



June 29, 2021

President Bill Flanagan
Office of the President
2-24 South Academic Building (SAB)
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2G7

Sent via email to: president@ualberta.ca

Dear President Flanagan,

I am writing to express my extreme concern about the failure of the President's Executive Committee (PEC) to ensure that university administration followed the long-established and clear outsourcing [policy](#) and [procedure](#) in arriving at the decision to outsource the jobs of almost all remaining university custodial staff.

As you are no doubt aware, the university's outsourcing procedure lays out a six-step process which is "necessary for making decisions pertaining to outsourcing of operating units or functions currently performed by University staff." While the first two steps of this procedure were followed—which resulted in the implementation of a voluntary severance package being offered to impacted staff—NASA is frustrated by the failure of the university leadership and administration to follow the critically important third step in the process prior to the proposal being brought to PEC for a final decision.

The procedure unambiguously states that the business plan will be brought to PEC only "If, **on completion of Step 3**, a clear business case for outsourcing is identified" (emphasis added). Despite step three not being completed, NASA was informed by Provost Dew on June 11, 2021 that PEC had completed step four of the outsourcing procedure, had approved the business case and would be moving forward with outsourcing. Despite this decision having been made almost three weeks ago, NASA still has yet to receive any of the business plan information as required in step three of the procedure, including:

- full details of the business case for outsourcing
- a draft request for proposals (RFP),
- a plan for addressing potential human resource impacts, and
- a plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the outsourcing should it be approved.

The procedure states that "consultation with affected staff associations and other constituencies will occur **as the business plan is developed**" and that "the University **will provide** affected constituencies with:

- sufficient information to understand all of the business considerations relating to the possible outsourcing, **including the completed draft Business Plan**, at appropriate stages in the consultation process, and

- reasonable time and opportunity to respond and, if appropriate, propose alternatives.”
(emphasis added)

To reiterate: the procedure outlines that this information is to be provided to affected constituencies—which clearly includes NASA—*prior* to the submission of the detailed business plan to PEC for a final decision on whether to proceed. Not only was NASA not provided with this information in advance of the decision as mandated by the procedure, we have also asked for updates on the outsourcing since May 10, 2021 and despite numerous requests have still not received the required business plan almost three weeks after it was presumably shared with PEC in arriving at its final approval.

Give the significance of this decision on the lives and livelihoods of almost 70 of your staff members and the failure to follow the well-defined procedures that have been in place since April 2003 in arriving at this decision, I am formally requesting that the university postpone the planned July 6, 2021 announcement of this decision to the affected employees. I’m also requesting that you delay the implementation of this decision until such time as NASA and other affected constituencies are provided with the required information and “reasonable time and opportunity” to participate in the “effective consultation” mandated by university procedure, followed by a revisiting of the issue and final decision by PEC.

The University of Alberta rightfully has the reasonable expectation that its employees follow university policies and procedures in the course of their work, and NASA believes it is a fair reciprocal expectation that university leadership and administration do the same. Without a commitment to following appropriate policies and procedures, it is hard to envision how the university community can have confidence in the university’s processes or the decisions being made in the future.

Thank you in advance, and I look forward to participating in the “rigorous, transparent, consultative manner that ensures the University’s best interests are served” as this decision is delayed and revisited. Please don’t hesitate to contact me if you would like to discuss timelines or how best to achieve what I trust is this mutually desired outcome.

Yours truly,



Jillian Pratt
President, Non-Academic Staff Association

cc: Steve Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)
Catherine Swindlehurst, Chief Strategy Officer
Walter Dixon, Interim Vice-President (Research and Innovation)
Todd Gilchrist, Vice-President (University Services and Finance)
Andrew Sharman, Vice-President (Facilities and Operations)
Elan MacDonald, Vice-President (External Relations)
Brad Hamdon, General Counsel and University Secretary
Shelley Klatt, Senior Executive Coordinator
Kate Chisholm, University of Alberta Board of Governors Chair