
PRESENT

Christopher Binkley, Brian Browning (Guest Speaker), Mary Beth Burlison, Caitlin Cai (Guest Speaker), Alicia Calderon (Campus Partner), Jon Chandler, Shane Colter, George Drinnon, Darrell Easley, DeAnna Flinchum, John Goddard, Lauren Hatcher, Marcus Hilliard, Bill Jackson, Melissa Jenkins, Bonnie Johnson, Beth Kurtz, Amanda Middleton, David Moore, Kim Raia, Tonya Sartin, Sam Smith, LaShel Stevens, Tanara Teal-Tate (Guest Speaker), Hillary Tune, Matt Ward, Leslie Wereszczak, and Lisa Yamagata-Lynch

ABSENT

Michele Atkins, Jamie Cyphers, Allyson Graves, Nathan McKinney, Blake Reagan, and Tanya Washington

1. WELCOME

Beth Kurtz, Exempt Staff Council (ESC) Chair, welcomed everyone to the March 2024 meeting.

2. NEW BUSINESS

a. The Future of Parking – Brian Browning, Associate Vice Chancellor for Operations

Brian Browning shared a presentation about Parking & Transportation and an overview of the future for the department that is currently planned for in the Campus Master Plan.

The budget for Parking & Transportation Services is \$18.1 million for FY24. It is comprised of revenue from 41% permits, 7% citations, 34% transit, 13% special events, and 5% visitor parking. The department has an annual debt of \$5.5 million for 10 parking garages. There are currently 23 T buses that make up the transit fleet and the University currently has a 10-year \$87 million contract with Knoxville Area Transportation.

The future of parking will have to change a culture. Part of this change will be to utilize reliable alternatives. One campaign is to park once; once staff or students arrive on campus, they will park in the morning and then not move their car again

until leaving campus for the day. Other alternative transportation options will also be suggested, such as walking or using the T bus to get around campus.

Student parking will have 3 to 4 zones, which will include a Park n' Ride option, tiered priority based on student cohorts, and non-commuter spaces will be reduced allowing for a reallocation of faculty/staff areas to meet growing demand. Future students will be warned of the limited parking options, with non-commuter students being told not to bring their cars to campus unless they absolutely need them.

There will be an increase in visitor parking spaces; with a new mobile pay as you go option, where you can scan a QR code and pay online.

There are approximately 20,000 parking spaces on campus. Due to ongoing capital projects, inventory in parking spaces will continue to decline. In Fall 2023/Spring 2024 there was a loss of 313 spaces between lots N23, N3, and S12 (Caledonia Ave). It is expected that there will be a loss of 33 spaces in S12 in Spring 2024, a loss of 161 spaces in C8 in Summer 2025, a loss of 513 spaces in S23, GF1, and EC3 in Summer 2026, and a loss of 89 spaces in S9 in Summer 2027.

Some improvements that are coming for Parking are space availability systems in the Neyland, Summit, Terrace, 11th Street, and Lake Loudon parking garages. A new T bus service contract and equipment will be phased in beginning in Summer 2024. There will be an increase in the total fleet, which will increase in bus pickup frequencies. There will also be electric buses added to the T bus fleet. The implementation of a student zone permit program, with a sales cap, will begin in August 2024. The department is also looking into potential leasing opportunities for garages in the downtown Knoxville area beginning in August 2024.

Other parking improvements to come are robust wayfinding and new vibrant signage that will be phased in beginning in Summer 2024. A new Executive Director of Parking & Transportation, Tanara Teal-Tate, began at the beginning of March 2024 and a new Campus Traffic/Transportation Engineer, Rudolfo Reyes, began September 2023. A partnership with the Tennessee Department of Transportation began February 2024 on a Traffic Demand Management project. A new parking locator app (late AY 23-24) is currently being developed and tested which will provide real time information on when and where to park based on events and time of day. This new app will heavily leverage social media to inform commuters of available areas.

New parking garage options are being researched, one location being out at the Agriculture Research Park and the other option being on the corner of Volunteer Boulevard and UT Drive. This parking garage will add about 1,000 to 1,200 parking

spaces to the campus and cost \$51,000 per space. The garage will have state-of-the-art technology enhancements and multiple entry/exit points to facilitate daily and special event traffic flow more efficiently. Programming and design are currently underway, with an estimated completion of Fall 2027 or Spring 2028.

