Minutes
Operating Staff Council
August 3, 2016
Hunt Room – 9:00 a.m.


Absent:  Angelica Gutierrez-Vargas

Guests:  Liz Guess, John Heckman, Sarah Klaper, Celeste Latham, Rose Miller, Andy Small, Karen Smith, Tom Viel

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 Kozumplik to accept the agenda. The motion was seconded by Raices and passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of July 7, 2016, minutes
A motion was made by Bohn to accept the July 7, 2016, minutes. The motion was seconded by Hulseberg and passed by unanimous vote.

V. Treasurer’s Report
Bohn went over the report, pointing out the charges for StaffFest, name tags for the newly-elected OSC members, and refreshments for the July meeting. He also noted that the money from the travel fund was now in the OSC checking account, mentioning that would be discussed in more detail later in the meeting. A motion was made by Andree to accept the report. The motion was seconded by Wielert and passed by unanimous vote.

VI. Visiting Committees/Guests
A. John Heckman, AVP for Facilities Management and Campus Services, and Tom Viel, Director of the Physical Plant were invited to discuss the new work order system. Heckman explained he wants to make improvements on how to handle
requests coming from all across campus, and ensure that the appropriate amount of
time is spent handling each request. Heckman said that 50 to 100 requests are
received per day, and a backlog can accumulate. It is at this time that the software
system can be leveraged.
1. Work requirements are centralized. Staff reviews requests on a weekly basis,
prioritize, do additional research if necessary, and sort requests.
2. Requests are divided into categories such as:
   a. Cost
   b. Type: is this a repair of a component; something new (new paint?)
   c. Discretionary: prioritized. Since the budget is tight, an estimated cost of less
      than $7500 is alright to do; above that cost, the request will have to be looked
      at more closely to see if there is an urgency to the mission of the university.
Heckman explained that his staff prioritizes based on the price of the requested
project. For minor work that costs less than $7500, Facilities Management & Campus
Services will find the money; for work costing more than $7500, the requesting
department will have to fund the project. Klaper asked about a work request that is
not being executed, even though she has the money to pay for it. If the work is not
being done, can that decision be appealed or can she ask for clarification. Heckman
replied that if there is no response to a work request, send an e-mail. Requests are
reviewed every week. Questions can also be expressed up to the vice-president or
dean level. It was stressed that requests are not deleted, and Viel asked for an
understanding of the volume of work orders received, and that employees please have
more realistic expectations of how much can be done and how quickly. Employees
and departments can contact Facilities Management and Campus Services at 753-
1941. Wielert asked about switching offices. Her office has the money for the project,
however Heckman responded that even if an office or department has the available
funds, his department sometimes does not have the time or resources to do the work.
His department works on projects that have been in planning for months, or even
years in advance. For larger projects that will cost more than $100,000, the plan is
done in FY +0, the design in FY +0/1, and construction in FY +1/2. However, he
stressed that emergencies are addressed right away. For example, water leaks, which
are considered facility emergencies, should be called in immediately. For
facility/utility emergencies, employees should call 753-1741 (24 hours). For routine
requests, use the online system to put in work requests. Employees can also contact
their building representatives with questions. Klaper asked if project timelines could
be put in the weekly announcements, and a list of the building contacts be made
available. Liberty-Baczek asked if Heckman would share his PowerPoint
presentation, and he said he would. Viel said that the work order request flow chart
would also be made available.
B. Liz Guess attended the OSC meeting to discuss the online enrollment system for insurance benefits, which will be implemented in September 2016. Central Management Services has issued IDs to access the system and there will be security questions to answer. There is an enrollment window for new employees, however the system will default to Quality Care if the new employee does not make a choice. Human Resource Services will announce information sessions for campus to highlight the new system. Benefits choice will be a paper-based process until August 16, 2016. Qualifying events (marriage, divorce, birth or adoption of a child, etc.), will be done online. For those NIU employees without access to a computer, there are computers in the Human Resources Campus Service Center in 110 Swen Parson and Human Resources on Lincoln Highway that are connected to printers in Human Resource Services.

C. Celeste Latham shared information about a recent Fair Labor Standards Act ruling, which would increase the salary threshold for overtime pay for those people who are paid hourly. Those who are paid under $47,476 are now eligible for overtime. It was clarified that the designation non-exempt=hourly, while exempt=salaried. One issue is moving from salaried to hourly and the paycheck that would be missed between December 15 and December 31. The university wants to ensure that no employee misses a paycheck. Latham estimated that the new federal ruling affects just over 500 NIU employees. Latham and Wybourn will be meeting with departments to clarify jobs. Hulseberg pointed out to Latham that a number of workers in the DoIT department felt coerced to sign job descriptions when they did not want to. The job descriptions should be an accurate reflection of what the employee does. Klaper informed Latham that she should expect a memo concerning giving guidance to supervisors about allowing employees to participate in shared governance activities.

