

Minutes of the Food Services Committee

2:00 PM, Wednesday, February 1, 2017
Student Affairs Conference Room, GUC 207A

The Food Services Committee met on Wednesday, February 1, 2017 in Room 207A of the Guillot University Center. A quorum was established with the following members: Dr. Jenny Dawson (Chair, faculty), Ms. Cindy Conlon (designee for Business & Financial Affairs), Dr. Ulrich Groetsch (faculty), Ms. Leah Harper (staff at-large), Mr. Bret Jennings (staff at large), Dr. Johnson Ogun (faculty), Ms. Sarah Stevens (staff, International Affairs), and Mr. Ken Starks (staff, University Residences); other voting members present were Mr. Jordan Cooper (SGA), Ms. Suzanne Berry (SGA designee for Sarah Green); and, non-voting members Mr. David Shields (Vice President for Student Affairs), Ms. Susan Breer (Director of Dining, Chartwells), and Mr. Michael Bennett (District Manager, Chartwells).

Chair Dawson called the meeting to order at approximately 2:00 PM.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda for today's meeting was approved unanimously after proper motion and second.

Welcome and Introductions

One designated proxy, Suzanne Berry, will arrive as soon as her class ends.

Approval of Minutes of November 2, 2016

Chair Dawson presented the minutes of the last meeting on November 2, 2016 for committee's approval. Upon proper motion and second, the minutes were approved unanimously.

New Business

Chartwells Manager Update/Report –

1. Mr. Bennett provided survey responses from Fall 2017. The data was light, desiring 500 for a campus the size of UNA but less than 200 participated in the survey. He will repeat the survey in Spring 2017 and increase the publicity effort to capture more student responses. The actual comments from students are included in the attachment.
2. Ms. Harper asked if incentives would be used to attract more students to participate in the survey, such as free milkshakes. Mr. Bennett indicated that they are looking at options. They discovered in past efforts where one large prize is awarded that the response is still lower than expected; the better alternative is many smaller incentives available for many participants. Ms. Harper suggested adding a website at bottom of receipt to have a survey invitation for customers to complete.
3. Dr. Ogun expressed concern about the sample size of the survey, although the performance score was good. He recommends finding ways to get more people involved in the survey; Chartwells has a good product and we want to get the word out. Mr. Bennett agreed and added that 10% participation of the student population gives more accurate indicators; for UNA, this is 500-600 students.
4. Mr. Bennett announced that they have hired a full-time marketing manager, Daishu McGriff, from Auburn University at Montgomery (AUM) who had started as an intern with Chartwells. She is working on a master's degree in marketing and will begin on February 6. Jasmine Fleming has been part-time as a student but Chartwells realized that there is a need for full-time staff who is fully dedicated on their marketing effort to get to students. Daishu is outgoing and they believe a good fit for this campus.
5. The Chartwells website has been improved. Contact information for the managers and a friendlier user interface are some of the improved features.
6. A few colorful 5-page handouts (*pending copy for attachment*) were distributed and reviewed. A February calendar featuring food events Black History month will be expanded with input from some members of the Black Student Alliance. Survey results of all food venues has comments included by unit. The action plan that goes with the survey results will be presented at the next committee meeting. Other methods of feedback from students include social media and personal interaction with students.
7. Mr. Bennett reviewed the statistics of Chartwells national performance among 280 colleges serviced.
8. Social media has hit a stall with 214 followers on Facebook, 350 on Twitter and 372 on Instagram as of September. They anticipate that Daishu will boost these numbers as she was able to triple at AUM.

Mr. Cooper and Ms. Berry provided further student feedback which opened discussion for updates at each food venue:

Moe's -- Students inquired about how people were selected for the soft opening of Moe's. SGA and RAs were selected by Chartwells and then departmental staff members.

1. Line management at Moe's—Chartwells will provide more rope stands for this.
2. Distribution of chips with dip at Moe's—Chartwells is using the standard size for Moe's.

Odette's -- Mr. Cooper offered that students are still excited about the food options on campus: Chick-Fil-A as always, Krispy Kreme, Frios, and the return of Odette's this semester, now the opening of Moe's, and the upcoming Panda Express. He asked about the future of Odette's and would there be a permanent fixture for Odette's.

Mr. Bennett shared that they have not seen a reduction in Odette's sales due to the opening of Moe's and we'll have to see if that remains true. The future will depend on how Panda affects the outcome. Some small investment has been made for health permit purposes. Odette's interest in remaining on campus will be a factor, as well; presently they run about 100 transactions daily. Mr. Bennett asked what is driving the student interest and Mr. Cooper provided that it's a great option and it's a healthy option.

Restaurant prices are upscale but their pricing on campus is different because there is no overhead. Menu items may have been selected to keep within the competitive pricing of other campus venues. Odette's will consider their option to remain as Panda Express comes online and we see how their market share is affected.

