

MINUTES

Support Staff College Union Committee

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| Date: April 2, 2020 | Location: Skype |
| Present: Joseph Lauzon, Craig MacKenzie, Elaine Murray, Barbara MacNay (recorder), Cathy Torella, Lisa Banks, Denise Balfe, David Coward (Chair) | |

This was a special meeting arranged to address any issues / concerns, and answer questions, with regards to the recent college announcements related to Covid-19.

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| <p><u>Vacation Directive:</u></p> <p>The union asked several questions with regard to the college's March 31, 2020 announcement to staff regarding using up their vacation banks.</p> <p>The following clarity was provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The college explained the rationale for asking employees to use up their accrued vacation days. Funding for all earned vacation days is put into an account for accrued funds. This is separate from the operating budget. When employee's use their vacation banks, it reduces the impact on the operating budget which will help the overall financial situation of the college. ▪ The focus is on employee's 2019-2020 vacation balances (not 2020-2021). ▪ On July 31st support staff must have no more than three days carry-over from their 2019-2020 vacation year, plus any days they earn in July 2020 in their vacation bank ▪ For employees that are unable to take off multiple days in a row due to workload, they have the option to reduce their work week by taking a lieu day or vacation day once per week. ▪ A Frequency Asked Question (FAQ) is being developed specific to vacations and should be posted today to the employee portal. As new questions are received this will be updated. <p>The union recommended departments set up a virtual vacation schedule accessible to all staff however; it is important to note that not one size is best for all. The union also requested that staff on vacation not be contacted. If they are contacted it was questioned whether this would be considered call back. Ideally no employees are asked to respond during a vacation day, however, there may be instances where a manager needs an employee to respond for operational reasons.</p> | <p>Action: FAQs will be posted on the employee portal and updated as new information or questions arise.</p> <p>Lead: D. Coward</p> |
| <p><u>Redeployment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Managers have been asked to look internally within departments to find work for employees who have reduced workload or cannot perform their normal duties due to the pandemic. Where work cannot be found within a department/area, a process will be set up to register employees to be redeployed to an area in need provided skillsets are reasonably complementary. ▪ A guide with more details on the process will be finalized for managers on Monday. ▪ Until that time managers have been asked to take a pause on hiring. | <p>Action: An update will be provided to the Union once</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The union raised concerns that managers may not be aware of the diverse skillsets, or backgrounds, that an individual has especially if the manager is new to the department and recommended that the College involve and engage staff in this process. ▪ The union asked if employees in Appendix D contracts that do not have a full workload are being considered for redeployment or if their contract is being ended early? Human Resources is still in the process of reviewing App. D contracts with managers. ▪ It was also asked if COVID-19 was being identified as the reason for loss of work on the Record of Employment (ROE) for contracts ending early? The College is following the interpretation from the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) and the Canadian Payroll Association (CPA) that the reason be recorded as end of contract. All individuals out of work are able to access government benefits so in doing this it would not exclude anyone from applying, or being eligible, for benefits. | <p>information is gathered.</p> <p>Lead: D. Balfe</p> |
| <p><u>Hours of Work</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concerns were raised that support staff are working additional hours to the extra pressures, the feeling that they need to be online and available at all times, and the need to work outside core business hours. It was questioned whether the College was allowing staff to accumulate lieu time and/or overtime. ▪ HR is providing direction to managers on hours of work. Managers should be taking personal home life situations and differing work roles into consideration. Each employee may want to re-establish their hours of work with their managers. If additional hours are required by the manager in order to complete tasks, the direction would be for employees accumulate lieu time. | |
| <p><u>Retirement Incentives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The union asked whether the College was considering offering retirement packages to staff. David Coward commented that typically this is offered when restructuring the workforce. At this time, we are not doing that. However, things are rapidly changing and we cannot predict the future, so it may be something that could be re-visited should the current plan be impacted further by the pandemic and restructuring is required. | |
| <p><u>Use of College Facilities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As other colleges disclose that they are offering spaces to their local hospitals it was asked whether Georgian would follow suit with our local partners to assist them during this time of emergency. David Coward commented that while the College has been in discussions with local hospitals within the region. | |
| <p><u>Staff Resources</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Concern was raised about the mental health of staff if the College's closure goes on for an extended period of time and whether there is resources staff will be able to access when working from home. The college has an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) available to all employees as well as other resources posted on the employee portal to assist staff if needed. ▪ The union asked if there was a central location that staff could submit ideas to or if they should be submitted directly to the manager. David Coward indicated that the manager should be the first place staff should express their ideas to at this time. ▪ Some employees have brought forward concerns to the Union that they feel they are not being communicated to on a regular basis by their manager. As a lot of communication is done through technology currently David Coward acknowledged that this could be a challenge especially for people not technologically savvy or have low band width. The College has had training for managers on how to manage remote teams and has sent out additional tips to them. The union was encouraged to reach out to a Human Resource Consultant if there are specific areas, or individuals, that have concerns so each individual case can be addressed. | |