

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM
EMPLOYEE ADVISORY COUNCIL
APPROVED MINUTES – With Revisions
July 18-20, 2011 held at
The University of Texas System, Austin

PRESENT: Lisa Belue, Glenda Bennett (alternate – UT-Tyler), Benjamin Bond, Yolande Caddell, Jorge Cardenas, W. Dennie Clemons, Gerald Cleveland (alternate UTMB), Gary Cook, Colter Fleming, Michael Gannaway, Ronnie Garcia, Lewis Garrison, Joseph Gregory, Joel Helmke, Adriana Hinojosa, Dexter Jones, Jesse Manciaz, David Marquez, Brenda Martinez, Susan “Aris” Obar, Rochelle Pena, D. Ellen Reedy, Shawna Ridley, Shirley Rowe, Kimberly Sanders, Eric Solberg, Laurie Thompson, Sally Thompson, Doc Weathers, Venetta Williams, Marsha Zimmerman

ABSENT: Priscilla Castillo (we were advised that Ms. Castillo has resigned from the UTHSCSA and no replacement has been determined), Melanie Loving, Douglas Stark

VISITORS: Kathy Mayes, Sarah Hart, Dan Stewart, Associate Vice-Chancellor for Employee Benefits & Services

Tuesday, July 19, 2011

Executive Session - Officers and Committee Chairs

Called to order at 8:10. Goal for today is to review results of committee work and their subsequent presentations. EAC will be presenting to *full* Board of Regents for first time and will highlight some of the unique issues staff members are facing. Joel Helmke, Chair, will be condensing committee presentations submitted over the course of this meeting to provide consistency in a report to the Board.

Joel Helmke reminded all present that any legislative updates presented by Dan Stewart are sensitive and not necessarily to be reported to constituencies. Mr. Helmke announced that elections will take place tomorrow so think about members open to nomination and who would be good representatives.

9:00 Call to Order - Full Membership

9:05 Approval of March-April Minutes: Two minor spelling changes were submitted to the secretary and were reported to the members. There being no additional changes, Ben Bond made a motion to accept minutes with revisions. Doc Weathers seconded. Minutes approved by acclamation. Joel Helmke thanked the secretary for the work done to provide comprehensive minutes. Since we only meet three times a year the minutes become very important in providing continuity and the link between meetings. All present expressed their appreciation as well.

9:15 Presentation of Committee Recommendations: Thirty minutes were allotted per committee for Power Point presentation and discussion. This will provide the initial review of what has been accomplished during the year.

- **Wellness Committee for Promoting Health – Chair, Dennie Clemons**
 - Presented outcomes with “Seeds of Success”. Shared seven member’s healthy success story about life changes such as freedom from tobacco, weight loss, exercise, and healthy eating. Five institutional success stories were presented.

- Goal is to elevate awareness by posting EAC personal and institutional stories, share healthy recipes online as a way to share successes with a wider audience, and to encourage others to begin their quest toward a healthier lifestyle.
- Key points:
 - City of Brownsville, with support of UT-Brownsville, set Guinness record for the most Zumba participants at one session.
 - Weight Watchers (especially at work) – losing weight and maintaining loss. Being around like-minded people helps.
 - Allowing time for “Wellness Moments” such as breathing deeply throughout the day are encouraged and recommended.
 - Reducing your Risk – Breathing Easier, Going Tobacco-Free in 2011.
 - UT System Living Well - Make It a Priority has helped to promote wellness at UT System.
- Some healthy recipes were received but would like to have more to post online.
- Provided list on how to begin successful healthy living.
- **Work-Life Committee – Chair, David Marquez**
 - They are still finalizing a survey to be distributed to each component.
 - Goal is to improve staff morale by exploring various options surrounding alternative work schedules, flex time, telecommuting, elder care and childcare.
 - Most institutions will say they have alternative and flex schedules but nothing formal is in place. The health science centers tend to have more in place than academic institutions.
 - Need to convince administration that there is a definite benefit. Proper management of hours could be beneficial to the mission of the office. How can we best advocate that every institution have something in place? Best practices across system should be determined.
 - Benefits to institution
 - Benefits to individual employee
 - UT Arlington has formal policy and it is available online so it will be used for a model and condensed into specific bullet points.
 - Benefit would be retention of valuable employees and improved employee morale.
 - Goal for today – keep the target in mind. A refined recommendation for all institutional to have a formal procedure needs to be developed and presented. Provide best practices.
- **Recruitment and Retention Committee – Chair, Ben Bond**
 - Created two separate presentations – one for the Board of Regents meeting and one that highlights Employee Discount Programs.
 - Employee Discount Programs – Stretch employee take home pay - 2 recommendations:
 - Open to spouses and partners (possibly using insurance card).
 - Open to all UT System employees regardless of institution of employment.Third party companies can administer the program but must meet policy requirements.
 - Indirect compensation alternatives to reward high performance employees:
 - Flexible schedules
 - Tickets to events
 - Internal professional development and mentoring
 - Tuition reimbursement and certificate programs as budgets allow

- **Policies and Procedures – Chair, Jesse Manciaz**

Committee is pursuing two primary issues, Performance Evaluations and Sick Leave Pool.

