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PRESENT

Eric Amos, Emma Burgin, Jessica Cantu, Jon Chandler, George Drinnon, Darrell Easley, Deanna Flinchum, Kevin Frye, John Goddard, Brandon Herriage (Guest Speaker), Elisha Hodge, Rita Jackson, Bonnie Johnson, Janet Jones, Johnny Jones, Beth Kurtz, Mary Lucal, Sheila McNeil (Guest Speaker), Heath Nokes, Theresa Sears, Elizabeth Smith (Guest Speaker), Nancy Taylor, Ken Wagner, Kaley Walker, Matt Ward, Brooke Wichmann (Guest Speaker), Norma Wilcox

ABSENT

Tom Cervone, Marcus Hilliard, James Hodge, Amber Mathes, Blake Reagan, Michael Smith-Porter, Kevin Thompson, Lisa Yamagata-Lynch

1. WELCOME

Elisha Hodge, Past Chair and IPS MTAS representative, welcomed everyone to the April meeting.

2. GUEST SPEAKERS

a. Enterprise Resource Planning (DASH) Update – ERP Project Managers

Elizabeth Smith greeted the group and introduced the UTK Enterprise Resource Project (ERP) Project Management team. She shared background information about the DASH ERP project noting it is a statewide initiative changing the system for all UT campuses. DASH is being implemented as the current ERP, IRIS, will be sunseting in 2024. She explained that since IRIS has been in place there have been new cloud-based systems that have come on the market. These cloud-based systems will provide an opportunity to streamline and standardize the processes we currently have.

Sheila McNeil reviewed the history and implementation timeline of the DASH ERP project. She discussed activities including reimagining business processes and focus

group meetings with subject matter experts. Oracle was selected by the UT System as the ERP vendor and Accenture was selected as the implementation consultant. A transition management team will be formed to manage change in core areas including finance, grants and research, human resources, reporting, and technical services. The goal is for DASH to go live in July 2024.

Brandon Herriage then shared a matrix of pain points the focus groups communicated. He shared the UTK ERP website which covers information about scope and status of the project. He encouraged the group to reach out to their team with questions and concerns about what is working well (or not) and to help them advocate for a system that meets our campus community's needs.

### 3. UPDATES

- a. Human Resources Update – Dr. Mary Lucal, Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources

Mary Lucal greeted the group and began her update by reflecting on the end of the semester and the upcoming Picnic on the Plaza faculty and staff appreciation event.

Dr. Lucal next discussed the ERP project and spoke to the scope of staff effort involved in the planning efforts. She shared some staff working on the project will be dedicating significant amounts of their time to the ERP and encouraged the group to be aware of the impact on regular office business as a result.

Dr. Lucal closed her update by reporting on other HR efforts including wrapping up Online Performance Reviews. She announced that the State budget was approved including a 4% merit and market pool. She noted that decisions about pool money are ongoing, and she is looking forward to learning more about plans as she meets with senior leaders on campus. She reflected on the upcoming summer months and encouraged the group to make sure their people have time to take annual leave in refreshing themselves before the fall semester starts.

### 4. COMMISSION REPORTS

- a. Commission for Blacks – Elisha Hodge

No report was given for the [Commission](#).

- b. Commission for LGBT People – Tom Cervone

Tom Cervone was not present, but Bonnie Johnson reported that the Commission recently hosted the April session of their virtual lecture series on studying human geography of LGBTQ populations. She announced the next lecture session would be held on [May 3 featuring Dr. Lance Poston from the University of Kentucky](#). Dr. Poston will speak on building LGBTQ resources in southern higher education campuses.

c. Council for Diversity and Inclusion – Tom Cervone

No report was given for the [Commission](#).

d. Commission for Disability – Emma Burgin

Emma Burgin reported the [FUTURE program](#) will co-host an [upcoming autism panel discussion with Student Disability Services](#). She announced a [lunch and learn event will be held on May 5 on neurodiversity](#) in which she will be a panelist along with other people from around the campus.

