

PRESENT

Mary Beth Burlison, Chelsey Byrd, Jon Chandler, Shane Colter, Jamie Cyphers, DeAnna Flinchum, John Goddard, Allyson Graves, Lauren Hatcher, Bill Jackson, Rita Jackson, Melissa Jenkins, Bonnie Johnson, Mary Lucal, Paula May, Rachel McClelland, Amanda Middleton, David Moore, Ivonne Pizarro, Blake Reagan, Tonya Sartin, Sam Smith, LaShel Stevens, Ken Wagner, Matt Ward, Tanya Washington, Leslie Wereszczak, Norma Wilcox, and Lisa Yamagata-Lynch

ABSENT

Christopher Brinkley, Emma Burgin, George Drinnon, Gina Hale, Marcus Hillard, James Hodge, Johnny Jones, Beth Kurtz, Nathan McKinney, Kim Raia, and Kevin Thompson

1. WELCOME

Chair John Goddard welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. NEW BUSINESS

a. Welcome to the newly elected representatives listed below.

- i. Allyson Graves (AG Research)
- ii. LaShel Stevens (Arts/Sciences – Basic Sciences)
- iii. Lauren Hatcher (EHHS)
- iv. Amanda Middleton (Engineering)
- v. Michele Atkins (Extension – West)
- vi. Tonya Sartin (President & Other VP's)
- vii. *re-elected* Mary Beth Burlison (Provost)
- viii. Jamie Cyphers (SocWork, SWORPS)

b. HR Update – Mary Lucal

Hiring is picking up to prep for the Fall semester. The ERP project is still underway and prototype meetings are continuing. The campus did well getting performance reviews completed this year. The merit process is now beginning with the Office of Budget and Finance.

c. Chelsey Byrd – Recruitment Manager

Chelsey Byrd joined the meeting to discuss the biggest topics and questions that the recruitment department receives.

If you are within your first 6 months of accepting a new role or position, you are not eligible for a transfer. This is because it takes time to train a new employee and investment on behalf of our partners to get someone up to speed on the position.

HR does not currently have any video training on the hiring process. Recruitment has put together a graphic that explains the process, linked [here](#). All recruiters are also available to answer any questions you may have during the search and hiring process. You may contact them at 865-974-6642 and select option 2 for recruiting. You may also reach out to the Recruitment Business Partner for your department as they can do a Zoom training, if requested.

Taleo does save applications and forms. It can save your previous applications, and if you are using the same account, it should auto population information from your last application. Be sure the information is correct before you submit it, because the recruitment team has seen that some people do not update their application to make it relevant to the position they are currently applying for. It also can notify potential candidate of openings if they set up notifications.

- i. A question from a constituent was sent in before the meeting asked, “due to rampant inflation and our existing pay structure, many individuals are quickly finding themselves lagging behind the median salary. This poses a significant challenge when it comes to hiring new employees, as we aim to begin their compensation at the midpoint. However, this approach ends up placing new hires at a higher pay level than those who have been with the university for an extended period. This longstanding issue highlights a fundamental flaw in our system. Could you please provide details on the plan intended to tackle this problem?” Dr. Lucal responded that the starting salary is typically an entry level start, due to the large amount of employees that UT hires that are just starting off in their career. With continued experience and skill, employees will climb up their pay range. Dr. Lucal also addressed the larger question of how the University is trying to deal with inflation. She stated that senior leadership is aware of this concern, and they are doing a good job of advocating for further salaries for our staff. The governor gave a generous amount for the University in this year’s budget. Dr. Lucal also mentioned that with the new BAM budget model, the salary decision is now within the departments, and she encouraged employees to go to their department heads and ask if they have a plan to combat the current inflation that is being seen.
- ii. A constituent sent in the following question: “Some grants require a project manager, and some are very short (i.e., NSF Convergence Accelerator, phase 1 is only 12 months). Is there a way to establish a “quick-start solution” to have a project manager on board quickly?” Ms. Byrd answered that from a

recruitment standpoint, there is nothing that can be done more quickly. Onboarding a project manager would be the same as onboarding other employees.

- iii. The following questions were sent in before the meeting, but will be followed up on at a later time.
 - Why do 4-H Agents have to raise funds to send Region winning teams to national competitions?
 - When is the organization going to address 4-H Agents being the only staff charged with selling a product as part of their Performance Appraisal, 4-H Camp.
 - How often are wage increases evaluated for County Extension Agents?

3. CONSTITUENT ISSUES

- a. (Q): Why does the tuition waiver not cover law classes or undergraduate certificates?

(A): HR reached out to Connie Walden, Director of Records and Strategic Planning, who provided the following: "The fee waiver can be used for the master's program in Law but not the Doctor of Jurisprudence (JD). The policy excludes fee waivers for programs without part-time options such as vet med and law (JD). Certifications are not covered in the fee waiver policy." Shane Colter noted that he can submit the question to the Employee Relations Advisory Board to be put on the meeting agenda.

- b. (Q): "I'm interested in simplifying the Student Fee Discount process for employees' spouses and dependent children. Since my oldest child is headed here in the fall, I'm just now learning of the somewhat complicated process of getting a discount for staff's children, and I'd love to talk to Human Resources about improving it."

(A): Oracle could potentially fix this with a workflow. Several representatives mentioned that the paper form is more of the issue, and a fillable PDF file might help.

4. OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Post-Doc update from last meeting:

Post-Docs are entered into the system like an exempt employee. This means they are on the constituent list for the area they are working in.

- b. Sick Leave Bank Enrollment ends Friday!!

Sick Leave Bank enrollment ends on June 30. Anyone who applied to become a Sick Leave Bank member during the 2023-2024 enrollment period, will receive an email in July about the status of their enrollment into the Bank. If you have any questions, please email SickLeaveBank@utk.edu.

5. Thank You Exiting Representatives

The Exempt Staff Council Chair will change from John Goddard to Beth Kurtz beginning July 1, 2023. Thank you to the exiting representatives listed below.

- a. Kevin Thompson (AG - Experiment Station)

- b. Johnny Jones (Arts/Sciences - Basic Sciences)
- c. Emma Burgin (EHHS)
- d. Gina Hale (Engineering)
- e. Rita Jackson (Extension - West)
- f. James Hodge (President & Other VP's)
- g. Ken Wagner (SocWork, SWORPS)

6. REMINDERS

- a. Next meeting- July 25, 2023 at 2:30 pm EST.
- b. Please email Beth Kurtz (ekurtz2@utk.edu) or Sam (samsmith5@utk.edu) with constituent issue or questions the Friday (by noon) before the next meeting.