

BENEFITS COMMITTEE Minutes

February 18, 2016

10:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am.

Hokie Wellness

Amy Epperley, Assistant Director of Hokie Wellness, spoke to the group regarding the history of Hokie Wellness and gave an overview about what has changed about Hokie Wellness since fall 2015, what is new, and the types of services offered.

Hokie Wellness started in 2010 with 2 employees. In fall 2015, Hokie Wellness merged with student health and alcohol education and now employs 12 people. Hokie Wellness is now located in McComas Hall. In June, Hokie Wellness will evaluate whether the merger has been successful or not.

Question from the Committee: Why do you only focus on alcohol, not drugs?

Answer: Drugs are included. A name change to Alcohol and Other Drug Education will be coming soon.

Employee wellness includes work-life balance, wellness and health education and university and community outreach. Hokie Wellness is not clinical, they are focused on well-being. They can assist individuals with connecting to the EAP, Tobacco Cessation, and self-management programs. If necessary, they can assist in getting an individual connected to doctors. This program is continually being reassessed.

Student health education includes Healthy Hokie Workshops, Health Counseling and events. Most health education is presented by a student-led team.

Question from the Committee: On the employee side, why is it that alcohol and drug education and assistance are not offered?

Answer: With the merger, Hokie Wellness will be able to offer that to employees on campus.

Alcohol and other drug education includes online class, mandated classes for students, party positive, making positive choices and the BASICS. Peer educators and recovery groups are also available. Hokie Wellness is trying a 21st birthday pilot program to encourage safe partying.

Question from the Committee: Are the recovery groups mixed? (students and employees)

Answer: No, employees are separate from students.

Question from the committee: Is there evidence that responsible choices programs actually work?

Answer: Assessments have been done on these programs. We know that it is going to happy so at the very least we try to educate students so they know what to do.

The spring focus for Hokie Wellness is to come up with a new mission and vision. The new tagline is "Helping Hokies Thrive". There will be a reorganization of roles and responsibilities and marketing and communications will be combined. In the future, Hokie Wellness hopes to offer wellness coaching, mindfulness training, contemplative practices, walking train signage and wellness retreats.

Childcare

The Board of Directors for the Alliance for Building Better Childcare in the New River Valley will be having their first meeting February 29th. At this time, there is not much information to report. They are attempting to hiring an Executive Director to assist in developing the workforce and researching grants. Cathy Kropff can present more after the Board Meeting.

Question from the Committee: Will this be a Virginia Tech program?

Answer: The president is on board, I believe that we would like to have this on campus. However, at this time, it's undetermined.

Work-Life Harmony

Hokie Wellness is hoping to expand the Fall and Spring Wellness Series and implement mindfulness training. Hokie Wellness will present wherever departments would like. They have done recent presentations for EDI and the Division of Student Affairs.

Flexible Work Arrangements

Virginia Tech offers many types of flexible work arrangements including telework and alternate work schedules. An individual should work with their supervisor for approval. Hokie Wellness does the final approval for all requests.

Question from the Committee: Are these department or college level decisions?

Answer: Department

Question from the Committee: What percentage of departments allow flexible work?

Answer: I am unsure, I will look and follow up.

Question from the Committee: What does Hokie Wellness look for when these requests are made?

Answer: We make sure that the work schedule still equals 40 hours, look for any unclear terms, and make sure that it makes sense.

Question from the Committee: Can a department head allow some people and not others to participate?

Answer: Ultimately, it is their decision.

Question from the Committee: Of the departments who do not allow, is there more turnover?

Answer: I do not know. I will find out.

Question from the Committee: Can you provide us with a definition of mindfulness?

Answer: Mindfulness is being more present in all that we do.

Question from the Committee: How does Hokie Wellness communicate?

Answer: Facebook, flyers, listserv, TV News and the calendar

Future Meetings

Angie King mentioned that there are two more meetings left in the year and invited individuals to offer agenda items. Cathy Kropff will be invited to the March meeting to follow up on childcare. Becky Morris will likely attend the April meeting to discuss Open Enrollment (as long as it is held around the same time as last year). Because it is a budget year, there could be changes to the plan. It is anticipated that Open Enrollment will start around May 1st.

Question from the Committee: Has there been any update regarding repurposing holidays?

Answer: Currently, we know that parental leave is still being worked on. However, we are unsure if the holiday repurposing is still being considered. Angie King will follow up with Cathy Petry and provide an update.

Question from the Committee: Do we have benefits for retirees regarding wellness?

Answer: Hokie Wellness offers all of their programs to retirees. However, it has been found that it's hard to communicate. Virginia Tech offers health insurance, health insurance credits, and other benefits through the state. Virginia Tech also has the VTRA, a retirees group. Benefits is working to provide more information to employees regarding retirement. Creation of a retirement planning guide for ORP and VRS members is underway and we are looking to expand session offerings.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.