e. Commission for Women – Amber Mathes

Amber Mathes was not present, but Ms. Hodge shared on her behalf that the [Commission](#) recently started to take applications for next year.

f. Faculty Senate – George Drinnon

George Drinnon reported [Faculty Senate](#) recently met. The Board of Trustees is reviewing the decision for continuing to make test scores optional for incoming students. Professor Beauvais Lyons has been assigned to the Board of Trustees as a UT Knoxville faculty representative. The Faculty Senate President expressed interest in developing support for Ukrainian refugees. He reported Chancellor Plowman talked about updating the Campus Master Plan and noted interest in mixing residence halls and other types of buildings across campus as well as the effort to expand campus boundaries across the river including building a new pedestrian bridge.

Mr. Drinnon continued his report by noting there was a discussion about updating both physical and electronic accessibility plans. Provost Zomchick pointed out that non-tenure track faculty would have their right to academic freedom and expression protected just as much as tenure-track faculty. He reported on growth at UT Knoxville with incoming freshman expected to increase six to eight percent over last year.

Mr. Drinnon closed his report by announcing Professor Lori Roessner is the new incoming Faculty Senate President.

## 5. CONSTITUENT QUESTIONS

### a. Extension Buyout

Q: “Will extension offer a buyout soon for employees close to retirement?”

A: Before the meeting, Jessica Cantu reached out to Doug Bohner, Human Resources Office for UTIA. He responded that retirement buyouts have not been a topic of discussion within UTIA, and that Dean Stokes recently confirmed there are no plans to offer one.

### b. Across-the-Board Cost of Living Pay Increase

Q: “I realize that the Legislature ultimately sets the state and UT’s budget, but even so, my question for the ESC is: Given inflation levels higher than we’ve seen in 40 years, what effort will the University make to provide an across-the-board cost of living pay increase this year?”

A: Dr. Lucal responded that a similar question was asked last month. Campus leaders are currently considering how to use the 4% merit and market pool.

### c. Juneteenth as a Paid Holiday

Q: “I would appreciate leadership giving some consideration to allowing employees off on Juneteenth.”

A: Dr. Lucal responded that the question came up in an Employee Relations Committee (ERC) group several months ago and she asked the System HR office. They responded that, at this time, it would not be incorporated into the holiday calendar. Additional research found [Governor Lee proposed a bill to make Juneteenth an official state holiday, but the bill stalled in the committee process](#). She noted the group could consider putting the question forward to ERAB. Ms. Hodge reported that ERAB had not had a meeting this year, so the question has not come up.

### d. Request for Grammarly Licensing

**Q:** “My question is for OIT. I’d like to ask them to look into obtaining a site license for Grammarly. I started using it a couple of months ago, and the premium version is much better than the free version plus, they offer an educational discount. My thought is most at UT could benefit from using the program, some more than others, but it does improve writing, everything from emails to research publications. It’s also beneficial for those that English is a second language.”

**A:** Kevin Frye responded that he forwarded the question to Joel Reeves, Chief Information Officer for OIT. He reported they are looking into what it would cost to purchase the licensing as it is not budgeted. Mr. Frye said they would look at what would need to be done to make it available to faculty and staff and report back once information becomes available.

Faculty and staff can submit technology suggestions using the [OIT Suggestion Box](#).

## 6. OTHER BUSINESS

### a. Virtual Drop-In Office Hours for Position Description Assistance

Need help writing a Position Description?

HR Compensation will hold virtual drop-in office hours in May. Compensation Analysts will be available to guide you through how best to describe your position using the Position Description form and can walk you through any questions you may have about the process of having a position reviewed.

Join them via Zoom on:

- Tuesday, May 3 from 10-11 a.m.
- Wednesday, May 18 from 3-4 p.m.

