Minutes
Operating Staff Council
February 4, 2016
Sky Room – 9:00 a.m.


Absent: Barbara Andree, Nancy Brown, Angie Gutierrez-Vargas, Yvette Lubbers, David Smith, Karen Smith

Guests: Steve Builta, Lisa Carlsen, Abigail Dean, Sarah Klaper, Greg Long, Mark Montgomery, 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 Liberty-Baczek to accept the agenda. The motion was seconded by Bohn and passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of January 7, 2016, minutes
A motion was made by Nay to accept the January 7, 2016, minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Raices and passed by unanimous vote.

V. Treasurer’s Report
Bohn read through the report, making special notice of the amount paid for refreshments at the January 7, 2016, OSC meeting. This was due to holding the meeting off campus at the NIU Wellness/Literacy Center. A motion was made by Raices to accept the treasurer’s report. The motion was seconded by Roesner and passed by unanimous vote.

VI. Visiting Committees/Guests
Lisa Carlsen and Mark Montgomery from Intercollegiate Athletics attended the OSC meeting. Carlsen has been the NIU women’s basketball coach since July 1, 2015. She talked about upcoming games, including one on February 10, 2016, at 11:00 a.m., which will include a potluck lunch in the Nelson Suite in the Convocation Center. On February 13, there will be a double-header with the women’s team playing at 1:00 p.m., and the men’s team playing afterward. The women’s team will be playing for breast cancer
Coach Carlsen hosts “Coffee with Carlsen” one Tuesday a month during basketball season at 7:30 a.m. at the Lincoln Inn. Men’s basketball coach, Mark Montgomery, hosts “Lunch with Monty” at Fanatico which has a $10 buffet and offers networking opportunities. Montgomery explained that the team has a five-day road trip coming up. His goal for the team has been to win 20 games this year, which is something NIU hasn’t done in a number of years.

Abigail Dean from University Marketing shared with OSC the brand survey results. This is the first time NIU has conducted a survey like this. A brand is a living and breathing thing, and it can show people’s perception versus reality. The brand survey showed a number of different things. Current undergrads are most positive about NIU, while faculty and staff rate it lower. NIU cut its marketing budget last year, which might have contributed to the result that first-time undergrads and parents know very little about NIU. Undergrads gave positive feedback on NIU’s homepage, while transfer students did not. Liberty-Baczek asked if there will be follow-up with the groups that participated in the survey. Nay inquired if Lipman/Hearne was involved with this survey. Dean replied, yes, and that NIU paid $80,000 for their services. When asked if she could share this information, Dean replied that she could and would send it to the OSC members through Nicholson. Liberty-Baczek, Hulseberg and Nay began discussing why students come to NIU. It was pointed out that how a university is ranked doesn’t really matter to teenagers, but they do matter to businesses who are hiring graduates. Bohn shared that he had friends who chose not to come to NIU because of negative interactions with staff.

Rhonda Wybourn shared that the Department of Labor is proposing to make certain positions exempt from overtime. As it stands right now, salaries of $23,660 can be exempt. The proposal is to increase the salary to $50,440. This increase means that some hourly employees will move to salaried. Because of payroll timing, those employees will experience an extra two-week lag between paychecks. Updates to FLSA have not been finalized, and Human Resource Services will keep us informed.

VII. Public Comment
No report

VIII. Announcements/Correspondence
The NIU Student Association’s campaign to help eliminate the stigma of mental illness is called “No Shame.” The OSC discussed MAP grants. Around 5700 NIU students receive these grants. It was announced that spring 2016 had the highest retention rate in five years; 88% of NIU students from fall semester came back for spring. Monteiro announced that there will be a Town Hall meeting with President Baker on February 16 at 2:00 p.m., in the Regency Room. Long said that this will be an unscripted meeting.
Liberty-Baczek announced that the Black Male Initiative will be holding a blood drive on February 9, 2016, from 2:00 – 8:00 p.m.

IX. President’s Reports
A. Executive Committee
All OSC committees should send their minutes to Nicholson to be put on One Drive. Nicholson was concerned whether or not the OSC and its committees are subject to the Open Meetings Act just as the Board of Trustees is, so she met with Greg Brady from University Legal Services. He is researching this and looking for precedents to answer this question. It is hoped there will be an answer by March.

