

## **EXEMPT STAFF COUNCIL MEETING**

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Wednesday, July 20, 2022

via Zoom

**Members attending:** Susan Lazenby (Chair), Alexa McClellan, Kat Mortensen, Nathan Barger, Stephanie Parrish, Elizabeth Johnson, Sedrick Snowden, Rebecca Littleton, Jordan Hicks, Sandra Jones, Jason Harville, Emma Fullington, Bryon Kluesner, Lance Keatley, Kelly Griffin, Mary Lee King, Elizabeth Smith

**Others in attendance:** Julie Brown, Director of Employee Relations; Logan Rader, HR Administrative Support Specialist

**Call to order: Chair** Susan Lazenby called the meeting to order.

**Email Communication to ESC Constituents:** Susan Lazenby revisited the call that was issued in the June Meeting for members to initiate semi-regular email communications to their representative groups. Ms. Lazenby shared an introductory draft that was created by Jordan Hicks and Alexa McClellan, asking for feedback from the council. Members expressed that they approve of the draft, and Mary Lee King inquired about the forthcoming anonymous survey to be sent to representative groups, which was addressed later in the meeting. Ms. Lazenby called for a motion to send the staff survey to members' constituents, which was confirmed by Sandra Jones and seconded by Ms. King.

**ESC Survey:** If members are unsure of those in their representative groups, they can reach out to Logan Rader for an updated list. Ms. Lazenby shared the survey with the council to be sent by members to their respective groups, which includes a call for suggestions, questions, or any university items as they relate to UTC's campus at large, employees' divisions, or individuals. The survey is entirely anonymous, and upon completion, responses will be pulled from Qualtrics by the chairpersons. One element hoped to achieve by this survey is to gauge representative groups' feedback in determining guest speakers in ESC monthly meetings, so that information can be relayed to members of campus through and from the council. Ms. McClellan suggested that the survey include a voluntary departmental or group identifier for those wishing to voice feedback, which will be added before it is sent out. All groups have several to many exempt staff members, so there are no concerns of employee identification through process of elimination. Ms. McClellan also inquired regarding the next steps in receipt of survey responses. The chairs will be receiving survey responses and using that information to inform future topics to discuss and guest speakers to invite. Ms.

McClellan reiterated that it would be beneficial for employees to know what is being done with this information, so they are encouraged to share without any underlying fears or worries about the process. Ms. Lazenby reaffirmed the concern, and relayed that their feedback will be utilized for the ESC to bring ideas together to make change, distribute information, etc. Stephanie Parrish expressed the concern that the quality and volume of responses may prove difficult for one person to coordinate. The ESC does, however, have internal resources, including Human Resources, to assist with any capacity issues expressed by members and chairpersons. A motion was made by Sandra Jones to utilize the survey, with the minor issues discussed earlier to be addressed, which was seconded by Elizabeth Smith.

**Microsoft Teams & the ESC** (Susan Lazenby): Interest had previously been expressed that the ESC and Employee Relations Council (ERC) investigate utilizing Teams as a communication platform for the group(s). It is a Microsoft application and program that can be accessed via your desktop if you have a Windows computer or web browser. Ms. Lazenby noted that she is willing to help anyone who wants to learn more about Teams and its usage; simply contact her ([Susan-Lazenby@utc.edu](mailto:Susan-Lazenby@utc.edu)) if that applies. By being invited to a "Team," members can communicate either directly or with the entire group via the "Posts" tab. It operates similarly to a Chat Room. Members can also tweak their desired settings as it relates to notifications, etc. Files can be shared and collaboratively edited using the "Files" tab. This is where the group can store minutes, agendas, contact lists, etc. Storing files this way will minimize email communication between members and make files more accessible for members and their constituency groups. The survey discussed earlier will also be housed in Teams. In short, Teams can make communication and file-sharing within the council simpler since all members are owners of the Teams space. Ms. Lazenby shared a template Teams site, which is currently used to track the work of the IT Web Development group here at UTC. All student workers are also able to utilize Teams. The ESC will begin utilizing Microsoft Teams more fully going forward.

**Blue Ribbon Award** (Julie Brown): Following up on the May 2022 Blue Ribbon Award Winner, Julie Brown shared that the May 2022 recipient was Leslie Ellis, Senior Custodian. Congratulations to Leslie on being nominated by ten (10) colleagues and receiving the Blue Ribbon Award for May 2022.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 21, 2022.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.