

**Minutes**  
**Operating Staff Council**

June 1, 2023

Hybrid Format (Altgeld Hall 225/Teams) – 9:00 A.M.

**July 6, 2023**

**Present:** Zac Birch, Angelica Gutierrez-Vargas, Natasha Johnson, Cindy Kozumplik, Rob Kerschke, Mandy Kreitzer, Frances Mitchell (Administrative Aide), Jay Monteiro, Holly Nicholson, Mark Pietrowski, Sara Richter, Mary Schlagel, Jim Slagstad, Linda Srygler, Tracey Ward

**Guests:** Nicole Adams, Felicia Bohanon, Sean Carpenter, Renata Catlett, Cathy Doederlein, Lesslie Erickson, Patricia Erickson, Lisa Freeman, Patrick Gerhardt, John Hulseberg, Lauren Kurpius, Caroline Kosmel, Lauren Kurpius, Pulchratia Lacey, Miriah Ranken, Cindy Robinson, Matt Streb

**Absent:** Kathy Mosher, David Rapp, Kevin Shirley

**I. Call to Order**

President Nicholson called the regular meeting of the OSC to order at 9:00 AM

**II. Roll Call**

Attendance was recorded by Monteiro online and in person.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

Birch made a motion to accept the agenda. The motion was seconded by Richter and passed by vote.

**IV. Approval of Minutes**

Birch made a motion to accept the May 4, 2023, minutes. The motion was seconded by Kozumplik and passed by vote.

**V. Treasurer's Report**

Yates reported.

- a. We will be able to pay for some materials for the Council of Councils in October, but not the room.
- b. The Civile Service Emergency fund is currently closed until the fund is back up to \$1000 so that we can start awarding grants again.
- c. The FY24 budget was approved by the university for \$16,462.54

Birch moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Slagstad and passed by vote.

**VI. Visiting Committees/Guests** – President Lisa Freeman and Matt Streb, Chief of Staff to the President, Liaison to the Board of Trustees

- A. President Freeman announced that NIU would close on Monday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- B. Freeman talked about the current executive level searches that are occurring on campus.

- a. Vice President for Research and Innovative Partnership – Harrison Associates was the search firm used. Dr. Yvonne Harris joins us August 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - b. VPDI and Chief Diversity Officer – Witt Kieffer search firm was used. Dr. Carol Sumner joins us July 16<sup>th</sup>.
  - c. AVP and Chief HR Officer a search firm was not used. John Acardo joins us July 1<sup>st</sup>.
  - d. Slagstad asked if we would use a search firm for the open Provost position. President Freeman believed a search firm would be used.
- C. Streb announced the state of Illinois passed a budget. The governor has put \$100 mil. towards MAP funding. They approved a 7% increase/\$6 mil. increase in state funding. NIU was reappropriated \$50 mil. In Rebuild Illinois funds.
- D. Freeman commented that the legislative liaisons for the university worked together with the Legislative Audit Commission to propose changes in wording to the University Finance Act, which hadn't been updated since 1980, to look at some thresholds and reporting requirements to update the rules to help us not violate things that don't make sense.
- E. Freeman described the Technical Modeling Work Group. This Commission was formed by statute to address our students who are using services like mental health services, tutoring, advising, wrap around services, seeking food security more than they used to.
- F. Slagstad asked if there is a proper channel to bring up subjects to the right people for making a change? Freeman said to look at the situation and ask: Is it a state of Illinois policy, or a NIU policy and research it from there. Always start with the person who owns the policy at the lowest level. Streb commented that sometimes NIU's interpretation of a statute is the most rigid, send those questions to Matt for investigation.