B. Board of Trustees

C. Faculty Senate
NIU Police Chief Phillips was invited to the Faculty Senate meeting to discuss security issues. Phillips spoke at length about his law enforcement background, and several of his experiences and challenges here at NIU.

D. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC)
Builta talked about degree completion. Civil service workers can receive a raise in pay if they complete a degree or certificate related to their work. SPS employees do not enjoy this same benefit. He also reported that the SPS Council’s constituents are discouraged from participating in shared governance.

E. University Council
No report

X. Committee Reports
A. Elections and Appointments
This committee met January 21, 2016. Committee members went over the OSC handbook, and noted several items that need to be changed. The handbook will be sent to the Legislative Committee for editing. With the yearly OSC committee election coming up, it was decided that the announcement of the election will occur in mid-March. Candidate data sheets will be due early in April. Ballots will go out around the third week in April, and will be due about two weeks after that. Exact dates will be announced. At the February 4 OSC meeting, Hulseberg distributed a list of all OSC members and which year their term would end. There will be five positions to be filled.

B. Legislative Committee
No report. Nicholson reported that Ferald Bryan, Parliamentarian for the University Council, has been invited to the OSC’s March 3, 2016, meeting to assist the council with learning Robert’s Rules of Order and proper parliamentary procedure. Liberty-
Baczek commented that when she has attended University Council meetings, there are a number of members who regularly do not attend meetings. OSC has an attendance stipulation in its bylaws. Jeffries went over how the OSC changes its bylaws and constitution.

C. Public Relations
The deadline for applying for the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship Award has passed. Thirteen applications were received, although two were disqualified. The upkeep of the Outstanding Service Award plaques by the OSC was discussed. At first, a motion was made by Monteiro for the OSC to manage updates to the Service Award plaques and include updates to the OSC Past Presidents plaque. The motion was seconded by Liberty-Baczek and passed with one nay vote. Then, a motion was made by Hulseberg for the OSC to take responsibility for the plaques OSC is accountable for. The motion was seconded by Liberty-Baczek and passed with two nay votes.

D. Workplace Issues
A motion was made by Jeffries that the Workplace Issues committee reserves the right to go into closed session for the last 15 minutes of meetings to discuss confidential matters. The motion was seconded by Nay. Nicholson shared her concern that all OSC committees should run open meetings. If the Open Meetings Act applies to OSC committee meetings, then they must remain open. Nicholson tabled the motion until university legal advice can be obtained. Therefore, all committee meetings will proceed as before. A motion was made by Jeffries to discharge the Ad Hoc Employee Morale Committee, explaining that the group had met its goals. The motion was seconded by Roesner and passed with one nay vote.

Ad hoc Employee Morale Committee
No report

E. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)
No report

F. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC)
Small announced that he has been reelected Chair. He will be working with Human Resource Directors. EAC approved electronic voting. NIU will not hold another EAC election for four years. Small said that the Merit Board’s chair, James Montgomery, was reelected. The board met January 27, 2016, and discussed three employee discharges, state statute changes, and changes at the state systems office.

G. University Advisory Committee (UAC)
No report
XI. Old Business
A. 2016 Holiday Schedule
Delegated to Workplace Issues committee

XII. New Business
A. Ad hoc Employee Morale Committee
Nicholson established a new Ad Hoc Committee on Employee Morale to work with other councils, University Marketing, and any other applicable departments to address low morale on campus. Progress will be reviewed annually through a report by the committee, results from subsequent branding surveys, and an annual OSC survey. Timing of that review is to be determined. Once a council president determines that substantial progress has been made campus-wide, the committee will be dissolved at the discretion of the president. Or, at any time, the council can vote to establish a standing committee for employee morale. Nicholson will convene the first meeting of the committee, with the members of the former ad hoc committee, in the absence of a chair. A motion was made by Monteiro to form a standing Employee Morale Committee. The motion was seconded by Liberty-Baczek and passed with one abstention.

B. Operating Staff Service Award in OSC Bylaws
See X. C

XIII. Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens
Operating Staff Council Secretary