August 11, 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 SEVEN summary: August 1, 2:00 – 3:30 PM** |
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On August 1, 2023, from 2:00 – 3:30 PM, Institute for Policy Research and Engagement (IPRE) team members conducted the seventh of nine focus groups with 27 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 had many critiques of CPFM. The following sections summarize their feedback, including support for CPFM’s social gatherings and professional development, dissatisfaction with parking and uniforms, and a desire for CPFM to invest in better space and raise pay. These themes received the most votes in the dot voting section of the session; the remaining themes are listed afterward.

Additionally, one group shared that there are several senior administrators (outside CPFM) who have abused their power and caused employees to quit but have not been disciplined despite being reported. Unfortunately, attendees anticipated that CPFM would not be able to act and did not name these individuals, but CPFM should conduct a robust review to address this issue.

## What should CPFM continue doing?

* **Group activities:** Attendees of this session enjoyed the many opportunities for social gatherings and team building activities both within their units and across the division.
* **Professional development opportunities (“Work Out of Class”):** Many employees appreciate the “Work Out of Class” program and other opportunities for growth and would like these to continue, especially if they eventually lead to job advancement.

## What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Protecting abusive people and behavior:** As mentioned above, many attendees noted that there known university staff who abuse their positions of power and have not been removed, despite being reported. CPFM should investigate this issue more thoroughly.
* **Requiring employees to pay for parking:** Many participants shared that the cost of parking is significant, especially for lower-level employees, and CPFM should consider either a partial waiver or covering the cost of parking entirely.
* **Failing to invest in CPFM’s space:** Employees from all units shared a strong desire for CPFM to upgrade and renovate CPFM’s own space on campus, including providing adequate workspaces equivalent to what other departments have (such as windows in all offices and a better breakroom).
* **Requiring uniforms:** Many attendees were dissatisfied with the dress code, stating that the quality of the uniforms available is poor, the choices are limited, and they felt only certain units were following the uniform rules while others ignored them entirely.

## What should CPFM start doing?

* **Implementing salary and wage increases:** Every participant overwhelmingly urged CPFM to review and raise salaries and wages across all units to both keep up with inflation and be more competitive with the private sector and government jobs.
* **Incentivizing training that leads to job advancement:** While some employees were satisfied with current professional development opportunities, many wanted CPFM to provide more incentives (e.g., bonuses for completion) and additional options for cross-training that could lead to job advancement within their unit or the broader division.

## 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:**
  + Inter-departmental communication.
* **Stop:**
  + Using FASS.
* **Start:**
  + Investing in CPFM (better equipment, more staffing, and higher quality space).
  + Creating opportunities for merit-based wage increases and promotions.
  + Improving training and onboarding procedures.
  + Connecting to the Portland campus via a ride share service.

# Appendix I. Dot Voting Results

## Continue

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Votes** |
| **Group activities.** | **7** |
| **“Work Out of Class” and other developmental opportunities.** | **5** |
| Inter-departmental communication. | 1 |
| Improved communication with leadership and supervisors. | 0 |
| Treating staff members right. | 0 |
| CPFM’s collaborative spirit. | 0 |
| Investing in employees. | 0 |
| “Work Out of Class” and temp to hire pipeline. | 0 |
| Training for supervisors and for using specialized equipment. | 0 |

## Stop

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Votes** |
| **Protecting abusive people and behavior.** | **8** |
| **Requiring employees to pay for parking.** | **6** |
| **Failing to invest in CPFM’s space and providing inadequate workspaces that are worse than other departments (e.g., no office windows and no breakroom).** | **5** |
| **Requiring uniforms.** | **4** |
| Using FASS. | 1 |
| Using user-unfriendly time sheet systems (AIM and UKG). | 0 |
| Shrinking space for CPFM on campus (e.g., storage closets for custodial). | 0 |
| Buying cheap clothing with limited options. | 0 |

## Start

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Votes** |
| **Implementing salary and wage increases to keep up with inflation.** | **16** |
| **Evaluating and improving pay based on inflation to be competitive with the private sector and government jobs.** | **12** |
| **Incentivizing training that leads to job advancement.** | **5** |
| Investing in CPFM (e.g., better equipment, more staffing, and higher quality space). | 3 |
| Creating opportunities for merit-based wage increases and promotions. | 3 |
| Improving training and onboarding procedures. | 1 |
| Connecting to the Portland campus via a ride share service. | 1 |
| Synchronize knowledge management to avoid loss of institutional knowledge. | 0 |
| Promoting what CPFM does to the broader campus community. | 0 |
| Expanding opportunities for input. | 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?

