NDUS Human Resource Council
Dickinson State University
Klinefelter Hall, Room 107
Monday, September 21, 2009 (12:00 Noon – 5:00 p.m. Mountain Time)
Tuesday, September 22, 2009 (8:00 a.m. – Noon Mountain Time)

BSC-Rita Lindgren and Carla Sivesand; DCB-Anne Bergeron; DSU-Gail Ebeltoft; LRSC-Joann Kitchens and Becky Lang; MASU-Steve Benson; MISU-Wes Matthews; NDSCS-David Lindberg (Monday); NDSU- Jen Baker, Broc Lietz, Colette Erickson; UND-Diane Nelson, Joy Johnson;  WSC-Barb Slagle; NDUS-Laura Glatt, Pat Seaworth (Monday), Cynthia Wagner Goulet (Monday), Karin Stinar, and Teri Thorsen.

September 21, 2009

Legislative Results – Laura highlighted some bills of interest to the HRC
1029 - new sections to NDCC chapter 54-56 relating to employee service awards, employer-paid tuition, and employee-paid professional organization membership and service club dues. No action necessary; wait until state puts their stuff together
1341 - bill about employee tuition. Assigned to interim committee.
1510 – Veteran’s preference – notification to unsuccessful candidates. NDUS procedure 601.0.
1562 – leave for ees participating in grievance and other administrative processes. Wait to see what state does
2001 – State EE compensation system. Watch to make sure broadbanding doesn’t get included.
2064 – in-state lodging increased. Mileage rate will be set to match the federal mileage rate.
2353 – lodging established at 90% of federal rate
2389 – Name change for Dakota College Bottineau

Pat Seaworth introduced Cynthia Goulet Wagner as the new assistant counsel for the NDUS.

12:30 p.m. (1:30 central) Legislative Results (NDPERs) – Sparb by telephone (328-3901)
See handout.
-24.5% loss in retirement reserves. Concern about reserve fund balance. Most likely looking for substantial increase in retirement plan funding, but may not need if fund recovers. Question: Are they considering both employer and employee contribution going up? Answer: Unknown at this point – too early to determine. NDCC 54.52 “retirement plan is part of the employment contract…..” People already retired cannot be affected. Future employee benefits could be changed. Current employees area is not quite so clear. Laura will visit with him more about the study later, with a concern that we not treat the people on PERS better than we treat the people on TIAA-CREF.

Health – increase in health credit - $4.50 x years of service – increased to $5.00. Effective July 1. Retirees premium went up roughly 25%. Single pre-medicare premium is $600/month. Family pre-medicare premium - $1200. Family of 3 - $1500/month. Once you get to Medicare, cost is $231/month, $461 for a couple..

Flu shots will be 100% covered. BCBS has not yet given an answer about H1N1 flu shots.(awaiting- federal decision).

PERS fixed the issue of people transferring from political subdivision to Higher Ed changing from single to family.

Health insurance – 25% increase was funded by legislature. Health club $20 credit is a big hit. Comes out of BCBS administrative fee.

Job Family #3415 (General Student Svcs Prof.) – Broc – NDSU was wondering about the difference between 3415 and 3110. Broc’s question was, do campuses have anyone in 3415 that are not in Student Affairs? Conversely, do campuses have people in student Affairs but in the 3110 job family? Consensus is that it’s about the work, not the department you’re in.

Criminal Background Checks – Broc - Thought a system-wide RFP for a background check vendor would be a good way to establish consistency and provide potential cost-savings. It was noted by Pat Seaworth that there is no prohibition against asking for arrest records.
There remain three outstanding issues:

Issue #1 – Conviction, or Conviction and recent arrests?
Issue #2 – Form
Issue #3 – common vendor

Wes moved we table this and form a committee to research 1) form for an outside vendor
2) who all should be checked
3) conviction vs pending charges
4) develop RFP

The motion was seconded and passed. Wes, Dave, Diane, Broc will serve on the committee. Cindy will be on it as legal counsel.

Pat noted background check reports are open records, EXCEPT FBI checks. Redact confidential information like SSN.

Pat Seaworth reminded campuses that they each need to have a criminal background check policy, and handed out a release form that can be used for finalists.

**Life Insurance** – Joann - if $1300 policy is cause of odd penny, maybe we could get the dollar amount changed. Joann sent e-mail to Laura & Sparb re: thi, but is still having trouble fixing the odd penny issue for the optional life insurance premiums. Some political sub-division who are paid twice/month only take the optional life premium out once a month. Karin will need to explore whether or not this is possible. What would raising life insurance base to $5,000 cost (we only pay .28 for the $1300). Wes wants this placed on a future agenda to increase this. Laura encouraged group to have any proposals that would have a legislative fiscal impact by the end of the calendar year.

