Alternative Service Committee

Alternative Service Committee | Academic year 2013-2014

Minutes of the Alternative Service Committee Meeting September 4, 2013

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Minutes
ASC Sub-Committee Chair Meeting
Sept. 4, 2013
RSC room 266

Randy gave us an update as to where K-State is in the process they are slated for a vote the first part of November. They do not have their white papers posted on their website right now but keep watching the website they will be posted.

Does anyone have any questions on which direction they need to go in. I am no expert on this all I can do is tell you what I have read on other websites and what my feelings might be with the process like this. Joe did make the announcement so we will probably be getting some contacts about this.

Stacy – So I don't quite know what I am supposed to do, I have furloughs and layoffs. There was maybe a sentence about layoffs in the white papers that were sent out and nothing on furloughs. Am I just supposed to go through the policy and procedures and hunt down anything that I can find on this in there?

Randy – Start with that first, then take a look at the K-State white papers, KU has posted their Support Staff Manuel online so you can take a look at that. Their stuff is all finalized and has been for several years. I don't see where there will be a lot of changes where Furloughs and Layoffs are concerned, that will still happen and I don't see where procedural process will change, it will be similar except that it will need to be adjusted as to the wording coming from the university instead of coming from the state. Which will be a problem with the discipline issues as well, right now if we have issues with discipline it can be taken to the States Civil Service Board and we will not have that option if we move to the USS it will end with the president. So that will have to be changed. But I don't expect a lot of changes with yours; I think it will be pretty close to what it is now.

Angie – You could also look at the contracts for the 2 unions that are here on campus and see how we can mirror that.

Stacy – But how do those apply to the Classified Staff here on campus?

Randy – This agreement is with the Service Maintenance dept. and it is over at the physical plant and this list right here is all the classification that it applies too. And they are classified staff, now it is only people at the physical plant and it doesn't apply to everybody at the physical plant. This agreement is with the Police Dept. there are 4 classification with it, there layoff procedures maybe different than the rest of us you can have these if you would like. Anyone that would like a copy of these you can get them from Lamar over in HR.

Stacy – Now these cannot be affected in anyway, right?

Randy – We can't by law change that in anyway what so ever. Now what can happen is they can be allowed to lapse after the contract time runs out. Those departments can decide that they no longer what to have those agreements but what to fall under the USS completely.

Stacy – So explain the whole process and procedure this is totally new to me. How does this apply to the university or do they work together or does this agreement over rule what we would have in our USS policy.

Randy – Their union agreement would overrule anything that the university has as a policy but for only those classifications that on attached to the union agreement. Not for anybody that is outside of that. Now we have 2 people that are on the full committee that is affected by those. Nick Beech who is a University Police Officer and I asked him specifically if he was automatically in that or if you have to sign up for it. You have to sign up for it; Kansas is a right to work state so you don't have to be part of the union to work. Matt Clatfelter who is our other 3rd shifter is a University Power Plant worker and that is covered under the Service Maintenance Agreement. That could be the reason why they were pulled into this committee so that we would have people that were affected by those agreements and policies.

Angie – So it is really important for them to me here to give us their perspective on how they feel about that.

Randy – Yes, so that is why I wanted to change the meeting so that they could be there because I think it is important that they are part of this process. We might find out that they don't like the current agreement that they are under. But it can't change until those agreements expire.

I really hope that people see that we can put more trust in our university administration than we can in the legislatures up in Topeka. Some of you have been up there during the legislature days and they look at you and say "who are you, why are you up here, you should be happy that you have a job at all".

Angie – Ok let's say that we are starting from scratch mind is the Performance Appraisal how do you know what to do to fix it if we don't know that it is broken? There is a new paper coming out that will be added to that this year. But we can't get to that tool to see what it is; I can take my appraisal and look at it.

Stacy – Yes but you can get copies of it from Randy Lindquist in HR, she is the one that does all of that.

Randy – We have enough people in HR on this committee that we can get a copy of it.

Angie – What I am trying to find out is what is the procedure that I need to do to create my white paper.

Randy – I guess we need to find out where people think that it is broken, some of that will be going to HR having them pull some out and finding out what the changes are going to be and how they will affect us. Do we need to add categories, do we need to take some categories away, and Frankie clarified some of this in the last meeting. From my understanding when it comes to layoffs even though I have been here for 25 years if I do not have enough evaluation for HR to go by I could be one of the first to be laid off.

Angie – So is this new system better now, we haven't seen it yet?

Stacy – It isn't a new system it is just a new sheet to be added to the current evaluation form. But I am just going off a little email that I received telling me that there was a new sheet that was part of the seed system now.

Randy – Another thing that the use to do and I don't know if this is still the case, if you were a classified supervisor you had to go to training to understand how to fill out that evaluation. But if you were faculty or unclassified and you supervised classified staff you didn't have to go.

Emily – I think that there is a training coming up, can Angie go and shadow it.

Randy – Sure I don't think that should be an issue or someone on the committee could go and sit in on it.

Stacy – I know that Lamar sits in on them, but she is there specifically to help. But I would think that it would be okay.

Emily – I just think that with the research that you did to do for the committee I think you should be allowed to go to that.