Zoom Link: <https://tennessee.zoom.us/j/91513450169>

No appointments are necessary, and visitors can drop in at any time during one of the two scheduled sessions.

### b. Professional MBA Program Scholarship: Call for Nominations

Free speech and academic freedom are among the most challenging and timely The Haslam College of Business is sponsoring a scholarship for the 2022-2023 Professional MBA program, which begins this August.

This is a fantastic scholarship opportunity for staff who have applied for and been accepted to the Professional MBA program. They must also have been a full-time UTK employee for at least one year.

Scholarship nominations should be submitted no later than Friday, May 13.

Submit a nomination: <https://hr.utk.edu/graduate-and-executive-education-promba-scholarship/>

Mr. Drinnon shared his recommendation for the Professional MBA program, and noted it is a great option for someone who wants to work on a graduate degree and who is also working full time.

c. UTILA: Now Accepting Applications

Are you interested in becoming a more inclusive leader on the UTK campus or know someone who would?

L&OD in partnership with the Division of Diversity and Engagement is proud to announce the 2022-2023 University of Tennessee Inclusive Leadership Academy (UTILA) is now accepting applications.

Learn more about UTILA: <https://hr.utk.edu/ut-inclusive-leadership-academy/>

d. Donation Drives: Veterans Food Pantry & East Tennessee Children's Hospital

We have two great donation drive opportunities to share!

First, we are teaming up again with Second Harvest & the Combat Veterans Motorcycle Association to provide food assistance for needy East Tennessee Veterans and their families via the Veteran Mobile Food Pantry.

HR is collecting canned food items (meals-in-a-can) and other non-perishable, non-glass container food items through Friday, May 13. Donations can be dropped off at the HR offices at 105 Student Services Building, Veterans Success Center in Hodges Library, or Army and Air Force ROTC offices in Hoskins Library.

Second, East Tennessee Children's Hospital is requesting donations of scrapbook paper. Donated paper is used in birthday celebrations and memory-making for bereaved families. Donations of any kind of scrapbook paper are welcome and can also be dropped off in the HR offices.

Look for more information about both drives including sharable flyers in the April HR newsletter, which will be sent later today.

e. Knoxville-Area Sick Leave Bank Enrollment: Enrollment Underway

We are accepting applications to enroll in the Knoxville-Area and Institute of Agriculture Sick Leave Banks (SLB) through June 30.

Learn more about Sick Leave Bank: <https://hr.utk.edu/sick-leave-bank/>

f. Survivor Benefits

We would like to ask for your help in spreading the word about employee Survivor Benefits. Survivor Benefits can take care of loved ones if an employee dies while in active service to the University.

Please encourage your constituents and colleagues to update their Survivor Benefits beneficiaries at their earliest convenience. When an employee dies, the University uses the most recent information on file to process the benefit. Unfortunately, there have been situations where employees never completed beneficiary information, or their named beneficiaries were out of date due to family and life changes since their original beneficiary form was completed years prior to their death.

The beneficiary e-form is available anytime in [IRIS Web Employee Self Service](#) under Personal Information.

Please also note that Survivor Benefits beneficiaries are not connected to life insurance or retirement beneficiaries. Contact Payroll/Insurance & Retirement Services at 865-974-5251 for any other beneficiary designation questions.

g. Retirement Seminars

John Goddard asked if Retirement Services would be offering in-person retirement seminars. Ms. Cantu responded that Retirement Services offers [on demand life planning seminars in K@TE](#).

h. Election Update

DeAnna Flinchum gave an update that she would start running elections in mid-May. She thanked those rolling off for their service and encouraged those interested in running to participate or encourage others in their areas to participate.

## 7. REMINDERS

- a. Next meeting: May 24, 2022
- b. Please email constituent questions to Elisha Hodge ([elisha.hodge@tennessee.edu](mailto:elisha.hodge@tennessee.edu)) or Jessica Cantu ([jlcantu@utk.edu](mailto:jlcantu@utk.edu)).