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| **To** | Michael Harwood, Campus Planning and Facilities Management |
| **From** | Leah Rausch and Bob Parker, Institute for Policy Research and Engagement |
| **SUBJECT** | **quest for the best session six summary** |
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Campus Planning and Facilities Management (CPFM) wants to understand and enhance the experience and effectiveness of the approximately 300 employees within the Division—a project CPFM is calling “Quest for the Best.” The “Quest for the Best” seeks to identify key issues and strategies to improve the culture of collaboration and customer service at CPFM.

The Institute for Policy Research and Engagement team members conducted ten focus groups with approx. 30 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 keep doing?
* What should CPFM start doing?
* What should CPFM stop 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 first session. Appendices I-III provide full session notes; Appendix IV presents the top themes and the results of the dot voting process.

# Key Themes

Participants identified several strengths and many opportunities for improvement within CPFM. Most found value in opportunities for training and professional development, as well as connecting with other staff informally. Participants appreciated flexible schedules and a “family-first culture” at CPFM, as well as ongoing efforts to improve communication tools. To improve the organization, participants suggested 360-degree reviews of supervisors, improved parking options, and improved communication regarding procedural changes. Participants also desired increased visibility of CPFM and their role on campus. Many voiced concerns about pay scales at all levels, and felt some groups engaged in unfair compensation practices. There is a perception that CPFM, and the university, values construction projects over ongoing building maintenance. Finally, participants indicated inefficient administrative activities wasted the time of skilled trades people, and that there was a culture of minimal accountability due to fear of blame and limited capacity.

## What should CPFM keep doing?

* **Offering employee trainings:** Participants enjoyed professional development trainings, conferences, and seminars specialized to their unique positions. They find them useful and pertinent to their jobs. Participants expressed that they would like CPFM to continue notifying employees when training is available and increasing the number, time of day, and diversity of opportunities offered.
* **Offering team building opportunities:** Participants appreciated opportunities to get to know other staff, whether informally or through team building events. There was a desire to make these events more inclusive of those who work odd shifts.
* **Developing and improving communication tools:** Participants referenced the call log, newsletter, and other tools as important communication channels. There was an interest in improving these tools to get a better understanding of ongoing projects within CPFM.
* **Flexible schedules and family-first culture:** Participants noted the flexibility in scheduling that CPFM offers. Although not equal across all groups, where there is flexibility in work schedules, participants would like to see this continued. Relatedly, participants appreciated the family-first culture and generous family medical leave. Others noted they were allowed to bring their children into the office if they had a medical appointment or other engagement. Valuing employees’ personal lives was important staff, and participants hope CPFM will continue recognizing this.

## What should CPFM start doing?

* **Conduct 360-degree reviews of supervisors:** Participants desired the opportunity to provide substantive feedback to supervisors through performance evaluations. They suggested this may improve employee relationships and culture, as well as encourage supervisors to give more thoughtful feedback and take performance reviews seriously.
* **Improve parking options:** Participants felt there is never enough parking for service vehicles and employees who work during the day have difficulty finding parking when they arrive. This is a stressful element of the day and parking fees may pose a financial burden for some staff. Participants recognize that transportation services is removing spaces, not adding them, and would like to consider alternatives to on-campus parking.
* **Increase visibility across campus:** Campus operations are inherently “behind the scenes” and participants felt campus partners do not always appreciate their work. One suggested solution was uniforms for employees to make them more recognizable. Building managers would be better informed on who is doing the work. Another group suggested lunch and learns with campus partners as an informal way to extend outside of CPFM and increase campus connectivity.
* **Review pay scales:** For both classified and OA employees, participants felt they are not paid competitively with the private sector or to reflect cost of living increases in Eugene. They agreed this felt true across the board for all positions.
* **Enhance communication between departments:** Participants emphasized the importance of communicating across departments, especially regarding changing procedures. Many frontline staff felt they received angry responses on work tickets when they are not aware of changes or new processes. Whether this communication happens through email, newsletter, or meetings, participants shared a desire to “ensure we’re doing what’s expected of us so we can serve and help.”

