August 10, 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 SIX summary: July 25, 7:00 – 8:30 AM** |
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On July 25, 2023, from 7:00 – 8:30 AM, Institute for Policy Research and Engagement (IPRE) team members conducted the sixth of nine focus groups with 17 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

Participants in this session identified very similar themes across all three groups. The following items detailed their comments, including appreciation of CPFM’s professional development and team building opportunities, dislike of certain technology and internal processes, and a request for both more training and a review of pay structures. These themes received the most votes in the dot voting section of the session; the remaining themes are listed afterward.

## What should CPFM continue doing?

* **Team building activities:** Attendees noted that while these events can be awkward, the opportunity to grow closer with colleagues and build camaraderie is important to maintain for nearly every unit.
* **Cross-departmental collaboration, events, and communication:** Employees across all units appreciated the level of social gatherings, work across departments (especially within facilities and custodial), and the consistent internal communication throughout CPFM (e.g., the newsletter on new hires and retirements).

## What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Charging for parking:** Nearly every participant echoed a strong desire for a full revamp of the parking system, with a preference for exempting CPFM staff from having to pay.
* **Wasting time and resources:** Many employees felt that CPFM often rushes into new projects without prior planning or finishing up lingering projects, leading to inefficiencies in budgeting and time/resource management (e.g., forcing one work crew to juggle two sites, leading to both sites falling behind schedule).
* **Failing to match private sector pay:** Staff across all units and levels within CPFM noted that the pay is well below equivalent private sector positions; addressing this would not only reduce turnover but would also improve recruitment and understaffing issues.

## What should CPFM start doing?

* **Updating job descriptions and increasing pay:** Some employees, especially those in the trades, noted that job descriptions do not always match actual work requirements, asking for either too many or too few qualifications – and the pay is always too low.
* **Having clear onboarding procedures:** Many participants wished that CPFM would standardize onboarding, including establishing mentorships as soon as a new staff member joins a team to decrease the amount of confusion as a new hire.
* **Advocating for auto renewal for parking:** As noted previously, attendees strongly disliked the current parking system and shared that if they do have to pay, they should be allowed to purchase a spot just once per year instead of having to renew each term.

## 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:**
	+ The streamlined hiring process.
* **Stop:**
	+ Allowing lab heads and building liaisons to interfere with work schedules.
	+ Having siloed and separated departments.
	+ Using Teams.
* **Start:**
	+ Communicating more efficiently with custodial workers.
	+ Listening to employees and acting on/respecting the input received.
	+ Having more frequent small-scale, inter-department interactions.
	+ Holding supervisor check-ins more often.

# Appendix I. Dot Voting Results

## Continue

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Votes** |
| **Team building activities.** | **6** |
| **Cross-departmental collaboration, events, and communication.** | **3** |
| The streamlined hiring process. | 1 |
| Improved employee well-being. | 0 |
| The supportive and helpful atmosphere within CPFM. | 0 |
| Annual meetings with Mike. | 0 |
| “Work Out of Class” and internal training. | 0 |
| Barbecues and social events. | 0 |

## Stop

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Votes** |
| **Charging for parking.** | **5** |
| **Wasting time and resources with inefficient planning.** | **5** |
| **Failing to match private sector pay.** | **4** |
| Allowing lab heads and building liaisons to interfere with work schedules. | 2 |
| Having siloed and separated departments. | 1 |
| Using Teams. | 1 |

## Start

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Votes** |
| **Updating job descriptions for positions to match work requirements and making the pay scale competitive.** | **9** |
| **Having clear onboarding procedures with organized and streamlined mentorships.** | **6** |
| **Advocating for auto renewal for parking.** | **4** |
| Communicating more efficiently with custodial workers. | 1 |
| Listening to employees and acting on/respecting the input received. | 1 |
| Having more frequent small-scale, inter-department interactions. | 1 |
| Holding supervisor check-ins more often.  | 1 |
| Using more process-oriented documentation (e.g., by consistently updating organizational charts). | 0 |
| Having consistent hiring requirements and communication. | 0 |
| Developing a long-term, internal incentive program. | 0 |

# 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?

* Interdepartmental communication (social and work-related). Employees enjoy the social gathering opportunities to bowl, barbeque, and picnic. One employee also shared that their department just had a meeting with another department to align projects more.
* Prioritizing employee well-being. Employees appreciate the bi-annual “gripe sessions”, which help center employee experience and solicit employee feedback.
* Working to streamline the hiring process. Employees noted that previously, they would lose possible employees due to delays in the hiring process. Custodial staff reported a lot of success with the new ability to directly hire temporary workers.

