

Committee on Priorities and Resources
Meeting Minutes – April 26, 2022

In attendance: Professor Nusrat Chowdhury; Professor Andrew Dole, chair; Professor Jill Miller; Professor Monica Ringer; Retail Dining Supervisor Peter Charron; Provost and Dean of the Faculty Catherine Epstein, *ex officio*; Chief Human Resources Officer, Kate Harrington, *ex officio*; Interim Director of Financial Planning, Ashley Travis, *ex officio*; Assistant Director of Family Giving, Emily Ziomek; Allie Ho '24; Steven Hegarty, recorder

Not in attendance: Interim Chief Financial Officer Thomas Dwyer, *ex officio*; Dania Hallak '24, *ex officio*

Guest: Chris Casey, Senior Director of Human Resources Strategy and Operations

The meeting came to order at 8:30 am.

Proceedings

1. Open enrollment and benefits update (Chris)
 - a. Every few years, AC's full offering of benefits is compared to the Colgate group of colleges, with a continued goal of offering the best for the employees. For 2022-23 fiscal year, Amherst will be enhancing a few benefit offerings.
 - b. The annual open enrollment period will be May 16 to June 6. Any changes in benefits take effect on July 1. This is the annual look at benefits and the chance to make changes (once per year) for all employees. Employees may:
 - i. Enroll in, cancel, or modify medical, dental, and vision coverage;
 - ii. Transfer between medical plans;
 - iii. Add/delete dependents;
 - iv. Apply for sliding scale premiums;
 - v. Enroll or re-enroll in flexible spending plans (must be re-enrolled annually); and
 - vi. Increase supplemental life insurance.
 - c. Slight increased cost to health premiums, plus the addition of two more tiers:
 - i. Individual
 - ii. Individual + Spouse/partner (new)
 - iii. Individual + Child(ren) (new)
 - iv. Family
 - d. Medical premiums will increase by 2.5%, both for the college and employees. However, for the upcoming plan year, most will see a decrease in per-paycheck costs due to the additional tiers. Those covering just themselves or a family will see a slight increase.
 - e. High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) continues to be offered. This is an increasingly popular option, though not for everyone. Features include:
 - i. Paying for health care when you use it. While less is taken out of your paycheck, it costs more out of pocket when you receive care.
 - ii. Additional benefit of a Health Savings Account. This is a tax advantaged account only available for HDHP. Money is saved on a pre-tax basis for future health care needs.
 - f. For 2022-23, the benefits guide will be mailed to employees. There is an online tool (Alex) to help with selecting benefits. It provides a step by step process for benefit

comparison and selection. Reenrollment and any changes will be requested through Workday, same as 2021.

- g. Review of additional benefits, including discounts and services available through BenefitHub and Care.com. See the [HR website](#) for details.
2. The CPR briefly considered a grant-in-aid proposal from JP Baird.
 - a. Plan would convert grant-in-aid from an outright grant to a 529 account, deposited to over time. The Benefits Committee is considering the suggestion, as well as potential tax implications.
 - b. Some schools, including Amherst, displace grant-in-aid payments from scholarship aid. Similarly, 529 college savings accounts are commonly displaced. The Benefits Committee will research these practices as part of their consideration.
 - c. CPR can return to the proposal in the Fall.
3. In response to a follow up question on hiring and staff turnover, Kate expects another 12 to 18 months continuation of the unstable labor market. HR is reconsidering starting salaries, and a new focus on promoting the brand of AC as an employer.

Adjourned 9:15 am.

Respectfully submitted,
S Hegarty