## What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Prioritizing construction over maintenance:** There is a perception that the old buildings on campus do not receive enough attention compared to new construction projects. In one participant’s words, they are “maintenance workers, not a construction crew.”
* **Practicing unfair compensation:** Participants indicated many are given additional responsibilities that they feel are outside their job description and above their paygrade, yet they are not compensated fairly. For example, an employee who moved into a coordinator position was given timecard tracking responsibilities of their coworkers and was then seen as a manager by their coworkers. This employee was promised a raise, but it was never granted. Employees want to be reclassified if they take on managerial responsibilities.
* **Requiring inefficient administrative activities:** Participants shared that trades people are overburdened with the amount of administrative paperwork they must complete in order to do their jobs. Some participants referenced projects delayed paying for parts, and it slows down the entire train of work on a job.
* **Avoiding accountability:** Participants indicated there is a shared fear of being blamed for mistakes, so many operate with the mindset to look after themselves. Some attributed this to a significant workload where they are forced to be reactive instead of proactive, allowing things to fall through the steps.

## Additional Comments

The small groups identified other top themes from their discussions, including:

* **Organizational restructure and collaboration:** One small group appreciated the focus on improving collaboration, resulting in fewer silos. One group cited the shift to a centralized shop rather than zones as an example of an effective organizational change. Another group felt these changes happen too frequently and do not provide adequate time to learn new systems.
* **Centralized CPFM management tools:** AIM and the call log are topics of frequent discussion, with some participants voicing appreciation for the changes and others who are frustrated with the administrative burden. Generally, there is a sense it is an improvement over the previous system but there is more work to be done. There is an opportunity to continue this effort with the CPFM database to provide standardization in the storage and access of information.
* **Provide informal ways to share information within the department:** Participants suggested quarterly presentations from different work groups and staff as an opportunity to share information about ongoing efforts or projects. The group cited new construction on campus as an example. While the architects may present designs at a campus-wide event at the EMU, staff within the department don’t receive the same opportunities. A member of the design team could do a short presentation and answer questions, offering a chance for relationship building.
* **Hire from within** **and recognize experience**: Participants felt CPFM should hire and promote employees already working within the organization, but not just in an interim role. Some staff have been asked to serve in interim roles until a permanent replacement is found and feel they should have the opportunity for promotion. Participants felt there is a great amount of institutional knowledge and experience that is not always tapped into because individuals may lack degrees or certifications.
* **Wasting surplus:** Participants shared that extra supplies, equipment, furniture, and tools are often thrown away. Participants wanted to see this surplus either generate revenue for the university or be donated to those in need. One example was the replacement of vacuums when the older (and functional) vacuums were thrown away.
* **Introducing new software without training:** While not discussed in depth, the group agreed that new software often appears without adequate training. One group member noted there is a software in use in his department that no one can train him on.
* **Supporting a hierarchical culture:** Some participants felt there was a strong hierarchical culture at CPFM. There is a tendency to refer to people as their position rather than who they are, especially for trades people or those not in OA positions.
* **Inefficient supervisor meetings:** This happens in all large organizations, but there have too many long, unstructured meetings that feel like a waste of time. Meetings are important but it seems to be great for collaborating while bad for decision making.

