

**Senate Benefits and Welfare Committee  
University of Pittsburgh  
Minutes of November 9, 2021**

**9:30-11:00 a.m**

**Attendees:**

Linda Tashbook, John Kozar, Tyler Tenney, Victoria Lancaster, Lucas Mentch, Emily Parasky, Donald Hoffman, Irene Kane, Donovan Harrell, Nikhita Chakraborty, Miriam Meislik, Joanne Prasad, Ann Mitchell, Malforzata Fort, Robin Kear, Vaishali Aggarwal.

**Guest Speakers:**

Victoria Lancaster

Tyler Tenney

Minutes taken by: Linda Tashbook

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Discussion</b>	<b>Action to be Taken</b>
<b>Call to Order</b>		
<b>Committee Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We are going to host some upcoming programs about retirement investments to make sure that faculty and staff have clear and correct information. The first one will be on December 14 at Noon via Zoom and will be about the selection of investment funds that are available to Pitt employees. Featured speakers will include Tim Irvin from CAPTRUST (who has spoken to our Committee) and representatives from the University's Retirement Oversight Committee. This will be in question and answer format like a TV talk show –including prizes for audience members. Please spread the word about this event. As soon as our publicity material is ready, Linda will pass it along to you. We know that our best event attendance comes from personal invitations and we know that there are people who don't understand how our retirement investments are managed, so please reach out to people you know at the University who might be interested in this information.</li><li>• The Mental Wellness Task Force (MWTF) ordinarily hosts a speaker program during the fall semester, but this semester they just wanted to spare everyone</li></ul>	Miriam Meislik will run the prize drawings. Tashbook and Meislik will meet to plan the event.

	<p>from having to attend yet another Zoom event. Also, having been in operation for six and a half years, they want to know whether they should offer some other kinds of programs. So, they are going to circulate a questionnaire in early December to ascertain areas of interest, concern, and desire. MWTF is eager to alleviate the evident stress among faculty and staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given that our committee is coordinating these two activities in December, and we really hope to see all of you at the retirement investments event, the attendees present at the meeting voted not to hold a Benefits and Welfare meeting in December.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Benefits Report</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We are in the middle of open enrollment for folks with post age 65 coverage. Webinar tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. Rate increases were very low. Our cost of healthcare for post-65 is lower than it was five years ago. If you belong to defined dollar benefit, “you don’t pay a penny for your premiums.” This is a popular option. Here are the slides from this week’s online open enrollment event for the post-65 group. <a href="https://www.hr.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Post-65RetireeWebinar_Nov102021.pdf">https://www.hr.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/Post-65RetireeWebinar_Nov102021.pdf</a>.</li> <li>Dental and vision coverage—Premiums would go up so high if our dental plan included major surgery and procedures that hardly anyone would register for that coverage and it wouldn’t work out.</li> <li>JK will survey the post-65 users in the spring regarding their desired dental and vision coverage and will then negotiate a group price.</li> <li>Question- Plan docs say “Western PA” what is that coverage area, Is there a County listing? J Kozar says it goes as far as Harrisburg and as north as Erie. (UPMC For Life sent the map subsequent to our meeting. It shows that the coverage extends to all but a handful of counties in the state---and those counties are in the East.)</li> <li>Question – Why don’t vision plans cover transition lenses? Answer: To keep the premiums modest. Transition lenses save people from having to buy two pairs of glasses, so JK will ascertain the possibility of adding these to our plan.</li> <li>Working on health insurance renewal for FY 23. We’ve had a lot of expenses related to COVID and more haven’t yet been uncovered. So far, \$800,000 just for vaccinations. The vaccine is paid for by the gov’t, but the administration of the vaccine is what has cost the University this \$800,000. Other issues include</li> </ul>	

