Plant Growth Facilities Faculty Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – May 10, 2022

The meeting started at 11:02 AM

Members Present: Ming Guo, Jinliang Yang, Stacy Adams, Katarzyna Glowacka, Justin McMechan, Amit Mitra
Ex-Officio Members Present: Hector Santiago, Matt Anderson, Amy Hilske, Scott Sattler

Approval of Minutes of the March 25, 2022, Meeting – The minutes of the March 25, 2022, meeting were approved without changes.

Old Business –
Space request forms:
  • Modifications have been made so that they are streamlined for teaching and research.
  • Links to the space request form, maintenance and door access forms are available in the previous meeting minutes.

Action Item: Save the forms to easily access and share with department administrative lead.

Updates from Hector Santiago –
Faculty Concerns:
  • A couple of faculty members have reached out with concerns about the services provided. Nothing was major, but felt it needed to be addressed.
    o A PGF manager’s meeting was held last week to discuss recent events and improvements. The goal is to meet quarterly moving forward.
  • Discussions about ongoing training for how to handle certain situations and customer relationships have occurred.

Agenda Items –

New members of the committee:
  • Katherine Frels has filled one of the two positions. The other is currently vacant.
  • Both will start at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Budget Discussion:
  • Overview -
    o It has been a struggle to order and receive items due to supply chain issues. Projects have had to be adjusted to accommodate for products we have been able to get.
    o There is a nice stockpile to get through the summer, but products will not be manufactured again will until September/October.
  • Supplies Review document – chart that shows the items we buy in the highest quantity and the percentage of cost increase.
    o 5% is the maximum amount that previous committees have determined to raise the prices in one year.
    o Amounts are calculated from the last 12 months and some products won’t have the lower grades available, so we will have to spend the money for higher grade.
    o Consumer price index was 7.2% last year and this year is projected at 8% or even up to 10%. In the horticultural industry a lot of products are specialized.
  • Operations Summary –
    o Summary presents what the 5% increase would be (i.e. would go from $1.24 to $1.30 per square foot of bench space).
    o Total projected expenses for FY23 are around $1 million.
    o Operate under a breakeven system –
      ▪ This means, we are forced to break even and, if not, need to fall on the positive or negative side of about 15%.
      ▪ i.e. if we make too much money (more than 15%), then we would need to reduce the rates. If there is a negative balance of more than 15%, then that force to raise the rates.
    o Justin McMahan moved to approve the 5% rate increase. Amit Mitra seconded. All, but one, voted in favor of the 5% increase. Motion carried with 1 descending vote.
• Nominations for PGFFAC chair for 2022-23  
  o It was proposed that Stacy Adams will be chair and Justin McMechan volunteered to be the co-chair for the 2022-2023 academic year. All were in favor. Motion passed.  
  
  **Action Item:** request agenda items from your respective department for future meetings.

**Items from the Floor –**

**Topics for Next Meeting**

1. Define roles and responsibilities of PGFFAC committee members, management team and administration.
   a. Not every decision in management of facilities needs to go through the committee.

2. Working to identify a resource that can help when conflict occurs.
   a. How to address conflict: every incident that happens that elevates to improper workplace behavior will be documented, and a formal complaint will be submitted to HR. If a staff member feels unsafe, they will be calling UNL PD. This will be implemented moving forward.
   b. HR has a website where you can process a formal request. The idea is a 1-pager to discuss what happened, the time, date and if here were any witnesses. That person will submit request to Amy, then to Hector, then to Upper Administration.
   c. Overall, there is a lot of tension, and it has affected many in their professional and personal lives.

  **Action Item:** Lauren to send out the new form for everyone for review.

Next Meeting – sometime in September

**Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM.**

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Lauren Kruger.*