### What should CPFM stop doing?

* Siloing departments and shifts. The physical distance between departments (and sometimes within departments) and the temporal distance between shifts creates inefficient workflows. A custodial staff noted that radios are not an effective intra-shift communication tool because employees don’t feel comfortable broadcasting to the whole CPFM staff. A Campus and Design employee noted it would make a big difference in their workday to be able to drop by other department staff office to check in throughout the day.

### What should CPFM start doing?

* Refining meeting structures. Employees want agendas sent out ahead of time so that the meeting objectives are clear from the outset. They would also like to see more widespread understanding that not all meetings have to be an hour. Meeting timing should be “right sized” for the meeting objectives.
* Implementing a mentorship program during and after onboarding. Employees expressed frustration with the inconsistencies and knowledge gaps in business practices. They felt a mentoring system would help support new employees during onboarding, provide more consistency around turnover, and give employees a point of contact to go to with questions.
* More efficient communication. One employee also noted that Spanish-speaking staff often don’t have the level of translation supported needed for them to participate/understand meetings full (such as translation of both meeting materials and oral content). Another employee requested greater transparency around department-based policies, like the remote work policy.

## Additional Comments

This was a quiet group- it was small, and contained an upper admin employee in CPFM, which I think might have limited how comfortable people felt in sharing feedback (the employee would push back a little when people brought up things that weren’t working).

### Discussion Notes

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

* Communication between departments
* Team building
* Cross department communication
* Support for needs
* Work out of class
* Schedule flexibility

### Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?

* Interdepartmental meetings (sustainability department meeting with planning department to talk about if there are any projects that overlap and things we can work on together)
	+ Collaborate on things with overlap
	+ Other employees noting they wish that there were more direct interdepartmental discussions on projects (campus design and construction coordinating with facilities)
	+ Starting to happen but some places/departments more successful than others. Continue this though!
* Social events (barbeque, bowling, picnics)
	+ Attendance has been growing (15% more attending bowling now, because people hearing it’s fun). People attend and don’t even bowl so that they can just hang out.
* Hiring process has been streamlined
	+ W/ custodial worked out a deal with HR where when people are hired temporary, they can be directly hired later, without going through the hiring process
		- Previously losing qualified applicants because of the hiring timeline.
		- Recruitment process has gotten better too
* Bi-annual meetings with the boss (gripe sessions)
	+ People are more willing to give feedback now than they used to be.

### Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?

* AIM software platform- not that great for project management
	+ It does a lot, but it’s clunky for people that just need to do a specific task (or few tasks)
	+ Time tracking in Anvil is way easier (because it autofills stuff)
		- They re-configured AIM for some specific tasks for people who only use them for a few tasks and employees have seem to like it (no more than 3 click to do anything).
* Silos- positionally (because of the physical set up). Would be great to physically combine.
	+ Employee moved offices and found it was nice to be close to different groups and it has allowed for getting to know each other, better efficentcy and communication.
	+ Have been efforts to move people on this side of Franklin and have seen relationships improve.
	+ Campus design and construction and ASM (?).
* We need a director over at the power plant.
* Stop making every meeting an hour (people ramble), 45 minutes or 30 minutes is a more focused.
	+ Make meetings have a purpose and focus instead of just taking up time in your calendar.
	+ Or don’t be afraid to stop a meeting if it stops being productive.
	+ If you have a weekly or bi-weekly meeting, but don’t have anything, don’t meet.
	+ Stop unproductive meetings
		- Stop not having an agenda
* Custodial- communication
	+ Custodial is split into 4 shifts, so better communication needed between shifts
	+ Employee finds that they are having to go back and do things that were previously assumed to be done (the plan changes in the first hour they come in)
	+ Spread out- could people volunteer if they want their phone number available to the crew to help with communication
	+ Radios- people never use them because you are talking to all of CPFM, need separate channels to just talk to your team
		- This can lead to another problem where people talk on a private channel and then are working on a project that someone else is already working on.

### Start – What should CPFM start doing?

* Start having an agenda for every meeting
	+ Send out the agenda beforehand
* Start more clearly defining processes
	+ Some are lacking in sequential nature
	+ Have an updated document that say who is doing what and how to get a hold of them
		- These tend not to get updated/have languished/have never been created
	+ Have business practices written down to help with turnover.
	+ When you need help, but don’t know who to ask for help.
* Updating ID picture. Maybe have a service date?
	+ Having an updated id card too (so that it looks new)
* More of a focus on Spanish translation for Spanish speakers
	+ Custodial employee noting that meetings don’t have translated materials and meetings
		- Having separate meetings? Or having cross-translation during the meeting.
* More frequent check-ins with supervisors (so you are getting feedback before a review)
* Remote work
	+ Some people can do remote work but other people cannot do remote work (because of their job)
	+ Current policy in Sustainability is 2 days a week from home, but employee doesn’t know how we came up with this policy. **What is the transparency behind this issue?**
	+ Some employees in the group noted they have to be in person and it’s really nice to be able to walk in and talk to people (even though those people could be working from home).
	+ There isn’t standardization- or anything official.
	+ Interpersonal things are improved through in person but the flexibility is nice for people too
	+ Is it positional? Departmental? Generational?
	+ Benefits of flexibility for being sick or having an appointment, but concerns about productivity.
		- Also UO wants to talk people’s offices of people who want to work remotely.
* A mentoring program to improve consistency – people being brought up to speed