The current goal of the Parking & Transportation department is rebranding and elevating the parking and transportation experience. Stay up to date with everything parking at <https://parking.utk.edu/>.

Bill Jackson asked a question regarding the safety and security of parking in parameter lots. Mr. Browning answered that this is a topic that is being discussed with Troy Lane, Associate Vice Chancellor for Public Safety. Any property that UT owns or leases will be part of the UTPD program and patrol routes.

Mary Beth Burlison asked what communication will be going out to let the campus community know of the parking and transit updates. Mr. Browning responded that a very robust communications plan is being put together by a small group consisting of several different stakeholders. Communications should begin to be sent out to the campus community in the summer.

(Q): Will the University consider a reduced parking rate or a partial refund for the past academic year since a parking spot is not guaranteed on campus? I have had to resort to using metered parking at times.

(A): Mr. Browning responded that campus has not run out of parking spots despite popular beliefs. If your assigned area or parking lot is full, additional parking is available at the University Commons. You can also reach out to the Parking team and they should be able to let you know where the overflow locations is to your assigned area.

(Q): For the past several years, 4-H has been able to be on campus for livestock-related activities due to the cost of other venues and lack of space for outside venues. I have been told that for 4-H events moving forward even if it is a weekend outside of school hours, we now must pay \$5 a parking pass. Some of our events have 300-600 parents attending. Why is this a change UT is making?

(A): Mr. Browning responded that this isn't a new change in policy, but more of being consistent with existing policies. A lot of angst is created when one event is charged for parking, while another event is allowed to park free of charge. As parking receives no state appropriations, the parking fees and permits are what support the whole Parking and Transportation operation.

(Q): Are there plans to expand the electric vehicle charging stations?

(A): Mr. Browning responded that there are plans to investigate expanding charging stations for faculty, staff, and students. Target areas are being researched to see where expansion would benefit the most.

If you have any questions relating to the parking and transportation system, you can email the new Parking Executive Director, Tanara Teal-Tate at ttealtat@utk.edu.

- b. Caitlin Cai, Risk and Insurance Program Manager – Risk Management’s New System, Origami

The Office of Risk Management has implemented a new risk management information system, called Origami. You can report an incident on their website <https://riskmanagement.tennessee.edu/incident-reporting/> by finding the type of incident you need to report and clicking on its link. This will begin some workflows behind the scenes to make reporting easier.

You can sign up for an in-depth risk management services overview through their [webpage](#). If you have any questions or feedback on Origami, you can email riskmanagement@tennessee.edu.

- c. Human Resources Update – Darrell Easley, Director of Employee Relations & Learning and Organizational Development

Staff performance evaluation season is almost over. Annual Staff Performance Reviews for 2023 are due March 31, 2024. Lists will start to go out to Vice Chancellors of reviews that have not been completed as of the deadline.

The Exempt leadership development cohort program, University of Tennessee Inclusive Leadership Academy (UTILA), is now accepting applications for the 2024-2025 cohort. This is a strong leadership development program that focuses on inclusive leadership. To learn more about this program or to apply, visit: <https://hr.utk.edu/ut-inclusive-leadership-academy/>. You can also nominate a colleague you think would be a good fit for the program on their webpage.

Beginning April 1, 2024, and continuing through June 30, 2024, HR will be accepting applications for new enrollees into the Knoxville-Area (including the Institute for Public Service, System Administration, UT Foundation and UT Space Institute), and Institute of Agriculture sick leave banks. For more information regarding the sick leave bank visit the Hub at [Sick Leave Bank \(sharepoint.com\)](#). An informational on-demand session is available at [SLB Information Session on Demand - YouTube](#). For questions, or to submit your application, email sickleavebank@utk.edu.

HR has a new LinkedIn page called, [Rocky Top Employee Network](#). This is a place where you can learn about events, HR learning sessions, programs, and announcements.

d. Committee Updates

The Employee Relations Advisory Board, Faculty Senate, Police Advisory Council, and Shared Governance Committee did not have updates to share with the group for the March 2024 meeting.