**Taxable Meals**- de minimus rule – Pat Seaworth - issue about extra-curricular team travel. Normally, same-day travel meals are taxable. There is an exception for de minimus reimbursements being non-taxable. The question to the group was, is it worth trying to make an exception/de minimus argument, or should we consistently tax same-day travel meals. Campus practice is to make it non-taxable when it is a team meal that the coach takes part in. When a coach has a separate meal, and they claim reimbursement, should be taxable.

**Health Insurance Premiums in exchange for other premiums if employee is already covered** – Joann
If we offered some other insurance in these cases, would it have to be system-wide or could each campus decide. Would it require legislation? Yes, it would. Upping a person’s salary because they don’t need the insurance also would not be allowable.

**Storm Pay/Intstitutional Closure for exempt employees** – Only non-exempt employees get paid if they have to work. HRC policy 20.4 is in place.

**Conferences or Convention Leave** 20.5 – conference or convention pay refers to NDPEA. These are paid days. Note: HB 1562 – interim committee looking at bill for attending NDPEA meetings and testifying in front of the legislature.
Grandfathered payroll deduction 403(b) vendors – Laura - not less than 50 university system. Pat Hanson has proposed we only let plans with 10 or more participants accept new participants. Wes moved, Dave seconded (may have to make exceptions to PERS plans). Motion passed. Look at every year to see what plans had fallen below 10. CND will review at end of calendar year.

TIAA-CREF Plan Definitions – (see e-mail from Laura dated 8-6-09)
Compensation means regular salary which is basic annual earnings and summer session pay, if any, but excluding overtime, continuation education and extension.

Wes & Diane are working on this, but don’t think they can do this by themselves because there will be other interested parties. David moved we accept the language proposed by Wes and Diane and forward to next appropriate committee. Wes seconded. Laura asked for a record of what that would change at each institution. Laura will gather that information about which campuses this will make a change for, and that estimate what cost impact this may have. David recinded his motion. Laura is still going to gather the information.

Pandemic Planning – Campuses are developing their plans. Will there be guidance or policies system-wide that will need to be implemented? How does the Chancellor fit in with the campus plans? What will be discussed at the September 30 meeting in Valley City?

Each president reassured chancellor they were taking planning action. Campus presidents have the authority to be flexible with leave policies (e.g. paid administrative leave) in emergency situations.

Veterans’ notification letters – NDCC 37-19.1-04. Change in notification requirements. Previous requirement had been to only formally notify disabled veterans. Now the notification goes to any ND veteran (or spouse) with notice of appeal rights. Must be sent certified mail. Requirements went into effect August 1, 2009. Pat will draft change to NDUS Procedure 601. Diane and Rita will share letters with HRC.

NDUS HR Policy 22.3 – “FMLA leave used for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child must begin within 12 months of the event.” What if the employee is not eligible for FMLA at the time of the “event” but then asks for it within “12 months of the event”? Answer was that you look at eligibility at time request is made.

Discussion: NDUS HR Policy 24.8 – Paragraph 2: “The Human Resource Council shall maintain a list of employees, including their qualifications, who were terminated due to a reduction in force. This list shall be made available to all institutions for employment considerations. Individuals from this list shall be treated as internal applicants by the hiring institution.” What are campuses doing? Using the State RIF list, which we just started getting again. It is the employee’s obligation to identify themselves as a RIF employee.

Family Sick Leave (increasing Dependent Sick Leave) – Committee report – Erin Klingenberg, Chair. Committee members: Wes Matthews, Carla Sivesand, Joy Johnson, Barb Slagle. Committee is just starting up again. There is concern about people running out of family sick leave with the advent of H1N1.

Fitness Center Discounts – are campuses getting many requests – Erin If health club doesn’t report for you, employees can self-report on-line.

Dinner provided by TIAA-CREF
TIAA-CREF Updates – Lisa Benton, Bill Thorn, Brad Balken

Brad: Market is better, TIAA-CREF is in good shape. Their Wealth Management sector doing one-on-ones. NDUS offers a good mix of investment opportunities for employees. Suggested we think about developing an investment committee of people who could measure whether or not we have a good product mix. Roth 403(b) product (contributions are after-tax so earnings are tax-free) participation is relatively low where it is offered around the country. Do we think there is any demand for it here? It is 100% voluntary employee contributions. MNSCU added it about 18 months ago; only 200 out of 18,000 eligibles are participating.

