MEMBERS PRESENT: M. Lenz, T. Fritter, G. Jensen, J. Moran

MEMBERS ABSENT: S. Frey

OTHERS PRESENT: R. Cramer, J. Horn, P. Seitz, A. Vembu Julian, M. Owens

At 2:30PM, Chair Lenz called the meeting to order and instructed the Secretary to record those present.

Chair Lenz paused for public comments. Mr. Terry Fritter noted that it was this week in 1926 that Labor leader and Socialist Party Presidential candidate, Eugene V. Debs died.

Chair Lenz directed the attention of the Committee to the draft Minutes of the previous meeting. Mr. Fritter moved, seconded by Mr. Moran, to approve the Minutes. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Chair Lenz recognized Vice Chancellor Cramer for the purpose of providing a report. Vice Chancellor Cramer informed the Committee that in response to concerns regarding computer usage and access a working group was assembled that included FP&M, Housing and DoIT employees.

Ms. Jensen arrived.

Vice Chancellor Cramer discussed campus revenue growth and the work of the Revenue Innovations Group, including their analysis of corporate engagement, real estate and management of auxiliaries.

It was noted that an MOU by the Board of Regents had been prepared to identify parcels that could be managed differently in order to add land value and address community and student needs.

Mr. Paul Seitz provided the Committee with additional details regarding the principles of the real estate initiative which was described as “a long term strategy” that will “unfold over decades”. It was noted that the initiative would remain consistent with the Campus Master Plan.

Question was raised if there would be any effect on the status of the campus as a land grant college. Reply came that it was not felt that there would be any impact in this regard.

Question was raised as to how ground floor retail space of new structures could be made profitable. Reply came that the campus would help enable placemaking and that retail was not the primary driver of value.

Concern was expressed that new structures and business on campus be staff by University Staff and that there not be a repeat of what happened with the W.I.D.

Concern was expressed that if Eagle Heights and the Harvey Apartments were to be razed they could be replaced with high rise, unattractive structures. Reply came that if any proposed plans were to violate
environmental goals then they would not be pursued and that the campus is aware of height and wetlands restrictions.

Question was raised why there is no plans for a staff alumni house and what the function is of a ‘controlled entertainment zone’. Reply came that the first step was the MOU and the first initial parcels will not include some of those concepts alluded to in local media reports.

Concern was expressed that components of some of the proposed concepts would encroach on the nature of the facility being a ‘public’ university. Reply came that a successful faculty and staff will want to take advantage of both federally funded and corporate prospects.

Concern was expressed that corporate interests are already leveraging their power with the State Legislature to reduce State funding of the campus in order to push the University into private funding schemes which they control.

Chair Lenz recognized Ms. Megan Owens of the Office of Human Resources for the purpose of providing a report to the Committee.

Ms. Owens informed the Committee that the Critical Compensation Fund, while not at the levels of previous years, is functioning and the bonus program contains $5 million to be paid out before the end of the calendar year to targeted performance of individuals who provided exemplary performance during the pandemic. Ms. Owens clarified that the discretionary compensation fund contains $4 million and would be used to increase base pay for performance and retention and can be awarded beginning in December but must be completed by March. In addition, Ms. Owens informed the Committee that if approved by JCOER there would be a 2% salary increase in January of 2022 and 2% in 2023.

Concern was raised that discretionary compensation payments have not been transparent as names of those awarded are not disclosed, nor are the amounts that they received known, which causes confusion among the workforce as to how such awards can be earned when they are deprived of this information. Reply came that every Division is required to disclose their DCF process and those employees who were not compensated should have a conversation with their supervisor or their OHR representative.

Concern was expressed that employees do not always know what course requirements are needed. Reply came that requirements include sexual harassment training, cybersecurity training, and for supervisors, employee evaluations must be completed.

Concern was expressed that it is difficult for employees to complete training on computers with a lack of training, equipment or kiosks that have a timed out function that may activate before the training is complete.

Concern was expressed that employees do not know where to go with OHR related inquiries. Reply came that any employee can call the OHR reception desk.

Concern was expressed that the compensation for supervisors and Administration executives is far outpacing that of the workers. Reply confirmed that there is an increase range from 1 to 10 percent and a 50 cent minimum.
Chair Lenz provided a report to the Committee in which she informed that she continues to take part in regular calls with the representatives of campus Administration in regard to COVID response and overall campus conditions.

The Secretary provided a report to the Committee in which he noted that Pringle Award nominations are now closed and the website is currently being updated with current photographs of Congress.

Chair Lenz directed the attention of the Committee to the draft Agenda for the November meeting of the University Staff Congress. The Secretary reviewed the details of the Agenda. Mr. Fritter moved, seconded by Ms. Jensen, to approve the Agenda. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

At 3:57PM, Mr. Fritter moved, seconded by Mr. Moran, to adjourn the meeting. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Minutes prepared and submitted by: J. Lease / Secretary