Minutes
Operating Staff Council
August 3, 2017
Sky Room – 9:00 A.M.


Absent: Ellen Cabrera, Colleen Leonard,

Guests: Dennis Barsema, Wheeler Coleman, Catherine Doederlein, Acting President Lisa Freeman, Sarah Klapar, Lisa Miner, Carlos Raices, Linda Saborio, Jessica Webb, Vicky Wronkowski, Barbara Zeman

I. Call to Order
President Andree called the regular meeting of the OSC to order at 9:00 A.M.

II. Roll Call
Attendance was recorded by Stacey Bivens.

III. Approval of Agenda
A motion was made by Wielert to accept the agenda. The motion was seconded by Wyizard and passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of July 6, 2017, minutes
A motion was made by Hulseberg to accept the July 6, 2017, minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Davis and passed by unanimous vote.

V. Treasurer’s Report
Davis reported. She noted that the report did not include the catering bill for July, because she had not received it yet. A motion was made by Kozumplik to accept the Treasurer’s report. The motion was seconded by Monteiro and passed by unanimous vote.

VI. Visiting Committees/Guests
Acting President Lisa Freeman attended the OSC meeting stating that she hoped for an ongoing dialogue with OSC, and that this would not be the only time she
met with the council. She believes that staff are critical to the success of our students, and one way we support them is by modeling what it is to be a good employee. Dr. Freeman acknowledged that a lot has happened at NIU this summer, but she wants NIU to be a welcoming, inclusive workplace that makes employees feel part of the Huskie family. We need to share everything positive about NIU, focus on the great work being done here every day, and highlight Huskie accomplishments. Now that Illinois has finally approved a budget, the university must address things that have been set aside. Student recruitment for 2017-2018 is a priority. In an effort to achieve more transparency, reimbursed expenses for any hospitality or travel related to her duties as president will be posted on her website. Dr. Freeman announced that a town hall meeting is scheduled for September 20, at 3:00 P.M. Employee release time will be authorized for this event.

Saborio asked how changes will be implemented. Dr. Freeman answered that suggestions are sent out to the people who know and work with the issue in question. Then, there is follow-up to find out if any of the suggestions resulted in a solution. Kozumplik inquired about raises. NIU administration is still trying to figure out the numbers resulting from the newly-approved state budget. Brown asked how employee morale would be addressed. Dr. Freeman said that increasing compensation is part of that, while also stating that employees have a voice when asked to take on more work. They can request additional pay or a change in classification, and say no to extra work or overtime. Nicholson asked about enrollment goals. Dr. Freeman acknowledged that these are very important. NIU must take things in stages and follow guiding principles in order to retain students through graduation. On a positive note, our fall-to-fall retention rate has increased. Saborio wanted to know if Dr. Freeman plans to continue the tradition of a weekly report. Freeman said she would have to consider the efficacy of a weekly report. Instead, she might want to get out and talk to people.

OSC welcomed Wheeler Coleman, Board of Trustees chair, and Trustee Dennis Barsema, vice chair. They attended the meeting in order to garner feedback relative to the search for a new NIU president. Trustee Coleman shared that he was appointed to the Board of Trustees by former Illinois governor Pat Quinn. Trustee Coleman described how he came to NIU 39 years ago as a freshman, and participated in a CHANCE orientation class. The ombudsman at the time was a mentor who encouraged Trustee Coleman to run for a seat on the Student Association. Mr. Coleman also met his wife here at NIU. After graduating from NIU, he went on to earn an MBA from Notre Dame. He decided to give back to NIU. By impacting current NIU students, hopefully they themselves will go on to give back to the university as well. Coleman acknowledged that NIU is currently
going through some difficult times. He stated that we can have a pity party and possibly let NIU go down the drain, or we can stand together as a university and fight.

Trustee Dennis Barsema shared that he graduated from NIU 39 years ago. There are 15 NIU graduates in his family, and he is very proud to serve NIU. He feels fortunate to have Trustee Coleman as the chair of the Board of Trustees, and is grateful for his own appointment to the board. Barsema teaches in the College of Business on a volunteer basis. He truly believes that our NIU students are every bit as good as students from “prestigious” schools. Trustee Barsema addressed the morale issue by stating that we as a university must bring forward points of pride. NIU has many great programs and we need to be very vocal about these. He also knows the value of good communication. Trustee Barsema has taught a leadership workshop for the football team for the past 10 years.

Next, the trustees asked those in attendance at the OSC meeting for their feedback concerning the search for a new president. At first discussion centered on how Dr. Baker was hired. An outside firm was hired to find candidates, and the search committee met with the search firm, which selected appropriate candidates. Shared governance stakeholders got to interview/interact with candidates. However, each candidate was interviewed at NIU’s Naperville campus, and was only brought to the DeKalb campus for a tour, and not to meet with other stakeholders. The question of salary offers came up. The search firm will give a salary range typical for the Midwest, keeping in mind that it must be competitive. When asked about the timing of the search, Nicholson stated her opinion that NIU should wait a while. The university still has to pay Dr. Baker his severance package, there is confidence in Acting President Lisa Freeman, and there could be internal candidates. Trustee Coleman informed the group that a search process typically takes nine months. If NIU waits to begin the search until after the 2018 general election, candidates will see where Illinois stands on higher education. Another question was whether Dr. Freeman would play a major role in the search process. She has a lot of institutional knowledge, and as acting president, Freeman would be a great resource for a new president. Some suggestions were that a good candidate should be a strategic thinker (good with numbers), but at the same time, a people person, someone who can build revenue, a visionary, and a person who is passionate about NIU.