# Appendix 1. Table 1 Notes

* **One word** to describe your ideal work environment
  + Clean
  + Cohesive
  + Comfortable
  + Stress free
  + Positive
  + Safe
  + Independent
  + Lucrative
  + Efficient
* Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?
  + Quarterly events are fun and a good way to get to know people. They work best when you are assigned various groups. In the summer, the kickball people just went to their friends.
  + People have continued to improve collaboration. People were siloed but it’s getting better.
  + Personality types have changed.
  + As a building manager, Tanya got to know CPFM staff pretty well but she did not know who to talk to. It has gotten easier to talk to one group and actually follow it through. It used to be a call to Work Control but sometimes that call would disappear.
  + There has been more of an intention to bring people together. People can get stuck in their units but it needs to be interwoven. People in leadership have been more interwoven than before.
  + Call Log and work flow – single point of contact is working and allows people to have a lot of autonomy.
  + Starting to capture data, there are problems attached to that, but it’s getting better. They are not keeping track and keeping history. They are able to have an asset-based system.
  + Centralized shops versus the zones
* **Start – What should CPFM start doing?**
  + Can you connect the people who are doing the work with the building managers. Campus Ops in general is behind the scenes. Bridge the gap between the campus customers with the CPFM.
  + More CPFM PR.
  + Bought a car, financed, then now he has to pay for parking. Improve parking for facilities people that are not in the morning shift. This is the only place where people have paid for parking.
  + Is there a way to fund an alternative way for parking?
  + Central database of all building plans. Things are scattered throughout. This would include contact information and information attached. It is difficult to figure out where things are and trying to wade through them. Trying to find pictures for things. Usually looking for things like paint colors.
  + The building palate. All the paint colors. There are the campus standards that are meant to be applied. Establishing standards that are adhered to.
  + Regularized training with in house classes. He is envisioning a cross training so that you can find out what everyone else is doing. This is another way of how to see what other people are doing. Within CPFM and people who do operational things across campus.
  + Professional development and other trainings.
  + Uniforms.
  + Outwardly facing maintenance databases
* Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?
  + Making people park off campus at two in the afternoon.
  + Prioritizing construction over maintenance. There is a perception that the old buildings are not getting enough attention.
  + There is a lot of time spent in meetings. Stop long, unstructured meetings. At the supervisor meeting and up meetings, there are a lot of meetings where we are moving the ball forward inch by inch. Its great for collaboration but bad for decision making.
  + Stop focusing on budget. They are held to doing a lot of paperwork. Budgeting paybacks. Ex, they had an asbestos removal, another department puts in the work order, but other department does not pay them. If was there way to short cut that and fix the paper work after the fact. The trades people should just go out and do the job and the supervisors should have to do the “paperwork.” The supervisors generally are shielded from admin support.
  + It’s a large organization, but there was a lot of fear of being blamed. A lot of people operate with the attitude of stop fearing getting blamed. It should be a great place to work. Team work turns into people taking care of themselves. It could come from management or team members. This may stem from having too much work and people are reactive. Something is going to slip through the cracks. You can be proactive.