Lisa:
1. On-line enrollment – This speeds things up tremendously. Employees can enroll within 24 hours. Another advantage is that campuses don’t have to store enrollment materials, and this reduces the amount of paper used. Simply need to hand employees the “how to enroll” card. Employees should be sure to access this through the campus micro-site, as opposed to the general TIAA-CREF page.
2. New quarterly statements – Some changes are compliance issues; other changes are in response to feedback from clients. The Retirement Projection section has been added to the quarterly statement instead of just annually. In addition, we have the ability to add communication on the Message Board section. This can either be a message specific to a campus, or a system-wide message. There is also a new section that contains information about a personal rate of return.
3. New feature – Streamlined Administrative Services: Two main components: Compliance and Services
   a. Participant Education
   b. Common Remitter
   c. On-line Salary Reduction Agreement enrollment

Does the 15-year rule include all service within the NDUS? Normally, no, since we all have separate Employer IDs. However, TIAA-CREF is still checking into this. Current practice is each campus is treated separately.

15-year calculation rule vs. Years of Service amounts for contribution rates, generally include any other TIAA-CREF contribution. We can consider whether or not to include years of service with any higher Ed institution (including those who did not have TIAA-CREF as the vendor). The 15-year rule is supposed to be used first, and then the 50 and over rule.

Bill – Financial services consultant working out of Minneapolis office. Looking for a staff member in Grand Forks or Fargo. Provide face-to-face or telephone one-on-one counseling:
1. Am I on target
2. Am I investing appropriately
3. Will I make my goal, or do I need to save more?
Ibbotson Associates (division of MorningStar) helps do projections/modeling. Aim is to meet current net spending needs throughout retirement.

They make webinars available monthly. Is this something NDUS is interested in setting up? Some of them can be customized to fit specifically with the NDUS plan design. 4-5 topics/quarter; 1 topic/month. Will run each topic twice.

Very generic versions are also available on their website.

Easiest way to do this is to have one main person as contact for them for the entire university system. Sub-committee to set up the topics?

HRC discussion on years-of service for contribution rate. Currently takes into account current TIAA-CREF contract (including out-of-state contracts, PERS years-of-service, TFFR). Group didn’t see any reason to change definition. PERS and TFFR do NOT have to be current contracts. Laura will check into whether or not we should add PERS and TFFR to having to have a current contract.

Retiree health credit- group was not excited to do it since there doesn’t seem to be a big demand for it. Cost would be $2500/year. Maybe the Roth 403(b) is a better option to present to people.
NDUS Staff Senate – By-laws include: “A member of the NDUS Human Resource Council shall be in attendance at all NDUS Staff Senate meetings.” – Diane Nelson, Rita Lindgren.

Rita attended a meeting this summer. Rita and Diane have discussed the possibility of having an HRC member in the location of the NDUS Staff Senate. How will we be informed? They have one face-to-face meeting per year; the other 3 meetings over IVN. There could be exchange of minutes. Broc moved HRC minutes be sent to individuals upon request. Wes seconded. Broc withdrew the motion. Broc moved HRC publish their minutes on the NDUS website (Council section) at the next scheduled meeting. Wes seconded. Motion passed.

Retiree Health Insurance Benefits – Committee report – Wes - See handout. Table it until next time – members will go back to their campus to gain more input. Wes invited members to bring questions to him. Wes will send the handout to the HRC via email.

Wes moved we ask TIAA-CREF to start the process to make the Roth 403(b) to our employees. Seconded by Broc. Laura clarified this would be a separate plan document, so could be done at any time. This Roth would have 403b limits, but not the income limits of a Roth IRA. Motion passed.

Employee Suggestion Incentive Program – Steve Bensen – President received notice from the state saying please use it more. Are campuses using it? Diane reported that they have one on their campus, which will be reported to OMB after the year has completed (once the savings have been computed). Payouts to employees come out of the savings.

NDUS Exit Survey – Colette Erickson reported on the work of the subcommittee (Colette, Rita Lindgren, Joann Kitchens, Cathy MacDonald, Gale Ebeltoft) charged to develop an exit survey which will be used by all campuses and provide information for both the campuses and the System. Colette requested that Council members review the survey form to make sure that the information gathered is correct and then provide comments/suggestions back to the subcommittee by next HR Council meeting.

OrgPlus presentation – Karin Stinar explained the on-line Org Plus program that will be available for campuses by end of October 2009. The program will work off of the “Reports To” field in Position Data and will develop organizational charts. The tool will be customized for each campus.

PERs Committee Meeting - Rita Lindgren attended the meeting on behalf of Laura Glatt. She briefed the council on some of the topics discussed at the meeting.

Schedule for rest of the academic year
   November 17 & 18, 2009 – Williston
   February 16 & 17, 2010 – Grand Forks
   May 4 & 5, 2010 - Bottineau