July 31, 2023

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| **To** | Michael Harwood, Campus Planning and Facilities Management |
| **From** | Brendan Adamczyk, Institute for Policy Research and Engagement |
| **SUBJECT** | **quest for the best session TWO summary: July 20, 7:00 – 8:30 AM** |
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On July 20, 2023, from 7:00 – 8:30 AM, Institute for Policy Research and Engagement (IPRE) team members conducted the second of nine focus groups with 19 CPFM staff members. CPFM and IPRE leadership began the session by sharing project objectives, agenda, and ground rules. Participants were then divided into three small groups representing a mix of departments. Within each group, IPRE team members moderated a discussion to respond to three questions:

* What should CPFM continue doing?
* What should CPFM stop doing?
* What should CPFM start doing?

Each small group identified top themes from each of the three questions to report out to the larger group. Finally, participants voted on their top “theme” from each question. This memo summarizes the top themes from the focus group. Appendix I presents the results of the dot voting process; Appendix II includes the small group discussion notes and themes.

# Key Themes

Attendees of this group focused heavily on several perceived shortcomings of CPFM leadership. The sections below highlight major focuses of their comments across all three groups, including appreciation for professional development and team building opportunities, a strong desire for addressing understaffing, and requests for quality-of-life improvements internally within CPFM. These themes received the most votes in the dot voting section of the session; the remaining themes are listed afterward.

Some groups disagreed on whether certain tasks were being completed at a sufficient level (continue) or whether they should be expanded (start) – e.g., professional development opportunities, onboarding and training, and tours of buildings.

## What should CPFM continue doing?

* **Professional development:** Employees across units appreciated the opportunities for ongoing professional development, especially the “Work Out of Class” program, and wanted to ensure that CPFM continues to offer these for employees at all levels.
* **Team building:** Employees appreciated CPFM’s current options for team building within and across units, including quarterly fun activities (e.g., picnics), building tours, enforcing the dress code, and frequent email newsletters.

## What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Failing to address understaffing:** Attendees overwhelmingly agreed that CPFM has a problem with chronic understaffing across departments that is affecting their ability to carry out their work and that this should be a priority for the division to address.
* **Encouraging the degradation of service:** Employees from a wide array of units shared that their supervisors had encouraged a lower standard for work that was not only impacting the campus community via worse service but also lowering their self-respect.
* **Discouraging inter-department collaboration:** Several attendees shared that they had been both formally and informally disciplined for attempting to work with staff from other units within CPFM, an approach that harms morale and increases redundancy.

## What should CPFM start doing?

* **Creating standardized onboarding and ongoing training:** Many employees felt that while some departments have onboarding and training opportunities, CPFM should expand and standardize these procedures for both new and long-time employees.
* **Creating opportunities for CPFM staff to learn about ongoing work:** Employees from all three groups requested that CPFM expand options for learning about the division’s work, including implementing a job shadow program for both new and long-time hires and holding internal CPFM staff tours of new projects and buildings.
* **Raising stipends and pay:** Attendees strongly affirmed that CPFM should raise equipment stipends and pay to reflect the rising costs driven by inflation.

## Additional Comments

The small groups identified several other top themes from their discussions, including the items listed below, which did not receive a significant number of votes in the dot voting. A full list of all comments and the corresponding votes regarding these themes can be found in Appendix I.

* **Continue:**
  + Collaborating and communicating between departments within CPFM.
  + Opportunities for training and cross-training.
* **Stop:**
  + “Kicking the can down the road” by procrastinating on hiring and onboarding.
  + Blocking the road to the CPFM parking lot, which creates a safety risk.
* **Start:**
  + Working with employees to streamline job descriptions and speed up hiring.
  + Increasing wages to match the market value.
  + Expanding professional development opportunities and acknowledgement of notable employees (e.g., by streamlining the Gold Duck incentive program).
  + Conducting more work in-house instead of contracting out.

