Northern Illinois University
Supportive Professional Staff Council Meeting
MINUTES
Thursday, June 12, 2014
HSC Clara Sperling Skyroom
10:00 a.m.

Present: Diane Alberts, Pat Anderson, Melissa Burlingame, Catherine Doederlein, Dana Gautcher, Megan Gerken, Lesley Gilbert, Deborah Haliczer, Anne Hardy, Emily Hochstatter, Gail Jacky, Bri Lauka, Janet Love-Moore, Jeanne Meyer, Debra Miller, Kiera Miller, Randi Napientek, Donna Schoenfeld, Donna Smith, Kathy Smith, Michael Stang, Brian Walk and Rachel Xidis

Excused: Eric Biletzky, Steve Builta, Dan House, Betsy Hull, Marti Jernberg, Anne Petty Johnson and Christina Sutcliffe

Absent: Cliff Bottiglieri

Guests: Bobbie Cesarek, Victoria Livingston, Samantha McCarron, Nick Piazza, Bill Pitney and Karen Smith

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Supportive Professional Staff Council President Deborah Haliczer. With many guests and newly elected Council members present, she began with introductions.

Haliczer made one addition to the agenda under ‘Announcements’ adding, “E. Campus Reorganizations”. Haliczer asked for further additions. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve the amended agenda. The motion to approve the amended agenda was made by Meyer and was seconded by Love-Moore. **The motion to approve the amended agenda was passed unanimously.**

Haliczer asked for corrections to the May 15, 2014 minutes. She made a correction. In discussions regarding the pension injunction, during conversations it was referred to as a restraining order, but she suggested using the term injunction to remain consistent. She asked for additional changes. Hearing none she asked for a motion to approve the amended minutes. The motion to approve the amended minutes was made by Doederlein and was seconded by Meyer. **The motion to approve the amended minutes of the May 15, 2014 meeting was passed unanimously.**

Attendance was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

Guest Speakers
Haliczer announced there were two speakers for the meeting. First would be Dr. Bobbie Cesarek, past SPS Council President. The second is Bill Pitney, who is replacing Alan Rosenbaum as the Executive Secretary of University Council and President of Faculty Senate.

Bobbie Cesarek, Retired SPS Council President
Cesarek welcomed the opportunity to return to SPS Council to meet new members and is delighted to see friends and familiar faces. She is interested in hearing about the projects Council is currently pursuing for employees. She spoke briefly about projects she has been working on since retiring.
Bill Pitney, Executive Secretary of University Council and President of Faculty Senate
Pitney thanked Council for the invitation to come speak and provided some personal background. He is looking forward to beginning his term on July 1st and is enthusiastic about the role. He said he will try to stay abreast of Council concerns.

Announcements

A. SURS and SUAA – Motion for Injunctive Relief
Haliczer reminded Council a motion for injunctive relief was filed last month, which has allowed some employees who didn’t want to retire to remain employed while a final decision is made by the courts. She said there were reports of high numbers of university employees possibly eligible to retire, but the most recent numbers show about 160 employees look to be retiring as of this point. Of retirements filed, 10 have been rescinded. Employees who are considering retirement in the near future or have questions about buying time were asked to consult with HR or SURS for the most up-to-date information.

B. NIU Annuities Associate Annual Meeting – June 4th Report
Haliczer announced the NIUAA held its’ annual meeting on June 4th and for the first time more active employees, than ever in history, were voted to the Board. Judy Santacaterina, Judy Burgess, Pam Rosenberg and Haliczer joined one other active employee as Board members for NIUAA. She shared the NIUAA has the largest number of active employees and is the second largest group in the state, second only to the University of Illinois. The organization is trying to get 200 new members, which would provide another vote for the Board. She asked Council who are not currently members to consider joining and reminded members; membership is only a few dollars a month. She shared members enjoy many benefits such as discounted trips, timely emails and updates regarding pension issues from the organization, and the yearly annual dinner.

C. NIU Move-In and Welcome Days Planning
Stang reminded Council Move-In Day will be on Friday, August 22nd this year, not Thursday. The Academic Convocation has been replaced by the “Huskie Family Welcome” which will be held that Friday evening. The President’s Picnic is planned for Sunday, August 24th at the East Lagoon, beginning at 4:30 p.m. All Council members were asked to mark their calendars for these important events. He shared the registration is now open for those who are interested in volunteering to assist with Move-In or other Welcome Days events. Employees can visit the webpages or contact him for more information.

