

Staff Alliance Compensation Committee
Report for Staff Alliance
February 2016

Present: Mike Cox, Mae Delcastillo, Maureen Hunt, Brad Krick, John Moore, Michelle Warrenchuk, Elizabeth Winfree
Guest: Tara Ferguson

The committee met on Wednesday, February 17, from 10:00 to 11:15 AM. The meeting was held via a phone line audio conference. The only agenda item was a discussion with UA Compensation Director Tara Ferguson. Brad sent the following questions to Tara before the meeting:

1. Governor Walker's budget to the Legislature included funding for union employees but no funding for non-represented employees. What is UA's plan for FY17 and the previously requested 2.5% ATB increase for staff?
2. Are furloughs being discussed for FY17 and/or FY18? The committee has heard that systemwide furloughs are unlikely, but that campus or department-level furloughs are a possibility.
3. Between FY09 and FY16, non-represented staff have had one step increase (in FY12). What would it take to restart movement on our steps?
4. Are we taking any steps to address salary compression or inversion that is occurring as a result of a lack of step movement? New hires (when that becomes a possibility again) will come in at the same step or higher (because of negotiation) as current employees.
5. If we're moving away from automatic step increases, are we putting into resources into other forms of compensation, like bonuses or merit increases?

Tara answered the questions in order, with questions and comments from committee members.

1. No decision on the 2.5% increase at this point, with likely no announcement until June 2016 Board of Regents meeting.

A committee member asked about CBAs and their impact on staff salary. Tara said that the negotiations usually start in the spring/summer and that they do impact staff salary discussion.

2. Tara said that furloughs are being discussed, but not at her level. She agreed that furloughs are not a preferred tool of the current administration (Tom Langdon indicated this to the committee during the January meeting)..
3. With regard to step increases, Tara indicated that if we have a 2.5% increase, her recommendation is that it would be a split ATB and step increase.

4. With regard to salary compression, Tara said that HR has done an analysis on different positions and found that there were some departments that had salary compression, but that most were fair. Brad asked if this data could be shared with the committee or with Staff Alliance.
5. Tara said that we aren't moving away from steps, but if we can't have steps due to budget concerns, we are looking for other means. Expanding bonuses is not off the table. It was being worked on last year, but fell off the table.

The committee asked if there is a "five year plan" for staff compensation. Tara said, "Yes." She'd like to look at market and at restructuring the grid, but it hasn't been feasible over the last few years. A possible market survey would benchmark common positions and look at peer institutions. The cost of living would be taken into account. We'd likely compare to the State. Comparing public employees to private industry is more difficult.

Tara left the meeting. The committee then discussed the possibility of requesting salary data regarding compression and what kind of data would we need to evaluate compression.

The committee discussed other methods of compensation, including the value of longevity awards.

Brad commented on ASEA's proposed 2016 - 2019 contract with the State. The proposed contract language does not include cost of living increases, but he is fairly sure that it still includes merit increases.

- As of 3/4/2016, this is confirmed - the proposed contract still includes merit increases (page 2 of the FAQ linked below):

<http://www.afscmelocal52.org/index.php/benefits-services/all-forms-documents/collective-bargaining-agreements/state-of-alaska-cba/soa-2016-2019/277-faq-for-2016-2019-ggu-tentative-agreement/file>