Minutes
Operating Staff Council
November 5, 2015
Sky Room – 9:00 a.m.


Absent: Carlos Raices, David Smith

Guests: Deborah Haliczer, Sarah Klaper, Celeste Latham, Greg Long, Rose Miller, Andy Small, Rhonda Wybourn

I. Call to Order
President Holly Nicholson called the regular meeting of the OSC to order at 9:04 a.m.

II. Roll Call
Attendance was recorded by Stacey Bivens

III. Approval of Agenda
A motion was made by John Hulseberg to accept the agenda with changes. The motion was seconded by Zach Bohn and passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of September 3, 2015, and October 1, 2015, minutes
A motion was made by Nancy Brown to accept the September 3 minutes. The motion was seconded by Vicky Nay and passed by unanimous vote. A motion was made by Karen Smith to accept the October 1 minutes with changes. The motion was seconded by Nay and passed by unanimous vote.

V. Treasurer’s Report
Bohn reported that he gained access to the OSC’s financial reports, and went over the financials from July through October 2015. He is waiting for Chris Samples to disburse the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship Award funds. It was noted that by paring down to coffee, ice water and hot water for tea, OSC is spending only $25.00 for meeting refreshments, which is a savings of $42.50. A motion was
made by Patricia Liberty-Baczek to accept the treasurer’s report. The motion was seconded by Barb Andree and passed by unanimous vote.

VI. Visiting Committees/Guests
Celeste Latham visited OSC to talk about State Universities Civil Service system audits, which are conducted to check whether SPS positions should actually be civil service positions. Nicholson asked if this was a typical response to audit findings and Latham said it was. Andree asked if people currently in SPS positions will remain SPS until they leave that position. It is the case that these positions are evaluated once vacated. Also, the majority of vacant positions are converted back to civil service. Jennifer Jeffries asked if there is a policy that keeps SPS positions in place instead of being changed to civil service. It was explained that SPS positions are contractual on a yearly basis. She also wanted to know how employees could find out if their job was properly classified. Wybourn answered that it is more than likely that SPS positions are actually civil service. Small commented that Human Resource Services is very vigilant about proper positions classifications, while there are many other universities ignoring audits.

Dr. Vernese Edghill-Walden, NIU Chief Diversity Officer visited OSC. Coming to us from the City Colleges of Chicago, she introduced herself, and commented that she was grateful to serve here at NIU. She feels that NIU has the commitment and organizations for diversity, but that things are sometimes being done in silos, and wants to see how we can collectively understand these groups. She wants to build awareness around diverse groups, and observe how students are succeeding in and out of the classroom. Dr. Edghill-Walden sees great importance in working with DeKalb, forming partnerships with existing programs, and breaking down the silos in order to work across groups. OSC members and other meeting attendees had suggestions for Dr. Edghill-Walden. Liberty-Baczek and Deborah Haliczer commented on the RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) system, which has been offered a number of times here at NIU. Haliczer remarked that the training has been offered to many different groups. Liberty-Baczek wants to ensure that the program is offered to men. Other groups brought to the attention of the Chief Diversity Officer were military veterans, Pagan Student Association, Association of Campus Religious Organizations, and there is a move to create an Interfaith Commission. Bohn pointed out that a person does not have to be a member of a group to help or support that group. Dr. Edghill-Walden mentioned that programs at the City Colleges of Chicago were not mandatory. Andree was unsure that making programs mandatory would work. It’s important to make diversity part of NIU’s culture. Haliczer commented that people would only attend mandatory
programs.

**VII. Announcements/Correspondence**
Wybourn shared that the Civil Service System office’s server is being closed down on December 15. Unfortunately, the typing test is housed on that server, so Human Resource Services is scrambling to find an alternative. It was also announced that the SEEK Conference which was scheduled to take place was canceled due to low registration.

**VIII. President’s Reports**
A. Board of Trustees
The Board’s Enrollment and Governance Ad Hoc Committees met on October 14, 2015.

B. Faculty Senate
Greg Long reported that the MAP rally that took place while Governor Rauner was at NIU on October 29, 2015, seemed successful. Long admitted that Program Prioritization process is painful. Faculty Senate has written a rough draft of a resolution to the Illinois government to end the budget impasse.

C. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC)
Haliczer reported that the MAP rally went well. She estimated that there were at least 500 people present at all times. SPS Council has started a Leadership Initiative. An average of 100 people have attended each session, and have collaborated. The attendance has been about one half SPS employees and one half civil service. Haliczer reminded everyone to check the SPS website for social activities.

D. University Council
No report

**IX. Committee Reports**
A. Workplace Issues
Met October 28, 2015. Committee Chair Jeffries wants to look at the operating staff survey that was conducted, and asked to see paper copies of this. Communication between OSC and campus still needs improvement, and Workplace Issues wants to work on this. The subject of desk audits was brought up, and Wybourn offered to help with this process, and Jeffries asked about the time frame. Also discussed were the “Steer Your Career” workshops. These were well-attended, but it cannot be said they improved morale.
Ad hoc Morale Committee
Did not meet. There was some discussion whether there is a need for this, or should it be expanded?

B. Elections and Appointments
Did not meet

C. Public Relations
The PR committee discussed the OSC’s idea of “A Huskie You Should Know,” versus Dr. Baker’s “Applaud a Colleague” initiative. To garner more publicity for OSC, PR talked about having meetings at different places on campus. Andree suggested the Field House since so many operating staff work in that vicinity. Another idea was to place ads about the OSC meetings in the Northern Star and the online Monday morning announcements.

D. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC)
EAC met October 14-15, 2015, at Illinois State University. Andy Small e-mailed a presentation that was given October 16, 2015, at Council of Councils at Illinois State University.

E. University Advisory Committee (UAC)
There was discussion about asking employees to use benefits for December 21, 22, and 23, in order to have two full weeks for the holiday break. It was decided that there was not enough time for employees to accrue those days, and it was short notice. This discussion was tabled.

F. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)
Rose Miller shared that the Administrative Professionals’ Day Breakfast will take place April 27, 2016. Nomination forms for the Pat Siebrasse Award will be available online after the first of the year, and will be due in March 2016.

G. Legislative Committee
Did not meet

X. Old Business
A. Letter to State Officials
Nicholson prepared a letter to be sent to state officials sharing our concerns about the budget impasse and lack of MAP funding and their chilling effects on higher education, and NIU’s ability to carry out its mission to educate its students.
B. Program Prioritization
Hulseberg shared that the academic and administrative task forces have posted their rubrics. The website is informative and up-to-date, and can be found at: http://www.niu.edu/program-prioritization.

C. Council of Councils
Vicky Nay spoke about her experience at the Council of Councils conference held at Illinois State University on October 16, 2015. ISU did a wonderful job hosting, and all the OSC members who were able to attend had a great time. Andy Small helped found this yearly conference, and the first one took place in 1997. The OSC members in attendance offered to host the conference in 2017, which marks the 20th anniversary of the Council of Councils.

XI. New Business
A. Holiday Closures
See IX. E

XII. Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens
Operating Staff Council Secretary