Research Policy Committee Draft Minutes

December 20, 2019

2:30-4:00 pm

Fleming, Room 4250

Chaired by Dr. Francine Dolins

Members present: Francine Dolins, Natalie Colabianchi, Jacob Carlson (3:30), Nicholas Harris, Nicholas Ernst, Irene St. Charles, Ashley Kalinski, William Close, Nishii, Akira, Marisa Conte (phone),

Guest(s): Anthony Burger

Absent: Mimi Dalaly, Kate Eaton, Hafiz Malik, Annalisa Manera, Jairam Menon, Teri Rosales, Jessie Lee, Yi-Su Chen, Nocona Sanders

I. Review of minutes from November 2019
   
   - Jake Carlson: Q&A regarding cost associated with DeepBlue
     - Correction to be made and submitted by Jake
   - No other changes
   - After corrections from Jake, the minutes are approved by the committee

II. First topic: Tony Burger – Director of Procurement

   - Overview of Procurement Services
     i. Will submit a summary of services to be included in the minutes
        1. Divided by commodities
        2. 10 billion dollar organization
           a. 60% of that is people
              i. Includes everything: health plans, construction, etc.
     ii. Manage travel
        1. 120 million per year
           a. Concur and pcards
              i. Encouraged to use the cards
     iii. Campus mail and US Mail
     iv. U-Attic
     v. Asset Management Disposition
        1. Tracking space use for reimbursement
        2. Tracking equipment

   - Challenges: Modernize
     i. Buying
     ii. Reimbursement
iii. Making payment process quicker
   1. Question: systems still allow payment on specific dates
      a. Net 30 days

iv. Web pages need updating

• 90 people in the group (over 100 w/ temps)
  i. 7 different physical locations

• Compliance
  i. A lot of oversight/ agencies to please
     1. Uniform guidance (federal guidelines??)
  ii. IRS auditing

• Why so many checks?
  i. Mostly subject fees.

• Big initiatives
  i. More talking with teams across the institution
     1. Meet with people / outreach
     2. Education
        a. Cut back on errors, allowing for a higher quality assurance
        b. Teach systems like Concur
  ii. Lots of vendors pitching systems to make things easier.
  iii. Partnering w/ American Express
     1. Would like to partner with others: Visa, MasterCard
  iv. They would like to replace PeopleSoft
     1. Great a payroll
     2. Terrible at purchasing

• Question: Better interface with visitors is needed
  i. Lots of options
  ii. Use travel agencies
  iii. Use PCard
     1. Department decision
     2. This is preferred

• Question: are there guidelines for preference of process based on impact
  i. Yes – these guidelines are posted online
     1. Using credit cards is preferred

• Question (Francine): the process of trying to schedule flights is easier to schedule flight and pay ahead of time, then wait for reimbursement
  i. Reimbursement can take up to 6 months

• Response: use the travel agency Conlin
  i. Contracts should include a discount from Delta if going through Conlin
     1. No change fees
  ii. Shared services will prepare expense reports if requested

• Question: Alan (visitor) faculty in mechanical engineering
  i. Questions about procurement
     1. Repairing various equipment (~10k per year)
a. Is there a mechanism for equipment repair?
   ii. Response: budgeting example of air conditioning?
      1. Plan for depreciation
• Question (Natalie): trouble with procurement for buying data
   i. Response: general counsel, OGC, IA all write the agreements to protect the institution
      1. Procurement is simply implementing those agreements (police)
      2. Need to do a better job being consistent
   ii. “Quarrel” patient care data
• Question (Francine): Ordering – system failures for ordering items such as laptops. Occasionally needing to pay for items out-of-pocket because the research cannot wait due to deadlines. Needing to go through too many people (dependent on administrator).
   i. Response: must do better. More of a direct buyer experience than going through multiple people, causing delays.
• Question (Francine): why are items so expensive buying through the institution when they can be found cheaper elsewhere (such as Amazon)
   i. Have trouble with Amazon due to a plethora of personal delivers coming to campus
      1. Delivery trucks showing up in the wrong/restricted areas
      2. Amazon banned from Michigan Medicine
   ii. Clarification (Francine): not a fan of Amazon, the question is really about finding cheaper products wherever that may be from
      1. Response: Hard to make 1:1 comparison, but do feel that we are receiving good pricing on a large scale.
• Comment (Nick H.): Procurement team is willing to meet with departments to establish best practice and strategy on a more intimate level
• No further questions (16:50)
• Added question (William): why are pcards frowned upon?
   i. Response: it was historically hard to keep track of payments and use, but now the technology allows better management
      1. Some groups base the need on volume of use per month (or other given time)

III. Announcements
• Email sent earlier today by Francine – support letter for proposing centralized office for UM Post-Doc Association
   i. Asking for any comments:
      1. Please email Francine with comments
         a. Comments by first week of January
• No additional announcements

IV. Call for other business
• None

V. Meeting adjourned: 16:04