Performance Evaluations:

- Even though there is a Regent's Rule mandating completion of annual evaluations for all staff many institutions are not enforcing it.
- The group of HR directors for UT System meets regularly. A member of the EAC will present to the group and try to determine who is in compliance regarding performance evaluations.
- Recommend HR at each institution perform audit review of them self.

Sick Leave Pool:

- Who determines who is eligible to participate in sick leave pool?
- Is there a physician on the committee?

- **Cost Savings – Chair, Aris Obar (each member of this committee spoke on their individual area)**

- Identify and share cost-saving opportunities and efficiency models across the UT System.
- Gather and compile information received and make available on the EAC website.
 - Completed a survey of each component.
 - Found that all institutions are involved in cost reduction strategies.
 - Compiled 91 page listing of cost savings initiatives from all components which will eventually be posted on EAC website.
 - UTSA: Cost containment committee. 44 initiatives. \$2.4M saved
 - UT Tyler: \$1.3 million recommendations
 - UTB: \$5.6 million in savings
- (Eric Solberg) **Actively solicit innovative ideas;**
 - UTHHealth (UTHSC-H): Genius award.
 - UT Arlington: Maverick ideas. Broken cost-saving down to specific areas/ environments. Post ideas and they are then voted upon by constituents.
 - There is some discussion about UT System hosting something similar. Share success stories and efficiency models across campuses.
- (Rochelle Pena) **Centralize services – purchasing/HR/secretarial/research grants;**
Combine the services offered through attrition as an efficiency opportunity since people are performing the same task in multiple offices. Do not replace individuals in each group. Salary dollars could be saved and redirected. Cross training would be beneficial especially in cases where many employees are ready to retire. UTEP is also doing something similar.
- (Rochelle Pena) **Using Skype to replace telephone service;**
Telephone service is second largest expense. There would be no long distance but it may cost the university to add something to the IT switches. OIT has asked that they wait to move forward with this project until they can completely review it especially with conversion to Microsoft. There is a cost involved to make phone calls but it is much less than current systems.
- (Gary Cook) **Leased equipment;**
Decisions are often made at high level. MDACC created a committee to evaluate cost savings. All medical institutions participate in the Supply Chain Alliance. Saved \$17.2 million through streamlining leasing. REMI group is third-party supplier of electronic maintenance contracts and has also realized savings. Recommend extending leasing contracts for equipment instead of renegotiating – just extend for one year.

- **Challenge for EAC members;**
 - Become a part of the solution.
 - Review innovative ideas from similar institutions.
 - Think outside the box.

After lunch, each of the EAC Board members provided an overview of their position so members would have insight into the duties and responsibilities for each role as related to the upcoming elections.

Joel Helmke - Chair develops agenda, coordinates with hosting institution, and keeps everything moving forward. Charge committee chairs with developing components for Board of Regents reports. The elected individual will work with Sarah Hart to schedule meetings. Finally, the chair facilitates dialog in order to refine the annual report to the Board of Regents.

Dexter Jones - Vice-chair on occasion, in the absence of the Chair, will fill in as chair for the meeting.

Brenda Martinez - Historian documents EAC issues past and present, is available to share information with committees, and provides online updates to the EAC website. Also takes photographs at meetings.

Shirley Rowe - Take detailed minutes at meetings and forward for review and approval as appropriate.

Kim Sanders provided some tips and reminders on reimbursements.

1:00 Legislative Update – Dan Stewart

Reiterated how difficult the recent legislative session was. The budget needed to be balanced. There were many tensions in the session particularly regarding redistricting and funding sources. The session was impacted by social networking – many decisions being impacted up to the last minute by “tweets”. What impacts our elected officials is very different now than in previous years. It can be very dynamic – may or may not be beneficial.

Chair charged committees – refine presentations to pull together for BOR.

2:00 Adjourned general meeting - committee breakouts to refine PPT for BOR recommendations.

Wednesday, July 20, 2011

9:03 Call to Order - In absence of Chair, order called by Dexter Jones

First order of business was officer elections for the upcoming year.

All votes were tallied and verified by Dan Stewart, Sarah Hart, Shirley Rowe and one additional board member.

