



UNIVERSITY
of ALASKA
Many Traditions One Alaska

Minutes

Staff Alliance

Wednesday, October 11, 2017

10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

[Google Hangout](#)

Audio call-in: 1-855-280-1855

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Voting Members:

Kara Axx, President, UAF Staff Council; Chair, Staff Alliance

Ryan J. Hill, Co-President, UAA Staff Council

Kolene James, President, UAS Staff Council; Vice Chair, Staff Alliance

Brenda Levesque, Co-President, UAA Staff Council

Elaine Main, Vice President, SW Administration Assembly

Sue Mitchell, Vice President, UAF Staff Council

Kiwana Sutton, Vice President, UAS Staff Council

Staff:

Morgan Dufseth, Executive Officer, System Governance

Guests:

Keli Hite McGee, Chief Human Resources Officer

Michelle Pope, Director of HR Accounting and HRIS

Sara Rodewald, HealthyRoads Wellness Manager

Members Absent:

Shiva Hullavarad, President, SW Administration Assembly

2. Adopt Agenda

Sue moved to adopt as is, seconded by Ryan. There were no objections. The agenda adopted as presented.

3. Approve Minutes

3.1. August Retreat and September Meeting Minutes

References [1](#) & [2](#)

Brenda noted she had one concern, about something Geoff said about at-will and UA at the September meeting, and would like more information. Morgan will solicit more information from Geoff about whether UA is at-will.

MOTION: Ryan moved to approve the August minutes, seconded by Brenda. There were no objections and the August retreat minutes were approved as presented.

September minutes were postponed until November so Morgan could get more information from Geoff.

4. Public and Guest Comment

4.1. Michelle Pope – Benefits Updates

4.1.1. HR is working on a method for employees to change their address through UAOnline. Currently, a separate paper form has to be submitted to get an employee's HR address changed. SW HR is working on testing and communication to the employee population. Messaging will be sent via Benefits email listserv, local newsletters, and local PPAs. They are planning for it to go into effect on November 1. This has been requested by employees for some time, mainly because it was confusing they can't change it online with other addresses. It will also cut down on HR processing time and any delay in processing.

4.1.2. Changes to the Health Savings Accounts – The HSA is currently on a fiscal year plan, which does not align with federal tax schedules; so SW HR is proposing a to change to a calendar year schedule. This means employees won't have to re-enroll each year during open enrollment, it will become an "evergreen" option and they can change their deduction amount it at any time. There will also be internal controls to ensure employees don't go over the limit/cap. SW HR is hoping this will give employees more flexibility to change their plans. The change will be communicated shortly and will go into effect the first pay period in January. Will be sent to all employees currently enrolled in an HSA. If someone is currently enrolled, whatever they have in place right now will be what they have going forward, and it won't end. This won't change health plans at all—no impact on deductible, etc.

4.2. Sara Rodewald – HealthyRoads Updates

The wellness program is now up and running. Monthly emails are sent to employees to help them understand what activities, plans, etc. are being offered. UA will be holding biometric events but have not yet been scheduled (will likely take place prior to the end of the calendar year, and then again in February and March). This year's plans are driven

by last year's results. Of the five categories, if an employee met three of them in FY17, they only have to fill out a Personal Health Assessment to get the rebate in FY18. If an employee did not meet at least three requirements or did not participate last year, they will have to meet all of the requirements (biometrics, PHA, five points). This option will be offered to employees in alternating years depending on their results.

4.3. Keli Hite McGee – UA Leadership and Succession Development

The CHRO noted she is heading up a project on leadership and succession development at UA and she is starting to talk first with key stakeholders in the hopes of finding out where areas of need are. Nicole Cundiff, Pips Veazy, and Heidi Shepard are assisting her at UAF. Keli noted they want a leadership and development track for each level of leadership (from mid-level supervisor to executive management)—and that each level needs a different set of skills and development set. She noted higher education does not follow a typical corporate development schedule (identifying an individual and then developing them for a specific position). However, at UA, we can still develop people in their current roles, to help them with their current position and to make them ready for a new position with more responsibilities.

Staff Alliance members provided the following feedback:

UAA – lack of clear communication from supervisors, lack of recognition, training for current supervisors if possible, giving constructive feedback

UAS – UAS is currently holding twice monthly supervisor training on different topics (i.e. creating diversity in the workplace), how to talk to/with subordinates, professional development for specific positions/areas, compensation for staff governance members and communication to supervisors about governance participation

UAF – development of leadership with minorities and women

SW – mentorship program, adding information to website about career development, conflict management, emotional intelligence

5. Chair's Report

Kara Axx

Kara noted she met with the CHRO and President Johnsen, separately, to discuss the change to annual leave cash-in and the annual leave accrual cap.

BOR – Title IX changes are supposed to help all people who interact with UA to feel safe and secure while they are a part of the university community. It isn't just a box to check, it is a culture that UA is trying to build and promote. All business was done the first day of the BOR meeting; the second day was a workshop/presentation with NCHEMS leaders. Gave Regents on how to interact with the administration—go through the president and don't contact individual staff members; how to set goals and then let the administration figure out how to meet those goals (basically stay out of the weeds!). Also, how to empower employees so they can fulfill their work objectives—don't impose too many rules and allow decision-

making to be done at the lowest level possible. One big change is new budget request—now looking at goals of institutions and then funded based off of that. Seems like this change could cause departments to really think about how we use money.

