

Facility Manager Meeting

Tuesday, July 15, 2014

8:30 a.m.

Microbial Sciences Building

1550 Linden Drive

Ebling Symposium Room

Rob Lamppa welcomed the Facility Managers and thanked them for attending.

Feedback on Physical Plant Work – Rob asked what is working well, what areas need improvement and whether Physical Plant employees are notifying the Facility Managers when work is being done in their buildings.

- When there is an emergency, the response is fabulous.
- Over the years, the lead time for getting renovations done has gotten much worse. It has gone from 9 months to 3 years for even a small project.
- Physical Plant staff members are knowledgeable and professional.
- The quality of work done by Physical Plant staff is very good.
- The quality of the work has improved over the years.
- It would be helpful to have regular feedback on work that is being done or has been done in our buildings. A daily service report would be useful.

Rob noted that maintenance items and the project administration center (PAC) are separate entities. He stated that he has gotten a lot of feedback that the process takes too long, the projects are too costly, projects are not completed in a reasonable timeframe, and that the estimates are inaccurate. He noted that he is looking into the whole PAC process.

Rob stated that he is looking at improving communication and responses on our work order system. Presently comments can be added to individual work orders by Facility Managers or Physical Plant staff, but we are working to improve the whole process and provide easy access to the information.

- If there is going to be a long wait for our problem to be addressed, we should be told that.
- I agree with the previous comments, we've had projects that have gone \$10,000 over the estimate that we received.
- It appears that the definition of maintenance work has changed over the years. We used to get our windows washed, offices and classrooms painted, etc. on a regular maintenance schedule. Now, if you have funding available you can have it done, otherwise you have to wait for another 6-8 months. It would be helpful for us to know what is considered "maintenance work" and what we should expect.

Rob replied that in the past, the Physical Plant had more trades people on staff and we were able to address maintenance work in a timelier manner. Over the years, a decision was made to hold vacancies open and pool the resources for larger projects (like CURB and large building renovation projects). He stated that we are working to get back to having the trade positions fully staffed, and noted that currently window washing is only being done every 7 years unless departments want to pay for it out of their own budgets.

- I've been fairly pleased with the way the Physical Plant employees usually stop by my office to tell me that they are working in my building. I've worked with a number of work ticketing systems in the past and it would be useful to have a notification when something is being done, or when the work has been completed. When you try to check on the work order, sometimes it is listed many pages back and is difficult to find. I've noticed that once a case gets opened and has a billing number, it is suddenly like a blank check has been issued. We have had a ticket run \$13,000 and we've never seen any workers in the building.

Rob mentioned that a video camera upgrade across campus is being planned. The Physical Plant is working with the Police Department and DoIt to upgrade and provide maintenance on approximately 1,500 cameras in the near future.

- I don't have any complaints with the trades' staff. The problem I have is that sometimes you submit a maintenance request and then it turns into a project because Physical Plant staff start looking into the issue and find additional problems that need to be addressed.

However, often DSF won't fund the project and then our original maintenance issue is still not addressed.

Rob agreed that the process to get state funding can be long and complicated. He noted that the Physical Plant needs to find a way to provide an interim fix while the longer-term project is being addressed.

- I've never had a complaint on quality of work done by the Physical Plant. I have put in a work order and had someone come out to look at the project and then been told that since the work was done by a private contractor that the Physical Plant was not going to address it. This is fine, but they still bill me for an hour of time.

Rob agreed that there needs to be a better schedule of work, and people should not be billed for going back and forth when no work has been done. He stated that he is considering adding a smaller; second shift of trades staff that could complete work orders and projects when the buildings are less busy. We would need to discuss how the work would be coordinated with the Facility Managers to make sure that everyone is informed and buildings are left secure, etc.

- I've heard that the Physical Plant is considering uniforms. I would really appreciate having the Physical Plant staff identified by a shirt that identifies them as working for the UW.
- I agree. It would be great to know that people in our buildings are employees and should be there, including custodians.

Rob stated that building occupants and managers have raised this issue before and we are working on uniforms for Physical Plant staff. The shirts would have the UW crest, say "Physical Plant" as well as the unit (Painting, Maintenance Mechanics, etc.) Within the next two months, the majority of Physical Plant staff will have uniforms.

- I agree that the work order process is very confusing, but the end product is good. Oftentimes, a worker comes to start a project, and then disappears without telling us why or when they will return. I can understand if there is an emergency on campus and an electrician needs to leave abruptly, but there aren't painting emergencies that would require a painter to leave in the middle of a project.
- This campus doesn't close down at 5:00 p.m., so I think that it is crazy that you don't have a second shift maintenance staff. Students often call me rather than calling the Police Department if there is an

emergency in the building. It would be nice to have someone here that could look at the leaks, etc. in a timely manner rather than us having to call the Police Department, waiting for them to respond and them calling someone in to deal with the problem. It significantly delays getting the problem addressed.

- How are you planning to man the second shift if you can't keep the projects going and get the work orders done with the first shift?