Nominations for Chair: Dexter Jones, Ben Bond

Jesse Manciaz moved to close nominations; Brenda Martinez seconded.

Candidates provided introductions to themselves and their vision for EAC.

- Ben Bond: years at UT Austin - Supervisor, front-line employee, training manager, 4 years on Staff Council (60 members), 3 years as chair with massive restructuring and updated bylaws. Presented to high level representatives on issues. He would like to serve members of EAC and would ensure that time and issues are of value. Look at opportunities to get members involved.
- Dexter Jones: Currently serve as vice-chair. Five years as EAC member, 28 years at UT HSC Tyler, moved up from food services to public relations. Part of move to create staff council. Selected due to respect received from fellow employees. Would be able to carry on and move this organization forward. Served on local Board of Trustees and Chamber of Commerce.
Dexter Jones was elected as chair for 2011-2012.

Call for hands for those eligible and interested in being nominated for one of the remaining offices.

Nominations for Vice-chair: Ben Bond, W. Dennie Clemons, Rochelle Pena, Eric Solberg
Gary Cook moved to close nominations; Doc Weathers seconded.

- Ben Bond: Fully support Dexter as chair.
- W. Dennie Clemons: 24 years at UTHSC-H. Second term on EAC, have served as Vice Chair of EAC, and worked with Dexter previously on Executive Council. Thorough and dedicated and will support Dexter in his role as EAC Chair.
- Rochelle Pena: Starting 8th year on EAC. Served as President of staff council. Need to go out to members and find out what constituents need.
- Eric Solberg: Withdrew nomination.

Run-off election required between Ben Bond and W. Dennie Clemons.
Ben Bond elected as Vice-chair for 2011-2012.

Nominations for Historian: W. Dennie Clemons, Brenda Martinez
Dexter Jones moved to close nominations; Doc Weathers seconded.

- W. Dennie: Spoke with Brenda regarding her service as Historian for 2011 and feel she is doing great job in position. Brenda has some great ideas for moving forward. Dennie withdrew her nomination.
- Brenda: Thanked Dennie for her kind words and support.

Rochelle Pena moved that Brenda Martinez be elected by acclamation; Jorge Cardenas seconded.
Approved by acclamation.
Brenda Martinez elected as historian for 2011-2012.

Nominations for Secretary: Eric Solberg, Dennie Clemons
Dexter Jones moved to close nominations; Brenda Martinez seconded.

- Eric: Takes good notes.
 - W. Dennie: Secretary to the Faculty Senate for many years and takes good notes.
- W. Dennie Clemons elected as secretary for 2011-2012.

10:30 Next step – Preparing for Board of Regents Presentation in Fall 2011.

Committee chairs provided brief update on outcomes from committee breakout meetings yesterday to refine presentations for the Board of Regents.

- **Wellness:** Worked to condense to two slides. Recommendations will focus on institutional successes rather than individual success stories. Because of interest in this topic, may incorporate additional slides in Board of Regents report.

- **Work-Life:** Reduced down to 4-5 bullets. Topics are alternative work schedules and telecommuting.
- **Recruitment & Retention:** Word-smithed document based upon recommendations during general discussion; new bullet point for professional development. Changed event tickets to tokens.
- **Policies & Procedures:** Focus on Regent's Rule (1st slide). Every employee should have evaluation with employee signature. Goal to review process in place to ensure accountability at all institutions.
- **Cost Containment:** Goal is to have report posted online. Refined slides, added recommendations from previous discussion to slides, and will create searchable PDF. This should be vetted with each of the institutions so they are aware that information is being posted.

Floor Opened

Shawna Ridley, UT SW-Dallas, requested to make a brief presentation on their new local EAC. A year ago they did not have a council, EAC or similar structure to represent staff members. President supported the idea. Created employee survey and questions included:

- How can we better communicate with you?
 - Are you aware of the following programs, initiatives, benefits and perks? Included list of all available to staff?
 - In the future when new hires come on board he/she is aligned with district. Their name and picture is sent to 3 staff council representatives. HR sends names and pictures of their representatives.
 - About a third of the council reps attend each orientation where brochures are handed out.
 - There is a level of dialogue with president, he approved the survey and supports the council. He attends meetings twice a year.
 - Focus on staff appreciation rather than formal recognition programs.
 - A brand was needed and it was decided to use "Getting engaged and Staying committed".
- She thanked EAC members for their guidance in developing Bylaws.

Dan Stewart presented members with a certification for their service on the EAC this year. Joel Helmke made parting remarks as EAC Chair 2011, as well as any other members rotating off.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 to assemble outside for taking group pictures which will be posted on EAC website.