# Appendix II. Table 2 Notes

* One word to describe your ideal work environment
  + Friendly
  + Good team environment
  + Happy
  + Positive
  + Cooperative
  + Helping others
* Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?
  + Allowing employees to be trained
  + Continue attending trainings/conferences
  + They’ve stressed that we can sign up for trainings, sign up for trainings, and encourage people to attend trainings
  + Real estate and property management – it’s hard for those employees to find trainings in that field
  + Continue open door policies with supervisors
  + There has been so much change lately that it’s hard to think of something to ‘continue’.
  + Continue the family-first atmosphere in our department (construction). I can take a day off if my son is sick, I can take care of him. Children can come into the office if they need to be
  + Flexibility (department specific)
  + Although in custodial there is no flexibility. “It’s interesting to see how other departments in CPFM are run.” Smaller departments have more flexibility.
  + Keep the bus pass perk
  + Team bonding across CPFM
  + Social activities
* Start – What should CPFM start doing?
  + Everyone should wear a uniform, all the way up to upper management.
  + Management has said that “some of us don’t look like we belong here”. We’re going to have to wear uniforms and no one asked us or directly told us.
  + Career development training
  + How to give skills and appropriate training for internal employees so they can move up.
  + Start hiring more from within. The current position for manager in custodial has been open for months and is taking forever to fill.
  + Current employee was told they weren’t qualified to move into senior level management because they didn’t have a bachelor’s degree which was required for the job. They then changed the job description to allow applicants without a bachelor’s degree, so they were qualified. The employee left for medical leave, and when they returned management told them they weren’t qualified again.
  + You have to train someone anyway, why don’t they just hire someone from within who has been there for so many years.
  + Cross-department knowledge sharing and collaboration
  + All management everywhere should introduce themselves every time they speak, especially a new director.
  + Start evaluating their position descriptions (PD’s), and what the employees actually do. Reclassify employees as more work gets put on them. More work is piled on without being part of their job description, but they don’t get equal pay.
  + Consider actual role and work compensation.
  + Classified position descriptions are very detailed, whereas OA’s are very broad and ambiguous and you can pile on more work more easily while staying within their job description.
  + Start planning for ALL logistics that affect mobility across campus. More long-term logistics
  + Start providing free parking for custodians. They used to have free parking, now there is none.
  + Start selling surplus furniture. It’s a huge revenue stream. OSU makes hundreds of thousands per year from it.
  + Start establishing partnerships to be able to do it. It’s a sustainability thing.
  + Start allowing us to bring our dogs to work
* Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?
  + Stop taking employee parking
  + Stop hiring more management, we have enough. We don’t even know what the guy above us does.
  + Stop hiring unqualified employees. Stop reclassifying employees into position (i.e. employee moved into a trade maintenance coordinator position, he didn’t get the big raise he was promised, but people think he’s management because he’s stamping their time cards and coordinating their work. But he’s not a manager. He’s “managing” two people above him that make twice as much as what he makes.
  + Stop unfair compensation for the job you’re doing
  + Stop taking service parking spots. Now they’re filled with contractor trucks,
  + Stop giving management protective status.
  + Stop drastically changing policies every 6 months.
  + Right when you get used to something then it changes.
  + Stop throwing away surplus (at least donate it)
  + Stop wasting money in budgets – programs across campus waste money.
  + Stop using plastic garbage bags
  + Custodial doesn’t want to change the plastic garbage bags if they’re not dirty.