Rob stated that new positions could be hired as second shift employees and noted that he is thinking about having a much smaller group (i.e., 2-3 for each trade) on this shift. This group could be doing work orders without the interruptions encountered during the day. They could also be available to respond during emergency situations. He agreed that the Physical Plant has been short-staffed for some time and that there is a backlog of work.

- Many times maintenance people come in pairs to work on a project. Wouldn't it make sense for them to work alone?

Rob replied that in some instances, having two people working together is beneficial and necessary. Also, sometimes a more seasoned employee may be training a new hire.

- With the UW going with some private/public buildings, sometimes it is hard to figure out who is responsible for what, but in the end, we still have a broken elevator that needs repair, for example.

Rob stated that when the state builds new buildings, DOA is responsible to work with the contractors to resolve problems and take care of items covered by warranties. Sometimes this works in resolving issues and sometimes it doesn't work very well and Physical Plant staff is asked to come in and fix the problems. Rob noted that he is starting to push back on new building repairs by the Physical Plant and would like to hold the contractors accountable for their work.

- Have you thought about streamlining the after-hours calls by having a telephone tree that would be easier, cheaper and faster than having the Police Department respond? By pressing a particular button, the second shift would be called immediately to address the problem.
- Are you thinking about any weekend shifts? At times during an emergency, 20 different plumbers are called before someone is reached or agrees to come in. Meanwhile, a burst pipe has caused major damage.

- I have had to physically bail water out of an elevator. It would be much better if we could get someone to respond quicker to the emergency situations.

Rob asked if someone from the Physical Plant has shown the Facility Managers where the main water valves are in their buildings.

- I've been told that I'm not allowed in certain rooms. For instance, we have air vents in an elevator room that I don't have access to.

Rob stated that it might be good for the Physical Plant to provide some basic training for the Facility Managers. He also stated that we don't want construction work happening without coordinating with the Physical Plant. Sometimes a minor repair and good intentions can lead to other safety problems (such as asbestos, etc.) So, from a risk and safety standpoint, please coordinate any work with the Physical Plant.

- I think that building training would be a very good idea. Many of us wear many different hats and have never had any training related to our building.
- I've had a contractor come to do some work, but needed a Physical Plant electrician to unlock a utility room. I've made a call to CARS, and then had to wait for an hour for someone to arrive. Meanwhile the contractor and I are being paid to sit there. There needs to be better communication between the Physical Plant and us.
- The Facility Manager should be involved when planning major renovations. We've had state-run projects where items have been put in ridiculous places because no one thought to involve us.

Rob stated that when Physical Plant employees are doing work in buildings, they need to be working with the Facility Managers to discuss the impact of the work, who is affected, the duration of the project, etc.

- You should look at where things can be streamlined and how best to utilize our state resources.
- There needs to be better communication. I've had projects where there has been no communication with me and no estimate of the cost of the work. Later, we are billed a ridiculous amount for the work. There should be a point of contact listed on the work order. Sometimes trades staff just come and does the work and we don't

even know. We should be informed of the scope of the work, duration, etc. so that we can notify the building occupants.

- How will we be informed of work done on a second shift?

Rob stated that the idea of a second shift is still in the talking stages and there will be details to work out with the Facility Managers on how to keep everyone informed.

- Instead of looking for “minute men” that are able to come into any building and stop a leak, or fix any problem, I think that Facility Managers need to learn about their building so that they can help your staff find the problems. We are constantly working with your staff so that we know what is happening as well as helping them locate the problem faster. It is the responsibility of the building manager to know their building and help workers through the process.
- We’ve had an alarm go off on a fan on our roof. The exhaust fan was in flames, and the Metasys person said that everything checked out o.k.

Rob stated that the systems need to be measuring the correct things and not just the power. There are different alarms and some are more important than others.

- It would be nice for us to monitor the systems from our end. All we want to do is look at it and see if any alarms are going off or if something is flagged.
- We’ve had an emergency situation with a leaking pipe. The plumber was standing there with water dripping on his head and said that he couldn’t do anything about it without a work order.
- Sometimes when there is planned maintenance, it could affect other things, but if we don’t know that it is happening, we can’t anticipate the problems. It would be nice to let the Facility Managers know in advance of planned events. I would like the Physical Plant to take a broader picture of themselves and where they fit into this campus. We are all prisoners to the Physical Plant. Just communicate with us.

Rob said that he is working with the UW Communications team to make sure that there is a notification process and that they have a point of contact that can provide information. He would like to set up a web page where everyone can access information on what is going on.

- Our Maintenance Mechanic has been very good about keeping us informed about upcoming items.
- It is my understanding that the Maintenance Mechanics don't have access to the Metasys information either.

Concerning the Central Answering and Response Service Unit (CARS):

- For the most part, staff is good at handling the calls.
- Several of the CARS staff knows my name when I call.
- Staff is generally friendly and gets the proper information.
- The message that you get when you call CARS and they are not available is too long.
- I like the online work order system.
- The front part of submitting a work order is good.
- You should have a second CARS shift rather than use an after-hours answering service. CARS should be staffed until at least 9:00 p.m.
- After hours calls have been frustrating.
- CARS does not work well in emergency situations. Sometimes we call the shops first and then call CARS.

