

September 15, 2020 Employee Forum Executive Committee minutes

Delegates Attending: L.E. Alexander, Shane Brogan, Tiffany Carver, Jen DeNeal, Phil Edwards, Stephanie Forman, Adrienne Gibilisco, Shayna Hill, Keith Hines, Haydée Marchese, Arlene Medder, Katie Musgrove, Ayla Ocasio, Laura Pratt, Kevin Robinson, Robert Smith III, Antonio Squire, Jacob Womack

Chair Shayna Hill called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m. She asked for a motion to approve the August minutes. Katie Musgrove made this motion, seconded by Haydée Marchese. There were some minor changes requested of the minutes. The motion was approved by acclamation.

Ayla Ocasio and Matt Banks presented the Forum's monthly budget report. Banks reported that there was very little spent this month.

The Chair asked how many members had read all 91 pages of the Covid-19 survey responses. Only a few delegates had done so. She was happy to recognize Jen DeNeal, who had done a preliminary analysis of the responses. DeNeal distributed her report and listed various caveats to her conclusions about the data. The first of these is that the responses do not represent a scientific rendering of the data. She outlined the main themes indicated in the responses, particularly the advice for administration. Among these responses were to be flexible, consider childcare and flexible work schedules, be transparent in decision-making, provide additional hazard pay, and protect vulnerable staff.

The second big category of responses considered challenges to administrators. These included the breach of trust, a lack of transparency, a lack of resources, and loss of administrative leave. She added that some answers stated that the administration was doing a good job.

Stephanie Forman asked who had seen these responses and what did the Forum plan to do with this information. The Chair said that staff have placed a huge amount of faith in the Forum in the content of these responses. She observed that much identifying information remains in this data that needs to be de-identified. She said that the Forum needs to be careful how it shares this information to avoid betraying the trust of respondents.

Forman asked if the Forum could find a way to de-identify the data without gutting the points made. Jen DeNeal thought that this could be done without changing the integrity of the responses. She said the issue demands more thought. The Chair agreed, noting a guiding principle to recall the mission of the Forum to seek out and constructively address issues while providing appropriate advice to the Chancellor. The Chair added that employees are now physically and emotionally exhausted, and it is important to convey this fact to the administration.

The Chair added that a real inequity exists in what is communicated to staff among different departments. She saw a similar inequity between those who can work at home and those who have never stopped work on campus. She noted the health care and TEACCH workers who have brought their issues to the Forum.

Kevin Robinson thought that the Forum needs to provide some analysis of the data, select some higher-impact quotes, de-identify and anonymize the data, then assign negative and positive scores based on adjectives used. This course would allow summarized, quantified presentation of the comments. DeNeal added that she could not do this task in time for the next meeting. Robert Smith III

added that the Forum could use analysis to create themes and quantify data while protecting anonymity.

The Chair thought that this work was absolutely the job of the Forum. She never expected 91 pages of authentic responses. She did not want to waste the incredible trust placed in the organization.

Jen DeNeal outlined themes from responses requesting advocacy from the Forum.

Stephanie Forman suggested that the Forum attempt to prepare a document for the Vice Chancellor representatives' meeting October 8th. The Chair encouraged interested delegates to form a subcommittee to work on the data. She also thought that the data could serve as the basis for another resolution for the public record.

Katie Musgrove thought it important for the Forum to release its report on the data in advance of the town hall discussion. Jen DeNeal, Robert Smith III, Kevin Robinson, and Phil Edwards, among others, volunteered to work on producing the report. The Chair thanked the group for volunteering.

Shane Brogan reported that the Communications & Public Relations committee discussed Employee Appreciation events and *InTouch* publication for this month. The Chair asked if the committee could publish information on mental health resources in the latest issue of *InTouch*.

Jacob Womack reported that the Community Service committee is moving forward with work on the IFC food drive and Covid-related community service leave. Kevin Robinson offered to help with production of fliers for the drive.

Antonio Squire said that there was no report from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee. The Chair recalled that the Rebecca Clark Staff Award for Moral Courage will be presented at this year's University Day festivities.

L.E. Alexander said that the Education & Career Development committee will open applications for professional development grants in October. She said that the committee has discussed the possibility of restarting the annual mini conference on higher education professional development.

Tiffany Carver had no report from the Membership & Assignments committee.

Stephanie Forman reported that the Personnel Issues committee had raised questions on implementation of 360 reviews for staff and managers. She said that the University's Committee on the Status of Women had discussed childcare benefit increases. She said that this benefit is important but is hard to advocate for now given the current budget situation.

Phil Edwards noted a couple of employee requests for increased hours for asymptomatic testing currently offered by the Town. He would follow up with Catherine Brennan of Environment, Health, and Safety to see how to extend testing hours in multiple locations.

Keith Hines noted that surveys on diversity, equity and inclusion will go out soon across campuses from the UNC System Office. Adrienne Gibilisco differentiated that survey from the recent one sent from the Chancellor's Office that week.

The Chair asked if the committee wished to schedule speakers other than the Ombuds office for the upcoming Forum meeting. Angenette McAdoo added that the Office of Human Resources will present on open enrollment in October.

The Chair hoped that the Forum could hold its community meeting/town hall in November, either during the Forum meeting or at some other time. Much will depend on the University's eventual announcement of plans for the spring semester.

Arlene Medder asked if Jacob Womack had any information on the use of the recently granted 80 hours of community service leave for Covid related matters. Womack said that this leave will generally follow option A in the leave listing. He hoped that an email from administration on this subject will go out soon. He noted the need for specific examples for this use of community service leave.

Angenette McAdoo said that she would raise questions related to this leave at an upcoming OHR meeting. In the absence of further discussion, Arlene Medder moved for the meeting to adjourn. The meeting adjourned by acclamation at 12:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Banks, Recording Secretary