



UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

Mary R. Jeka, *Senior Vice President and General Counsel*

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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE
SOMERVILLE, MA

April 29, 2015

John J. Long
City Clerk
Somerville City Hall
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

RE 198737

Dear Mr. Long:

Thank you for sending President Monaco the Resolution regarding the re-organization of the DTZ custodial staff at Tufts University, adopted by the Somerville Board of Aldermen on April 9, 2015.

I would like to share with the Board a recent letter that was published in the Tufts Daily that describes the reasons for this decision. While I recognize that people will have varying opinions on this issue, I hope that the enclosed letter clarifies the reasons that Tufts University is making this change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary R. Jeka", written over a horizontal line.

Mary R. Jeka
Senior Vice President and General Counsel

Enclosure

Tufts Daily Op-Ed - 4.27.15

Why Tufts Needs to Reorganize Custodial Services

By Patricia Campbell and Linda Snyder

A number of questions have been raised by students and others in the Tufts community about the reorganization of custodial services at the university. We'd like to take this opportunity to share some key points about this change.

First, we understand that any change in a community as close-knit as ours is difficult, especially when it involves job security. We value the contributions of all of those whose work has made Tufts a world-class university—including the 200 employees of DTZ, our custodial contractor, who provide essential services on all three campuses.

This decision was not made lightly. It came after months of thoughtful and considered deliberations about all aspects of the reorganization, the impact on DTZ employees and the financial well-being of the university. We consulted with DTZ and with members of our own community on numerous occasions.

The reorganization is one element of an institution-wide commitment to improve operational efficiencies so that Tufts' limited resources can be directed to its core mission—providing an exceptional education to talented students and recruiting outstanding faculty to teach and mentor them. We are mindful of the sacrifices that many of our students and their families make to come to Tufts and take seriously our responsibility to control tuition costs and offer the financial aid that allows us to admit outstanding students from all socioeconomic backgrounds.

In support of that goal, a number of efforts are underway to improve the effectiveness and achieve cost savings in major administrative areas, such as purchasing, technology services and finance. We estimate that these operational changes will save \$15 million annually when fully implemented—money that will be reinvested in Tufts' academic priorities and help minimize tuition increases. The anticipated annual savings resulting from this custodial services reorganization is approximately \$900,000.

The reorganization was informed by a DTZ analysis that showed that cleaning operations here at Tufts were less efficient than those at comparable colleges and universities in the Boston area—in other words, Tufts is paying more for these services. DTZ developed a plan that incorporates high-efficiency, labor-saving equipment so its employees can clean more areas in less time. The plan will reduce the frequency that administrative, faculty and staff offices are cleaned and increase services in high-traffic areas such as Tufts Athletics, Tisch Library and the dormitories. The reorganization takes into account the new facilities that are currently under construction.

We don't yet know how many custodians will be affected by the reorganization. That ultimately will be determined by the policies and procedures of the Service Employees

International Union (SEIU), which represents the custodians. DTZ, which has a workforce of 2,500 in the Greater Boston area, has committed to doing everything possible to find other jobs within the company for the affected employees. DTZ is working with the SEIU to determine how those job transfers will take place.

In the meantime, DTZ has implemented a hiring freeze to facilitate the transfer of affected custodians to new locations. For the DTZ employees remaining at Tufts, the company has agreed to offer maximum flexibility for those moving to new shifts or needing training on new equipment.

We have reached an agreement with the student group Tufts Labor Coalition (TLC) that no changes, other than voluntary transfers, will take place before late May. While DTZ has said that it cannot guarantee that every custodian will be offered equivalent employment, the company has assured us that it will do its best to ease the transition for those affected.

We have tried to be transparent in providing information to students and others in the Tufts community about the custodial reorganization. We met with TLC members in December to discuss their concerns. We reached an [agreement on major points](#) and have honored the terms of that agreement, including providing TLC with a detailed plan in early March and posting that plan on the Operations Division website. On March 27, we participated in a forum, organized by the students involved in TLC, to publicly discuss the reorganization plans with the SEIU, DTZ custodians, students, faculty and staff. We have also posted updates on the Operations website and shared information through the *Tufts Daily*.

We know that not everyone will agree with this change. But we believe this decision is in the best interest of the long-term fiscal health of the university and its aspirations for the future. We remain committed to supporting the custodians through the transition to ensure that they are treated fairly and respectfully. We will continue to keep the community updated.

Patricia Campbell is executive vice president of Tufts University, and Linda Snyder is vice president of operations.