Randy – You could ask either Sheryl or Matt.

Emily – Something else that I thought about to see where people think that our current system is broke is to do a survey. My committee could certainly come up with a survey to send out to the classified staff and we can make it so that they can either enter their name or not. We can do an online survey.

Randy – The other thing that we need to look at is are we going to tie this into part of a raise or not. K-State is trying to decide if that is what they are going to do, KU is actually doing that. There is a portion you get if you have a satisfaction or better and there is a portion that just everybody gets.

Wanda – We talked about that in our committee yesterday and how it would be done.

Randy – That is something we will need to look at as well is how do we want to do that.

Stacy – You bring up a good point as well that in case of a layoff if it comes down to an evaluation and you don't have as many in as the person that is equal to you, that is not your fault that is your supervisors fault.

Brenda – I have a question about the agreements there, how many different categories of that are there. Is there just those two?

Randy – There is only those two on campus but the ones that there are involve different classification.

Angie – I think that all the committee chairs should have a copy of those.

Randy – I can have Lamar make sure they get copies of them.

Brenda – So they are part of this AFT but they have separate agreement from the rest of us.

Randy – That is right. Everything else that I glanced through was pretty much in line with the university policy. I don't think they are out to try and change everything, but I think in their eyes they are out to change the classification involved. When this law that has been passed this 76-715a when it was still in committee everyone pretty much agreed with it that testified in front of the committee until KAPE comes up, they didn't like it Andy Sanchez said that "he respects the process of the legislature in the making annual appropriations including pay adjustments for state employees". He says that this bill attempts to weaken the conditions of employment and the only reason for them to make this move is from the employees perspective is for more money in our pockets".

Stacy – I don't think that they are the only ones that hold this view. I personally don't think it is a good idea.

Randy – That is fine and we need people on the committee that feel that way.

Stacy – I mean that I understand the whole no pay raises, I get that I have been here 12 years and I haven't had one. But I am not convinced that going away from the state system is good for the longevity of our jobs.

Randy – There are some other things that might fit into that. The state legislature also looking at doing away with the classified service and moving everybody to unclassified positions.

Brenda – Then we would be like all the other unclassified positions where we would go from year to year not a continual job situation.

Stacy – See that is a good point to understand because at these town hall meetings these questions are going to come up. That is something that I don't understand is why would we be better off doing this.

Randy – Unclassified are year to year employees they have to sign a contract every year. If there boss says we don't have the money to renew your contract then at the end of that contract there out of a job. They don't have any civil service protection like we do, we would have to go through the layoff procedure, we have call back rights and they would have to check to see if has enough points and who get laid off first. That doesn't happen with unclassified.

Stacy – I just think that it is very important that we understand the answers to these questions before we have a town hall meeting. I am not entirely convinced that it is as simple as the explanation that you just gave.

Randy – No, it is not simple and I am not trying to simplify it, there are a lot of things that go into it that we are going to have to be concerned with.

Angie – I think it is very difficult to write a white paper if you don't know the concerns before you start. I really think we need to reverse this, have the town hall meetings first and get the concerns so that we have something to work with.

Stacy – So the question is do we want to do it as a town hall or as a survey? My only concern is that we will get into a room with a lot of angry people. I agree with Angie we definitely need feedback and we need to know what the concerns are.

Randy – I like the idea of a survey better.

Angie – I think that is a good idea also.

Emily – I feel like that would fit under my committee, could also spin it so that they have the information as to what we are doing and let them know the dates that they need to save for town hall meetings. Put a positive light on the survey and what we are trying to accomplish.

Randy – that will be one of the issues we have with the meetings is they could very possibly turn into mudslinging and I don't want that to happen. Something that Matt suggested was that we have the smaller groups so we don't lose control of the meeting.

Angie – I could see having people sign up for different interest in meetings once you get to 30 no more can be added to that particular meeting.

Randy – If you would like to build your committees up I do not have a problem with that, but these core groups are what will come back to the big committee with their ideas. That is why last week I suggested at looking at involving the classified senate because they are really interested in helping with this process.

Stacy – I also wonder if they would be able to help us by talking to their members. It is keeping it smaller and they have already put themselves in that position of getting feedback from their members.

Randy – At the last Senate meeting there were questions as to why the committee wasn't involved. Somehow HR was asked to put together a diverse list of people and I don't know how they picked that list, then that list was given to the president and the VP's sat down and picked people at of that list. There were enough people on that list to pick a committee plus have some reserve on the list. Sheryl has stated that they have gone through the entire list; there were people that turned us down or weren't interested. That is another reason to look at pulling from the classified senate.

Stacy – Is it a good idea to talk about how this committee was chosen. They already have question about it.

Angie – Ask people to come to the classified senate meetings to get them involved so they can see what is going on and maybe get involved with some of our sub-committee.

Stacy – Putting this survey together and sending it out will help to address some of the concerns and ideas of the classified staff.

Randy – Having something to start with before we start with the white papers is a good idea. Although this is a very diverse group that sits on this full committee there is still a lot more out there.

Angie- We have no one from the Library we should really have someone from the library.

