Forum Minutes:
Date: 11.16.2016 Wednesday
Time: 10:30-11.30 AM
Location: Room 455
Attendees: 26-27 staff members including Dean Kevin Smith, AD Judith Emde
Facilitator: Lars Leon
Speaker: Mike Broadwell, Executive Director of Administrative Services
Note taker: Sunita Gandhi
Handout/referring material: Power Point by Lars, data from LSA September, 2016 survey send to the staff and some online references

Summary of Minutes:
- Introduction of committee members.
- Purpose of forum’s meeting: To talk about benefits, merit pay process, other issues raised based on concerns submitted on LSA survey as well as other general concerns not mentioned in the survey.

Detail of Minutes:

Benefits: Mike spoke about these benefits and replied to all the questions.

- **STAR Program:** It is an employee discount program run for state employees from Topeka. Some discounts are local and some are available state wide. Please send any additions to the STAR program to Mike Broadwell and he will contact the State Administrator.

- **Employee Assistance Program:** It is a state sanctioned program. You need to register. Use the company ID “SOKEAP” for the registration process. Some examples include 24 hours’ nurse call service, identity theft issue with attorney, coaching, etc. The services can be changed as the negotiation with vendors’ change.

Merit Pay Process: Dean Smith provided some details, and Shannon also provided some key information.

- 4 criteria for the staff (USS, UPSS).
  A) Unsatisfied (no merit base raise)
  B) Need improvement (merit based raise)
  C) Meet Expectation (merit based raise)
  D) Exceptional (merit based raise)

- Faculty only has 3 levels of evaluation.
- A general merit pool of 1.5% for all eligible faculty and unclassified professional staff appointed to regular positions.
- There could not be across the board increases.
- Each AD/Director was asked to identify 25% of their faculty to have highest merit.
- The letters have been sent from the Dean’s office on 11.15.16.
- Please talk to your supervisor or AD for any questions about your merit letter.
- Percentage increase is based on July 1, 2016 salary.
- Will be reflected on the paycheck of December 16, 2016.
To be eligible for the raise, the employee must have work at KU by 03.01.2016.

**Salary Compressions:** Mike explained about this term.

- Skills and experience do not match with the current pay.
- Means sometimes, the new employee may have starting salaries close to existing employees in a similar job.
- Incoming offer for positions may be pushed up by the market value.
- The market value studies are valuable to help with the adjustment in pay. HR and Dean together try to make these adjustments fair. During times of merit increases and hires that may be reflected as an equity adjustment.
- The salary compression has been an ongoing issue with the driving factor being funds. Market values can be checked for a job, but the question of affordability by the institution is always the key factor.
- This time, the merit is approved by the Provost after getting it approved by the students’ governing body. Students agreed for the tuition increase.
- Tuition increase goes to a pool, from there the percentage for the increase is been decided.

**Career Mobility Issue:** Mike explained this issue and Dean Smith also had his valuable input.

- Working on the same job may not give opportunity to grow as there is no scope of expansion of that work flow.
- Sometimes there may be a need to change jobs for growth in career. Sometimes takes opportunities such vacant positions and or outside of the libraries.
- Academia in general lacks clear stepping stones for promotions for the staff.
- Faculty has a process for promotion after reaching a set milestone, but for staff it is not structured and again generally driven by business need.

**Concerns/feedbacks/Questions:**

i. Suggestions about different cellular services, hotel discounts, restaurant discounts, car wash discounts.
ii. Free taxi ride service on New Year eve.
iii. Articles also available on various topics.
iv. Free psychologist sessions for employees and family members without on insurance.
v. For HSA/FSA information, see [human resources benefits page](#).
vi. Unhappiness about increase in insurance. Mike suggested to contact legislature or representative to express as KU does not having any authority over this issue.
vii. Some of the Health Quest Reward points can be earned by signing up for coaching sessions.
viii. What is the cap for merit raise and how the employee would know?
ix. Has salary compression always been the issue?
x. How merit is approved this time?
xi. Do we need to build in-built (auto) promotion system?
End of the session:

- Lars ask the gathering if they had any last minutes’ comments, questions.
- Shannon reminded that a handful of people will not get the letter from the Dean about the merit base raise since they are not eligible. (temporary or not hired before the cut out date)
- Encouraged people to send email with feedback and concerns by December 9 to Salary & Benefits committee members who will collect and share with governing leadership and administrators.
- Thanks to Provost Neeli Bendapudi, Dean Kevin Smith, and Students to make the increase possible for the faculty and staff by agreeing for the tuition increase.
- Thanks to Dean Kevin Smith and Mike Broadwell.
- Thanks to everyone for attending the session.

Actions to be taken:

1. Think over Mobility program.
2. Mike Broadwell suggested to make a panel with inclusion of library managers to make pathways to grow within the same job.
3. Lars will send links of STAR program and Employees Assistance program to KULIB serve.
4. Brainstorming about more vendors for STAR program.
5. Collect the feedbacks, concerns from the emails which people can send by Dec. 9 and send to the collective data to administration.
6. Sunita will take and send notes.