



**Employee Relations Organizations Meeting**  
**June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023 – 2:00p to 2:30p**  
**Zoom**

**Moderator:** Debbie Long

**Representatives Present:**

**ERC:** Jessica Ross, David Meyer, Janette Smith, Ann Fields, Elaine Robinson, Michelle Shiver, Flavenia Leaper, Shenicia Richardson, Veronica Horton, Shannon Brown, Kyle Smith, Corey Newell, Katora Jones, Linda Johnson

**ESC:** Terri Fought, Kristi Forman, Patti Smith, Yin Su, Cynthia Tooley, LaTisha Williams, Peggy Reisser, Libby Pelham

**Representatives Absent:** DeSha Bolden, Anna Norris, Keshia Giboney, Selena Strong, Michelle Shiver, Kimberlee Norwood, Blake Dingman

**Minutes Secretary:** Debbie Long

**Visitors:** Dr. Brian Dickens, Chief HRO; Dr. Chandra Alston, Vice Chancellor of HR

**Meeting Agenda and Minutes**

- 2:00pm**      **Welcome and Attendance – Debbie Long**  
“We are elected to support employee issues, policy, and organizational challenges.”
- 2:05pm**      **Employee Engagement Survey – Dr. Brian Dickens, Chief Human Resources Officer for the University of Tennessee System and Dr. Chandra Alston, Vice Chancellor of Human Resources at UTHSC**

Concern about the engagement survey – people concerned about there not being a lot of anonymity due to departments being in small areas.

Dr. Dickens reassured the group there are measures in place to ensure anonymity in survey responses. One measure is, for example, if a unit only has three responses a report will not be generated for that unit to protect the identity of the responders. The key to ensuring we are able to see all results is to encourage staff to respond to the survey.

The purpose of the engagement survey is to see where employees are in terms of how people are feeling in the organization – where are they, what are their pain points, what are their concerns. This is to get a big bucket view of our workforce. Items such as compensation are reviewed and reports are provided on a large scale



and on a manager level. At the manager level, if not enough respondents have participated to ensure anonymity a report would not be generated. There is not a large amount of detailed reporting do to the small units. However, results are bubbled up to be reflected in the larger areas – for example a small unit will be reflected in the larger unit of the college.

We are using McLean’s model to protect anonymity, they determine the cutoff levels which determine what is considered a low response rate, which is four.

Another measure in place to secure the identity of participants is the redaction of comments that specifically cite names of employees, whether this is positive or negative. The survey results are combed through by our third party, McLean, and revealing answers are eliminated before being provided to the university.

We have the capability to work with McLean to get bubbled up reports to capture those responses that were redacted on the detail reports due to personally identifiable information. It was noted that the way we provide the data to McLean did provide an issue in getting an appropriate detailed report. This year we are trying a different method of data organization to get a better reflection of our results. We are in our third year of using the engagement survey from McLean and have made adjustments to the survey to refine it each year.

Dr. Alston encourages the staff to continue being a person who will speak out at the variety of items happening around our campus. What happens when you provide this information it often reinforces information we have acquired in HR, so you are not the only one to point out these issues. The more an issue is identified then the better positioned we are to take action when necessary. McLean will aggregate this data to show us the common reflection of the area, even if the singular identifying comment has been removed.

Most people look at engagement surveys as a punitive measure, but this is also the place to provide information on what is being done right, not just what is being done wrong/needs fixing.

When results are received and processed they are shared to the deans, chancellors, and community groups such as this one, about their areas to review the data and create action items from the information. Trusted and Transparent is one of our values and next year we will be putting the results history on our UTHSC website. It is already present on the HR System website: <https://hr.tennessee.edu/yourvoice/>

There are three different verticals of surveys being used at UT to acquire the view of faculty, students, and staff. At this time those results are looked at in relation to their surveyed groups and not compared, however it is a goal to be able to cross reference



the faculty-staff-student survey results in the future to obtain a global view of the university.

Do not suffer in silence for a year when you need to bring things to our attention, encourage your employees to come and talk to HR when the need arises. We are here to help you out of a bad situation and the survey is not the only place to express your concerns. Send people our way, don't wait a year to put it out on paper if there is a problem.

This whole process is about building trust.

**2:55pm**

**Round Table**

No updates were given.