



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

Questions from Presentation by Debra Williams

Q: Debra Williams – What do you need to be successful in your role? What do you need from your peers or from leadership to help you be effective?

A: Equipment in Custodial and Grounds, more recycling options on campus, opportunity to obtain certifications (such as heavy-duty equipment), more staffing, free/lower cost parking. Suggestion made to adjust parking fee according to how much money you make.

A: As far as the training and development, we have a lot of great tools. Would some of that training be more of the tools that C&IT has provided or something else?

A: We need consistency from our leaders.

A: I don't mean from my immediate leader, but I think the University needs to find a way to forge more trust and confidence in middle managers.

A: I think that one of the things we could do better is more communication on all shifts. The first shift may work differently than the second and third shifts. Maybe the job description needs to be updated so that everybody knows what they are supposed to do.

A: I think we should have more knowledge of the chemicals we are using. We should have training on how to use the chemicals and the safety involved.

A: On behalf of all janitors and custodians, it would be helpful if we had the equipment we needed.

A: From the leadership level, I would like to see more trust in the managers – that we know what we're doing. Get the facts first before talking or chastising us behind what someone said.

A: Universal training. Everyone that does this job [custodian], doesn't do it exactly the same way. If there's not mandated universal training, people will continue to do things incorrectly.

A: Work needs to be done in a timely fashion. Adequate staffing would be step one, then training.

Q: Debra Williams – What does feedback look like to you: How do you know if you're doing a great job or not?

A: Someone will say something to you. [A customer specifically sought out leadership to mention that a custodian is doing a great job.]



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Q&A Summary

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Questions Submitted in Advance & Questions from the Floor

Q: Why do we have to pay for parking?

A: Bill Decatur – We pay for parking to maintain the parking structures and the equipment, clean the lots, etc. The parking budget is currently \$14M; we are looking at parking rates and fee structures related to parking.

Q: Management doesn't seem to understand the custodial staff challenges. We now have more buildings and less custodians. We had more custodians in 1984 than we have now with a lot fewer buildings. Custodians are expected to provide the same level of service with a lot fewer people.

A: Bill Decatur – Management does understand. APPA levels – level 1 is the highest level of cleanliness; level 5 is grungy, probably not sanitary. This is based on the number of square feet each custodian is responsible for. My budget hearing – I asked for 16 additional custodians. We need 30 just to reach APPA level 5. We should be at a level 3. I think we need 80-100 to reach level 3. We are below 5 overall. We are trying to concentrate resources in some areas to bring those up to around level 3. I've made this case at every budget hearing I've been at. I've asked for more money; I haven't gotten it. Master planning has provided some exciting data analysis. We don't use our space efficiently. We've got 1 office for every employee, even those who don't have offices. Master planning consultants have suggested consolidation; the data supports it. We've contracted Sightlines, a national firm, to look at deferred maintenance. The number is \$1B in deferred maintenance. The master plan consultants have a team of engineers who looked at 24 or 25 of our buildings to assess them. Their conclusion was that our deferred maintenance is actually \$1.5B. Consolidation and tearing down some of the worst buildings on campus is part of our solution. There are opportunities to relocate departments that create academic and research synergy. I know you get a lot of the complaints about our classrooms. Our classroom utilization averages about 40%; it should average about 75-80% at a major research university. My goal is – and I don't think it's too aggressive – my goal is to protect the resources we have as we take buildings off line. What we are talking about is an effort that takes probably the next 10 years, but we plan to implement it as soon as the master plan is complete at the end of this summer. We've got capacity; we can take on more debt without increasing our bond rating. We have to pay it back though. Long answer, but I share your pain. We do not have enough in resources and facilities to support what we have here. Ideally it's going to be both consolidation and additional staff. That is the case I'm making to the president.

Q: When you consolidate, it will make it better for us. This shows that we are not the problem.

A: Bill Decatur – No, we know that....

David Houle – The only way we can do what we do is because of our custodians. More than half of our time goes to just restrooms and health cleaning issues alone. Same thing for Grounds – 20 guys and look at what they went through this year. Financial issues are bad. It will take a change in public policy to really move the needle. We should be very proud of what we do every day and I want to thank each and every one of you.



