollars received from sales on campus that will benefit the city and campus. In past years, requests have been submitted in November. We are going to be starting this now going forward. It sets a time line so we can have a consensus on 3 or 4 items to move forward on. Many project suggestions that came out of this group were selected.

- President's advisory council was presented information from HCS on Rumors on 4 year degree requirements for unclassified positions. It may have been mentioned in a letter years ago but no signed documents were ever found. Four year degrees will not be required for unclassified positions. Some positions as an unclassified person may require a degree (ie: JD degree for Investigators). All USS positions are going to go to truly unclassified. President took it off the table and said no. This rumor is not true.

## **IX. Senate Standing Committees**

- A. University Affairs & Communication Committee  
Nothing to report
- B. Governmental Affairs Committee  
Nothing to report
- C. Recognition Ceremony Committee  
Thank you for all your help, everyone for stepping in a helping out!!
- D. USS Employee Opportunity Fund  
Nothing to report

## **X. New Business**

- Since Doris Galvan is retiring and this was her final meeting, she introduced her replacement, Yvone Bachura.
- Lesa Reves moved for all active senators to go into an executive session for 15 minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> Steve Greinke. Motion carried. Time started at 2:25.
- At 2: 40 time expired and the meeting reopened.
- John Wolfe motioned to go into an executive session for 15 minutes. Steve Greinke seconded the motion. Motion carried. Time started at 2:45.
- At 3:00 time expired the meeting was reopened.
- Lesa moved that we take 2 Administration and Finance seats and reallocate them to Student Life seats for USS senate and change the bylaws based on changes in work force and senate seat allocation. John Wolf seconded the motion. Motion carried
- Steve Greinke asked if there could be a letter sent to the President regarding how USS employees are feeling about the new process for the Peer Review Committee. Pam Warren requested that we include OIE falling under the president to be that 2<sup>nd</sup> body in the process. Kerry referred to the communication committee to draft a letter about our disappointment in staying with the current process for appeals and the communication that was given to the parties involved was not agreed upon.

## **XI. Adjournment**

Michael Seyour II moved to adjourn. Cheryl Martin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Next meeting: June 3, 2015 12:00 p.m., Frith Community Center, no Executive Council meeting.