

Academic Senate  
Research Committee Meeting Minutes  
March 15, 2013, 1270 FAB

Present: David Kessel, Lisa Alexander, David Cinabro, Maik Huttemann, Jason Mateika, Patrick Mueller, Alexey Petrov, Robert Reynolds, Harley Tse, Joseph Dunbar, Lexie McGillis

Absent with notice: Nabanita Datta, Maria Ferreira, Judith Fry-McComish, Stephanie Brock

Absent: Abhijit Biswas, Randall Commissaris, Li Hsieh, Senthil Sundaram, Derek Wildman

Guests: Ken Doherty, Kim Tomaszewski

At the meeting of the Research Committee on Friday [March 15](#), Ken Doherty, Assistant VP for Procurement and Strategic Planning spoke on the new procurement policies. He brought along three other members of the procurement/purchasing staff including Kim Tomaszewski, one of the Procurement Specialists.

His office had initiated a process designed to economize on purchases by directing the bulk of these toward specific vendors. Major items being purchased at WSU include Office Supplies, Computers and Scientific Supplies. Contracts were sought with a view to getting better pricing for these items. If major concern to the research faculty had been scientific supplies which currently amount to approx. \$3.8 million/year. The major competitors were Fisher and VWR, with Fisher being selected after some discussion.

The contract with Fisher calls for elimination of many charges put in place by other vendors including shipping, hazardous materials surcharges and use of dry ice. The only charge that Fisher orders will incur is for overnight delivery, when specified.

It was noted that use of ProCards results in a 3% fee collected by VISA; use of WayneBuy eliminates this cost.

A new arrangement was also described whereby costs of obtaining gas cylinders will eliminate the demurrage cost (a monthly fee we pay for keeping tanks of gas on hand) if we buy from a specified vendor.

This new arrangement resulted from an analysis of past practices along with consultation with major vendors. It was pointed out that, for example, it is not obligatory to purchase computers from Dell (the chosen source) if there is some special reason for picking another vendor. But the favorable Dell prices suggest that, all else being equal, this would be the source to choose.

In early days of this policy change, it had been indicated that any purchase that did not

involve, e.g., Fisher, made on a ProCard, would be subject to a \$200 limitation. This was later increased to \$400 and finally abandoned.

A member of the group raised the question of whether WSU was to receive a 'rebate' based on dollar amount of purchases from any vendor. Mr. Doherty indicated that this was not the case.

While we could argue that more prior consultation would have eliminated the need for this shift, the net outcome reflects the best outcome. On [March 27<sup>th</sup>](#), there will be a Vendor Exhibition in the School of Medicine, with another to come to the Main Campus. This will permit faculty to get acquainted with the preferred vendors and see what they can offer.

David Kessel