

CIVIL SERVICE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting

November 20, 2014

[These notes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these notes represent the views of, nor are they binding on, the Senate, the Administration or the Board of Regents.]

In these minutes: [Job classification system redesign; review of policy changes; communications plan]

PRESENT: Bill O'Neill, chair; Gordon Fisher, Samantha Duke, Kevin Prigge, Jean Wang, Duane Orlovski, Terri Wallace, Patti Dion

REGRETS: Lynn Hegrenes

ABSENT: Carolyn Davidson

GUESTS: Sheila Reger, project consultant, Office of Human Resources

Chair O'Neill convened the meeting and welcomed committee members.

1. Job Classification System Redesign

O'Neill introduced Sheila Reger, project consultant, Office of Human Resources, who presented information to the committee on the job classification system redesign project. Reger briefly described the process, saying there were 18 job families to review, and 14 had been completed at that point. Position descriptions are collected for each of the families, which are sent to the consultants who then conduct preliminary reviews and position mapping. The review of the administrative job family (approximately 1500 employees) was about to begin, and position descriptions were due January 5, 2015. It is anticipated that the redesign will be concluded by May 2015.

Reger distributed a document illustrating employee group changes. She explained some people may be notified that their position has changed employee group, such as a civil service position being reclassified to P&A. At that point, the employee has a choice to stay in their current grouping or move to the new one. The overwhelming majority of people chose to remain in their current groups. Duane Orlovski asked if there were any employees who were not given a choice, and Reger said the option was available to everyone except non-exempt employees. Of those, there have been very few.

Reger discussed the appeals process, saying thus far there had been 196 appeals (7% of the positions mapped); of those, 54 have been granted (28%) and 142 denied (72%). Reger described the process, saying employees submit their appeal, which are then submitted to a group of subject matter, classification and compensation experts. The information and data is reviewed and discussed, and the group comes to a consensus on whether to accept or reject the appeal.

The committee discussed the information. Gordon Fisher asked how salary data was obtained and how it was used. Generally speaking, Reger said, salary information is collected through focus groups, interviews, and advisory teams and market survey information is gathered by our consultants and salary structures are developed and red at the advisory team. Reger pointed out that so far there had not been any issues around the salary piece of the project and they wanted to ensure salary ranges were conducive to recruiting, and equitable across job families while maintaining flexibility within a range. Fisher asked how employee levels were determined. Reger said the levels were based on the job descriptions and information obtained through the focus group process. For example, in the Office of Human Resources, the job descriptions of 204 employees determined eight levels of work. Dion added that levels can be created in a job group if needed, and the process was trying to stay flexible and responsive to that need.

O'Neill wondered if there was a way to have more in-depth involvement and cited the public information sessions for the strategic planning process as an example. Reger said they had several different communication modes, including emails to the various employee groups, a web presence, liaisons throughout campus, etc. but had not conducted a public forum or any other sort of structured feedback system. Dion asked if this might be something civil service could create, and advised that it address a specific purpose, such as educating people on the process.

O'Neill thanked Reger and Dion for the information.

2. Review of policy changes

Dion said she wanted to share information with the committee about OHR's regular review of the P&A performance management policy. The review was underway and Dion said she would keep the committee apprised of any policy changes.

Dion also noted that after the Enterprise System Upgrade Project is complete, there will be an electronic approvals process for vacation and absences.

Fisher said the issue of standard management training for managers and supervisors at the University had come up at the Civil Service Senate meeting. He said here need to be some core principles and expectations for these roles, and said OHR was uniquely positioned to address this issue. Fisher said the committee could work on this issue as well. Dion suggested the committee invite Brandon Sullivan, Leadership and Talent Development, OHR, to discuss employee and leadership development, as they were starting to look at this issue.

The committee discussed their various experiences with the employee engagement survey and subsequent follow-up or lack thereof. O'Neill emphasized that follow through on the survey and an action plan was crucial, otherwise it was meaningless. Dion said OHR had provided tools and resources for units to share results: some units delivered results, others did not. She said this could be discussed with Brandon Sullivan as well.

O'Neill thanked Dion for the discussion.

3. Communications Plan

Duane Orlovski, chair, Communications Subcommittee, reported that he had not received any feedback on the draft communications plan that was shared with the committee, so the plan would move forward as it was presented at a previous meeting. He said he was working with the Senate Office to determine appropriate distribution lists, and Fisher said civil service email lists also needed to be divided into particular groups represented.

The committee discussed limiting communications and the need to not inundate constituents with messaging. Orlovski said the communications and marketing community at the University had established standards and recommendations, which he felt, would be appropriate guidelines. O'Neill asked Orlovski to forward these to the committee members.

Orlovski said he also wanted to create a list of people for spotlight articles, and create a list of standard questions to ask for the articles. He noted that that the articles do not need to be limited to Civil Service employees but can include anyone who has information pertinent to civil service. He said he would create a shared document for committee members to contribute ideas for both. Fisher suggested focusing on new senators to begin with so as to create interest around civil service and to demonstrate activity in governance.

Hearing no further business, O'Neill adjourned the meeting.

Mary Jo Pehl
University Senate Office