Minutes
Operating Staff Council
April 2, 2015
Sky Room – 9:00 a.m.


Absent:  Yvette Lubbers, Victoria Nay, David Smith

Guests:  Robin Andersen, Karen Baker, Deborah Haliczer, Sarah Klaper, Andy Peccarelli, Harlan Teller

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

II. Roll Call
Attendance was recorded by Stacey Bivens.

III. Approval of Agenda
A motion was made by Patricia Liberty-Baczek to accept the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Karen Smith and passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of March 5, 2015, Minutes
A motion was made by Carlos Raices to accept the Minutes. The motion was seconded by Barb Andree and passed by unanimous vote.

V. Treasurer’s Report
The treasurer’s report was given by Elizabeth Buck. She reported that she e-mailed Christine Black again regarding the StaffFest money, but still has not received a reply. The OSC is paying $67.50 for coffee, tea, fruit and pastries. Patricia Liberty-Baczek pointed out that seems to be too much money for what we get. She wants to ensure that we are getting what we pay for. A motion to accept the Treasurer’s report was made by Patricia Liberty-Baczek. The motion was seconded by David Long and passed by unanimous vote.
VI. Visiting Committees/Guests
Karen Baker from Human Resource Services attended the OSC meeting to clarify the different situations when employee release time can be used. While the Diversity Conference was being planned, discussion turned to who can attend events on campus. Lisa Freeman, Executive Vice President and Provost, began to look into this issue. It was found that there is no consistency among departments or a policy. Deborah Haliczer shared another area of problems is retirement counseling. On campus appointments fill very quickly, and employees may use release time for these appointments. However, employees who travel to Naperville or Champaign for counseling must use vacation time. Barb Andree mentioned that she’s found telephone appointments to be very effective. Andy Peccarelli said that attending things like retirement counseling has not been a problem in the Building Services area. Baker reminded that a supervisor can say no, if that decision is based on operational needs. Also, workers cannot take sick time to attend conferences. Robin Andersen offered to investigate the different departments regarding their release time policies via APAC.

Harlan Teller, Interim Vice President for Marketing and Communications, was a visitor at the OSC meeting. He began by describing himself. He is an NIU alumnus, donor, and serves on the NIU Alumni Board. He is currently on leave of absence from his job at FTI. He gave several examples of what NIU must do to solve its budget crisis. These included: taking market share from others, hold the line on tuition and fees, and remaining focused on the university’s target. He announced that a University Marketing Council has been created. The new NIU tagline is “Your Future, Our Focus,” with narrative added around the tagline. Work is being done to streamline the 90,000 websites. Mr. Teller shared that ITS received a memo from President Baker which asked if we as employees have an interaction with a student which might keep the student on campus, we can share that information with Mr. Teller.

VII. Announcements/Correspondence
Bookmarks were distributed at the OSC meeting that explain how to access their payroll statements and W-2 information through the Human Resource Services webpage.

A sympathy card was passed and signed for Marcia Dick, a long-time, former member of OSC for the death of her mother.

It was announced that House Bill 403, which would eliminate the 50% tuition waiver
for the children of state employees, is being reviewed in Springfield. Senate Bill 1525 was introduced that calls for the privatization of all state universities. It was mentioned that Provost Freeman does not believe that such a bill would go anywhere. However, this bill needs to be watched. Privatization could lead to the elimination of SURS, the Civil Service system, and the Board of Trustees.

David Long shared that each Wednesday will be a Spring Forward day. Weather permitting, there will concessions available in the MLK Commons.

VIII. **President’s Report**

A. Board of Trustees
   Met on March 12. The bulk of the meeting was spent renewing contracts. There was discussion about the cost of student insurance.

B. Faculty Senate
   Program prioritization was discussed, specifically who would be on the task forces. At the meeting, it appeared that faculty want faculty on all task forces despite the presence of staff. Andy Small would like to pen a joint letter with the SPS Council to Lisa Freeman to voice our concerns about faculty “hijacking” the task forces.

C. SPS Council
   The SPS Council continues to talk about the morale issue. They are having their awards event on April 14, 2015.

D. University Council
   Met April 1. It was announced that there will be searches to fill positions left vacant by Lesley Rigg, Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships, Dean Richard Holly, and Dean Jennifer Rosato. Dr. Al Phillips talked about the external audit report. There were no federal findings in the report.

IX. **Committee Reports**

A. Workplace Issues
   No report
   Ad hoc
   No report

B. Elections and Appointments
C. Public Relations
Public Relations Chair Patricia Liberty-Baczek went through the changes in the OSC bylaws. A motion was made by Holly Nicholson to accept the changes in the bylaws. The motion was seconded by Barb Andree and passed by unanimous vote.

D. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC)
Andy Small shared that the State Universities Civil Service Systems office is still working on the NIU and they were very appreciative of NIU’s cooperation. A few of the things that have come out of the EAC meetings are: qualifications and specifications on job descriptions are outdated; there is need for flexibility for human resources officers to add specialty positions; allowing out of state recruiting; auditing done on a three-year audit cycle rather than two; and all positions are civil service until determined to be SPS. The next EAC meeting will be held April 16.

E. University Advisory Committee (UAC)
No report

F. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)
Robin Andersen shared that APAC had a demonstration at their last meeting on how to order printing through Document Services. The Council continues its mentoring program with new employees.

X. Old Business
A. Program Prioritization
   Task forces are still being formed.

B. Wellness Fair
   The OSC had a table at the Wellness Fair. The council collected $230 for 50/50, with half the proceeds going to fund the Operating Staff Dependent Endowed Scholarship award.

C. Proposed Non-smoking Policy
   The forums are finished, with opinions on both sides of this issue. The task force will be meeting the week of April 6 – 10.
XI. **New Business**
   A. Website Information
   A request was made for a submission form on the Faculty and Staff toolbar icon on the NIU home webpage. Dr. Baker sent a message to say that his staff will work on this.

XII. **Adjournment**
   The meeting was adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens
Operating Staff Council Secretary