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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 NINE 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. Staff appreciated recognition programs, including the Gold Duck, but believe there are different and more effective ways to incentivize and motivate teams. Participants would like to see CPFM continue offering team building activities and providing clear direction and structure. CPFM could consider streamlining internal and cross-campus communication, providing more formal professional development and continuing education, and improving pay for staff. Participants voiced a need for CPFM to stop allowing campus to dictate their work, asking staff to do more with less, and ignoring issues on campus that affect safety and service.

## What should CPFM keep doing?

* **Recognition programs:** Participants generally agreed that recognition and incentive programs are important to employees. One group felt the Golden Duck program promotes going “above and beyond,” and is one of the only ways that employees can recognize the work done by others. Additional programs that reward employees for going the extra mile, getting certifications, or even for longevity would be appreciated.
* **Offering team building activities:** Participants appreciated opportunities to socialize without different departments, meet other people, and build relationships. Additionally, so groups were interested in seeing the diversity forums continue.
* **Clear direction and structure:** Participants thought CPFM provided beneficial organizational structures, including scheduling and clear direction of what to do and where to go. For some, this structure included regular check-in meetings.

## What should CPFM start doing?

* **Engage in better internal communication**: Participants voiced a need to improve communication between departments in order to better collaborate. There are projects across the university that other departments are working on where there might be duplication of resources. One example was the landscape architecture and urban farm groups. There are opportunities to communicate more internally, such as between shops to prevent accidents and miscommunication.
* **Identify different ways to incentivize staff**: There were differing opinions on the effectiveness of the Gold Duck program in incentivizing performance by employees. It is only used by some groups/supervisors and isn’t always taken seriously. One group felt that there is a culture within CPFM to do the bare minimum. More and better incentives could help to provide more shared motivation.
* **Provide formal professional development**: Participants sought a more formalized strategy for continuing education and professional development. This may include licensing and certification pathways, apprenticeship, job shadowing or floating, all of which could support more internal mobility and growth.
* **Pay a living wage**: Participants felt they were not being compensated for the amount of work being assigned to their understaffed crews. People described a tendency to work with “skeleton crews,” which leads to burn-out and turnover. People described the conditions as “unsustainable” and did not believe that management would be willing to hire more people or pay current employees more to improve retention.

## What should CPFM stop doing?

* **Allowing campus to dictate work:** There is a perception from participants that campus stakeholders are able to dictate how CPFM works. One example of this was the power plant outage testing. There is an interest in facilitating more interaction between faculty and staff, recognizing that they both play important roles within campus.
* **Asking people to do more with less:** Participants felt employees were generally overworked and cannot complete one task/project before being asked to do more. Recent budget cuts reduced staff and capacity, stretching everyone’s time, but also limiting materials, supplies, and tools. While infrastructure on campus grows, maintenance capacity does not keep up. Several groups indicated the need to dedicate adequate and separate resources to construction and maintenance to assure that maintenance does not suffer.
* **Ignoring campus problems:** Participants were not comfortable with the current management of homeless camps near campus. Some felt there were safety and health concerns not being addressed, specifically drug abuse issues. There was a sense that management should do more to address the issue and prepare staff who may encounter transient populations. Participants noted that student employees who work in the library may come into contact with individuals and drug paraphernalia without being explicitly warned of risks.

## Additional Comments

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

* **Wasting expertise and labor:** Some participants felt jobs should be delegated to people based on the skills needed for the task. Often over-qualified staff are asked to complete tasks that could be assigned to a student employee at a fraction of the cost.
* **Follow standard operating procedures:** New employees need to be adequately trained on standard procedures, so jobs are completed consistently and safely. Participants expressed a lack of formality on procedures for handling hazardous materials. Generally, participants felt CPFM cultivated a culture of safety through trainings and adherence to safe practices, but there are opportunities to improve.
* **Clearly define roles and responsibilities:** When job responsibilities shift, participants expressed a need to provide clear explanations on how roles are defined. Some felt uncertainty around the division of labor and who is ultimately accountable.
* **Using more cooperative language:** Some participants felt strongly that CPFM should use less competitive language, specifically citing the Quest for the Best name. Many felt CPFM cultivated an open-door and comfortable environment, which should be echoed through language and avoiding referring to people as their positions or titles.