# Appendix 1. Dot Voting Results

## Continue

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Votes** |
| **Professional development opportunities (e.g., “Work out of class”)** | **2** |
| **Spanish interpretation for employees.** | **2** |
| **Team building opportunities (e.g., quarterly fun activities, building tours, a dress code, and frequent newsletters).** | **2** |
| Clear onboarding and training procedures. | 2 |
| Collaborating and communication between departments. | 1 |
| Opportunities for training and cross-training. | 1 |
| Healthy work-life balance with good benefits and flexibility. | 0 |

## Stop

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Votes** |
| **Failing to address understaffing.** | **9** |
| **Encouraging degradation of service and lower standards.** | **4** |
| **Siloing departments and discouraging inter-department collaboration.** | **3** |
| “Kicking the can down the road” by procrastinating on hiring and onboarding. | 1 |
| Blocking the road to the CPFM parking lot. | 1 |
| Separating departments. | 0 |
| Ineffective meetings that lack meaningful listening and follow-through. | 0 |

## Start

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Votes** |
| **Creating standardized onboarding and ongoing training.** | **5** |
| **Implementing a job shadowing program.** | **4** |
| **Holding internal CPFM staff tours of new projects and buildings.** | **3** |
| **Raising stipends and pay to reflect rising costs due to inflation.** | **3** |
| Working with employees to streamline job descriptions and speed up hiring. | 2 |
| Increasing wages to match the market value. | 2 |
| Expanding professional development opportunities and acknowledgement of notable employees (e.g., by streamlining the Gold Duck incentive program). | 2 |
| Conducting more work in-house instead of contracting out. | 1 |
| Encouraging inter-department cooperation and communication. | 1 |

# Appendix II. Small Group Discussion Notes and Themes

## Small Group Notes: A

**The following section contains notes from one of the three small groups within this session.**

### What should CPFM keep doing?

* **Continue Team Building Exercises:** Quarterly team building exercises are valued and important within the different departments. Aside from the organized team building events there are other pieces of team building that are beyond just the quarterly events. Tours of other departments was a very popular demand that was brough up to get to know each other better other team building activities that were popular include the newsletter, the 10 second update. etc. The employees liked interacting with other departments because it’s a chance to see what others are doing and feel more connected/know each other better.
* **Continue out of class trainings (professional development):** Out of class trainings was a highly used term to reference professional development. They believed it would solve the hiring issue of hiring people who don’t know how to do their job because they haven’t been trained. The employees are in favor of anything to do with training and increasing knowledge for their departments.
* **Continue Spanish Interpretation Services:** Because there is a population of primarily Spanish speaking employees at CPFM the employees were in favor of continuing providing Spanish interpretation services – especially in custodial.

### What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Stop failing to address understaffing:** The employees felt a serious problem with understaffing throughout all the departments. Many times, the same situation was brought up where one person would call out, and it would increase someone else’s workload. If one person is out it’s hard to cover everyone. There are several areas that’s grown since covid and the number of people who are employed has been cut from those departments.
* **Stop encouraging degradation of services/lower standards:** How CPFM is looked at by the rest of campus.People that are seen are the people responsible for the cuts within the departments and the people working in the buildings. It needs to be understood and talked about who is making these cuts and why. There is no communication about problems like these.
* **Stop siloing departments and discouraging collaboration:** The group strongly felt that not letting departments help other departments was a major issue within CPFM. They wanted CPFM to use their resources better and stop the siloing of employees. Different departments have different experiences and knowledge to share, if you collaborate with other departments then you shouldn’t be reprimanded for offering help.

### What should CPFM start doing?

* **Start encouraging inter-dependent cooperation/communication:** People want to help one another, and they enjoy helping different departments and employees within CPFM. They were interested in trying to figure out what allows or stops other from helping each other out in CPFM. Employees felt that knowing what other departments do and having the opportunity to be more interactive with them is beneficial and they’d like the opportunity to be more interactive. There’s only a small handful of people that know about interdepartmental communication and sharing that type of information is important and valued.
* **Working with employees to streamline job descriptions:** The employees felt that when CPFM is hiring new employees the job descriptions do not accurately represent the position. They usually do not accurately encompass the full roles of the position, they felt it would help more people understand what the job is so they can apply, and the department doesn’t have to be understaffed. They would want to meet with HR and see what the qualifications would say for the job as well as match the pay scale to the scope of work.
* **Expand professional development and acknowledging employees (improve the Gold Duck Program):** The employees felt that more training on CPFM technologies such as teams and UKG would be a helpful start to improving professional development. As well as improving the out of class trainings, as it creates a better work environment when supervisors/employees are more aware of their role at work. Another topic that was brought up was acknowledging employees in better ways, they need to celebrate people better. The Gold Duck Program needs improvement, the employees don’t feel as connected to each other as they once did.