## **VII. Public Comment – None**

## **VIII. Announcements/Correspondence**

- A. President's Report – Nicholson reported  
 Huskies Give Back - This is the opportunity that we all have to take 7 1/2 hours per year to volunteer in the community and those hours can be split up so you if you want to do one hour here or two hours there, you can do that without taking benefit time.
- B. Council Spotlight – John Hulseberg presented the award to Chris Fell for her dedication to NIU, tireless efforts, and keeping the Holmes Student Center quite literally, the central heart of our campus for students, visitors and staff alike.
- C. Human Resource Services Update – Lacey reported
- a. Working on filling HR vacancies.
  - b. HR did finally receive the draft final of the civil service audit that was conducted in September of 2021. We have until June 30th to respond to the findings that they gave us; 900 hours for Extra-Help hours, SPS positions that need to be converted to civil service, and temporary upgrades were audit findings. The civil service system is supposed to be notified of all dismissals, disciplinary suspensions, and layoffs. Not all of those have made it down to the system office, but we have them and are working on getting those to them so there should not be a permanent finding.

- c. Slagstad said that a concern had been brought to the Workplace Guidance Committee that someone is currently having trouble getting people hired in a timely manner, which is causing people to start their employees when they should not. Lacey asked that an email be sent to Doederlein and herself with more information so that it can be addressed.
- d. Lacey thanked Nicholson for her presentation at Vernese Edgehill-Walden's going away party.

## **IX. Shared Governance Reports**

- A. Board of Trustees – No report
- B. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC) – Bohanon reported
  - a. SPSC is on break for the summer.
  - b. Bohanon read a statement that was developed regarding concerns about non-union employee increments to be presented to President Freeman:
 

So, as we have reviewed recent contracts for some union representative employees on campus, which include base increases from 6.5% to 3% / 4-year period plus merit increases of 1%, we want to ensure that non-represented employees receiving fair and equitable treatment and are being compensated fairly. We are interested in examining what the plan is as the university moves forward with multiyear budget planning and consider salary increases for non-represented employees.

President Freeman's response was that they are bringing forth a recommendation at the June board meeting. Make sure it is very clear that OSC wants hear the multiyear plan for salary increments that it says in the last sentence. Birch moved to approve giving support to this letter. The motion was seconded by Monteiro and passed by vote.
  - c. There will be a social awards before the end of the month.
- C. Faculty Senate – No report
- D. University Council – No report
- E. Student Government Association (SGA) – No report

## **X. Operating Staff Council Committee Reports**

- A. Elections and Appointments – Slagstad reported
  - a. Collecting nominations for our new executive Board. Slagstad asked if everybody could give a short reason why they want to run for the positions they want to run for, but it was only required for president. Nominations are due July 9<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. Slagstad welcomed new members Nicole Adams from Psychology and, Cindy Robinson from Campus Dining Service.
- B. Legislative Committee – No report
- C. Public Relations/Activities – No report
- D. Workplace Guidance – Srygler reported
- E. Civil Service Emergency Fund – Srygler reported
  - a. There is a new overtime policy that the university is looking to implement. It affects employees that are utilizing flex time. There is an uptick in grievances being filed regarding people being hired at much higher rates than current employees in the in the same classification.

- b. Other suggestions are going to be sent to HR and President Freeman with ideas on how to streamline paperwork for hiring.
  - c. There was data presented by Meyer saying hourly employees may be at a disadvantage to getting approval of add pay. There seems to be a much greater disparity between the approval for salaried employees versus hourly. Pulchratia commented that hourly employees have to put their hours on their timesheet to be paid. When they go through the add pay system to get the approvals, they are quote denied in the system and then approval email is sent for those that are approved directly to the request or of the add pay and payroll. Kreitzer said most of the add pays in HHS are related to instructions instruction. Meyer said they eliminated any instruction in their FOIA request. Pietrowski commented that it is departments that are halting ad pays not HR. Lacey said the process would be reviewed.
- F. Civil Service Celebration Committee – Kozumplik reported
- a. Invitations went out. Response deadline is July 6<sup>th</sup>.
  - b. Games are being planned.
  - c. Some members of the leadership will be there to help with the event.
  - d. We will be accepting donations for the scholarship and emergency funds.
- G. Council of Councils Ad Hoc Committee – Kozumplik reported
- a. Still have not confirmed a guest speaker.
  - b. The menu has been determined.
  - c. Working on the agenda and whether we can get breakout sessions.
- H. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC) – No report

**XI. Prior Business - None**

**XII. New Business - None**

**XIII. Adjournment**

Birch moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Schlagel and passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 10:45 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jay Monteiro, Secretary  
Operating Staff Council