* **Continue group activities that foster community engagement and camaraderie.** The social events, such as picnics and bowling nights, instill a sense of connection across CPFM’s various units/departments, are fun, and bring folks together.
* **Continue improvements in communications and overall staff treatment**. Employees feel that they are increasingly being treated as equal partners in CPFM, rather than as subordinates. They would like to see management continue to foster this kind of workplace culture. Online training procedures have helped with sustained communication between management and lower-level staff.
* **Continue fostering a collaborative spirit within CPFM.** Management should continue their efforts to create a unified and cohesive identity across the many diverse units that make up CPFM. Generous cross-departmental information-sharing helps keep employees informed and forges connections among disparate units.

### What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Stop devaluing and under-prioritizing workspaces.** CPFM employees believe that their personal and shared office spaces should be held to the same standards as any other campus facility. They would like to see improvements in workspace conditions, such as access to windows for all private offices and adequate shared breakrooms/kitchens. They feel that many other University departments enjoy much higher-quality office spaces.
* **Stop requiring that staff pay for their own parking.** CPFM employees should not have to pay out-of-pocket for parking when working on campus.
* **Stop using time-intensive and user-unfriendly technology for regular employee interfacing.** Platforms such as AIM and UKG, which employees use daily, are tedious and difficult to navigate, cutting into work time and causing headaches for individuals. In addition, the highly-specific nature of UKG’s timesheet process makes many employees feel that they’re being “micromanaged” – that the platform reduces their ability to have agency over their day-to-day work schedules.

### What should CPFM start doing?

* **Start offering competitive and inflation-scaled wages.** Staff feel that wages have not kept pace with inflation rates or the growing cost of living, and that they are undervalued compared to private-sector workers. Low wages reduce CCPFM’s ability to retain employees and boost morale.
* **Start implementing a synchronized, centralized knowledge management system.** It can be challenging to navigate and locate historic documents, reports, and training materials within CPFM’s online storage system. A more streamlined and consolidated system of information storage would make it easier for employees to access files. A “resource guide” that directs staff members to relevant files would increase workplace efficiency.
* **Start promoting the value of CPFM within the University’s broader community.** Staff members often feel that their hard work goes underappreciated by members of the campus community; they would like their efforts to be recognized on a larger scale. Spotlighting and celebrating the integral nature of CPFM, just as the University spotlights academic faculty, would improve morale.

### Additional Comments

Our group contained multiple new hires, whose ability to provide meaningful feedback was somewhat limited. Additionally, at least one employee was placed in the same discussion group as a higher-level supervisor. While I don’t think this person was their immediate supervisor, it may have limited their ability to speak candidly. All told, the group still had a productive, collaborative, and insightful discussion.

### Discussion Notes

### Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?

* Group events – picnics, bowling, etc. – means of coming together (2 votes for that)
* Lines of communication with management have improved since 2019, but require further improvement and continuation
* Staying informed via newsletter, “CPFM on the move,” etc.
* Staff being treated more as partners than as merely subordinate workers by management
* Ability to recognize staff by their Oregon baseball caps – knowing that those individuals can help answer questions or connect you with someone who has the answer
  + General impression that staff members are willing to help in any way that they can
  + Existing (especially newer) employees find their ability to identify other employees on campus easily to be a plus
* Information sharing – often interdepartmental – willingness to provide access to services and departments
  + E.g. sustainability center – staff offered tour of a different facility
* Sense of collective identity on behalf of the whole CPFM cohort, which is such a diverse group – sense of belonging to a cohesive unit
* Training – online modules, etc. – has been impressive (participant was mechanical employee; this may be more unit-specific)
  + They still all hate AIM! Were eager to all express their frustration with AIM technology
* Acquiring materials/supplies for facilities and maintenance projects
  + They wish that this process was easier and speedier, but they acknowledge that it does occur – just very slowly

### Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?

