Northern Illinois University
Supportive Professional Staff Council Meeting
MINUTES
Thursday, June 11, 2015
HSC Clara Sperling Skyroom
10:00 a.m.

Present: Diane Alberts, Karinne Bredburg, Steve Builta, Ximena Burgin, Melissa Burlingame, Catherine Doederlein, Amy Flewelling, Dana Gautcher, Megan Gerken, Lesley Gilbert, Deborah Haliczer, Sabrina Hammond, Emily Hochstatter, Betsy Hull, Gail Jacky, Sandy Lopez, Janet Love-Moore, Patricia Martinez, Jeanne Meyer, Debra Miller, Kiera Miller, Nick Piazza, Donna Schoenfeld, Gail Schumacher, Kathy Smith, Michael Stang, Nicole Stroobants, Christina Sutcliffe, Brian Walk, and Rachel Xidis

Excused: Eric Biletzky, Debra Boughton, Anne Hardy, Randi Napientek, and Donna Smith

Absent: Dan House

Guests: Sarah Klaper, Sheila Milan, Jay Monteiro, and Al Phillips

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. by Supportive Professional Staff Council President Deborah Haliczer who welcomed everyone to the final meeting of the fiscal year. She congratulated those who are completing terms on Council and reminded everyone the new Council members start in July.

Haliczer made several additions to the agenda, under ‘Announcements’ she added, “C. Emergency Exercise”, “D. SPS Representation on Dean Searches”, “E. July Council Meeting”, and “F. Orientation Reminder”. Haliczer asked for further additions to the agenda. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve the amended agenda. The motion to approve the amended agenda was made by Doederlein and was seconded by Burlingame. The motion to approve the amended agenda was passed.

Haliczer asked for corrections to the May 14, 2015 minutes. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Meyer and was seconded by Bredburg. The motion to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2015 meeting was passed.

Attendance was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

Guest Speakers

Dr. Al Phillips, Vice President – Administration and Finance
Haliczer welcomed Phillips to the meeting. He thanked Council for the opportunity to speak and provide an update on the university’s financial situation. He began by sharing his background and past experience and why he decided to come to NIU. He next provided a PowerPoint presentation for members which explained the state’s current fiscal situation and factors which affect NIU’s fiscal outlook. He discussed the current state procurement process and how NIU is trying to streamline the process, while maintaining all state policies. He talked about funding trends in Higher Education and how NIU is working to meet these challenges. He also discussed some other funding concerns (i.e. deferred maintenance) that many employees don’t commonly think about, which also add to the university’s funding concerns.
He discussed how prioritizing funding concerns on campus can help when there will be money available to purchase or when replacing items is necessary. He shared how the department of Transportation created a five year plan which prioritizes spending and how and when vehicles will be replaced.

After completing his presentation, he opened the floor to questions from Council. After questions he thanked Council for the opportunity to speak and thanked all employees for the work they continue to do to serve the students and the university. Haliczer invited him to return to Council to provide an update once the state’s financial outlook gets a little clearer.

Announcements

A. Summer Flex Schedules
Haliczer reminded Council the summer flex schedule period has begun and noted supervisors had different options for how they could implement flex times for employees, if appropriate for the department.

B. Communiversity Gardens Update
Burlingame announced there are still opportunities for students groups or departments to volunteer at the Communiversity Garden this summer. She said 2/3 of the garden has been planted, but help is always welcome. She reminded members of the volunteer times: Tuesdays (4 - 6 p.m.), Thursdays (2 - 4 p.m.), and Sundays (2 - 4 p.m.). If someone would like to schedule times outside of regular volunteer hours, she asked individuals to send their request to niucg@niu.edu. Volunteers were reminded to not track mud and dirt through Anderson or park on sidewalks or grass near the building if volunteering.

C. Emergency Exercise
Meyer announced the NIU Police will be hosting an Emergency Exercise on Friday, July 10th and bystander volunteers are needed. This event not only benefits NIU police, but will also have state and federal law enforcement participating. Those interested in volunteering were asked to contact Carolyn Giacchetti at 753-1212.