# Appendix III. Table 3 Notes

* **One word** to describe your ideal work environment
  + Quality
  + Transparency
  + Collaborative
  + Healthy
  + Communication
  + Challenging
* Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?
  + Getting used to the people I work with… getting to know people in a short period of time. Personal connections make for an easier work environment. People you work alongside – not necessarily in the office.
  + Interactions we’ve been having with events – potlucks, kickball, scavenger hunts… quarterly opportunities to build community. Doesn’t feel the same for folks who work on odd-shifts.
  + Newsletter – could be improved in certain ways… but the idea to have the newsletter. Information that pertains to all of CPFM which we don’t often get a lot of.
  + Easy access to our supervisors within my department (work control)
  + Text message alert system – informative
  + Call log – everyone puts in their information. A good tool. Need to keep developing… further implement into other systems (project requests, maintenance requests) … keep focusing on that.
  + Texting has made communications a lot better
  + Enjoy the people I work with directly… keep hiring good people in my department. (Design) not sure how much of it comes from top down. Not sure how much other units would say the same thing.
  + Enjoyed meeting people in the other departments through the activities
* Start – What should CPFM start doing?
  + In previous roles I enjoyed shadowing at other companies, talking about what we’re doing. In design we sometimes look at OSU or ask questions about best practices. Facilities shops from the Pac 12 meet annually to discuss topics.
  + Training program… field trip for my crew up to OSU. Done that a couple of times over the years. Would be great to be focused on trades people, hands on. Getting away from your work place.
  + Encouraging or empowering employees to travel to go to trainings or workshops. There is already some support for that idea, talked about but not implemented. Especially for trades people. Usually for trainings that come here. Should be both classified and OA staff.
  + Need more trainings and support from leadership… software trainings would be useful for design (formal rather than figuring it out as we go). Software is really difficult… some software we have to use but no one knows how to train me on it. Other department that roles out new technology is not communicating very well.
  + Steep learning curve on main computer program (AIM) – need more support and training
  + Needed trade-specific training… only that specific crew would know
  + Employee development is a cultural thing… supervisors would say they support it and there is a budget. But it’s not necessarily something we talk about as an organization a lot, make clear or available. Places the burden on the employee rather than as a part of coaching.
  + Start to do something to address the issue of homelessness on campus.
  + Start saying hi to each other and introducing themselves to each other.
  + Look at pay scales… not here to talk about the contract. We are not paid comparatively to the private sector. Many of us are facing the restrictions of cost of living increases in Eugene. Feels true across the board for all positions. No one makes what they would make in the private sector.
  + 360-degree evaluations of supervisors. When they give their performance evaluation, there would be substance to be built on. We know how to please the boss, but not how to treat other people. Would be good to give a little input. We used to have opportunities to give feedback on our supervisors (maybe was HR… was a long time ago).
  + Each department should be consulted on how to develop more sustainability and recycling programs. People in the different units probably have some really good ideas. There are a lot of ideas out there and things we could do… as a unit we should focus on what we can do. It’s such a big place, sometimes idea like that need to be developed within the unit rather than a big, overall plan. Tykeson Hall might be a great example of that… what is happening to those plastics and cardboard? Construction process… might be some stipulations that we could include in contracting process. OSU probably has a better plan in place for waste / waste practices. Very little goes to the actual landfill… contract with other universities to get re-used and replaced.
  + Better communication among different departments as they change their procedures. We do a lot of the work tickets, and we don’t hear a lot of it until someone yells at us that we’re not doing it right. No one told us. It would be nice to know when things are changing and have it be communicated. Email, newsletter, something. So, we’re doing what’s expected of us and we can serve and help. We want to be on the same page.
  + Initiate an effort to improve unit-wide news sharing and communication. There might be great specific ideas (like add a page to the newsletter or more emails) but needs to be a wider effort.
  + Quarterly meetings where you get to know each other. Someone from the other departments presents on ongoing efforts or projects. New construction is a great example – I don’t know what’s going on. Ask for various people to present. More social. For example, when the architects open up a presentation on a new design… how about we show that on some slides or we get to go to the events at the EMU. Something that is specifically targeted towards my department. Regular enough that you know what’s happening. Twice a year isn’t often enough… the information that is currently shared is much more formal and not relevant. Could be anyone… could be a supervisor or it could be a staff member that’s presenting.
* Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?
  + Sit in too many meetings that are redundant. Interface with several different departments, we end up talking about the same things. Can consolidate and streamline meetings and information where possible.
  + Culture of hierarchy… people need to leave their title at the door. People wear their title as of who they are. Treat us like human beings. Especially those who are not in OA positions or work in the trades.
  + Stop working in silos… there are 5-6 departments within the big organization, and rarely do we cross-pollinate. We never transfer that information across the board. Its natural, but there are ways to combat it.
  + You don’t know who everyone is. Hard to know what’s going on.
  + Stop introducing new software without training.

# Appendix IV. Dot Voting

### Continue

* Employee training – encouraging attendance (9 votes)
* Offering team building – but be more inclusive of odd shifts (4 votes)
* Flexibility in scheduling (2 votes)
* Family first culture (1 vote)
* Organizational restructuring and collaboration (1 vote)
* Centralization of CPFM management tools – AIM and work control (0 votes)

### Start

* Review of supervisors – possible 360 degree (7 votes)
* Improving parking options (5 votes)
* Improve public relations across campus (2 votes)
* Better communication within CPFM (2 votes)
* Improving pay scales (2 votes)
* Regular and informal information sharing (1 vote)
* Centralize database (1 vote)
* Hire from within and recognize experience (1 vote)
* Cross-division collaboration and resources (0 votes)

### Stop

* Prioritizing construction over maintenance (6 votes)
* Unfair compensation practices (3 votes)
* Inefficient admin activities (2 votes)
* Not taking accountability (2 votes)
* Drastically and frequently changing policies (1 vote)
* Wasting supplies, surplus supplies/materials (1 vote)
* New software without training (1 vote)
* Taking away parking (0 votes)
* Inefficient supervisor meetings (0 votes)
* Siloing departments (0 votes)
* Hierarchical culture (0 votes)