* Paying for parking!
* Poor work spaces – everyone in an office should have a window in their office
  + Having to wash their dishes in the bathroom sink – not great
* Stop scheduling back-to-back Zoom and in-person meetings for an employee without any built-in time buffer time
  + Employees need to travel between in-person meeting spaces and Zoom meeting spaces
* Working five days a week
  + General desire to reduce work hours
  + This was said somewhat jokingly – the group was struggling to come up with ideas. However, there was certainly a sense that some participants genuinely desired a reduced workweek (4-day, 32-hour weeks) – there seemed collectively not much hope that this would actually be feasible [editorializing post-session]
* Password technology – 17-character passwords are annoying
* “went overboard with UKG” – intensive and confusing timesheet process
  + Micromanaging hourly employees; also adds burden to supervisors
  + E.g. tracking whether someone took a 35-minute lunch break instead of a 30-minute lunch break – staff feel that’s micromanagement and unnecessary

### Start – What should CPFM start doing?

* Rideshare board, especially traveling to the Portland campus
* Encourage various departments across CPFM to visit the Portland campus
  + Allow staff to learn more about the Portland campus
  + Make the Portland campus feel more connected with the main campus
* Pay scale equity and escalation
  + Pay not keeping up with inflation or cost of living
  + Trades not paid enough compared to the private sector
* Consolidate information in one well-organized location for CPFM
  + Training materials, etc. 🡪 Need links and materials to be more centralized and organized with a resource guide
  + Having to sign into various websites/software separately; would be nice to have one central website and only have to sign in once (e.g. not signing in separately to AIM versus UKG versus Dropbox)
  + “knowledge management” 🡪 knowing *where* to find files and information
    - Archive management 🡪 organizing old files and historic documents
      * Employees have to do this work themselves when working w/files
* Facilities/maintenance 🡪 getting proper equipment to do their job 🡪 this is an ongoing process that takes time and effort (wish it would move more quickly)
  + Sort of a quasi-“continue” item
* Promoting the work that CPFM does across the campus to the community
  + Highlighting and celebrating the value that CPFM has
  + Emphasizing the essential nature of the work that CPFM does, across all departments
  + Feeling appreciated by campus community
    - E.g. having spotlights on CPFM employees, similar to how the university spotlights academic instructors, etc.
    - Often, when CPFM staff are doing their jobs well, the campus doesn’t notice their work; by design, if CPFM is managing facilities well, they will appear somewhat invisible --- so we need to celebrate their hard work!
* Offering supplemental insurance through the university 🡪 and advertising all insurance options to staff
  + Some staff believed that the union does offer supplemental insurance; others appeared unclear about insurance plans
  + General consensus that overall insurance plans at CPFM are “great”

### Top 3 Identification

* **CONTINUE**
  + Group activities (e.g. picnics) – ability to meet folks across different departments
  + Improved communications and treatment of staff
  + Collaborative spirit
    - Understanding CPFM’s identity as a unit
    - Information sharing
* **STOP**
  + Minimizing and devaluing/under-prioritizing work environments
    - Campus standards should apply to campus staff!
    - Stop not holding CPFM staff to same standards as other campus employees (idea that some faculty/staff get better offices and better treatment)
  + Requiring that employees pay for parking
  + Using user-unfriendly technology (e.g. UKG and AIM)
* **START**
  + Evaluating pay scale versus inflation levels
    - Basically, pay employees a competitive wage to ensure retention and high morale
  + Centralized knowledge management
    - Of files, documents, records, tutorials, etc.
  + Promoting and celebrating CPFM’s work to all of campus
  + Connecting main campus to the Portland campus

## Small Group Notes: B

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

### What should CPFM keep doing?

* **Investing in training for employees (supervisors and all other levels)**

Employees at all levels want more opportunities to get more training and expertise in their roles and in other roles that they may be interested in (cross-training).

* **Work Out of Class & temp-to-hire advancement**

These programs are particularly helpful for retaining staff who want an opportunity to increase their knowledge and responsibility and who would otherwise not be qualified for advancement.

* **Group activities.**

Social gatherings were favored by all members of the group and should continue or expand.

