Minutes of Meeting  
March 1, 2004

Present:  M. Alkin, Chair; S. Cochran; R. Maly; R. Schonmann

Absence:  A. Coleman; M. Dapretto; C. Parodi-Lewin; V. Shetty; C. Spillenger; J. Arechiga  
(Graduate Student Representative)

Staff:  M. Avila; D. Dang

Guests:  Renee Fortier (Director of Transportation Services), Jack Powazek (Assistant Vice Chancellor), Steve Garcia (Administrative Director, Patient Business Services)

Meeting:  The meeting was called to order at 2:15 pm

1. CONSULTATION WITH TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
   - Assistant Vice Chancellor Jack Powazek
   - Director Renee Fortier

Chair welcomed AVC Powazek and Director Fortier to the meeting. Transportation Services’ presented a proposal containing parking fee increases for 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07. Under this plan, on July 1, 2004 the monthly fee for blue parking permits would increase by $2 (from $68 to $70). An additional increase of $5 is estimated for July 1, 2005 to be followed by another $4 increase on July 1, 2006. Blue permits will then cost $79 per month. The Committee was given to understand that the high costs of construction of additional parking spaces and the Transportation Demand Management program mandates are making it necessary to increase fees.

The proposed fee increases were justified in part by the measures taken to significantly reduce expenses in operational areas. These include elimination of staff parking, replacement of the Lot 32 kiosk with a self-service payment station and refinancing of existing parking debt at a lower interest rate. These actions will allow Parking Services to reduce parking fee increases below the levels indicated in the March 2003 All UCLA Staff and Faculty memo. Chair Alkin noted that the parking fee income that is paid to the campus as “ground rent” is now capped. This will also help mitigate the impact on parking fees.

2. CONSULTATION WITH UCLA MEDICAL CENTER
   - Steve Garcia, Director of Patient Business Services/Patient Finance Services
   - James Schultz, Associate Director of Physician Support Services

At the last meeting, the Medical Center administrators were asked to return and discuss concerns about billing for physician services. Director Garcia provided a brief history of the current billing system and an overview of the changes being made to improve processes and communication. A major challenge of the system is that it has a two-tier structure. The fee for doctor visits, in Westwood, is billed in two portions, a professional fee and a facility fee. This tiered system causes a delay in processing payments that are remitted within 30 days of the doctor visit and thus, are not reflected on the billing statement, which is automatically sent to patients 30 days after the services were rendered.

Discussion:
The Committee reported that data from the Health Care Facilitator showed that a majority of customer service problems involve billing issues. Members offered the following comments:
• A majority of faculty reported having difficulty getting their billing problems resolved. In some cases, it seemed that the telephone operator caused additional problems by not responding promptly to customer needs and expectations. Suggested remedies were to provide customer service training for staff, to monitor all incoming calls, and to provide contact information on the billing statement for individuals who have questions about their bill and for individuals with recurring problems.

• To better respond to customer needs, Director Garcia commented that the Medical Center has been divided into units: one unit will now handle all billing related problems under his direction and another unit will be responsible for addressing all administrative issues. That unit is managed by Pilar MacDaniel.

• Several faculty members wondered if the bills could reflect an itemized list of the services provided. Director Garcia responded that under the current system itemizing is not possible. However, he indicated that the Medical Center is looking for a new vendor that can produce a more flexible billing system than the current one.

Director Schultz was not able to attend the meeting.

3. CHAIR’S REPORT

Minutes: The FWC February 2, 2004 meeting minutes were approved as distributed.

UCFW Meeting on February 13, 2004—Professor Dan Mitchell reported that retirement planning was the main focus of this meeting. His comments included:

• Proposed 457(b) plan—In response to UC faculty and staff who want to contribute more to their 403(b) plan than the annual maximum, UCOP is proposing an additional 457(b) plan. The new plan will allow employees to almost double the amount of salary they may contribute to tax-deferred savings accounts. This option may come along in December 2004. There is, independent of this, a move to change options on vendor contracts and services.

• VERIPs—UCOP’s position is that there will be no VERIPs in the near future. There is a potential for a “negative” VERIP because of the possible increase in student enrollment and low UCRS funds.

• UC is considering a “Retirement-Recall Plan” that would provide incentives for faculty members to partially retire when their capacities are better suited to part-time rather than full-time teaching. A pre-retirement recall agreement of several years duration would make it easier for faculty to transition from partial to full retirement.

• Labs—UCOP is discussing whether to continue managing the national labs. However, UCFW’s interests are how the retirement fund and lab employees will be impacted if UC divorces itself from the national labs.

4. ADJOURNMENT -- The meeting was adjourned at 3:50pm.