

The University of Tennessee  
**Employee Relations Committee**  
**INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE**  
Wednesday January 13, 2016  
Room 102 Morgan Hall

**Minutes**

Members Present:

Izetta Slade	Danielle Browning	Rebekah Jones	Carla Phillips
Cindy Lay	Misty Bailey	Angie Fox	

Members Present via Zoom:

Kaye Avrit	Jenny Jessup	Jenny Yeary	Kelly Grant
Susie Nicholson	Schelese Ogburn (replacement for Tiffany Schmidt)		

Meeting was called to order at 3:04 pm by Izetta Slade and introductions of those present (face-to-face and via zoom) were made.

**Review and Approval of October 2015 Meeting Minutes**

Angie Fox noted Misty Bailey was chosen to represent the UTIA ERC at the UT Employee Relations Advisory Board meetings. Given this amendment, Rebekah Jones made a motion to accept the minutes. Carla Phillips seconded the motion and the Committee voted to accept.

**Chancellor's Update**

Dr. Arrington was unable to attend the meeting; however, he expressed the importance and his appreciation of this committee and all involved.

**Old Business**

- **Employee Relations Advisory Board Meeting Update**

Misty Bailey, the UTIA ERC representative, gave a brief overview from the December Employee Relations Advisory Board meeting. Misty also provided detailed notes from this meeting. Please note these meeting notes are unofficial, as the official meeting minutes have not been released. A few highlights are listed below.

- The University is being given money to expand its response to the governor's Rural Challenge. There will be a 35-county expansion for livestock care and this includes UTIA.
- A new data software will be used by the University to collect reliable information for the entire University in order to make more evidence-based decisions.
- Expected increase in tuition for the next academic year is 0 to 3%.
- Dr. DiPietro cautiously believes in a 2% to 3% raise for employees in the upcoming year.

- Detailed notes on the possibility of outsourcing facilities services are provided in the notes. The soonest any changes to happen would possibly be 2017.
- A new UT Compliance Hotline is now open. This hotline is addition to other UT hotlines.
- Minors on Campus notes are also provided. UT cannot stop a parent that has a criminal record from attending a program with their own child. The only time it can be stopped is when the parent is listed as an official volunteer. By being listed as an official volunteer, a background check would be performed.
- Details about the status of the animal cruelty issues are addressed in the notes.
- Family Medical Leave issues are also addressed in the notes.

## **HR Update**

- Family Medical Leave Update: UTIA HR Coordinators are working together to sure up documentation on Family Medical Leave. When an employee is granted FML, Jonathan Ramsey will be notifying the supervisor and next level of supervision. Committee members are asked to let deans/department heads/supervisors know they will be seeing paperwork/workflow for approval. The current issue is FML is not being tracked properly in IRIS. We need to make sure those entering/recording/tracking FML have the knowledge on how to do so.
- Fair Labor Standards Act Update: Izetta provided an update of the FLSA that would change current exempt to salary, threshold amount set by the Department of Labor. She is expecting to know more by Spring. Committees are currently working on different issues to stay ahead with 'what-if' scenarios. The dollar amount set will be a federal ruling set by Department of Labor. This will be happening, but the extent is not known yet. It is possible that UT may have until 2017 to set any action required in to place. It is also possible that the amounts set by the Department of Labor may be updated annually (meaning annual reviews would need to be made on UT's part). UTIA Administration is being very vocal on how this will affect UTIA.
- UTIA HR personnel officers held a two day strategic planning retreat in November at the Chancellor's recommendation. The retreat concentrated on the issues of compliance issues, communication and consistency among units, a 2 to 3 year leadership opportunity plan, and diversity (retention and recruitment) of staff. These recommendations will be presented to the Chancellor.
- System HR reporting lines will now be through Finance.
- Finance is working to draft a Return to Work policy to abide by the new state law. Once an employee is lifted from workmen's comp to return to work part time, it is the University's responsibility to provide suitable work until the employee is fully released. This is in an effort to avoid penalties and charges. It is also important

that injuries are reported in a timely manner. Training for employees and supervisors will be held later on how and when to report injuries.

- The issue of how to address smells (perfume, foods, candles, etc.) in office had been brought to the committee. The solution was to address this in the Regional Director meetings as a health issue with the number of people with sensitivities that others are not aware of. Employees should be sensitive to allergies, asthma issues, etc. Any concerns should be brought up with the County Director/Dean/Department Head/Team Leader to make the office a fragrance free zone. Izetta will gladly help in addressing this if needed.
- Parking in Lot 65 Issues: It was brought to the committee someone is giving students a parking pass for Lot 65. Students are advised to park in commuter parking and take the bus to UTIA campus. This does not seem to be working as students are getting parking passes and parking in Lot 65, which is intended for employee parking, and abusing the temporary student parking privilege. Izetta will alert Vanessa Hooper, UTIA Vet Med HR, on this issue. Angie Fox also suggested checking with Joe Cagle to ensure he is aware of this issue.
- UTIA parking garage will not be built due to the issues it would cause the greenhouses.

#### **Other**

- Committee member Kelly Grant brought up a question concerning Minors on Campus to Izetta. At what point does a parent become a volunteer? Izetta was able to provide clarification on this. The parent becomes a volunteer when UT asks for assistance (transporting kids, look after kids, direct a program, etc.) with a program/meeting/etc. If the parent is attending programs/etc. to show support for their child or if another parent has given them permission to chaperone their child, and UT has not asked for their assistance, this person is not a volunteer at this point. However, employees and volunteers who have been officially verified are still responsible to report any signs of concern.

Meeting Dismissed at 4:19 pm

**Next meeting will be April 13, 2016.**