### What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Stop protecting abusive people working within other departments/ administration at the university.**

The group members shared a concern and frustration with people in administration turning a blind eye to the abusive behavior of an particular administrator at the university level.

* **Uniforms are not high quality and do not fit the needs of the jobs.**

Those members of the group that were required to wear uniforms on a daily basis wanted to be able to wear their own clothing or have more flexible options for displaying the U of O logo.

* **FASS inhibits the department’s ability to hire and promote employees.**

FASS creates frustrating roadblocks for making accurate job descriptions and promoting people when they demonstrate aptitude.

### What should CPFM start doing?

* I**ncrease wages and salary to keep up with inflation and the cost of living in Eugene.** Non-competitive wages are a major factor in the staffing issues being felt across the department. Pay needs to increase to attract new staff and to make sure that the department doesn’t lose the current staff.
* **Merit based pay opportunities and mentorship/ training opportunities.** People in the group wanted a way to be rewarded for hard work in a lasting way that motivates new employees to do their job well with the hope of being rewarded.
* **Onboarding process, hiring people before the person they’re replacing.** The group was unhappy with the way that positions were filled. They would like more overlap and a chance for new hires to learn from the most experienced staff.

### Additional Comments

This group included a mixture of administrative staff and facilities management staff. The recommendations from this group tended to span the needs & experiences of a wide variety of work settings and daily tasks.

### Discussion Notes

### Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?

* **Investing in training for employees (supervisors and all other levels)**

Supervisors need more investment in their leadership skills as well as having an opportunity to learn all the technical processes that occur in their unit. Staff members are often frustrated by how little their supervisors understand the technical aspects of the unit’s day to day work.

* **Work Out of Class & temp-to-hire advancement**

Members of the group were very happy with the way that the temp-to-hire program gave them access to full time work at the university. Work out of class gave some members of the group enough skills to work in a role that they wanted to move up to.

* **Group activities.**

Bowling, barbecues, and other social events made members of the group feel like the department was a community. This is an essential distinction from most other jobs of this nature in the private sector.

### Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Stop protecting abusive people working within other departments/ administration at the university.**

This point resonated among many members of the group and seemed to be the most significant issue of the session. It was mentioned that multiple people had quit and mentioned in their exit interviews that they were leaving because of abusive behavior from a particular university administrator.

Members of the group were tired of how tolerant the university was of this person going after various people within the department and using them as a scapegoat.

* **Uniforms are not high quality and do not fit the needs of the jobs.**

The uniforms that are required often times do not really fit the specifications of the work being done in them and although they create a consistent brand they do not help staff do their work.

Some staff simply don’t have enough uniforms but others expressed frustration with the cheap construction of the uniforms.

Some suggested that having higher quality uniforms or only requiring nametags would be enough. “We have our own personal attire but never get a chance to wear it”.

* **FASS inhibits the department’s ability to hire and promote employees.**

FASS makes it harder to do internal promotions and makes hiring more complicated. They interfere with the hiring process and make it harder to hire qualified people. They also make it difficult to modify the job descriptions to match the qualifications needed which means that either too few people apply due to arbitrary and hard to meet requirements or the people that get hired don’t have the necessary experience to do the job.

### Start – What should CPFM start doing?

* **Increase wages and salary to keep up with inflation and the cost of living in Eugene.** Members of the group mentioned that their wages have effectively decreased due to inflation and the university’s lack of adjustment to account for this has served effectively as a pay cut.
* **Merit based pay opportunities and mentorship/ training opportunities.** Multiple members of the group wanted a way to reward their supervisees or be rewarded by their supervisor. They wanted a chance to have training in other areas and have more flexibility to try out other roles if they were unsatisfied with their work.
* **Onboarding process, hiring people before the person they’re replacing.** It was mentioned that as older members of the department left, much of their essential knowledge was left with them and was not passed down to new employees. This constituted a loss for the department and means that it’s harder for new employees to meet the needs of their job with limited knowledge. One group member suggested a specific person in each unit to be designated as the trainer for new hires, someone who had a deep knowledge of all the processes not just someone in a supervisory role.

## Small Group Notes: C

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

### What should CPFM keep doing?

* Work out of class and developmental opportunities that are available to all. These programs allow employees to advance and allows for more inhouse hires.
* In-depth trainings available to supervisors regarding new equipment, technology and more.
* Interdepartmental communication and communication of expectations.

