

Employee Benefits Committee Monthly Meeting

February 19, 2020

Attendees:

Margaret Radcliffe, Chair
Jennifer Earley, Staff Senate
Marie Bliss, ex officio
Samuel Doak, Faculty Senate
Patricia Donovan, Commission on Staff Policies and Affairs (CSPA) Representative
Sara Leftwich, ex officio
Leisa Shelor, ex officio
Amanda Hill, Administrative Support

Opening

The regular meeting of the Employee Benefits Committee was called to order at 2:01 p.m. on Wednesday, February 19, 2020 in North End Center room 3600 by Chairperson Margaret Radcliffe. Richard Ashley, LaTawnya Burleson, Sue Teel, and Eric Smith were absent.

Approval of Minutes

There were no minutes to approve as the January meeting was cancelled due to a gas leak and subsequent evacuations. The minutes of the meeting held December 18, 2019, were unanimously approved as distributed via email and are available on the EBC SharePoint site.

Subcommittee Reports

Tuition:

There was no new information to report from the tuition subcommittee.

Leave:

UVA automatically pays out excess leave over carryover limits at the end of the year that would otherwise be lost. It applies to university staff only and is understood to apply only to paid leave, not community service leave. Margaret asked about the option to cash out unused leave for staff at VT similar to the UVA policy. Pat said a similar policy may be particularly useful at the end of the year when employees who would have a lot of carryover leave at the end of the year are forced to take a lot of days off to avoid losing them. This could also positively affect productivity. Margaret wonders if it would be worth checking into for university staff.

Margaret shared a handout detailing leave for VT employees for comparison purposes. Pat is compiling a spreadsheet detailing the leave policies of peer institutions, and the leave subcommittee will continue to finalize research and use the data to identify disparities. Margaret suggests having the final report ready for the March meeting to allow time for consideration prior to drafting recommendations in April for final editing and approval at the May meeting.

Leisa shared that the resolution for community service leave for AP Faculty did not pass. Leadership will be encouraged to allow employees to use community service leave. She also

shared that there is legislation that mandates that emergency personnel get 24 hours of community service leave for use in their first responder roles.

Review Principles and Characteristics of Shared Governance and Draft Response

Principles and Characteristics of Shared Governance documentation was provided to the committee via email for review prior to the meeting. Pat mentioned items 2 and 8 in the document and stated that it seems as though the new overseeing body (University Cabinet) will have a fairly significant role and wondered if it will take anything away from this committee. Leisa stated that the premise is that the University Cabinet would be a subset of the University Council and could expedite decision-making and allow more to be accomplished, although some are concerned about there being another body. Margaret will report the comments received during this meeting and any received by email.

Schedule and priorities through May 2020

Margaret reiterated the importance of having final comparisons of leave ready in March so that a draft of recommendation can be completed by the April meeting and final recommendations can be completed at the May meeting. Even though tuition was not fully explored, Margaret stated it may still be worth mentioning as a possible issue for university administration to explore further.

May Meeting

A majority of the committee agreed via email to reschedule the May meeting of the Employee Benefits Committee to May 13, 2020, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in NEC Room 2410.

New Business

Margaret shared that the committee needs to appoint a representative to serve on the Employees' Spouse and Dependent Scholarship committee, and Jennifer expressed interest in taking on the role, but asked for an idea of what the commitment of time would be. Margaret will check with the chair of the committee, Robin McCoy.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 2:31 p.m. by Chairperson Margaret Radcliffe. The next general meeting will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 18, 2020 in NEC room 3600.