



## Labour Management Relations Committee (LMRC)

February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 @ 2:00 pm by Zoom

### **1. Staff Health Plan Performance:**

Karla – The plan performance is almost exactly the same for health and dental with a 1% variance. Our performance has been predictable regardless of pandemic. This makes it easy for options going forward in terms of decreasing benefits or increasing premiums.

Noah – Will take the temperature with the Union to see what options are more desirable.

Karla – We would like to build a bit of reserve. We have a good level of consult and Tim can show us where we are exposed. He has presented some good options so we would like him to speak at bargaining time if that is okay. An example of a good option would be a hospital expense account that would allow for expense allocations to things like TV services, parking, upgrades to the room etc. Maybe we could find an economical way to provide those type of benefits. Tim works with several unions and can give us creative ideas so we are not as exposed on the plan.

Noah – Will talk to the collective about everything discussed.

Karla – The good news is that there are no surprises at this point.

### **2. Town Hall Follow Up:**

Karla – Were there any questions about anything discussed at the Town Hall? There were no public questions but there might be some private ones?

Noah – No questions as far as he knows. Everyone is waiting on what the return plan will look like. Nina was filled in on what the meeting entailed.

Karla – Wanted to make sure that everyone was particularly made aware of the Engagement Committee update. A couple of union members have offered to participate. So far there are different service levels and positions both unionized and non represented.

Noah – Will be volunteering to sit on the Committee as well.

### **3. Q&A – Nick Vassiliou:**

Noah – Wondered how the graphic design position would look when transitioning into promotions.

Nick – In the past, the position took a jack of all trades approach with a little bit of graphics, running the print shop, and providing Gazette support. The print shop now gets very few requests and the position has become more specialized instead of a jack of all trades. From a creative standpoint, video is covered but they would like to have more graphic expertise and specialization.

Noah – So the formation of the department would take from 6 months to a year and would be structured to have a senior manager, a middle manager, union positions, and interns etc.?

Nick – It is an ongoing conversation. There is a meeting about the structure happening this afternoon. We need to create a division that supports the Executive at large. In the past the ideas were being driven by the Department and they want to move away from that. The ideas should come from the VP Communications & Public Relations. They need to replace Nick Scott and add a Communications Manager or maybe put them together in one position. They do need to have a specialized graphic artist. Hopefully they will have a better understanding of what is needed after the meeting today.

Noah – Where would existing staff fit into this?

Karla – It is taking longer than we thought to come up with the criteria that will be required. The work that the Executive requires is of a high calibre. The VP Communications and Public Affairs will be involved in hiring the Communications Manager and the Graphic Designer. We need

to start replacing positions. The question is, do we need a social media person and a content person and a government relations person etc.? We have separated these things out in the past but we need to put everything together now.

Noah – How much of this has been communicated to the existing staff?

Karla – The job description has not been done so nothing has been communicated yet.

Nick V. – Has talked to her about reviewing the current MOU and that the department is being restructured but that is all.

Noah – What is the timeline that they are looking at?

Karla – They are starting Executive hiring right now until March 5<sup>th</sup> so they will be posting the Communications Manager after that. Not sure what job market looks like for that type of position right now. It is hoped that that position would be hired by the beginning of May. It would be good to transition that person in person if possible. The Communications Manager would be part of the hiring panel for the Graphic Designer. That means that the Graphic Designer hiring would be set back a bit. Ideally the job would be filled by June if there are no hiccups.

Noah – When would we be looking at the MOU for Maja's position?

Karla – It was supposed to be revisited a year ago. Nick Scott created a Graphic Designer position before he left. We need to take another look at that. It would be ideal to have a strong Graphic Designer that could mentor other people. That job needs to be defined first and then fit into MOU. There will be a meeting with Maja to talk about the MOU and the job. We will not be doing anything in relation to that MOU until the end of fiscal. We need a job description first to make everything more clear.

Noah – Having it in writing would be helpful to her.

Jeff – There is a Gazette review happening too that Nick S. can perhaps speak to.

Nick S. – Five years ago there was a front office strategic plan created for the Gazette that included direction regarding digitalization. We will have

version 2.0 of that plan in place soon that will detail any changes to the front office and the publications.

Noah – It is not surprising that there have been and will be changes to the Gazette given the landscape for media over the few years especially. We would like to make sure that any changes are communicated to the staff involved along the way to make for smooth transitions.

Karla – We are hoping to have a job description together by the beginning of next week. We would like to have drafts out at least and then can go about doing the MOU review. It will be brought up before the Communications Manager is hired so that that there are no surprises. It should be before the next LMRC meeting.

Jeff – Would we perhaps have an opportunity for someone that could oversee the graphics work as opposed to someone who could actually do all the work. The medium changes so quickly that it might work if that position hires and oversees Interns who would most likely be up on the latest technology etc.

Karla –The issue with that would be summer coverage. We would need to have the Interns all year long. Plus the job is technically Union work. The managers in place could not oversee the work if they could not do it themselves to fill in etc. It is agreed that students can do the latest work but the manager should be able to do the things themselves also.

Noah – We know that trends will change but we would like to ensure that the Union members are protected. We are not going to stand in the way of a new job description and the success of the department. Our focus is the timeline, communications to staff, and what their options are moving forward.

Jeff – There are a lot of moving pieces. Even if everyone who took packages had stayed, we would still be in this situation. We would like the students to be using us and not a shadow wing of the organization.

Noah – We would like to address that too and would like to protect people in their roles. We would like all the information we can get and we appreciate the open communication in these meetings.

Jeff – We are tired of not hitting the mark and having friction. Flexibility is required if we are to make it better.

Noah – We are more than amenable to being flexible. We want to create something sustainable as well.

Jeff – One of the things that will help make it better would be hiring the managers and having them learn everything before hiring anyone else.

Noah – We will be planning a general meeting in the next month or so and will let know you when that will be happening.

#### **4. New Business**

Noah – We have no new business at this time except that Tanee and Mike will be standing in for Nina for the next little while.

Jeff – Hopefully things will start to open up soon. It will be very hard to get everyone back to work. Western is doing that right now and it has been difficult for them.

Noah – March break is in April now so that will create some potential problems. A lot of people are all set up at home. As issues arise regarding Return to Work, we will deal with that.