"Shovel Out" Initiative – Rob stated that many of the buildings have rooms full of stuff that is not needed and it would be nice to clean out these areas. He noted that he has talked with the Office of Sustainability and the WE Conserve areas about helping to recycle any usable materials and items.

When asked if SWAP is working well, responses were as follows:

- SWAP needs more trucks and more staff to pick up items. Eventually they come.
- It is easier to take items out to SWAP rather than wait indefinitely for them to come and pick it up.
- We've heard the truck excuse for years. It should be resolved by now.

- We were doing a fairly large upgrade and replacing a lot of old furniture. SWAP wouldn't take the majority of our items and it is really hard to know who to call to get rid of the stuff.
- SWAP never tells you when they are coming and we can't just leave stuff sitting on our loading docks.

Rob said that a lot of solid waste moves through this campus. SWAP seems to be "cherry picking" good revenue items and making everyone just deal with the rest. Currently we are required to send items to SWAP, but when they don't respond or take the items, things are just stuffed into rooms creating a safety hazard.

Laura Gower and the Maintenance Mechanics have been working to get some of the mechanical rooms cleaned out. The Physical Plant needs to develop a good process to deal with unwanted items and resolve this problem.

- We asked if we couldn't have a regular SWAP pick-up day. Could you pick certain buildings to get cleaned out once or twice a year?

Rob stated that we could have contracts with portable shredding companies, etc. to help staff clean up campus spaces. When he asked if this kind of initiative would be a good idea, the group wholeheartedly agreed. Rob said that we could get the program started and provide information and pick-up dates to all the Facility Managers.

- It would be helpful for us if you would issue a mandate to get the buildings cleaned out.
- If SWAP would just return our calls, it would be a good start. There is no communication and I don't have any open spaces to put the extra stuff to wait for them to pick it up.
- I like the idea. If you gave us a date, we could let you know how much stuff we have and not just dump the items on our loading docks.

Rob noted that any capital items would need to be accounted for and removed from the capital inventory. He stated that he is glad that people are interested in the idea and he will start planning for it.

- We have a lot of extra ceiling tiles and other items from the Physical Plant. We don't know if you want or need these items.

Rob stated that it would be part of the process to determine what items belong to whom and what should be kept. Everyone would be given a timeline and the opportunity to claim items.

- This is an ongoing problem. Things accumulate if you don't keep the process going.
- The Physical Plant should be painting or taping the areas in front of electrical panels. (There should be a 3-foot access in front of all electrical panels.)
- Can you give us PAC process improvements or consider bringing in outside contractors?

Rob replied that he would like to develop a process that DOA is comfortable with that would identify approved contractors that would be on call to help with projects as needed. The contractors would be required to use the same materials and provide the same level of quality as work being done by the Physical Plant. They would be managed by PAC and the Physical Plant. Our people know the buildings and would use the approved contractors to supplement our work force. We are in the process of hiring a new Director of Project Administration to start addressing the PAC issues and problems.

- Personally, I don't want contractors in my building. In my experience, the contractor comes in and does exactly what they are contracted to do, as quickly and as cheaply as they can regardless of whether or not it fixes the problem. The repair usually lasts just until the warranty runs out. The Physical Plant guys come in and fix the problem. We want the Physical Plant people to do our work.

Rob noted that it would be a short list of approved contractors with whom we have built a good working relationship. He stated that he understands Facility Manager reservations about this because of lack of continuity when using outside contractors. Currently state regulations control how we work with contractors.

- It seems like the state always picks the lowest bidder and then the Physical Plant has to fix all the problems.

Rob agreed that the Physical Plant has spent a lot of time and resources to upgrade, fix and straighten out problems with all the new construction projects. He noted that when we can get a better accounting system, we will be able to provide information to DOA to show that requiring contractors to provide quality work and holding them accountable would be a better use of the state's resources.

- Do you have set standards for building projects?

Rob replied that yes, we do have standards for materials, time, etc. but that oftentimes the DOA contracts don't meet our standards. He noted that he is working with DOA to improve this process and make the contractors accountable for their work. Within the Physical Plant, we have identified specific standards to be used when remodeling or making building repairs.

When asked if the group felt meetings like this are beneficial and if they would like to have meetings in a similar format, or in smaller, more targeted groups, the following responses were received:

- I think that providing training for us specific to our building would be good.
- I like this meeting format.
- It would be helpful to periodically have smaller meetings to talk about specific topics or areas on campus.
- There used to be a Facility Manager Handbook. I'm not sure when it was last updated.
- It would be helpful to have a checklist of items that Facility Managers should know about their buildings.
- At the next meeting, I would like to see feedback on the comments and issues raised today.
- I would like to see a list of what the Physical Plant sees as the "mega" issues for the campus.

Rob asked if the group would like to see a summary of what was discussed at the meeting today, and the group replied "yes."