Minutes
Operating Staff Council
February 5, 2015
Sky Room – 9:00 A.M.


Absent:  Barb Andree, Adam Lewis, David Long, Yvette Lubbers,

Guests:  Robin Andersen, Lesley Gilbert, Sarah Klaper, Andy Peccarelli, Rhonda Wybourn

I.  Call to Order
President Jay Monteiro called the regular meeting of the OSC to order at 9:07 AM.

II.  Roll Call
Attendance was recorded by Stacey Bivens.

III.  Approval of Agenda
A motion was made by Carlos Raices to accept the Agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by John Hulseberg and passed by unanimous vote.

IV.  Approval of January 8, 2015, Minutes
A motion was made by Carlos Raices to accept the Minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Victoria Nay and passed by unanimous vote.

V.  Treasurer’s Report
The Treasurer’s report was read and a motion was made by Andy Small to accept the report. The motion was seconded by John Hulseberg.

VI.  Visiting Committees/Guests
There were none.

VII.  Announcements/Correspondence
Welcome back to OSC member Holly Nicholson!

The Friends of the NIU Libraries is sponsoring a presentation by Geoffrey Baer from channel 11 WTTW. He’ll be discussing Chicago’s skyscrapers, and their role in helping Chicago rebuild after the 1871 fire. The talk will take place February 12 at 7:30 PM in the Regency Room.
Nominations for the Operating Staff Outstanding Service Award are due February 27, 2015.

VIII. President’s Reports
A. Board of Trustees
Did not meet

B. Faculty Senate
The proposed non-smoking policy was discussed.

C. University Council
Met on January 28, 2015. Discussed the passing of Professor Donna Monroe from the School of Nursing. A memorial service will be held March 5, at 3:00 PM in the Regency Room in the Student Center. Eric Weldy spoke about spring semester enrollment numbers, which have dropped to 19,000 students. Derryl Block gave a presentation on the proposed non-smoking policy. The Smoke Free Campus Task Force will be asking for input from smokers on this topic. There are several issues to be worked out. For example, can employees smoke in their cars? These workers would not be smoking around others, but would still be smoking on campus.

IX. Committee Reports
A. Workplace Issues
The committee is planning to have brown bag lunch series, “Steer Your Career,” to assist operating staff with advancing to or finding new jobs. These will be titled:
> Resume building,
> Moving On Up: talking about testing for different positions at NIU,
> How to Expand your Horizon: taking advantage of training and educational benefits that NIU offers.

Karen Smith, Workplace Issues Chair, shared the results of the operating staff survey for the OSC members to read.

Ad hoc Employee Morale Committee
Met February 4, 2015. John Hulseberg shared the Morale Action Plan. President Baker has been invited to the OSC’s March meeting. Dr. Bill Pitney’s graduate assistant has offered to design the layout for the Northern Staff News, which isn’t exactly what is needed; what is needed is ideas for articles. Patricia Liberty-Baczek offered the PR Committee’s assistance on this item. There was a discussion regarding numbers one through four on the Morale Action Plan.
B. Elections and Appointments
There was a vacancy on the Parking Committee. Melissa Folowell-Vargas expressed interest in joining the committee. By Council vote, Melissa was elected. She’ll start at the next meeting.

C. Public Relations
At its January 15, 2015, meeting, the PR committee worked on the re-wording of bylaws to bring them in line with current practices in regards to OSC membership. Patricia Liberty-Baczek reported that there have been six applications submitted for the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship Award.

D. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC)
Lesley Gilbert shared that the SPSC is finalizing its staff recognition awards. There are Presidential Excellence awards that come with a $1500 stipend, staff excellence awards, and service awards. The SPSC Awards will take place April 14, 2015. There was a brief discussion about flex-time, when Sarah Klaper mentioned to Lesley Gilbert that the subject had come up in a subcommittee meeting that Sarah had attended. Lesley said that the SPSC had produced a three page document about morale, and SPSC was told that the shared governance councils would meet and produce a consolidated document.

E. Employee Advisory Council (EAC)
Andy Small reported that EAC met in January at Urbana. Elections were discussed. Andy’s term as EAC Chair expires next year. Andy expressed that it could be very beneficial to have electronic voting. A 36 page document detailing the differences, and advantages and disadvantages between SPS and CS positions had been produced, and most EAC members felt it was finished, but then the University of Illinois backed out. NIU was audited by the Systems Office back in September, but the results haven’t been revealed yet. There are 1150 tests in the system, and out of those, 65% are e-tests. The University of Illinois uses only 700 tests. The Systems Office is incorporating positions throughout the state, and is looking intensely at eliminating the typing test. Andy Small was elected EAC Chair for the coming year.

F. University Advisory Committee (UAC)
No report

G. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)
OSC member Pam Roesner attended the meeting and related it to the OSC. President Baker attended APAC’s latest meeting. APAC related their compensation concerns, and Dr. Baker made it known that there cannot be raises in a deficit. NIU is investing in enrollment, and trying to develop community college ties which is a two year process. Illinois’ new governor is
an unknown quantity, and we cannot rely on the state, only ourselves. APAC inquired about market equity and they were advised to speak to Nancy Suttenfield and Lisa Freeman about this. Regarding the Administrative Professionals Day Breakfast, this will be held on April 22, 2015, in the Altgeld Ballroom.

X. **Old Business**

A. **Proposed Non-Smoking Policy**

The Smoke Free Campus Task Force is looking for input from NIU employees who are smokers. NIU’s proposal is tougher than the law requires. The Task Force will have open community meetings to hear input from students, faculty, and staff regarding the proposed NIU policy. The state law goes into effect July 1, 2015. There have been discussions here at NIU about how to enforce the law. Karen Smith said that there will be a website with resources to help smokers quit if that is what they would like to do.

B. **Prioritization**

This group has been meeting regularly. On Monday, February 9, 2015, an online survey will start to determine potential criteria to be used in evaluating academic and administrative programs. The survey is part of NIU’s Program Prioritization initiative. The survey will close February 23.

XI. **New Business**

A. **Recycling**

Robin Andersen from APAC stated that it appears that recycling is not being practiced as much as it used to be, and it should be advertised more. Patricia Liberty-Baczek stated that this would be a great idea for the Northern Staff News. David Smith spoke about his concern that Waste Management is “double-dipping” when picking up garbage and recycling. The company is paid for picking up garbage, but can also profit from recycling materials NIU could be recycling but isn’t.

B. **Town Hall Meetings**

It seems as if people understand prioritization. Andy Small attended both town hall meetings. Two questions got applause: one on compensation and the other on morale.

C. **Flex-Time**

After discussion, the OSC decided to take a stance on flex-time for summer 2015. A motion was made by Patricia Liberty-Baczek that the Operating Staff Council encourage the university administration to continue flex-time as we saw in 2014, as it is a question of employee morale. The motion was seconded by Victoria Nay and passed by unanimous vote.
XII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens
Operating Staff Council Secretary