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

Debra Williams – I know that Steven, David and others are looking at operational efficiency. I wonder if there's an opportunity to reset expectations with our customers to say here is what can be done with our current resources – not just in Facilities, but across FBO. People recognize how hard everybody is working to be effective. The challenge is for us as leaders to say how we can make even better use of our resources.

David Houle – The Ilitch School of Business was approved to be staffed at an APPA level 2. That building looks fabulous. This is a real point of success. This is a Petri dish for the University.

Bill Decatur – Ultimately, I don't want to put custodial staff on the endowment provided by the Ilitch family so that the endowment can be used for major maintenance efforts in the Ilitch Building.

Q: Steven Pecic – Can you talk about carry funds used last year and plans for this year?

A: Bill Decatur – When Riker [Grounds Department] invited me to his shop last year to see the equipment, I was appalled. I saw equipment that was broken down and equipment that wasn't commercial grade. I asked FP&M leaders to make a list and we used carry over funds and I allocated 700 or 800 thousand dollars to use for equipment.

Steven Pecic – We purchased ride-ons, vacuums, and many other pieces of equipment and the comments we are hearing from customers is directly related to using better equipment.

Q: 15 years ago, parking was \$5. Since then staff has gotten smaller. The question is what should be the continuing message?

A: Bill Decatur – First my message is thank you, because I appreciate all of the good work you are doing with limited resources. I recognize the challenge that you've got, that we all have, at Wayne State University. I'm going to keep lobbying for more resources for Facilities. Also we've been talking about feedback. I ask you for your ideas. What can we do in management to help you do a better job? Last year we invested a significant amount in equipment for FP&M; I expect to do that again. I expect to do that as long as I am here as your vice president.

Debra Williams – I mentioned earlier we've got 13 contracts that were negotiated as though none of the people work in the same organization. I am a fan of strong partnerships with unions to work to identify ways to better serve our customers. Having read through all of the contracts, there are a lot of procedures embedded, which is unusual. Those create costs. What I would like to do is have a collaborative partnership with union leadership to take away things that are operationally burdensome.

Q: Please start us earlier than the same time students are arriving. I've had to sit 15 minutes to do one sidewalk waiting for students. I understand because they are trying to get to class.



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

Bill Decatur – What time should you start?

Audience – 5:00 am. Call us in 4 hours ahead of time to clear snow and ice.

Q: *I don't understand why custodians are essential employees and we have to come in on snow days. We say the University is trying to save money, but I get paid for risking my life to come in on a snow day to basically sit around because my building is not occupied. Then I get a comp day because I worked on a snow day. That's two days I'm getting paid for....*

A: Bill Decatur – Let me tell you how the decision gets made for snow days. When snow is expected, Chief Holt talks to me, talks to Michael Wright [Chief of Staff] and the Provost. Often it's not crystal clear. Also metropolitan Detroit is a big area. This year alone we've had several snow storms where to the north, they were expecting...

Audience – No, we're talking about when the University is closed, when buildings are closed.

Steven Pecic – Our former AVP reviewed this in depth. The contracts do not allow me to treat a grounds keeper different from a custodian in the same union. We can look at this. We do have an opportunity to look at this policy.

Audience – Those that don't come in should not be penalized.

Bill Decatur – We have an opportunity to look at this and we will have a conversation with leadership and the unions to look at this policy.

Q: *Can we get your elevator speech on enrollment and budget projections?*

A: Bill Decatur – First of all, this past fall we had the largest enrollment of a freshman class in the history of the University. We had the largest Masters increase of any university in the country this year. Enrollment is up to 47% now. We topped Georgia State University, who at one time held the top spot. With that said, for enrollment next year we are being conservative and projecting flat enrollment – the Provost is very optimistic. He is doing a lot in terms of initiatives to recruit students particularly at the undergrad level. We have defied the odds in terms of enrollment. We are getting more Michigan high school graduates. We will have official enrollment projections the first week in May. We are sharing information on enrollment with our Board of Governors on March 20th. The governor proposed a 3% increase for higher education at a flat rate for everyone. We have had a tuition increase every year, which is typical for most institutions.