VII. Public Comment
None

VIII. Announcements/Correspondence
Nicholson shared that Bohn has been hired as the Administrative Aide to the Operating Staff Council and the Supportive Professional Staff Council. Congratulations to Zach!

IX. President’s Reports
A. Board of Trustees
The state disbursed $48 million to NIU, which is not going to go far. The state claims this money is part of the 2017 fiscal year budget, while NIU believes it to be part of the 2016 budget. There was a discussion about the software program Academic Works which was purchased by the university. The software makes the scholarship
application process easier for reviewers and applicants. The next steps in Program Prioritization were discussed. By the end of 2017, there will have been complex conversations, the opportunity for NIU faculty and staff to raise reasonable objections, and point out the significant impacts that will result from implementation. There will be slides on President Baker’s website. There will be guiding principles on hiring, however the academic and administrative sides of the university will be in different buckets. A formal progress presentation will be held at the end of the year.

B. Faculty Senate
No report

C. Supportive Professional Staff Council
No report

D. University Council
No report

X. Committee Reports
A. Elections and Appointments
Due to the resignation of Lauren Belasco and Elizabeth Buck, the committee discussed transitioning Angela Bollinger and Colleen Leonard from alternates to council members. The OSC decided to make this official. A motion was made by Cabrera to approve Bollinger and Leonard as members of the Operating Staff Council. The motion was seconded by Bohn and passed by unanimous vote. Monteiro explained that representatives to University Council had to be chosen. As president of OSC, Nicholson is already a representative. However, another representative had to be chosen, along with two alternates. Elections were held. Wyzard was chosen as the second representative, with Wielert chosen as Wyzard’s alternate, and Hulseberg chosen as Nicholson’s alternate.

B. Employee Morale
Bohn reported that the group had a good, productive meeting. Small discussed the recent Fair Labor Standards Act ruling, furlough policy, and the merit policy. Employee Morale has decided to make Wellness Promotion its cause this year. The group will sponsor presentations on nutrition and wellness.

C. Legislative Committee
No report

D. Public Relations/Activities
No Report
E. StaffFest
OSC members are to meet at the Student Center at 9:30 a.m., Thursday, August 4, to help with set up. Members have signed up for various duties in the Ballroom, as well as to be present for the outdoor activities. Here’s to a great StaffFest!

F. Workplace Issues
No report

G. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)
Miller reported that Celeste Latham from Human Resource Services and Danielle Schultz from Internal Audit will be attending the September 14 APAC meeting to discuss Records Retention.

H. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC)
Small reported there will not be a Council of Councils meeting this year. The University of Illinois was scheduled to host, but is unable due to budget issues. We will host next year on the 20th anniversary. EAC discussed AFSCME, and talked about furloughs as a substitute for layoffs. Bohn inquired about NIU’s chances of experiencing furloughs. Small replied that he had not heard anything. Bollinger shared her belief that Al Phillips, Vice-President of Administration and Finance, has taken steps to prevent furloughs. The problem is cash flow.

I. University Advisory Committee (UAC)
No report

XI. Old Business
A. Travel Fund
Bohn and Nicholson met with the Controller’s Office and found that the Travel Fund could be closed out and transferred to the OSC’s NIU credit union account. The fund currently amounts to $1134.84. After some research, it was discovered that the fund was started in 1980 by a group called the Salary Justice Committee. Because the funds were originally intended to help NIU employees, Bohn and Nicholson shared their idea of donating the money to the NIU Annuitants Association (NIUAA). A motion was made by Cabrera to vote on distributing the funds to the NIUAA. A discussion followed. Bollinger asked if there was consideration given to donating the money to the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship fund, and if other mechanisms had been used to raise money for the scholarship. Nicholson acknowledged that, yes that had been thought about but the Controller’s office seemed to steer them toward using the money for operating staff since that was its original intention. Hulseberg called the question, thereby stopping discussion. The motion to vote on donating the
funds to the NIUAA was seconded by Bollinger and passed unanimously. Nicholson called for the vote. The council voted unanimously to donate the former travel account funds to the NIU Annuitants Association. There were no abstentions.

XII. New Business

XIII. Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens
Operating Staff Council Secretary