Council was reminded Summer Orientation began this week and we need to be mindful of helping parents or students who appear to be in need of assistance. A comment was shared asking everyone to remember that even though a student and his/her family are attending Orientation, some use the experience as the opportunity to see how the university will treat them. A bad experience during Orientation could make a potential student decide not to attend.

D. Campus Plans / Construction
Haliczer shared there is not a firm date set for the demolition of Douglas Hall. With all of the construction occurring around campus, employees were asked to be careful walking near construction zones.

E. Campus Reorganizations
Haliczer stated there have been some reorganizations across campus this spring and Human Resources is also currently under-going reorganization with a mission of
improving the customer experience. Some offices have been moved and the department is still working on many of the details, but one of the changes is that she is now in charge of the Center for Training and Professional Development – with the assistance of Karen Smith and Gilbert. Plans are still being made to fully map out all of the training that will be available, but she said Supervisor Training and Customer Service Training will be available to employees. For those who have questions regarding any of the changes, they were asked to call 753-6000.

Committees of the Council

Awards
Gautcher reported the Committee met on May 27th to discuss plans for next year’s Awards Ceremony and to work on the committee annual report, which she posted into Vibe this morning. If anyone would like a copy, please contact her or Gilbert and they will email a copy. She said the pictures have been ordered from the Awards Ceremony and recipients of awards should receive them next week.

Communications
Walk announced the newsletter was sent out and it appears about 250 employees viewed the document, which is down a little bit from the Fall edition. He said the committee will be working on website updates soon, so if Council members know of any changes which need to be made, contact either Walk or Xidis soon.

Constitution & Elections
Stang shared there were four more SPS employees who were interested in serving on the SPS Grievance Committee – Eric Biletzky, Steve Builta, Janet Love-Moore, and Donna Schoenfeld. Stang made a motion to approve the four employees for the committee. The motion was seconded by Meyer. The motion to approve Biletzky, Builta, Love-Moore, and Schoenfeld for the SPS Grievance Committee was approve unanimously.

Haliczer shared some concerns with Council about the university grievance committees and how she is working to ensure all students and staff who serve on them receive training to help them serve effectively and learn their protections under the university.

Events
Burlingame provided a recap of the events hosted by the committee over the last year. The committee hosted five “Lunch & Learn” events, which had 112 attendees. There were four social events, which had 170 attendees. The committee hosted five tours with 88 attendees. Finally, there were two service events offered via the committee (NIU Cares Day and the Meals On Wheels event). She reported the “SPS Monthly Mixer” at Mikimoto’s went very well and received great attendance. The next ‘SPS Monthly Mixer’ is scheduled to be held at Fanatico’s on June 26th with a time to be determined soon and the announcement made to employees. Other upcoming summer events include an Outdoor Sculpture Tour which is planned for Tuesday, July 29th and a tour of the Outdoor Recreation Center, likely near the end of July. Once the final details are worked out, those events will be announced. The committee is also still working on details for an Office of Student Engagement & Experiential Learning (OSEEL) and First-Year Experience (FYE) Tour and an Observatory Night (preferably during one of the summer meteor showers) sometime in August.

Finance
Hull was unable to attend the meeting. There was no report from the Finance committee.
Legislative Issues
Bottiglieri was unable to attend the meeting. There was no report from the Legislative Issues committee.

SPS Dependent Scholarship
Hardy shared the SPS Dependent Scholarship fund currently has a balance of approximately $3,168, which includes the $1,000 which will be awarded to this year’s scholarship winner. She thanked everyone who has made a donation to the fund this year and asks those who are able, but have not yet donated, to please consider doing so.

Technology Resources
Alberts reported the SPS Distribution list has been updated, so all new Council members should be receiving the email announcements. Those members who are leaving Council will be removed after July 1st.