Q: *With all of the recent cannibalization of parking lots (lot 41 is now AWD Apartments, Lot 15 is the C&IT Data Center, Lot 60 will be the Hilberry Expansion Project, Lot 11 will be new Apartments), and if U of M takes back PS#3, has the University been thinking about other land that could become*



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

parking lots or structures for faculty, staff and students? How does the facilities master plan address parking?

A: Harry Wyatt – The Master Plan is in progress. Ashley is leading that. We are expected to be complete in July, so we are right in the midst of that. Clearly parking is important to everyone in an urban environment. Parking and land are expensive. The highest and best use of land may not be a parking lot. Investigation thus far is showing that we have parking capacity at the university at our peak hours. This may not be in the place where everyone would like parking to be. The theme of the master plan will probably be a lot of consolidation.

Bill Decatur – We have a walking problem right now more so than a parking problem. People like to park closer to where they work or where their classes are held.

Q: When will employees actually be financially rewarded for good performance? Blanket raises to good and poor employees is demoralizing.

A: Bill Decatur – It shouldn't be across the board, it should be based on performance evaluations and supervisors' decisions on that should reflect the performance evaluations and ratings.

Debra Williams – In terms of WaynePM, we will be getting rid of that as soon as possible. Also Banner HR isn't an HR information system and we will be transitioning to a true HR information system over the next 2 years. That said, while important, technology is just a tool; we have to redesign the underlying processes. We haven't used market data to benchmark our pay. We may not be able to quite get to market, but we can know how big the gap is. When we have a 2% merit budget, there aren't a lot of ways you can slice it. Some of the schools, colleges and divisions use the 2% across the board and then do off cycle pay adjustments, which is an ineffective practice. We don't do that in FBO but that's what is going on in other parts of the university. Redesigning our performance alignment process, training everyone on how it works, and focusing on what we are accountable for -- the outcomes -- and how we live the values, and accurately and fairly evaluating people -- that will allow us to reward strong performance.

Q: How do we believe in or stay focused on our FBO values when our president and board don't appear to be using the same values?

A: Bill Decatur – A lot of times people are not on the same page. The president and the board are working through that and we are hoping to see a positive resolution in the near future.

Q: What department do staff or managers go to when they need help planning and managing projects and making their processes more streamlined?

A: Harry Wyatt – Within Design and Construction, training is definitely a part of our process.



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

Q: *What department do staff or managers go to when they need help planning and managing projects and making their processes more streamlined?*

A: Bill Decatur – Allison’s operation provides project management support and development in that space. In terms of operational reporting, that is something that is near and dear to my heart and my staff is working on that reporting.

Q: *Does FBO have monthly informatics? Where are they stored?*

A: Bill Decatur – Allison’s group is working with my senior team on this.

Allison Martin – We do recognize the importance of these reports. I think it’s a positive message to those outside of our division so that others can see that we are focused and that we’re working on it.

Q: *Why is C&IT offering training for software that will be decommissioned in two months?*

A: Daren Hubbard – I assume this is about Skype and Teams. Skype for business training will transfer directly into MS Teams. We keep offering the training because a lot of the knowledge just transfers, and so until we make the full transition, people can still effectively make presentations and things.

Q: *When and where will we see a replacement for Scott Hall?*

A: Bill Decatur – That is one of the top questions we’ve given to our master planners. You heard the figure for deferred maintenance of \$1B; that was Sightlines’ evaluation. Dumont Janks, our master planners, have given a figure of \$1.5B. They’ve done an extensive analysis. We have to have a strategy as to what to do with it. Do we implode it, renovate it, or replace it?

Q: *Is there a suggestion box option at least a few times a year to make sure fresh ideas are heard?*

A: MVV Steering Committee Member - The form on the MVV website is open year round and questions/ideas can be submitted at any time. It’s the same form we use for Town Hall questions and it is anonymous.

Q: *What are the barriers to offering more online classes to people that work?*

A: Bill Decatur – We are definitely behind in that regard. The Provost is taking a significant initiative to expand our offerings. You will be hearing more about that in 6-12 months.



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

Q: *Can we hire a consultant to help those who are considering retirement adjust to their new life?*

A: Debra Williams – At one of my former places of employment we offered pre-retirement coaching with a robust early retirement incentives, but we found that often the barrier to retirement wasn't the money; it was knowing the best options for them post-retirement – another career, volunteering, traveling, or something else. That's something we could consider based on the financial analysis.