### Top 3 Identification

* 1. **Continue**- getting everyone together (for meetings and socializing); focus on employee well-being; streamlined hiring process
	2. **Stop-** siloing between departments and shifts;
	3. **Start-** refining meeting structure; mentoring program (to follow-up on onboarding, to have consistency to be able to get the same answer from someone if we are all training the same way, employee noted that they can get different answers from different people, also help with people who are leaving/retiring and being able to make sure their knowledge transitions over); more efficient communication (shift management and Spanish translation).

## Small Group Notes: B

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

### What should CPFM keep doing?

* Work out of class opportunities and on-the-job training
* Barbeques and social events
* Opportunities to socialize and communicate with other team members

### What should CPFM stop doing?

* Charging employees for parking or having to purchase permits each quarter
* Letting building managers, professors, lab heads dictate when maintenance can be done. Improve communication, planning, and authority (respect could also play a part here) of CPFM.
* Stop using Teams

### What should CPFM start doing?

* Auto-renew option for parking
* Internal motivation opportunities (directed from supervisors) and succession planning
* Update position descriptions and offer competitive wages that match

### Additional Comments

* Some members that were there for the last Quest for the Best were a lot more pessimistic as they hadn’t seen any improvements made. Assumed that nothing would be done about their challenges and be told “no” as they usually had been.
* Expectations about the realistic things that would be done, felt that the larger things may not be worth mentioning as they assumed that nothing could or would be done about it.
* Some concerns about the “top themes” as they felt all the parts were important
	+ Especially relevant for start and stop details in my below notes

### Discussion Notes

### Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?

* **Work out of class opportunities, on the job training**
	+ **Continue training, individual, on the job trainings**
* **Keep the BBQs and other social events and activities,**
* **other team building things are nice for a break, get to communicate with those that you don’t get to talk to as often, breaks things up**
* Some find iPads helpful, depending on the department or role, some are already at computer at all times, and others prefer choice

### Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Stop charging employees for parking, quarterly charges, auto-renew and deduct charges like a subscription service**
* Stop doing as many shutdown notices, sent out as an email to everyone in CPFM (perhaps color code them to be more specific, a weekly notice unless emergency notice), stop doing reminders
* **Stop letting building managers, professors, researchers (customers) dictate how management and maintenance is handled, interfering with the way they do work, stop letting faculty dictate the stoppage of work**
* **Stop using Teams, most communication is through email or AIM or call log or ANVIL**

### Start – What should CPFM start doing?

* **Auto-renew for parking**
* Color code shutdown notices
* **Provide opportunities for “rewards”, currently no way to reward employees and motivate those that are underperforming**
	+ **Should come from a direct supervisor, should have more latitude.**
	+ **Reward with comp time (admin time)**
	+ Have always heard a “no” to a merit-based raises
	+ Issue has been raised before that HR has heard and said no to, in union contract to be able to do this or at least be heard out
* **Succession planning, have a person behind them have a better way to train**
	+ **Be incorporated in your training**
	+ **Work-out-of-class but for succession**
	+ **CPFM tends to hire from the outside, would like to see hirings from within**
	+ **Internal hiring and internal promotion**
* **Start updating OLIS position descriptions to meet current needs**
	+ **Minimum requirements that are out of date, not needed, can keep great applicants away because if they don’t need one of the outdated minimum requirements, they can’t interview them**
	+ **Start paying a competitive wage so that competitive people can be brought in, competitive pay scale**
* Get more qualified applicants, to help combat shortages in staffing

## 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” Theme Statement #1** –The group members agreed that they would like the team-building activities to continue. They said they appreciate the teambuilding events, but they can be a little awkward because you’re getting to know people you don’t know or normally interact with much.
* **“Continue” Theme Statement #2** –The group members said they appreciate the supportive and helpful atmosphere of the department and the camaraderie. Each department is always willing to lend equipment to another or help where they can. They felt they could always reach out to anyone within the department for an answer to a question they had.
* **“Continue” Theme Statement #3** –One of the group members said they would like the annual meetings with Mike to continue. This was echoed by other group members. They like hearing updates about what is happening on campus and having an opportunity to provide feedback. They did note that they are not sure any of their feedback is acted on.