# Appendix 1. Table 1 Notes

* One word to describe your ideal work environment
  + Flow (get in, do your thing, get out)
  + Collaborative (strong team feeling)
  + Dynamic
  + Healthy
  + Happy
  + Open (communications and expectations)
  + Productive (get stuff done, less spinning wheels)
  + Partly sunny 68 degrees
  + When it doesn’t feel like work
* Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?
  + Diversity activities
  + Quarterly events – social, fun events
  + Cross-department communication opportunities
  + Leadership structure – the way that it’s broken into individual departments
  + Golden Duck program for recognition and acknowledgement of employee performance
  + Care about safety of employees – personal protection, culture of safety and safe work practices
  + Upper Management “Day in the Life” job-shadowing (1st time, should happen more)
  + Ongoing job training
* Start – What should CPFM start doing?
  + Cooperative Language
  + Define roles and responsibilities to clarify who does what and when
  + Guidelines for Tasks and Roles.
  + Standard operating procedures (SOPs) for working with hazardous materials
  + There might be a policy on the books, but it hasn’t been communicated or distributed effectively.
  + Educate people and teams about what to expect
  + Refine workflows. Coordinating trades more efficiently so that sites are prepped, and time isn’t wasted.
  + Improve communication between shops to prevent accidents and miscommunication and misunderstandings (especially from the top)
  + Providing a living wage.
  + Value institutional knowledge and experience.
  + Inventory of building assets
  + Keep storage spaces organized and tidy
  + Talking about the campus in terms of land origin (Native) to acknowledge the history of the campus
  + More partnerships with the City of Eugene
  + Onboarding for CPFM – for new hires
    - Manual, contact information
  + Hiring from within
  + Train and elevate employees for job opportunities – career pathing
* Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?
  + Using Quest for the Best phrase – sounds aggressive and outdated, competitive and lofty
    - Prefer to work under a phrase that is more relevant to CPFM
    - “Respect the Work”
    - “Sustainable, Love, Planet…. “
    - “Continuous, measurable, improvement”
  + Casual/Lax rules about public/campus safety:
    - Using Knight Library as place for the unhoused, being a welcoming place for heroin users.
    - Ignoring the problem with homeless camps
    - Exposing employees and students to dangerous materials (needles) without training
  + Wasting Labor – delegate work based on skill and compensation grades (don’t have tasks completed by over qualified employees)
  + The New Office Custodial Plan (trash n dash)

# Appendix II. Table 2 Notes

* One word to describe your ideal work environment
  + Creative
  + Energetic
  + Get Along
  + Friendly
  + Happy
  + Smooth
* Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?
  + Not too much say because hasn’t been working for CPFM long enough
  + Enjoy the “structure”
    - Scheduling
    - What to do
    - Where to go
    - All run through his department (plumbing)
  + Clear direction
  + Open environment
    - Open-door policy to discuss issues
    - From top to bottom
  + Team building activities
    - Alongside other departments
    - Meet other people
    - Relationship building
    - BBQs (extras)
    - Appreciation events
  + Bringing in new talent
    - Hiring quality people
    - Recruitment
    - Across CPFM
  + Outreach to campus from CPFM
    - Started but requires additional effort
    - Improving internal CPFM relationships
    - Across CPFM departments develop working relationships
    - Had been broken down in years past, Mike came on and started moving these together
    - Directors are working better as a group
    - But also, sub-groups working well together
    - Groups are getting together to understand each other’s roles and responsibilities, skills, specializations
  + Informal communication helps build relationships
  + Bring students into CPFM to do projects, help with projects, hire students
* Start – What should CPFM start doing?
  + Hire staff to do both maintenance and construction
    - Primary job is maintaining, but being stretched to do both
    - Start a construction side of CPFM
    - Should be collaborative
    - Expand capacity
  + More people, overall
  + Communication with other departments to improve collaboration
    - Don’t need to reinvent the wheel
    - People are already doing a similar thing that other departments are working on
    - Landscape, Urban Farm are doing similar thinking, but it needs to be coordinated
  + Clarify roles and responsibilities across CPFM
    - People doing same thing from different directions
    - Stepping on each other’s toes
    - Departmental roles, not entirely people
    - Difficult to grow departments and coordinate growth
    - Both groups working on same project
  + Have campus understand what roles of CPFM are
    - Communication?
    - Understanding
    - Clarity
    - Hurt feelings as a result
  + Start following-up on standard procedures
  + New employee and haven’t seen the scopes of work for each department so you understand where to go for what
    - Orientation to CPFM
    - Orientation is currently a checklist that stops at the department level
    - Orientation/On-boarding needs to be continued at the department level
  + Provide complete information via communication – specifically decisions
  + Incentivize employees
    - Supervisors have no way to give him motivation
    - Culture in CPFM is to do the bare minimum
    - Gold Duck program isn’t taken seriously due to the lack of
    - Can’t give monetary and team building activities
    - Issue comp. hours
  + Offering continuing education
    - Allow people to float in different departments - helpful for trades jobs
    - Training
    - Licensing issues and certifications
  + Better recognizing people // enhance the Gold Duck program
  + Improve relationships with supervisors
    - Increase awareness
  + Design places with maintenance in mind
    - Contractors don’t consider that – it’s not their job
* Stop – What should CPFM stop doing?
  + Top-down communication
  + Reinventing the wheel - If it works, don’t change it
  + A lot of people doing the same thing, but don’t tell each other - Duplicative work
  + Leadership changes lead to shifts in departmental shuffling
    - Lots of change and churn that makes it complicated
    - Constant change
  + Physical changes and people don’t know where they are
    - Some changes good, some not
  + There’s not a clear direction for employees on how to achieve long term goals
    - Long term plans are there but CPFM isn’t being coordinated to
  + Maintenance is being deferred in favor of construction
  + Fractured implementation
    - Unable to work on one project, see projects through
  + Stop Gold Duck -> try something new
    - Same people are nominating
    - There’s a big imbalance between where the Gold Duck is allocated
    - Inequitable
    - The process needs to be initiated
    - Comes from the “top” leadership it means more - more frequent
  + Distance from senior leadership
  + Doing more with less
    - Overworking employees
    - Can’t get one job complete -> forced to do 3 or 4
    - Budget cuts reduce people and capacity
    - Everybody’s time is stretched
    - Materials, supplies, tools, transport
  + Infrastructure has grown but the capacity to maintain it is not
  + Focus on construction OR maintenance
    - Maintenance doesn’t make money
    - Starting a construction project then there are people on your back
    - Hard to wrap up construction project
    - Forces you to do expensive things because there isn’t time to do maintenance
  + Have people with the care and desire in CPFM - pride
    - Contractors come from outside
    - Ownership factor changes the vision of the job
  + Let people flourish with their pride, but don’t over work them and exploit them