Diane Dailey – As part of our wellness scope there is a webinar offered on April 14th regarding Medicare. An announcement will go out soon.

Q: *Why are staff not required to wear their badges on their person at all times like in other places?*

A: Bill Decatur – FBO staff has badges. As far as across the university, I haven't tried it.

Q: *Why is Design and Construction Services hiring project managers with little to no construction experience?*

A: Harry Wyatt – Most of those we've hired have experience. Give them a chance before you judge them. Ryan Miller has 15 years of experience. Kidest Albaari, who will start in a couple of weeks, has about 15 or 20 years of experience.

Q: *What about assigned parking for faculty and staff?*

A: Mel Clarke – You can have up to 3 locations on your parking assignment.

Q: *What's the plan for tapping into the existing talent and skills? What's the approach? How do we plan to assess what skills we have amongst leaders?*

A: Debra Williams – One of our initiatives will be led by Jackie Wilson, who is in charge of compensation. We need to have adequate job descriptions and know what work is required for each job. Specific to leadership, we have clarified a model for leaders and we are about to launch a leadership boot camp to ensure our leaders are equipped in five core areas – people acumen, finance and strategy, subject and industry expertise, operational efficiency and aligning to the student experience.

Q: *Steven Pecic – What level of leadership does this include?*

A: Debra Williams – This includes leadership from the supervisor level down to VP.



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

Q: Why are custodians and janitors considered essential employees?

A: Debra Williams – Labor is looking at this policy.

Harry Wyatt – That essential employee status could relate to lots of different circumstances. Here we've just dealt with weather situations. Sometimes issues come on us so quickly that it is difficult for managers and supervisors to get the word out as to who is essential and who is not. We don't want to get into a situation where anyone is put into harm's way to get to work.

Teresa Moore – We need to use the technology that is already available. Doppler has been around for more than 20 years; we should be able to use this to anticipate weather. We need to communicate better and get ahead of the game.

Steven Pecic – We actually subscribe to our very own weather service. I get emails twice a day. We are tracking weather in 12 to 14 hour increments, depending on when the emails come in. It is very complex. Plymouth could have 6 inches of snow while we have 1 inch. It's not just as simple as saying, "oh, we're shutting down". I offer that it's never an easy call. We do have to work on how we can improve the essential factor.

Debra Williams – This policy is complex and does need more refinement. Harry hit the nail on the head; it depends on the situation as to who is essential. Let's think about how we might adjust schedules in terms of various situations.

Q: Custodians should be able to stay at home with our families also like the people who work in the building. Custodians do not have to work outside like the Grounds Department.

A: Bill Decatur – We in management have to take a hard look at this policy.

Q: We could have a group of people to volunteer to come in. They won't complain because they volunteered to come in. This could be a standing group of custodians who are considered essential and will come to work in these situations. There could be maybe 5 per sector or something like that.

A: David Houle – All of our custodial and janitorial staff play a role in snow removal. Our staff clears a path to the doorway – that's our responsibility. Even in a snow emergency that doesn't mean we get to stay at home. That's why it's not as simple as saying that we're custodians so we do not have to come in when there's a snow emergency.



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

Q: When we get this new equipment, what buildings will they be deployed in?

A: David Houle – Most of the equipment has been deployed and we've done training. We have a few machines that we still have to get out.

Q: I need a floor machine in my building.

A: Steven Pecic – A floor machine is on our list. My supervisors would love to hear what people need. When funds become available, we'll do our best to get it to where it's needed.

Q: What is the need for high-viz vests for custodians working inside buildings?

A: Steven Pecic – The high-viz vests serve a number of good purposes for custodians. They provide a safe way to contain the ID badge. They also make custodians visible from some distance so those who may need help or service can see them. It also helps identify all Operations personnel as part of a Facilities Planning and Management consolidated team.

Q: Why don't we keep more of the work that comes in, as far as the trades, in house?

A: Harry Wyatt – Managers do their best to figure out the best way to deliver a need based on the balance of urgency, expertise, and costs. Trades often has a back log of work when other needs arise.