D. SPS Representation on Dean Searches
Haliczer announced she has been contacted by the Executive Vice President and Provost, Lisa Freeman, seeking SPS representatives for four Dean searches (College of Business, College of Education, College of Law, and the College of Visual and Performing Arts). All SPS employees interested in serving on one of the searches should submit their name and contact information to Stang or Jacky by August 1st, so the Constitution and Elections committee can create the ballot for Council vote. A representative and alternate will be selected for each search committee and selected names will be submitted to Freeman following the August meeting. An email will be sent to all SPS employees seeking nominations.

E. July Council Meeting
Haliczer stated during the July meeting new representative and alternate members will be invited to attend as all members need to select their committee(s) for the upcoming year and she would like for each committee to hold a brief meeting at the end of the July meeting to select Chair(s) – which will be approved during the August meeting. Haliczer would also like the Technology Resources committee to provide a brief presentation on Vibe and other resources available for Council use.

F. Orientation Reminder
Council members were reminded that Orientation began today for our new Huskie students and their families. Haliczer asked everyone to remember to show their Huskie
spirit and make students and their families feel proud they picked NIU to be their academic home.

Committees of the Council

Awards
Gilbert began by recognizing Council members who were completing their terms this month, those members are: Ximena Burgin, Abigail Dean, Amy Flewelling, Megan Gerken, Deborah Gettemy, Dan House, Jeanne Meyer, Donna Smith, and Rita Yusko. All were presented with certificates, congratulated for their service to Council, and asked to consider returning to Council in the future.

She reported the committee is working on the end-of-year committee report, which should be done soon. Next month, the committee will select leadership and start work on a new awards year.

The committee thanked all Council members and university employees for their assistance with all phases of the awards process over the past year, which made it possible to recognize this year’s award winners. Gilbert thanked everyone for their continued support of the Awards committee and asks employees to continue to find ways to recognize each other in the future.

Communications
Xidis and Walk reported they are working on updates to Council representatives and alternates on the webpage. They will also make updates to the Awards and Scholarship pages once they have confirmed all the information. They asked if there is additional Council information which needs to be updated to contact either Xidis or Walk.

Constitution & Elections
Stang and Jacky announced there were more university committees which Council members needed to vote for SPS representatives. Stang shared ballots with Council and provided members time to make their selections.

Three employees, Amy Flewelling, Sheila Milan and Jeffrey Salmon, were nominated for the Campus Parking Committee to fill one vacancy. Council voted and Amy Flewelling was selected to serve on the Campus Parking Committee.

One SPS vacancy is available for the Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee. Four SPS employees were nominated to fill the vacancy – Melanie Costello, Jennifer Groce, Judy Schneider, and Kelly Smith. Council voted and Melanie Costello was selected to serve on the Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee.

Stang announced there is still a vacancy on the Parking Appeals Committee and no SPS employees have been nominated to fill the vacancy. The Constitution & Elections committee will continue to accept nominations for this committee until the vacancy is filled.

Jacky announced that 10 SPS employees were nominated for the SPS Hearing Board/Grievance Committee Panels: Eric Biletzky, Melissa Burlingame, Cathy Doederlein, Amy Flewelling, Megan Gerken, Anne Hardy, Betsy Hull, Gail Jacky, Sandi Splansky, and Rachel Xidis. Bredburg made a motion to approve the 10 employees for the board and the motion was seconded by Schoenfeld. Council voted and Eric Biletzky, Melissa Burlingame, Cathy Doederlein, Amy Flewelling, Megan Gerken, Anne Hardy, Betsy Hull, Gail Jacky, Sandi Splansky, and Rachel Xidis were approved as members of the SPS Hearing Board/Grievance Committee Panels. With these 10 new members, there is still a need for
three more SPS employees to complete the board. Those SPS employees interested were asked to contact Stang or Jacky.

Stang and Jacky were thanked for having the ballot prepared and ready well in advance of the meeting, allowing members time to review all the nominees before voting.

**Events**

Love-Moore reported the SPS Mixer at Four Seasons Sports on May 19th was a small gathering, but everyone there seemed to have a good time and a few new employees attended.

She announced there are two proposed sessions for R.A.D. Training (June 16, 18, 23, and 25 or July 11, 18, and 25). Those who are interested in attending were asked to contact Love-Moor or complete the R.S.V.P. form which was included in the email sent to all SPS employees.

She reminded Council another “Meals on Wheels” event is planned for June 17th. She passed a sign-up sheet as more volunteers are needed.

The committee is working on finalizing plans for the future, which includes the second part of last year’s Campus Art Sculpture tour, a tour of the Egyptian Theatre and other events. All SPS employees will be notified via email as events are finalized.

