



**Fringe Benefits Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 15, 2013**

In attendance: Bonnie Thiel, Barb Juknialis, Stacy Fening, Amy Sheldon, Michael Yeager, Matthew McManus, Kelly Marcus, Jing Li, Mary Consolo, Jim Nauer, and Tony Kramar.

Stacy Fening called the meeting to order. Jing Li agreed to take minutes.

1. The minutes from the August meeting were approved.
2. Meeting attendees introduced themselves to the group.
3. New Business/New initiatives discussed:
 - A. Tuition Reimbursement or other possible Tuition benefits
 - This past year, we successfully asked for an increase of tuition reimbursement. However, the increase is so minimal and cannot catch up with the increase of tuition or cost of living. Should we ask to increase to \$2500.00 and next year ask for another increase?
 - Rationale to support the increase is that Case employees can take up to 15 credit hours of classes free at Case annually so we should be able to get equivalent dollar amount of reimbursement if we take the classes from other schools.
 - Discussion on the tuition cost from other schools. For example, if you take a class from CSU, for graduate classes, the cost per credit hour is around \$560; and the cost per credit hour is around \$400 for undergraduate classes.
 - People are looking into how extensive the tuition benefit has been used by Case employees. The past statistics from HR shows that less than 100 employees used the tuition reimbursement benefit and the average amount is \$1500. Since only a small number of people are using this benefit, we think that we should be able to ask for more money and the financial impact to the university is minimal.
 - Amy Sheldon mentioned that there is a tax ramification on how much money a university can reimburse an employee for tuition each year and suggested that we should check with the HR expert on this topic, Joe Camino.
 - How about asking for reimbursement for professional development or a certification program? Jing and Jim recommended that we ask for taxable reimbursement for professional development or certification program, both internal and external.

Action items:

- Research tuition reimbursement amounts from sister schools to their employees
- Research the cost of external certificates or professional development programs from sister schools. –Bonnie to do
- Contact Joe Camino in HR about tax rules on tuition reimbursement –Stacy to do
- Ask HR to start a tracking project going forward to better monitor the use of the reimbursement credit, such as how many credits hours used, what university used at,



- what program (undergraduate vs. graduate program), degree type, and institution name.
– Stacy and Tracy to do—need to ask Jamie Ryan
- Research on cost of internal certificates or professional development program, such as program from Weatherhead. – Jing Li to do

B. Parking

Kelly Marcus to attend the upcoming Parking Committee meeting and asked for issues she should bring to meeting:

- She has a list started already and will send out to the group via email
- If others have grievances or suggestions, please get to her via email
- Discussed the idea of subsidized parking—all goes back to cost to CWRU
- Discussed when the standard parking contract might be up

C. Dental Benefit Complaints

CWRU Staff feel that Case Dental insurance is not good enough. We discussed whether other choices can be available such as Delta Dental plan? Amy Sheldon explained how bids are taken in by HR preceding each open enrollment period and how the cost to CWRU and the employee are affected when more expensive plans are offered.

Would need to contact Jamie Ryan in Human Resources as a start to this discussion

D. Hearing Aid Benefits—not part of the health insurance policy. Discussion concerning this and how it could be added; discussed cost increases to CWRU and employees associated with increased benefits.

Meeting adjourned 12:58 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jing Li and Stacy Fening