### Discussion Notes

### What improvements have you noticed since 2019/since you started at CPFM?

* Should continue the out of class training opportunities. This is because it gives opportunity to see what other people do/other departments and it allows people to get new jobs out of the experience.
* The communications group has improved, there are uniforms instilled within CPFM, and this is done through people wearing shirts that adhere to their department (they’re matching).
* Tours: the powerplant had organized tours with other departments to see the work of other departments.
* More trainings for Aim.
* Communications that they’ve done with the 10 second update, this is executed with departmental communication (through the 10 second update and newsletters).

### Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?

* Mandatory supervisor trainings:
  + Some were on the fence about it, because they don’t know what their supervisors were learning, they would like to know more about what they’re teaching at the supervisor trainings.
  + It would be nice if one of the supervisors came back and told the employees what they learned.
  + In those meetings you learn how to communication, overtime it grows so you can understand how your department works.
* Newsletter: It’s cool to see what other departments are doing
* Modifications to the hiring committee that came out of the last CPFM.
  + Would like to see the continuum grow.
* Long term planning with how campus development goes.
* One employee has had an experience with two Spanish translators that help translate for the crew that works a lot of the dayshift. Has helped a lot of the confusion between the crew. Feel more connected.

### Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?

* Teams: phone dropping you on teams. It’s not cuff controlled.
* Teams: when using teams some people had a problem with it dropping the call, it’s now CPFM controlled.
* UKG: it’s hard to remember when to submit and the whole process when you clock in wrong is difficult. Maybe more training should be offered so it’s not so confusing to use.
* Not letting other departments help other departments. CPFM should use their resources better to stop the siloing of employees. An example that was brought up was why the powerplant can’t help other departments.
* For those working the dayshift, they should stop having trainings right away in the morning, so that people can be receptive to it and retain what they’re being taught.
* Turnover with HR.
* Understaffing: if one person is out it’s hard to cover everyone, it also increases the workload onto other employees.
* There are several areas that’s grown since covid and the number of people who are employed has been cut.
* How the CPFM is looked at by the rest of campus 🡪 people that are seen that are responsible for the cuts are the people working in the buildings. It needs to be understood and talked about whose making these cuts and why.

### Start – What should CPFM start doing?

* More training (with technologies) on the university programs so that it makes it not so hard to use (teams/UKG)
* More training with technologies that are used by CPFM, so that it makes it not so hard to use (Teams/UKG).
* Allow departments to work with other departments, you get to see how they operate and it’s a really rewarding experience.
  + Encourage interdepartmental work 🡪 people don’t know what other departments do and they’d like to be more interactive.
  + Knowing what other departments do and having the opportunity to do so is rewarding an
  + Knowing what other departments do and having the opportunity to do so is rewarding, CPFM should communicate what people do with other departments Some people get to see what they do but it’s only a small handful of people, sharing that type of information is important. People want to come and have a conversation with other people in other departments.
* 5-minute presentations to share what people in specific departments do 🡪 such as the sustainability open house that could be implemented for other departments.
* Tried to establish an electrical apprenticeship 🡪 supervisors said it’s not the greatest place to learn. Over at the powerplant they tried to start a program where you start as a maintenance worker and work your way up to the powerplant.
  + It could have possibly stopped because of the way the job was worded/the way the program was set up – no one was applying for the job. HR should work with the people that are in these positions that they are hiring for.
* Establishing better methods to work your way up – currently working your way up is very limited. They should work with HR to figure out how to get that to happen.
* Get with HR and see what the qualifications say for that job. Talking to the people that have the job when they write a new job description for the department to see if they’re qualified. Match the pay scale to the scope of work.
* Need to celebrate people better 🡪 they used to do that, heard a lot of comments of how it used to feel like family there. Maybe one of the covid impacts. Getting one of the social things going again has been semi-comfortable with people.
* Holding tours of new buildings like the one in Portland).