### What should CPFM stop doing?

* **“Stop” Theme Statement #1 –** A common theme was poor communication. The group said new visions are formed each time there’s a change in leadership. This happens too frequently and then the vision is implemented without a fully formulated plan. There’s a lack of shared vision within departments. Often changes aren’t communicated before they happen and if they are communicated in the future, feedback could help flesh out these visions/changes. There is also a lack of communication during the hiring process. Something as simple as letting an applicant know how long the hiring process takes would be very helpful.
* **“Stop” Theme Statement #2** – Another big theme we heard is that CPFM needs to stop wasting time and resources with inefficient planning. An example the group gave was that the grounds equipment has been located across campus from their office for a year now after they moved into the CPFM compound.
* **“Stop” Theme Statement #3** – All group members stated that CPFM has to stop failing to match private sector pay. Everyone understood that it is a larger university-wide issue but emphasized that the benefit packages do not offset the cost of living and people are vastly underpaid.

### What should CPFM start doing?

* **“Start” Theme Statement #1** – Group members stated that managers need to start listening to their employees and respect and act on their input. Often classified staff have more experience in the field and the daily operations than the managers do so managers need to listen to feedback. Managers should also shadow workers for days to see what their daily work looks like and what problems they face. The group also suggested management training on communication, listening skills, how to be open to feedback, and how to work with workers.
* **“Start” Theme Statement #2** – One participant suggested smaller-scale, interdepartmental interactions in addition to the large quarterly team-building events. Often people stick to their own units during the quarterly team-building events. The group members would like to see smaller team-building activities with assigned people from different departments and more frequent interdepartmental meetings. That way they would feel more comfortable meeting people from other units within CPFM.
* **“Start” Theme Statement #3** – Participants would like CPFM to start implementing consistent hiring requirements and communicating the length of time of the hiring process. Right now, temp custodial workers are hired faster than non-temps (temps get hired immediately after 3 months). It can take longer for a custodian applying to an open position to get hired and is a more cumbersome process. There are also inconsistent standards for new hires. Group members would like to see standard practices for all workers (new hires or existing workers) within the smaller departments.

### Discussion Notes

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

No feedback. The majority of people feel they haven’t been here long enough and the 2 people that have worked for CPFM since before 2019 did not offer feedback.

### Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?

* autonomy/flexibility in job tasks/daily work
* interaction with students & other depts. in CPFM
* sharing of equipment across depts.
* everyone is so helpful
* supportive atmosphere & camaraderie
* appreciate events for teambuilding but can be a little awkward because you’re getting to know people you don’t know
* annual dept. meetings w/ Mike (discussing what’s happening on campus, how things are going, share feedback)
* work out of class for training opportunities/professional development
* custodial daily job site meetings to communicate daily tasks & work status with coordinators & leads & staff

### Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?

* hiring more bosses and start hiring more workers
* talking about doing and start implementing
* improve time it takes to make changes
* hiring process is too long (make the process clear and the steps in the process clear)
* temp custodial workers are hired faster than non-temps (temps get hired immediately after their 3 mos.)
* inconsistent standards for new hires
* wasting time & resources (grounds equipment has been located across campus from their office for a year)
* ideas are formed and implemented without fully forming plans
* new visions are formed each time there’s a change in leadership and then that vision is implemented and change is too frequent, leadership changes too frequently
* turnover & retention & understaffing
* no shared vision within depts. (too many cooks in the kitchen)
* benefit packages don’t offset the cost of living/underpay

### Start – What should CPFM start doing?

* hiring more classified staff and less managers
* consistent hiring practices
* seeking & accepting more frequent input from employees
* need consistent hiring requirements & timelines
* locate all depts. in the same area with all their equipment
* accountability for mistakes & managers in particular
* implement some sort of reporting system for mistakes/bad management practices and an enforcement practice
* managers need to listen to their employees and shadow workers for days to see what they do and what problems they face
* take initiative when you see areas for improvement (if you see something that needs to happen and it’s not in your position description follow up on it)
* a suggestion box
* management training on communication & listening skills & how to be open to feedback & to work with workers (they often have more expertise)
* start smaller team building activities with assigned people from different depts.
* more frequent interdepartmental meetings
* working on AiM trainings
* real-time updates for leave balances with UKG

### Top 3 Identification

**Continue:** team building activities, supportive helpful atmosphere, annual meetings with Mike

**Stop:** poor communication (hires, changes, etc.), wasting time & resources with inefficient planning, failing to match private sector pay

**Start:** listening to employees & respecting/acting on their input, smaller-scale, interdepartmental interactions, consistent hiring requirements & communicating hiring process length of time