	<p>increased medical usage due to lower medical usage in 2020—people postponed medical appointments and procedures until this year (and providers weren't making all services and procedures available during the quarantine).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers are still waiting for federal government decision about using retirement savings for payment of student loans.</li> </ul>	
<b>Topic</b>	<p><b>Draft Policy and Procedure on Protection of Children from Abuse</b></p> <p>PA Keep Kids Safe Act requires compliance  Drafted, approved by Chancellor, posted for University Community commentary, reviewed by Council of Deans, now under consideration by this committee and the Faculty Affairs Committee. Clearances necessary when employees start working (used to have 90-day window after starting job). "It is not an uncomplicated process to obtain these clearances."  The draft policy and procedure were circulated to committee members in advance of this meeting.  Two questions:  1. Who will pay for getting these clearances?  A: The policy does not address payment because responsibility centers will make their own arrangements. Some of the responsibility centers will pay the costs and others will require the new employee to pay the costs.  2. Clarifying—The policy defines Direct Contact with Children as "The care, supervision, guidance, or control of children or routine interaction with children ("routine interaction" meaning regular and repeated contact that is integral to a person's employment or volunteer responsibilities). This includes contact in physical and/or virtual settings." So, what about high school students' mock trials at the law school or children coming to various clinics operated by the University?  A: In both of the given examples, the child (someone under age eighteen) is accompanied by either a parent who does not need clearance or a teacher or coach who already has the clearance, so the Pitt faculty and staff members present would not need to also have clearance for situations that only involve such occasional contact.</p>	<p><b>Action to be Taken</b></p> <p>Vote to endorse policy and present to Faculty Assembly for approval. Due to low attendance at the meeting, this vote will be conducted via Qualtrics. If approved, the chairs of this committee and the Faculty Affairs Committee will present it to Faculty Assembly for endorsement.</p>
	<b>Care.com complaints</b>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three examples from Staff Council: Told to take kids to Kindercare, no offer of caregiver coming to house No caregivers available Caregiver scheduled, but didn't show up (Also, one person was disappointed with the method of selecting a caregiver. Apparently, users have to go through a long list rather than having filter options that would reduce search time.)</li> <li>• Have any committee members heard or experienced anything good or bad <i>in re</i> our Care.com arrangement? None reported.</li> <li>• Only five comments rec'd by Care.com—all were positive.</li> <li>• John Kozar asks people to notify him if anyone needs to report and investigate anything about care.com. Continuous improvement is goal. 49 backup care days (heavily subsidized by Pitt, you pay co-pay) used so far. 549 enrolled. There have been 1,628 visits to the Care.com site by Pitt faculty and staff members.</li> <li>• Care.com has complaint line where you can report incidents.</li> </ul> <p>49 Backup days used since September</p> <p>549 Faculty and staff enrolled in Care.com</p> <p>1628 Visited the site</p> <p>85 Job posted to the network (In order of postings)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Child Care</li> <li>2. Housekeeping</li> <li>3. Senior Care</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Other questions:</b></p>	<p>Participants inquired about the continued existence of this committee and also about potential changes to the benefits package for current employees as well as retirees, subsequent to the formation of a faculty union. Senate President Robin Kear and Linda Tashbook both noted that the retirees' separate benefit arrangements are less likely to be affected by arrangements between union-represented current faculty and the university. Benefits <i>are</i> typically an issue for negotiation with unions, so there is a possibility that the benefits package for all current faculty and staff could be affected, depending on how many faculty members actually join the union and what the union negotiates on behalf of its representatives, but it is also possible that there could be separate benefits arrangements for union members versus non-union members. We do not yet know how</p>	

	<p>our system of shared governance will be affected by having a faculty union. Robin's PowerPoint from this month's Faculty Assembly meeting shows what we do know, at this point, about the faculty union.</p> <p><a href="https://www.univsenate.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/President%20Report%20FA%202021-11-03.pptx">https://www.univsenate.pitt.edu/sites/default/files/President%20Report%20FA%202021-11-03.pptx</a></p>	
<b>Adjournment</b>	10:40 a.m.	