### Top 3 Identification

Continue**:** Team building exercises, out of class trainings, Spanish interpretation services

Stop: failing to address understaffing, encouraging the degradation of services/lower standards, siloing departments and discouraging collaboration.

Start: encouraging inter-dependent cooperation/communication, HR working with employees to streamline job descriptions, expand professional development and acknowledging employees (improving the Gold Duck Program).

## Small Group Notes: B

**The following section contains notes from one of the three small groups within this session.**

### What should CPFM keep doing?

* **Onboarding process for new hires and Training for all units** -Comprehensive and clear onboarding process gives new hires a head start. Training helps professional advancement.
* **Working out of class -** Expanding job opportunities in CPFM.

### What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Separation between departments** – Interdepartmental collaboration is needed. “I don’t know what other departments do and what services other departments provide.”
* **Stop ineffective meetings** – Stop meetings that leadership doesn’t listen to participants and doesn’t learn from their voices; without follow-through

### What should CPFM start doing?

* **Increase financial assistance for employees** – Raise stipends to reflect rising market costs.
* **Use more and prioritize in-house staff than contracting out** – Stop using contractors. We have skilled staff.
* **Social gatherings everyone can attend** - Mixers on weekends or days that work for more people.
* **Job shadowing implementation** – To know what other departments and what other staff in my unit do.

### Discussion Notes

### What improvements have you noticed since 2019/since you started at CPFM?

* We got uniforms.
* Commitment by leadership and mentorship for staff.
* Communication between leadership and staff. Information has been passed down more.
* It depends on leadership. Leadership’s behaviors have not changed.
* I don’t see any improvements.
* No change in senior leadership (in FS)
* Who is QFTB for? Mike’s or CPFM? Do we take ownership of this project? It is just another walk of the project.
* Not aware of any (improvements) at any time.
* We got cheap uniforms.

### Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?

* Work equipment check.
* Clear onboarding process including 1, 3, and 6 months checking and specific training. It helped my transition from Housing to CPFM
* Continue QFTB standards for the future.
* Class change to move to higher pay job.
* Continue to reach out to staff from management, but conduct it differently because some management is not capable of listening to criticism.

### Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?

* Division within FS unit, among 200 staff.
* Stop letting institutional knowledge leave the workforce without exit interviews and involvement with their replacements.

Do enforcement of inheriting professional knowledge and Do effective exit interviews.

* Disconnect of information,
* Siloing within CPFM. No interaction. Separation between departments.

“I don’t know what other depts do.” “How teams are made up.” “What services do other depts provide.” “I don’t know where to get information on who works for CPFM.”

* Ineffective meetings – All voices (in the meeting) should be heard.
* Stop making custodians' work difficult (on campus) – cardboards fill up in dumpsters quickly. Do something about this.
* Force to wear uniforms. Even if it’s a dress code, some middle management doesn’t wear them. I wear a uniform but don’t want to be forced.

### Start – What should CPFM start doing?

* Employees morale increase meetings – Custodian regular safety meeting doesn’t have to be always about work.
* Cross over between departments and Opportunities to hear from other units – e.g. once a month, someone from another unit comes down and talks about what they do, then we will know each other.
* Start job shadowing implementation to know what other staff do. Even within FS, we don’t know what other people do. It should be intentionally scheduled because custodian group has three shifts.
* Leadership should listen as they don’t.
* Hire more temporary people to get staff’s pressure off.
* A half-day tour of the new buildings in PDX.
* Share information on how to deal with emergency situations during custodian shifts, e.g. phone number to call. – During a shift, an unexpected incident happened, and I didn’t know who to call. (Then, an incident got a bigger attention than it should have been and UOPD showed up.)
* Increase financial assistance for employees – Raise stipends, e.g. for a pair of boots, work tools, and a pair of pants, to reflect rising market costs.
* Use more and prioritize in-house staff – Stop using contractors. We have skilled staff.
* Change and adjust shift ending times considering LTD bus schedule.

Not everyone drives. – Transportation Equity.