# Appendix III. Table 3 Notes

* One word to describe your ideal work environment
  + A lot of work
  + Fun
  + Messy
  + Quiet
  + Good
  + Organized
  + Respectful
* Continue – What should CPFM keep doing?
  + Keep diversity forums.
  + Keep social gatherings and fun activities
    - Bowling, winter celebrations, summer BBQ, scavenger hunt
  + Keep start-of-day orientation/pre-shift meeting, Keep weekly check-ins with direct reports
  + “Keep doing what we’re doing”- campus on the whole is running pretty well
* Start – What should CPFM start doing?
  + Start better communication practices interdepartmentally and internally
  + Start standardizing policies
    - Internal- paper towels not supposed to go into certain area, didn’t know
  + Start making trainings consistent through departments
  + Start informing employees of communication from managers and supervisors
    - Very Top/Down, “We’re told what to do after the fact.”
  + Start some kind of apprenticeship program for temporary employees
    - Grow skill trades in-house, mentorship program, promote employees
    - “you don’t move up here”, “there’s a lot of nepotism that happens here.”
  + Start filling vacancies
  + Start expanding rewards/recognition program
  + Start improving workflow program through AIM
* Stop - What should CPFM stop doing?
  + “Stop trying to fix things that aren’t broken”- Policies have changed that have disrupted effective work systems already in place
    - PODS example
  + Stop understaffing
  + Stop decentralizing
    - FASS, Shared Services IT for three departments
  + Stop hiring additional management positions/administrative costs
    - Was able to bring IPRE in but not mediator for ADA staff needs when asked for
  + Stop false promises
    - Were supposed to get jackets for work but never happened
  + “Stop allowing campus to dictate how we do our work”
    - Couldn’t test for powerplant outage, there are those who work there who don’t know how to handle power outage if it actually happened
    - Faculty needs to work with staff better
    - “We need to recognize that both of our jobs are important”
  + Stop experimenting
    - New ADA system that is switching areas for people who aren’t familiar with those areas
  + Stop running rogue - Allen Hall was given PVC piping and there was a pressure bump that caused a burst limiting pressure of cold water to half of campus. If communication between departments had been better and had known what was happening, it could’ve been avoided

# Appendix IV. Dot Voting

### Continue

* Recognition programs (7 votes)
* Teambuilding activities (5 votes)
* Clear direction and structure (4 votes)
* Diversity forums (2 votes)
* Trainings for management to understand the job (2 votes)
* Open door, comfortable environment and culture (1 vote)
* Regular check-in meetings (0 votes)

### Start

* Better communication - interdepartmental and cross-department (6 votes)
* Different ways to incentivize – ex. Training and education (5 votes)
* Apprenticeship and mentorship programs (4 votes)
* Living wage (3 votes)
* Follow and clarify standard procedures – trainings and communication as well (2 votes)
* Clarify roles and responsibilities within CPFM (1 vote)
* Use more cooperative language (0 votes)

### Stop

* Allowing campus to dictate work (6 votes)
* Asking people to do more with less (6 votes)
* Ignoring campus problems – drugs and homelessness (5 votes)
* Same people doing maintenance and construction (2 votes)
* Decentralizing (2 votes)
* Hiring additional management and administrative costs (1 vote)
* Wasting labor – don’t use overqualified people (1 vote)
* Reinventing the wheel across campus (0 votes)
* Leaving student staff untrained (0 votes)