

Staff Affairs Meeting Minutes
May 5, 2011
Kayak Room, Rasmuson Library

Members Present: Megan Hoffman, Naomi Horne, John Clendenin, Carolyn Simmons, Dawn Dearing, Jennifer Elhard, Shelbie Umphenour, Pips Veazey, Amy Bristor, Mary Sue Dates

Agenda was not approved due to a lack of quorum at the beginning of the meeting at 9:05am, 3 folks came in late at 9:15am.

Minutes from the April 7th meeting were reviewed and no changes were discussed as being necessary but were not formally approved due to a lack of quorum at the beginning.

Open Business

Employee Tuition Waiver changes as suggested by Beth Behner

It was noted that the vesting period suggestions is relatively harmless, and the group was relatively in agreement that it might be fair to implement. There was more discussion about the vesting period and whether it could just be one semester waiting or 6 months or less.

Pips Veazey pointed out that basically there is already a waiting period because employees start jobs when the hiring officer requests, it's not based on the semesters time frames so an employee will likely already have to wait to use the benefit till the next semester any way because they probably don't have hire dates that correlate to the semesters starting or ending.

Naomi Horne noted that the data does not suggest large scale abuse, and so to reduce the waiver at all may not be necessary. Carolyn Simmons asked where the discussion started; it was a short statement by an Anchorage legislature to the media about the amount of money spent on the benefit.

Shelbie Umphenour stated that the student credit hour charges might change so that credits over 15 are only charged at flat rate, This might impact the employee tuition benefit as well. Additionally Shelbie stated that the implementation of any kind of reimbursement made her nervous and would be difficult to put into action.

Jennifer stated that the dependents have limitless credits, and the employee can actually only receive 12 credits within a year.

Mary Sue Dates suggested that maybe the legislature isn't aware that even if the tuition is paid through the benefit, fees and books are still the responsibility of the student so it's not completely free to us as employees.

Amy Bristor asked if the suggested changes would impact non-credit hour classes, which was unknown specifically but has not been mentioned in discussions before.

Beth Behner's memo mentions union discussions, which called into question whether or not the changes were already accepted by statewide, and if so, non-represented staff could suggest alternatives or no changes at all, we do not have to go along with the unions in this matter. Overall the group was still curious about how this discussion even came about, because it's not a large amount of money that is spent on the benefit.

A motion was drafted and voted on with a unanimous passage (10 votes) , see attached.

Copyright Infringement Review discussion

The group agreed to both review the new policy, and be prepared to provide feedback to the group at our next meeting on May 26th at 9am.

We determined that the next normally scheduled meeting would be May 19th, but since that is Staff Council's Staff Appreciation Day we would move our meeting to the next Thursday, May 26th. Location will be determined at that time.

Naomi Horne is going to check with Maria Russell to determine the format our suggested changes should take whether it's a motion or another format.

Workplace Bullying

Naomi Horne stated that the trainings being offered by Earlina Bowden and John Clendenin are the first step towards education of the university community about the issue, and its implications on our business. The course that Earlina is offering is pre-purchased on a CD and is being re-played to various training courses, and can be streamed to rural sites. The training that John Clendenin is offering is a live stream that cannot be re-broadcasted to rural sites. The next training that John is offering is on May 10th from 10-11am in the Rasmuson Library's media classroom, room 340.

Naomi Horne is continuing her research on this topic and has pulled up anti-bullying policies from other companies and universities to use as a reference for the policy that staff affairs will likely draft in the coming months. Naomi Horne will be providing the initial draft to include a value statement about workplace bullying as well as categories of behaviors, how a victim might go about reporting or resolving the situation as well as some form of accountability for perpetrators.

John Clendenin pointed out that without any kind of teeth, such a policy would not be effective.

WIN Program use by non-insurance paying employees

Mary Sue Dates pointed out that some employees who do not pay into our healthcare plan through premiums might be using the WIN program benefits (some of which are cash rewards) without paying into the system itself. Naomi Horne agreed to email Maria Russell and ask her to inquire with Mike Humphrey's about where the WIN program is funded from. If it isn't funded by employee premiums then this may be a non-issue.

Medical Tourism

Jennifer Elhard suggested that medical tourism be included in our healthcare plan as a pre-determined option, as opposed to its current form. The current form places the burden on the patient and their doctor to provide letters of medical necessity for travel outside of Alaska for healthcare. The group was in general consensus that this option should be suggested for the 12-13 healthcare plan and we will draft a motion to that effect to present to Staff Council at a meeting. The timing of this motion is unknown.

We agreed to cancel our normally scheduled meeting on 5/19 due to staff appreciation day activities; next meeting will be 5/26 at 9am, location to be determined.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:10am.