* Take ownership of QFTB. QFTB should be led by us, not by Mike.
* Mixers on weekends or days that work for more people.
* Improve onboard process.

## Small Group Notes: C

**The following section contains notes from one of the three small groups within this session.**

### What should CPFM keep doing?

* **Continue department-wide collaboration** – This group values group collaboration and personal interaction while on the job. They enjoy having in-person opportunities to work with other CPFM departments, meet new people, and build interpersonal connections as a team.
* **Continue improving training efforts –** They like how training has improved since 2019, but they feel that the quality and number of opportunities vary across the CPFM departments. Some new training ideas they would like to see implemented includes cross-training between different departments and an overall increase in the frequency of training opportunities for everyone.
* **Continue promoting work-life balance –** They enjoy the flexibility that their job schedule provides and how it allows them to maintain balance with their other responsibilities. They did recognize though that not all departments have the same ability for schedule flexibility, thus this perk may not be feasible to standardize across all CPFM jobs.

### What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Stop blocking the road to the parking lot –** The frequent closure of the streets surrounding the CPFM offices and parking lots was discussed amongst the group multiple times. Their comments about this included the inconvenience it creates for them when it makes parking difficult, but also how it poses a safety threat for employees and pedestrians. Navigating the closed-off space at dawn and dusk when there is a mix of people camping there or other vehicles creates many opportunities for collusion. They suggest closure only on delivery days as a compromise.
* **Stop “kicking the can down the road” –** This group is frustrated that decisions, plans, and updates are put off for another person or later date. They specifically mentioned how there has been a lack of updating different plans utilized by various departments and how CPFM’s slow pace of making necessary changes adds difficulty to their jobs.
* **Stop throwing people into jobs without adequate training –** They wish that there was more priority placed on making sure that all employees have appropriate training and knowledge for their specific position. One specifically mentioned having more training and experience for their job than their new supervisor which is frustrating. Having to spend time getting someone up to speed when there are others more adequate for the position is a waste of time and money.

### What should CPFM start doing?

* **Start standardized onboarding –** They wish that the amount of specific job training and introduction to the CPFM department and campus was equal across all departments. They recommend the idea of having staff being treated similar to a new student on campus where they could get a tour of the whole university, learn about the resources they have access to, and feel more connected to the institution as a whole.
* **Start group tours of CPFM projects –** They like the idea of having the opportunity to tour ongoing and completed CPFM projects across different departments. Many of them solely spend time in their own office or outdoor space, but they would like the opportunity to tour new spaces like the Portland campus.
* **Start increasing wages –** As a whole, they appreciate the benefits package that they receive and that is what is currently keeping them in their positions; however, they stated that their pay was noticeably lower than previous employment. They feel that paying employees above market value would help reduce turnover and would adequately value the effort that they are putting into their jobs.

## Additional Comments

Overall, this group was appreciative of the opportunity to share their thoughts and the discussion process was smooth. Having a smaller group of five helped ensure that everyone had the opportunity to share out and feel heard throughout the entire focus group. Additionally, during the large group discussion, there was a pattern of themes across all three groups, thus highlighting the urgency of addressing these comments and concerns.

### Discussion Notes

### What improvements have you noticed since 2019/since you started at CPFM?

* Better collaboration and communication between departments
  + More inter-team meetings, coordinating projects, etc.
  + In the past, things would be missed when all parties weren’t included.
* Communication attempts have increased
  + More information shared in email updates: what everyone is doing, collaboration with other entities, etc.
* Open spirit of community and collaboration between departments
* Moving everyone to one space/side of campus.
  + Recently moved lawn maintenance to the Wilkinson House rather than staying on the other side of campus.
  + There has been a physical effort to bring everyone together which is nice because “you don’t feel a part of team when everyone is scattered”
* Chances to see new people and build connections between coworkers

### Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?