Strategic Pathways – Phase 1 and 2 are in implementation phase and are being overseen by the new system-wide councils.

6. Staff Council Reports – Postponed due to time constraints
 - 6.1. UAA Staff Council
 - 6.2. UAF Staff Council
 - 6.3. UAS Staff Council
 - 6.4. SW Administration Assembly

7. Staff Alliance Committees – Morgan noted most of the committees were scheduled to meet in the near future, but that additional members are needed for the staff emeritus committee from UAF and SW.
 - 7.1. Staff Health Care Committee
 - 7.2. Compensation Committee
 - 7.3. Morale Committee
 - 7.4. Ad Hoc Staff Emeritus

8. External Committees
 - 8.1. System Governance Council: Will meet on Oct. 19. New members include Kara Axx (Staff Alliance), Nathan Grilley (Coalition of Student Leaders), and Chris Fallen (Faculty Alliance).

 - 8.2. Joint Health Care Committee: Brenda and Elaine
Elaine will send a written update after the meeting because her mic wasn't working:
I went to the 10/5 meeting by the [Alaskans for Sustainable Healthcare Costs](#).

It is a group of Alaskan employers who are concerned about current healthcare environment and are working together to help understand issues and to find solutions to be able to provide affordable healthcare to our communities.

This group is new maybe about eleven months old, started in January 2017. Need more folks to get involved to help. See first attachment.

Milliman was commissioned by Premera (who of course want to be out less as well) to do a study about Alaska commercial healthcare prices (2nd attachment). This study was just completed but also compares to another study done in 2014.

Basically meeting was to supply information to the group. So they could see compared to other states just how high Alaska provider rate are (what Doctors/Hospitals charge us for services) and premium costs.

The charts clearly show that in every instance we pay well above every other state see page 1 for numbers. There were three areas of focus, medevacs, 80th percentile and transparency.

Medevac: example given-- Medevac post negotiation \$140,000 (JNU-ANC), but same flight at pre-negotiated rate is only \$22,000 why such discrepancy?

The 80th percentile is interesting in that this needs to be changed ASAP. Originally it was enacted as a constitutional protection, now it's turned against us. Basically State of AK has a MANDATORY allowable charge calculated at 80th percentile of out-of-network providers, so we will always be charged more because of this. We need to support this group in its need to change this. There's some bill that needs to be passed, or created or needs support to get this changed.

Transparency involved with rates why won't physicians give us their racks rates, so we KNOW prices before we commit to services, they won't do it. HB123 passed house but not senate. Lots of push back they don't want us to know how much they are going to charge, this is crazy.

Overall very interesting meeting, EYE OPENING. I'd encourage folks to look into this group, see link above go to toolkit page on website (you will see same Milliman report on this page). We need to start working together as a State, so that we can make actual changes that will help to lower how much we ALL pay for insurance statewide.

Brenda requested discussion with Erika about adding another voting staff member to the JHCC to create equal representation.

- 8.3. System-wide Councils: Kara, Ryan, Sue and Brenda – Members will begin to attend council meetings this month and will provide updates to the Alliance at their November meeting.

9. Ongoing Business

9.1. Update on Meeting with Union Rep

Ryan and Brenda they would need 30% of the UA staff population to indicate interest in forming a union, and then an election could be held. If there is overwhelming interest, an election could be waived. If the decision goes to a vote, 50% would need to vote to unionize for it to be successful. Ryan proposed taking the idea back to local staff councils to measure interest. Brenda also suggested meeting with Local 6070 members to see if they are happy with their union and if they feel it gives them more job security. Also suggested inviting a union member to present at a local staff council meeting to

hear their thoughts on how it benefits them. Kara noted we will want to be cognizant of all the rules surrounding unionizing.

ACTION: Members will take back to local staff councils to gather feedback from their constituents and will discuss again at the November meeting.

9.2. Strategic Pathways Phase III Feedback [Reference 3](#)

9.3. Full and part-time employment discussion

9.3.1. Definitions: [R04.05.020D](#) and [State of AK](#)

Members discussed the different definitions and how they impact employees.

9.3.2. UAA Staff Council Resolution [Reference 4](#)

9.3.3. UA Staff Alliance Resolution

ACTION: Brenda and Ryan will work on a resolution, and Morgan offered to work on wording for the regulation change.

10. New Business

10.1. Feedback on Email Guidelines [Reference 5](#)

Members provided the below feedback:

UAA – We noticed some instances where employees operate under a different server and so they wouldn't be able to send messages under the @alaska.edu server.

UAF – What happens when an employee separates from the university? Any employee responsibility? Any requirements? Archiving?

Kara also noted when she spoke with Karl he noted they felt they needed something on the books in case anything came up, rather than to address a specific issue.

Questions to share with Karl: What happens next? Where will it be housed? How will employees be notified of it?

10.2. Annual Leave Cap: Action postponed at September BOR [Reference 6](#)

As noted earlier, it looks like this action will not be pursued at the November Board meeting. Rather they will ask to change the roll date from February 1 to July 1, which will give employees an additional 80 hours for this year only.

11. Agenda Items for November 1 Meeting

11.1. Retirement Discussion with Erika Van Flein (and the JHCC)

11.2. Layoff Notice for Hourly Employees

11.3. Performance Appraisal Training

11.4. Feedback from Staff Councils on Unionizing

11.5. Full and Part-Time Hours Resolution

12. Adjourn

Brenda moved to adjourn, seconded by Kolene. The meeting adjourned at 12:17. p.m.