University Leadership Council met and discussed parking and the budget allocation model. Chancellor Plowman shared that the University has gotten all the funding from the State that we can get. Teaching efficiencies in some of the curriculum are going to be looked at as a result. This will allow for a more balanced load for faculty members and fix teacher to student ratios for some classes.

Counsel for Diversity and Inclusion have a couple of events coming up that they are sponsoring. One of the events is a [Women's Professional Development Panel](#) on April 9, 2024 at 11:30 a.m., which will host a panel of speakers to discuss services available on campus to staff to grow their career at UTK. The other event is a [We Will Speak movie night](#) on April 10, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. The Native American and Indigenous Studies Research Seminar will be screening the documentary film *UWhb* (We Will Speak).

3. CONSTITUENT ISSUES

- a. **(Q):** I wanted to discuss an issue I am having with Cigna and Caremark Insurance. I use a specific medication that is \$789 a tube and is the only medication that works for my condition. They are repeatedly asking for prior authorizations and my doctor to fill out appeal paperwork; my doctor has done the prior authorization repeatedly. Why is it that my medical professional prescribes one thing, and some person who has never met me can override their suggested treatment, just to save the insurance company money?

(A): Rob Chance, Executive Director of Payroll stated "Caremark CVS is the pharmacy benefits manager for the State of Tennessee Group Insurance Plan and uses the attached Standard Control for Clients with Advanced Control Specialty Formulary for the State of Tennessee. [The formulary is a list of medications](#) covered by the plan, organized into generic, preferred brand, and non-preferred brand. The formulary is designed to provide the best benefits for plan members while keeping in mind the total cost for the benefits provided. The formulary can be changed quarterly as conditions require and members affected should be notified. The University of Tennessee has little to no input on the formulary.

Tennessee Code Annotated 4-3-1021(a) requires the Department of Finance and Administration to audit the pharmacy benefits manager each year to make sure the

contract is being followed so we are sure that Caremark is pretty much doing what the state asked.”

4. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. A brief discussion was had about AI programs that take notes and screenshots of Zoom meetings. In the UT OIT Weekly newsletter, an announcement was made about using third party AI tools to create summaries of meetings and take notes. “While we are eager to embrace AI to help us do our work, we should do so thoughtfully. OIT has worked with Microsoft to create UT-Verse, which is the university’s private version of ChatGPT. We are currently working on testing Microsoft Copilot for Office 365. While we are in the testing and procurement processes, you may be tempted to use one of the many “free” versions of AI assistants available on the web.

When using transcription services provided by third-party vendors, sensitive information shared during meetings may be at risk. These vendors often have access to proprietary and confidential data disclosed in meetings. Additionally, they store copies of recorded meetings and generated transcripts, which could pose privacy and security concerns. Additionally, third-party AI tools might inadvertently reveal confidential or sensitive information. Inaccurate summaries or misinterpretations could lead to unintended disclosures, affecting business strategies or personal matters. If the need arises to use one of these third-party tools, please be aware of the context of the situation or meeting in order to minimize the risk to yourself and the university.”

- b. Staff Appreciation Week is coming, May 6-10, 2024!! To show how thankful we are for staff, we would like to invite the campus community to recognize any staff! We encourage you to complete this [form](#) to send a note of appreciation to a staff member that has made an impact. Let them know how valuable they are to you and/or your team. The first 200 employees who receive an appreciation note will also get a special gift. Staff who receive notes will be notified and may pick up their gift at the Thankful Thursday event. If you have any questions, please contact Sam Smith at SamSmith5@utk.edu.
- c. Sick Leave Bank open enrollment began April 1, 2024, and continues through June 30, 2024. For questions, or to submit your application, email sickleavebank@utk.edu.
- d. UT Inclusive Leadership Academy [UTILA](#) applications are live! If you are interested in a leadership development opportunity, click the link to apply today!

Next meeting- March 26, 2024 at 2:30 pm EST.

Please email Beth Kurtz (ekurtz2@utk.edu) and Sam (samsmith5@utk.edu) with constituent issue or questions the Friday (by noon) before the next meeting.