* Focus on continuous improvement, getting feedback from employees
  + Better format for everyone to share their opinion in focus group settings
* Attempt to get everyone together in CPFM
  + Group gatherings, birthdays, etc.
  + Nice to see other faces, but there is still a tendency to only interact with people from your own office
* Having physical office space and not being crammed together
  + Moving into Wilkinson was an improvement, but all tools still in other areas across campus
* Flexibility with schedules
  + Get it done when it best fits in your schedule
  + Building your own schedule, but that depends on position
* Empowerment to pursue projects that I want to (if they benefit university)
* Good benefits package
* Improving training efforts and opportunities

### Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?

* Putting off decisions: make a choice and move forward
* Bureaucracy
  + Inevitable, but could be improved
  + More bottom-up decision making needed
* Stop throwing people into jobs without appropriate training/knowledge
  + Increase onboarding to save money and time
* Putting off updating documents
  + Contracts and plans not updated like they should be
  + Need to be updated on continual basis
  + They see it as not getting done because those responsible are taking on too much so it loses priority
* Lots of pseudo-promises that don’t pan out
  + Tools we need not getting purchased
* Delay, breakdown in process, lacking level of commitment in certain areas
* Stop consolidating IT departments
* Stop blocking off road to the parking garage (safety issue)
  + Need garage to park and go to work
  + Makes sense when there is delivery sure, but need more flexibility in when it’s going to be blocked off
* Having supervisors who knew less than I did
* Stop putting off evolution of contracts/design standards that fit into the new system
* Loss of getting together
  + All meetings online now
  + Disconnect, more time on computer than in-person together

### Start – What should CPFM start doing?

* Having more HR/administration people
  + Potentially could help with the onboarding issues
* Need general framework for onboarding
* Need to feel a part of campus
  + Need to be treated like a new student (walking tour of campus, here is where all resources are, learn about the campus amenities)
  + Right now, this is left up to people who want to share or create that experience for a new employee in their department rather than being a norm across CPFM
  + Need formal mentorship program
  + Used to do zoom calls (U and UO) about campus, but that was not too helpful
* Improving the training situation
  + “sink or swim” right now
  + Smaller group training and continuous learning; right now there is variability in training access between teams
* Professional development needs to be formalized
  + Classes and workshops about advancements and updates in landscape design, etc.
  + Can’t just be trained once, need to match the pace of the world
* More standardized opportunities for employees to access resources from the UO
* Atmosphere/standard of always learning and improving
* Continuity across CPFM departments
  + Training, quality of supervisors, etc.
  + Would keep employees here, less turnover
* Process for campus planning operations to be updated to match the new systems
* Continuity in leadership practices
  + Defining the evolution and connecting it back to the actual day-to-day operations.
  + Used to work as one group but now work is more divided by departments
* Aligning practices and goals across CPFM and have everyone’s job contribute to those goals
* Keep up with changing world
* Restart in-person meetings
* Emphasis on pedestrian and worker safety- Franklin Blvd. crossing is dicey
* Better routes for carts
  + Hard to manage with lots of pedestrians
  + Waste of time waiting for people to move
* Implement improvements that came from studies of 13th Ave.
* Chance to tour projects across entire CPFM department
  + Beneficial/interesting to know what everyone else is doing
  + Chance to meet people
  + Specifically mentioned touring the new Portland campus
* Plant/tree walks on campus
* Pay people more
  + Above market wages
  + Ability to have leftover sick time payout when you retire
* Cross training opportunities
  + Classes to help people train for new department
  + Internal training opportunities

### Top 3 Identification

**Continue-**

1. Personal interaction/collaboration in-person, between departments, and within larger departments
2. Improving training by adding cross training, increasing opportunities, and making it more equitable across all CPFM departments
3. Promoting work-life balance with schedule flexibility

**Stop-**

1. Blocking the roads to parking lot!!! (safety issue, especially at dusk/early in the morning, opportunity for collusion)
2. Putting off decisions/ “kicking can down road” with campus plan updates, contracts, and pace of evolution
3. Stop throwing people into jobs without appropriate training and knowledge (knowing more than my supervisor)

**Start-**

1. Standardized onboarding
2. Tours across campus and of other CPFM completed projects
3. Increase wages above market value

### Additional Questions/Discussion

* Similar themes across the three groups; different phrasing but same ideas
* Not enough time to thoroughly address each question, especially in larger groups (10 people +)
* Maybe need additional groups/facilitators