

WPI FBC Minutes – Meeting #2 AY23-24

9/14/2023

In attendance: Sarah Stanlick, Jessica Sabourin, Rob Dempski, Diane Dubois, Mike Hamilton, Nicole Caligiuri, Dirk Albrecht, Wilson Wong, Mike Radzicki

Absent: Shams Bhada, Liz Chirico

Guest: Joellen Andrews

The minutes from 8/31/23 were approved.

All members were provided access to the SharePoint site.

As a reminder from AY 22-23, the chair mentioned that in 2021 the FBC made a recommendation to FAP to return the 11% match of our retirement plan and FAP will continue to advocate for that. Also, FBC made a recommendation for emergency ad-hoc childcare as a benefit and FAP has it in their queue. Last year FBC also had Emily Perlow give us an overview of the Quorum and asked for our input on helping it stay open. At the onset of AY23-24, Emily Perlow shared that the Quorum will be open for lunch with reduced hours in hopes of not losing money. A committee member mentioned being there twice so far this year and it was not busy, and the food options are not as plentiful, and it was asked if it has to do with COVID. Another committee member mentioned trying to have as many meetings there as possible and mentioned how people love the house and how cozy it is but there is no signage of the day's offerings. Another committee member mentioned this message to the head of Chartwells and hopefully we will see signage soon. It was noted that the space is useful when recruiting and sharing the history of our university.

The chair went around the room to get each person's perspective of what topics they wanted to point out. First, it was mentioned the 1.5% raise that was just announced for staff and that with health care costs going up, we will be in the hole. A topic of concern was the perks list for staff. One committee member reiterated the importance of the retirement match and to keep the pressure on. There was a review of items mentioned last year such as lunch breaks. Another committee member spoke about the salary banding issue that was brought up at the last meeting and that there should be some messaging about the banding and asked what the formula is and how we could better understand the way the model works. Another committee member said she did a lot of benchmarking over the summer and concluded that we might have too many bands and that the percentage each band pays could be closer than the current model. It was suggested that we get an overview of how the bands are created and One committee member mentioned that Lauren Turner had made the comment to Staff Council that T&I could not figure out the formula for the bands. Another committee member was eased that we will stay with advocating for the return of the 11% retirement match. There was also a concern to the climate of nervousness around campus over budget cuts and communicating about our benefits at the benefits fair. It was suggested a mechanism that FBC needs to frame our suggestions to FAP. One committee member stated if you cannot give me more money then more time would help get us on the right track. Another

committee member would like to see a way to share monetary information for procedures and doctors who perform them to make a better decision about health care costs. Another item of attention would be to get more education around FSA and HAS options. It was also mentioned that people in tech industries are offered a Mega Roth in their retirement accounts. This suggestion could be sent to the Retirement Benefits Committee for FAP. Another item was whether there are other employee discounts beyond WAM. A committee member asked if there is a discussion about the 5% minimum retirement contribution being flexible. For example, one member shared she delayed contributing because she could not afford the 5%. Joellen pointed out that the 5% mandatory is for exempt positions only. A list of priorities that could be addressed this year include:

1. Bereavement
2. Salary Banding for Health Insurance
3. The impact of 1.5% raise and impact on insurance costs over time
4. Employee Perks (like Percys)
5. 11% Retirement Match
 - a. Can we contribute different to 5% for match?
 - b. Utilization of retirement benefits? Would it change if 5% changed
6. What is the message/objective of banding?
7. Budget cut issues around campus on retention and nervousness
8. Overview of Benefits.
9. Lots of pessimism around staff. What helps that is not financial.
 - a. Vacation time.
 - b. Staff hours, including hours per day and hours per week.
10. List of people who perform specific procedures in terms of cost and quality.
11. Mega Roth
12. Gym Access
13. Is Worcester Arts Museum the only museum to have access to?