Q: Are you going to hire more custodians?

A: Harry Wyatt – Facilities Planning and Management has requested new custodial positions in the FY2020 budget request, specifically for classroom buildings and Vice President Decatur has moved that request forward for consideration. The results are yet unknown.

Q: You should let the client know that we're short-handed and could try and work with us better.

A: Harry Wyatt – We agree, the client's expectation need to be managed to understand the resources we have to work with. There have been efforts to do this. Steven Pecic (Senior Director, Operations and Maintenance), David Houle (Director, Custodial Services) and I have addressed the Faculty Senate Committee on Facilities, Support Services and Technology and the Student Senate on several occasions with data and benchmarking highlighting the issues of limited resources. This has led to a much better understanding within those particular groups. Vice President Decatur continues similar communications at higher levels.



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

Q: Why doesn't the custodian have a key to the first floor janitor's closet at Applebaum?

A: Steven Pecic – Keys are tightly controlled at Wayne State and must get tighter. Custodial Services may need access to closets, as managed through the front line supervisors. We have a process of key check-out and check-in for Trades, and this may possible be a similar set-up that must occur during morning clock-in procedures. Minimally, the sector supervisor should be challenged to generate a fluid work flow and access.

Q: When will details about the next HR transformation be released?

A: Debra Williams – May.

Q: Is PM and monthly operational reporting a focus for leadership training?

A: Debra Williams – Yes.

Q: When will WaynePM be blown up and replaced with a system that actually encourages growth, accountability, and employee success?

A: Debra Williams – The technology platform of this initiative is part of the implementation of a human resources information system, which will occur over the next 24-36 months. The actual process is targeted for redesign over the next 12 months.

Questions Submitted via Text Poll Unanswered During Town Hall

Q: Innovation: Has the university considered partnering w faculty/students to develop internal use apps and programs for staff to increase their business operations?

A: Bill Decatur - This is an interesting concept that I'd like to learn more about. Can the individual(s) who asked this question email me with more detail?

Q: Innovation: Has the university considered partnerships with tech companies for upgraded technology on the faculty/business operations side?

A: Bill Decatur - WSU is currently actively exploring various private/public partnership opportunities.



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

Q: *Can we move the meetings back to SCB?*

A: Bill Decatur - Based on capacity and convenience, we plan to have all future Town Halls in SCB.

Q: *Can we have short workshops conducted by business school professors?*

A: Bill Decatur - Partnering with our faculty on campus would be a great option. I'd be curious to learn more about what topics would be of interest to determine the right fit.

Q: *Conference call meetings have been found to be highly effective. Do we have a WSU tool for conference calls and webinars?*

A: Bill Decatur - We are in the process of transitioning from Skype for Business to Microsoft Teams. Teams has the ability to host audio, video, and web conferences. It also has features like scheduling assistance, note taking, desktop sharing, uploading files, and chat messaging. C&IT has more information on their website at <https://tech.wayne.edu/kb/communication-collaboration/instant-messaging/389938>

Q: *Does FBO have talking points/card. To promote the new projects in the area. Where is it located?*

A: Bill Decatur - Any project updates provided during the Town Hall are available on the FBO Mission-Vision-Values website: <https://fbo.wayne.edu/values/townhalls/archive> We currently do not have one central place where we provide real-time project updates but that is definitely something we could look into.

Q: *Can we ask the president to attend?*

A: Bill Decatur – We will extend an invitation to President Wilson for the next Town Hall.

Q: *Is it possible to change the shifts to 10 hour shifts ranging from 6 AM-4 PM, 2 PM-10 PM & 5 PM-3 AM, Monday thru Thursday?*

A: Bill Decatur - This is an option that management will have to work together to begin exploring.



FBO Town Hall

Q&A Summary

March 13, 2019

Final Comments from Bill Decatur, VP, FBO

We should look at everything we do in terms of how it affects students. Student recruitment and retention is everybody's top priority. Even if we don't directly touch a student in our daily work, it does touch someone who touches a student. It's important because our budget is driven by our enrollment and student success, retention. A lot of that happens in the classroom, but that student experience is broad. That is impacted every day by what is happening on this campus. Keep in mind that everything we do affects our students.