VII. Public Comment
None
VIII. Announcements/Correspondence
Nicholson announced that workshops are going to be held for NIU employees, especially for those with dependents. These workshops are: Admissions on September 21; Financial Aid and Human Resource Services on October 19; Housing on November 16; and Brand Management on December 7. The workshops will be held in the Blackhawk Annex from 11:30 A.M. until 1:00 P.M.

IX. President’s Reports
A. Board of Trustees
   No report

B. Faculty Senate
   No report

C. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC)
   Doederlein reported. Acting President Freeman is scheduled to attend the SPS Council’s meeting on August 10.

D. University Council
   No report

X. Committee Reports
A. Civil Service Celebration
   Brown reported. The celebration will take place from 11:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M. on Thursday, August 10. OSC President Andree and Board of Trustees Vice Chair Dennis Barsema will be greeting operating staff as they arrive. Brown asked that all OSC members taking part wear something fun and colorful. Nametags will be available at the check-in table. She also asked that each person bring a can of whipped cream for the pie toss, and bring fun stuff to be available for the photo booth.

B. Council of Councils Ad Hoc Committee
   Met July 25, 2017. Save the date notices have been sent out, and responses are already arriving. The liquor license for the Thursday night, October 19, 2017, dinner has been approved.

C. Elections and Appointments
   Nicholson had an OSC committee sign-up sheet which she passed around the table, so that council members, ex officio, and guests could sign up for committees in case they had not already done so online. In addition, she had several committee
applications for the council to consider. The first was an application from Karen Smith, a former OSC member, to become an alternate for OSC. Nicholson read her application. A motion was made by Kozumplik to accept Smith’s application and name her as an alternate. The motion was seconded by Wyard and passed by unanimous vote.

The Athletic Board had one position open, and there were applications from Anthony Calderala and Vicky Nay. Nicholson read both applications. Vicky Nay was appointed to the board by a show of hands.

The Campus Parking Committee had two openings, and there were applications from Anthony Calderala and Valerie Lorusso. Nicholson read both applications. A motion was made by Davis to appoint both Calderala and Lorusso to the committee. The motion was seconded by Wyard and passed by unanimous vote.

The Parking Appeals Committee had one opening and one application from Karen Smith. Nicholson read her application. A motion was made by Kozumplik to appoint Smith to the committee. The motion was seconded by Wyard and passed by unanimous vote.

The Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee had one opening, and one application from Vicky Wronkowski. Nicholson read her application. However, Wronkowski’s supervisor had not signed off on the application. A motion was made by Wyard to appoint Wronkowski to the committee pending supervisor approval. The motion was seconded by Davis and passed by unanimous vote.

The University Benefits Committee had one opening and one application from Anthony Calderala. Nicholson read his application. A motion was made by Gutierrez-Vargas to appoint Calderala to the committee. The motion was seconded by Davis and passed by unanimous vote.

The Ombudsman Review is coming up, and the OSC needed to choose one member to be part of the review group. Wierelt was nominated by Andree, while Wyard self-nominated. By a show of hands, Wierelt was chosen to take part in the Ombudsman Review.

D. Employee Morale
Met July 26, 2017. Among items discussed were: A day to give, a day to use; whether OSC should merge the Employee Morale Committee with Workplace
Issues, and, if so, chairs of these OSC committees should meet with the Legislative Committee to discuss changes in the OSC bylaws.

E. Executive Committee
Met July 25, 2017. OSC President Andree shared that the annual OSC photo would be taken on Thursday, September 7, 2017, before the OSC meeting. All OSC members should meet at 8:30 at the fountain on the corner of Normal Road and Lucinda Drive.

F. Legislative Committee
Did not meet.

G. Public Relations/Activities
Did not meet. Will be demonstrating crochet and sharing information about the Giving Project at the Civil Service Celebration event on August 10.

H. Workplace Issues
Bivens reported. She distributed a copy of the previous campus-wide survey that had been edited and featured some additional questions. When the Workplace Issues Chair, Angie Bollinger, left NIU at the end of July, the committee had not yet decided when or how to conduct the updated survey.

I. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)
Wronkowski reported. Abby Dean and Katy Saalfield gave a PowerPoint presentation on the retreat held by Dr. Baker in May. APAC is beginning to talk about next year’s Administrative Professionals Day Breakfast. APAC also had to say good-bye to Dori Day, who retired from NIU.

J. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC)
No report

K. University Advisory Committee (UAC)
No report

XI. Prior Business
A. Operating Staff Personnel Advisor (OSPA) Review
After discussion, it was decided that OSPA Hulseberg had thoroughly discussed his yearly review during the OSC’s July meeting, and attendees had no more questions for him.
XII. New Business

XIII. Adjournment
A motion was made by Kozumplik to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Davis and passed by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 12:19 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens, Secretary
Operating Staff Council