Emily – My committee meets tomorrow and we will probably talk about this survey. I will put an option as to whether or not they would like to enter their name or not and out the bottom I would like to put on there a question asking whether or not they might be interested in being a part of a sub-committee. Maybe that would help to generate so of their interest.

Angie – Yes give them a list of all the committees and ask if they would be interested in being a part of the committee.

Randy – You have a list of all the committees on the side bar you might go ahead and list all the members of the sub-committees too. Because somebody might not know the committee chair but might know somebody on that committee and be more willing to talk to that person.

Randy – you can go ahead and meet with your committee and get an idea on what direction to go and please feel free to ask anyone to become part of your sub-committee then we will get the survey out and see where we need to go from there.

Matt and Sheryl have done a lot of research in looking at websites and pulling in information, a lot of that they have passed on to us some of it they may or may not have. But they have been very willing to pass it on to us if they have it.

Stacy – As far as asking them about where the evaluations are broken they will be a very good resource on that because they hear the complaints a lot and how people need help with that.

Angie – How did the change come about with the evaluations?

Stacy – The change came from the state side not our side. Because we are part of the state we had to follow suit. The entire state has made the change.

Angie – Weren't we to go to a system that was to be merit based.

Stacy – The thought is that this particular system is to go that way but it hasn't yet.

Angie – But maybe they have already developed the ground work for that part.

Randy – Years ago we use to be merit based you didn't get your pay raise unless you were satisfactory or above. That was before I even got here, supposedly if you were going to get a bonus that was supposed to be based on evaluation and that never happened. That is another thing who has compensation? That is another thing that we need to look at is bonuses. KU gets $50 at the end of the year for bonuses, whether or not the president is going to be willing to do that or not. One of the reasons it didn't pass the last time when Ellen and them were looking at it is it got to the Board of Regents and one of the concerns was well we can't do a whole of pay but what can we do about benefits. There were some legal questions that came up about that Ted Ayres brought up the legal questions and that kind of shut everything down. Can we look at other options sick leave, vacation leave etc...

Stacy – Most unclassified positions require a degree and most classified do not.

Randy – I think we need to look at what we think is best and Stacy if you can find so holes that can be filled please do so and we will see what we can do to fill it. This committee is supposed to be looking at the possibility of making the move not saying hey lets' make the move that is going to up to the classified staff.

Stacy – I think that is a very good part of the marketing is to present it as unbiased in any way. Even if you are for it or against it.

Randy – as a committee we need to present both sides of it. There is a page that was passed out that shows the differences between the classified and the unclassified. Something that shows the differences between classified staff and university support staff.

Stacy – The only thing that I questioned is what does that mean, if I was too look at this at the town hall meeting and just think ok this really doesn't have any meaning to me.

Randy – One of the things that we have different from KU and K-State is that we have policies and they have handbooks.

Stacy – should we be looking at their stuff?

Randy – Absolutely you can, KU is online underneath their USS link, K-State is in the process of getting done I expect they will be posted before November since their vote is set up for November. Randy will send some links out to us to get the information.

Wanda – Should we leave the Hay Group out as far as trying to get these pay grades up to market standards?

Randy – Not necessarily the concern that I would have is will the university of the $'s to do that.

Wanda – There was $16,000,000 in the pot to do that then that money was just taken and they didn't go any further with that.

Randy – The other concern that I have is if we pull away from the classified civil service in state, what is the state going to do with the money for the 600 + employees that they no longer have to fund? Is that money going to be fed to the university or is the university all of a sudden going to have to come up with the money to cover the 600+ employee payroll? If so where will that money come from, if the state doesn't feed that down to the university the university will have to pull that down from somewhere else.

Stacy – That is a concern for me what happens with layoffs and all sort of things with the state, state employment is kind of a valued job because of all the protection that we have before we get laid off or fired from our position.

Angie – It is an issue with the State of Kansas because they are ready to release us as classified staff.

Stacy – Yes but they have been ready to release us for 10 years and how slow does the political system go. I think that kind of verbage just insights people to anger rather than lets' lay everything out on the table. Is that really true, if it is maybe we need to talk to somebody or have somebody from Topeka come talk about it. That kind of words just make people scared and ready to make a decision that they really shouldn't do.

Angie – But when you go to the hill and you are in front of a legislature that feeling is really really supported.

Stacy – Yes and I don't mean to disagree I think that we should just be cautious.

Angie – Yes but there is so many state employees they have to do something.

Randy – The state classified employee is the largest group of employees in the state and rightly so we cover the entire state.

Stacy – What happens with your retirement and what happens with your health insurance.

Randy – He is what the law says "if those classified employees who are converted from classified to unclassified shall retain all health and flexible benefits, retirement benefits under the state classified program." So none of that goes away it has to stay the same by law.

Stacy – How will it be funded?

Randy – We will still be in KPERS it is state employee funded there is a lot of people who are in KPERS. There will not be any changes there.

Wanda – That is because all of the unclassified who are not in the state system they have the same benefits.

Randy – the only difference is they are in TIAA/CREF but their insurance is the same as what we have. But then again that would be a question that Mary would have to answer.

Randy – Any other questions?

Meeting adjourned.