### What should CPFM stop doing?

* Failing to invest in CPFMs internal spaces. CPFM staff work on UO’s beautiful campus, yet work or are housed in less desirable buildings, far from campus.
* Shrinking space for CPFM on campus. Storage and on-campus presence is shrinking and not being considered in new buildings. This interferes with everyday jobs and makes CPFM staff and equipment needs seem not considered in current and new building plans.
* As uniforms are mandatory, CPFM should stop buying cheap quality clothing. Quality clothing is important for an attractive uniform as well as the everyday feel of wearing a uniform.

### What should CPFM start doing?

* Incentivizing opportunities for job advancement and room to grow in all positions. Along with this point, diversity in new hires was emphasized.
* Greater investment in CPFM itself, in terms of wages, buildings, equipment, space, and staffing.
* Expand opportunities for input. Ensure that every staff member has the opportunity to get a word in. This especially applies for supervisor evaluations.

### Additional Comments

A talkative and helpful group. It seemed that we had a large chunk of custodial staff as well as some administrative positions.

### Discussion Notes

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

* Increase in teambuilding activities (barbeque, monthly birthdays)
* Increased attempts at cohesion between departments
* A lot better communication of expectations
* Better communication between departments
* Custodial: seen lots of success in hiring temporary workers, expedited process

### Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?

* Team building activities
* **Interdepartmental communications and relationships**
* Temp to hire workers, offers a trial period and good pathway for internal hiring
  + Needs more training
* **Promotion of work out of class opportunities**
  + **Especially good for units that have a low advancement opportunities, give a chance to advance in other units**
  + **Hiring from within**
* Open door policy
  + Can talk to anyone with the issues that they are having (depends on units, custodial)
* Ability for evaluation of supervisors in some units
  + They have annual evaluations and also evaluate their supervisors
  + Other units select 3-4 people to give feedback
  + Perhaps expanding or altering to fit department size
  + Supposed to be reaching beyond department, may need to increase sample size
* **Support from people providing training**
  + **Training for supervisors, equipment, technology, etc**
* Clothing/ shoe stipend

### Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?

* Providing cheap quality clothing
  + Not many options in uniform options
* Disincentivizing sending custodians over to housing
* Cutting opportunities for bonuses
* Selling and reducing the number of storage units on campus
  + Departments are short on room and have many people in small space
  + Including in new buildings
  + Continuing shrinking spaces for units near CPFM main facility
  + Failing to invest in CPFM buildings. Not adequate space on campus for CPFM folks, feels siloed from rest of campus in less desirable buildings. People who work at beautiful buildings on campus work at less desirable buildings, far from campus
* Custodial feels separate from CPFM as they are not located around the rest of the units
  + Only group still on campus, struggles to find room to move them too
* Stop investing money in pet projects (replace front gate, it already functions, a very expensive project that can be done for cheaper)

### Start – What should CPFM start doing?

* **Ensuring that every employee has the opportunity to get a word in and be heard for supervisor evaluations**
  + **In-person and online**
* **Start buying quality clothing**
* Insist to HR that job listings are posted on a wider variety of forums to help them access a more diverse workforce (women and POC)
  + Perhaps working with partnerships to bring a more diverse group in
* Investing and evaluation broader apprenticeship program
  + Look into creating an quasi-apprenticeship program bth within CPFM and from community
  + Need more tradespeople, always a limited pool
* **Incentivizing training and opportunities for job advancement**
  + **Need opportunity and room to grow in all units**
  + **May have the ability otherwise to do projects but may need more people**
  + **And prioritizing diversity within these hires**
  + **Consider wider advertising for positions or looking into current advertising**
* Invest more in CPFM in general (wages, building, space, people)

### Top 3 Identification

**Continue**

1. Work out of class/ developmental opportunities
2. trainings for supervisors and equipment use
3. Interdepartmental communication

**Stop**

1. Failing to invest in CPFMs internal space
2. Shrinking space for CPFM on campus (storage)
3. Buying cheap quality clothing with limited options

**Start**

1. Incentives opportunities for advancement
2. Invest more in CPFM in general (wages, buildings, equipment, space, staffing)
3. Expanding opportunities for input