Mr. Jennings offered that there are opportunities for using the designated GUC space for a rotation of food vendors from semester to semester, which would have to be negotiated through Ms. Conlon. By involving other restaurants from downtown Florence, Ms. Berry believes it will encourage students to become more involved with downtown. The consideration of health and safety parameters as well as food preparation utilities will have to be considered. Intentions are to look at this option after completing Mane Market and Panda Express.

Mane Market -- Mr. Starks commented that among students he interacts with, they have commented on pricing at various retail venues. They get more value from their meal plans at Mane Market. Mr. Bennett responded that they hope students see that value at Mane Market and that it is also the most nutritional source.

1. Ice cream machine at Mane Market—Under consideration.
2. Pizza kiln at Mane Market—This is a self-order personal pizza process. Ms. Breer recommends 6-8 minutes in the kiln. She says it will be promoted more; people are actually using it.
3. Non-dairy milk alternatives—Summer renovation in Mane Market will provide more counter space to add items like soy milk.
4. Revisions to Mane Market for summer 2017—Proposed plans are still in the works and are not yet ready for full publicity. Mr. Bennett described the desired changes which include expanded restroom capacity.
5. Dr. Groetsch gave affirmation on how accommodating the Mane Market was for a fellow faculty member and her students to convene and eat together there. Ms. Breer added that this is what they want to see happen, that Mane Market is a focal point for people to gather.
6. Departmental food cards for group events—Mr. Bennett can consider this setup with Cindy Conlon.
7. Mane Market self-service supplies—Whenever quantities in areas like the salad bar need refilling, guests can approach any of the Chartwells staff (wearing a gray coat) with their request.
8. Eco-to-go boxes—Ms. Breer stated that there is a good following. Not many boxes were turned in at end of the fall semester nor have many sold this term since everyone is still has theirs. It was suggested that marketing opportunities exist at SOAR 2017 for this to-go program. Since Chartwells has been on campus for a year, they can present more at SOAR. Ms. Breer has SOAR counselor presentation scheduled for May 2017.

Chick-Fil-A -- One of kiosks is working; not sure what caused issues with the second kiosk but much work has been done to try to troubleshoot, possible software or Windows update, but they are working with the vendor.

Panda Express -- More questions came from the state to get license approval. Panda will own the operation and they have identified their subcontractors for the construction. They anticipate an eight-week build time. The dish area will be removed along with some of the faculty/staff meeting room. Their food line will be in the

hallway and their cashier will be just around the corner inside where the food court is. Ms. Berry asked about combo prices. Pricing at Panda Express will be based on their corporate standards.

Third Rock—Some students, who are major-specific in the science building, have complained that hot food options are not offered. They consider present options are more like a snack, even though soup is available. Previous efforts to have hot dogs and plated hot foods were like “gas station” quality. Hot foods deteriorate under heat lamps and would not meet Chartwells’ high quality standards. Mr. Cooper will give further feedback and keep the committee updated on student experiences and preferences.

Stone Lodge—Mr. Shields reported that plans are on hold until a decision is made on how to use it.

New Nursing Building—Food area on first floor is included in the plans. It was suggested by students to include items like muffins as well as coffee. Plans are to make it like a grab-and-go like the Third Rock operation plus some baked goods and snacks.

Gem Cart—Mr. Bennett stated that responses to the food truck are not where they want it to be yet. The health department is their main hurdle, since this is the only food truck in the Florence area. The Gem Cart offers pre-packaged on-the-go food options; it is a mobile version of CREATE. They are hoping to add hot soups and hot sandwiches in the future.

Krispy Kreme—Mr. Bennett announced that Krispy Kreme sells more on UNA campus than at Walmart.

Collier Library—Ms. Conlon announced that they are looking at how to put coffee vending in Collier.

Summer 2017 Venues—The GUC will be used for SOAR and the Mane Market will have renovations. Camps and Conferences will have to be served as well, such as cheerleaders; buffets work better for these groups. We are increasing camps this summer, per Mr. Jennings. The Gem Cart and CREATE are good options as well as The Commons during the summer. Retail is very difficult for personnel planning in the GUC in the summer, with extreme fluctuations in customer numbers.

GUC Renovations—The front area and seating will look severely contrasted with the newness of 256 Burger, Moe’s, and Panda Express. Mr. Jennings is hoping that discussions will open up for revenue appropriations to upgrade the GUC and greatly improve the furniture in the seating area.

Internships -- Chair Dawson suggested having a culinary arts student intern with Chartwells; this is an idea which Ms. Breer is working on. The Career Center can provide internship setup.

Announcements

The next meeting was agreed for Wednesday, March 1, 2017, at 2:00 PM.

Adjourn

Chair Dawson adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Submitted by:
Veronica Allen
Committee Recorder

Attachment: Chartwells Handout