Love-Moore announced over 21 events were planned this year for SPS employees and she and Burlingame thanked everyone for their support.

**Finance**

Hull reported $193 remains in the SPS Council budget for the year. Any committee that needs money was asked to contact her as soon as possible. She shared she has asked about the Council budget for next year and has only been told there will be a budget, but not sure how much at this time.

**Legislative Issues**

Schoenfeld shared Al Phillips provided a great update on the state of Illinois funding. She advised employees to continue to watch the university webpage, Annuitants Association information, and news updates for the latest updates.

**SPS Dependent Scholarship**

Bredburg reported for Hardy that there is $4,633 in the scholarship account, which includes the funds for this year’s scholarship winner. She asked everyone to consider donating to the fund and asked members to spread the word about the scholarship with fellow employees.

**Technology Resources**

Walk shared everyone on campus should now have migrated to Outlook and he hopes everyone is adjusting well, they have heard of no major problems. He announced Jonathon Ostenburg is working with DoIT reps to move the SPS mailbox to the Outlook platform and should be done soon. He added the committee will work on some information to help new SPS members with technology resources for Council.

**Workplace Issues**

Builta shared with Council the results of the first morale survey. The survey asked for members to rank the top three morale issues facing NIU. The top three were:

1. Issues related to compensation or raises.
2. Feeling undervalued or not appreciated.
3. Workloads
The second question asked members to rank things which can or should be done on campus to improve morale. The top three responses were:

1. Encourage hiring or promotion from within.
2. Encourage transparency related to change at all at all levels of the university.
3. Develop a structure for extra compensation.

Council had a discussion why compensation or raises was not first on changes that should happen. A comment was made that employees continue to hear raises can’t happen now, so members looked at what is actually something that CAN happen immediately. Builta will post survey results to Vibe.

Doederlein explained some of the projects she and Builta are working on as part of the Provost’s Task Force on SPS policies. One item includes an ‘Extra Compensation’ statement on the APPM and also updating the Performance Appraisal Process within the SPS section of the APPM. She shared all proposed changes will be submitted to Council for approval before moving on the next approval steps.

Committees of the University

**Vice President**

A. Committee Summary Report
   Hardy’s report has been posted to Vibe and all members were asked to review this month’s report, as it contains many end-of-year committee reports.

**OLD BUSINESS**

A. Morale Issues
   Haliczer thanked Builta and Doederlein for sharing the survey results and posting them to Vibe.

B. Program Prioritization Update
   Haliczer announced employees selected to serve on the Task Force have been contacted, but names will not be shared until all have signed their agreements to serve on the committee. All the latest information is available on the Program Prioritization webpage.

C. SPS Emeritus Proposal Committee
   Haliczer reminded Council this committee is tabled until this summer.

D. SPS Leadership Skills Workshop – Planning Committee
   Hardy has scheduled a meeting in July when the committee will continue to work on plans for these workshops. She will provide an update during the July meeting.

E. Provost’s Task Force on SPS Policies
   Haliczer thanked Doederlein for her report during the Workplace Issues report.

F. SPS Committee Reports
   Haliczer reminded Council the SPS Committee reports from Chairs is due by June 30th, so she has time to compile all of the information for the July meeting where she will submit the full report.

G. New SPS Representative and Alternate Orientation
   Haliczer shared the committee will meet soon to finalize plans for the July orientation.
H. BOT Board Meeting Statement
Haliczer shared a public statement from the Board of Trustees which addresses some items they are going to undertake including some changes to their Bylaws, including the role of the BOT in approving items of matter regarding the university. Haliczer will post a copy of the document on Vibe.

NEW BUSINESS
A. Workplace Issues Exercise
The Workplace Issues committee led the Council on an exercise to address employee morale.

Operating Staff Council (OSC)
Haliczer and Council recognized Monteiro, outgoing Operating Staff Council President, for his service over the past year for OSC and on behalf of campus Civil Service employees.

University Committee Reports
Haliczer will post her committee reports in Vibe for review by Council.

Final Comments
Haliczer thanked Council for their hard work over the past year and looks forwards to another great year. She again recognized those individuals leaving Council.

Adjournment
With no further business, Haliczer asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was made by Flewelling and was seconded by Gautcher. The meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Lesley Gilbert, SPSC Secretary