Walk announced the Vibe Council member list will also be updated after the July meeting. He shared the campus will be moving to the Microsoft Office Platform of software some time later this year, which means GroupWise and Vibe will no longer be utilized. He said the committee will begin researching SharePoint (as a likely replacement to Vibe) or other options which may be available to Council. As they learn more about the changes, they will update Council. The committee will also need to determine what affect, if any, these changes will have on the SPS election process.

Walk also shared the committee is working on purchasing the microphone for Council meetings, which is being donated by Bill Nicklas. Haliczer explained there were some minor financial details which needed to be figured out to properly purchase the system.

Workplace Issues
Kathy Smith shared the committee met and discussed employee workloads which continue to be of great concern to employees, especially with the number of retirements, and tried to work on ideas for providing employees with avenues of assistance. She shared with Council a document for educational compensation, which employees can complete if they have received a degree or certificate. Haliczer said she believes the document might be only for use with Civil Service employees, but the group will do further research to verify. Clarification was made that it is up to the requesting employee’s supervisor to determine whether or not to grant such a raise. She added the next meeting is June 26th.

Committees of the University

Vice President
Hardy noted her report includes year-end reports from some of the committees which have SPS representatives. She expects more reports to come in over the next few days and asked Council to review them to see what university committees are working on.

OLD BUSINESS
A. Guest Speakers for 2014
Haliczer reminded Council there are requests to invite Brett Coryell (CIO), Career Services, and to invite President Baker back to speak about his first year on campus. She asked members to think of other suggestions, as Council will work on the guest speaker list during the July meeting.

B. Bold Futures - Discussion
Council removed the Bold Futures discussion from the agenda, since the workshops are now past. Members expressed interest in possibly meeting with consultants or
administration to learn how suggestions made by the Bold Futures groups are being implemented into changes which are occurring on campus.

C. **Policy on University Service**
Haliczer reminded Council an Ad hoc committee was formed to look over a 2007 document “Policy on University Service” which outlines rights and reasons SPS employees should be allowed to serve on university committees. The document was drafted following employees reporting being asked to resign from Council by supervisors and also to protect supervisors who have employees who serve on numerous committees and are unable to fulfill job duties. The committee met prior to the meeting to review the document and make edits and suggestions. Haliczer asked all Council to review the document, which is available in Vibe, and to send any edits to Gilbert. The document will be brought before Council during the July meeting for discussion and vote. If approved by Council, it will be sent to Operating Staff Council for consideration as well, since Civil Service employees share some concerns with SPS Council in seeking employees to serve on university committees.

D. **Sabbaticals Workshop Report**
Haliczer and Burlingame reported approximately 20 SPS employees attended the Sabbaticals workshop led by Dr. Sharon Smaldino on May 22nd in the Heritage Room. She said the PowerPoint which was presented should be included on the SPS Council website for those employees who were unable to attend the session, but want to learn more.

E. **Report on SPS Survey on SPS Contributions to Bold Futures**
Hardy provided an update on the SPS Survey seeking for employees to explain how they are providing students opportunities for career success. She said the survey received an overwhelming response from 57 employees who provided wonderful responses. She has compiled the information in a report and Word Clouds which are both on Vibe and which she has sent to Haliczer and Gilbert for inclusion in the annual report and archive materials.

**NEW BUSINESS**

A. **SPS New Member Orientation**
Haliczer announced there will be orientation for new members to Council prior to the July 10th meeting. Gilbert is working on information packets for new members. Name tents and meeting dates for the upcoming year will also be ready for the July meeting. Xidis reminded members the annual group photograph will be taken in September.

B. **Organizing for SPS Annual Report**
Haliczer reminded Council, Committee reports are due to her by June 30th, so she can work on the annual report. She hopes to be able to present the annual report during the July 10th meeting.

**Operating Staff Council**
Karen Smith shared the Operating Staff Council has nominations for Council officer elections which will be held during the July meeting and they are preparing for StaffFest which will be held on Thursday, August 7th. She added there will be some small changes to StaffFest, but SPS who are interested in assisting, were asked to contact her.

**University Committee Reports**
Haliczer reminded Council the Board of Trustees will meet on Thursday, June 19th and there will not be a meeting of the University Council until the Fall semester begins.
Adjournment
With no further business, Haliczer asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was made by Gerken and was seconded by Lauka. The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Lesley Gilbert, SPSC Secretary