

## **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COUNCIL MEETING**

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Thursday, March 17, 2022, at 8:30 a.m.

via Zoom

**Members attending:** Melita Rector, Sharon Thomas, Laneeta Derrick, Susan Gutshall, Stuart French, Shari Kappel, Heather Heinlein, Shirley Hatfield, Matthew Holzmacher, Kimberly Thomas, Evie Deal, Mandy McAllister, Jean Betters, Merrium Carver, Brian Vann, Kim Sapp, Mark Stotts, Scott Sammons, Kathy Lindsey

**Others in attendance:** Laure Pou, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Human Resources; Julie Brown, Director of Employee Relations

**Call to order:** Rector called the meeting to order.

**Minutes:** The minutes for the February meeting were distributed and approved electronically.

### **Staff Engagement Survey**

Pou shared an engagement presentation similar to the presentation the Staff Engagement Taskforce shared with the Executive Leadership Team. The information pertains to the system-wide staff engagement survey that was administered by McLean & Company in September. The taskforce was created to think about engagement, review and capitalize on the feedback, and determine the best next steps. Along with Pou, Julie Brown, Dr. Lisa Burke-Smalley, Dr. Chris Cunningham, and David Steele are other members of the taskforce. The taskforce started meeting in January to discuss next steps. Pou solicited feedback from the ESC regarding what engagement means and why it matters. She shared that engagement is just one construct that explains worker behavior. The results from the McLean engagement survey provides information that can drive meaningful conversations for taking action. The results from the Best Places to Work survey that was conducted in December and included UTC faculty and staff will be incorporated into this effort as well. There was also a faculty survey recently administered by Coach, so that feedback will be reviewed as well. Pou shared that engagement can be discussed in terms of the ABC's: Affect, behavior, and cognition. She provided additional information regarding the ABCs of engagement. She also shared a priority matrix that was provided by McLean. The matrix identified engagement drivers that can be leveraged, maintained, evaluated, and improved. The next steps are continued engagement with ELT, ERC, ESC, and other staff representative groups, and identifying other impactful strategies. ESC was asked to think about engagement best practices in their division and how they may be leveraged in other areas of the campus.

### **Blue Ribbon Award:**

Chris Beavers, Accounting Services, was the recipient of the Chancellor's Blue Ribbon Award for December 2021.

Jason Harville, Student Success Programs, was the recipient of the Chancellor's Blue Ribbon Award for January 2022.

## **Other Issues**

### FY2023 Budget Update

Rector stated the Governor gave a 4% salary pool. Part of that pool will go to staff equity adjustments like last year. The minimum wage is now \$11.30, and that will be increased. Last year UTC received a 4% salary pool, and all eligible employees received a 2.75% increase. The decision has not been made about what the pay increase will be this year. The plan is for the budget balance to be finalized by the end of March. Tyler Forrest will present the budget at the Chancellor's Town Hall on April 26.

### ERC Meeting Time/Location

Rector solicited feedback regarding the current 8:30 a.m. meeting time. Some members expressed that the current time works well because it is at the start of the day before things get busy. The majority prefer the current time, so the meeting time will remain at 8:30 a.m. The committee will reevaluate the time in a couple of months. Rector also solicited feedback regarding meeting via Zoom versus in person. Some members shared that they prefer to continue to use Zoom at this time. Rector stated the committee will continue to meet via Zoom, and the meeting location will be reevaluated in June.

### Retirement Incentives

Pou responded to a question regarding retirement incentive. She stated there is no fixed timeline for retirement incentives. These incentives used to be sporadic in the past, but in 2015, the notion was it would be offered every five years. It was executed in 2020. If UT follows that path, the next incentive will be offered in 2025. The incentives are dependent upon the goals and the funding model at that time. So, there may be adjustments to it. Like other funding commitments, it is based on a strategic analysis of our vision at the time and what may be feasible. Human Resources plans to keep conversations going about the 2025 incentive and will share more information about retirement incentives when additional information is available.

### Blue Ribbon Awards

Brown responded to a question regarding Blue Ribbon awards. Although Jan Michaels is no longer with UTC, the award program continues. Call for nominations are still sent on the first of each month. So, nominations can still be submitted using the link in the email. There are certain requirements with one of them being the employee is a staff member. Brown asked the committee to encourage employees to nominate anyone who they feel is going above and beyond.

### Guest Speaker

Rector stated that David Seidel in parking has been invited to be April's guest speaker. If there are any questions for him, please email her or Brown so those questions can be forwarded to him.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Thursday, April 21, 2022, at 8:30 a.m.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Brown  
Director of Employee Relations