
VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Baker, Bond, Donovan, Downing (PTP leave), Feurer, Freeman, Giese, Kapitan, Kolb (on leave from UC), Kowalski, Leonhardt, Long, E. Lopez, Middleton, Polzin, Rollman, Smith, VandeCreek, Vohra

OTHERS PRESENT: Alden, Bryan, Caldwell (for Weldy), Cunningham, Hathaway, Kaplan, Klaper, Suttenfield, Thompson

OTHERS ABSENT: Armstrong, Blakemore, Falkoff, Gebo, McHone-Chase, Slotsve, Waas, Weldy

I. CALL TO ORDER

D. Schoenbachler: Okay, we’ll call the meeting to order. I’m Denise Schoenbachler. I’m Dean of the College of Business. Our president, our provost, and our most senior dean are all out so, tag you’re it, Denise.

Meeting called to order at 3:05 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

D. Schoenbachler: The first item, the adoption of the agenda as written. We have no walk-in items. Do I have a motion to approve?

R. Lopez: So moved.

D. Haliczer: Second.

D. Schoenbachler: Any discussion or any issues? By a show of hands all those in favor? Opposed, abstentions? All right thank you.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 4, 2013 MEETING

D. Schoenbachler: We next need to vote on the minutes of the December 4 meeting. Do we have a motion to approve?
D. Munroe: I move approval.

D. Schoenbachler: Do we have a second?

A. Small: Second.

D. Schoenbachler: All right, any discussion comments? All right, show of hands all, those in favor. Opposed? Abstentions? Thank you.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. “Policies and Guiding Principles for Annual Budget Development and Multi-Year Financial Planning” draft – Pages 3-7, PowerPoint presentation
Nancy Suttenfield, Interim Chief Financial Officer

D. Schoenbachler: The next item on the agenda is president’s announcements. I am not he so I don’t have any. However, representing the president’s office today we do have our interim CFO, Nancy Suttenfield, who is going to be giving a presentation this morning on the Policies and Guiding Principles for Annual Budget Development and Multi-Year Financial Planning. So, Nancy, first of all again welcome. We met you at previous council meeting. Happy to have you and the floor is yours.

N. Suttenfield: Well, first of all I want to thank each and every one of you that I’ve had the opportunity to get to know in other committee meetings or in other personal settings and especially to thank you for your very warm welcome. And I’ve been looking forward all month to this discussion today. I think we have a lot to talk about and I don’t want to spend a lot of time talking at you or talking to you but I do want to highlight some of the changes that the interim provost and I have been talking about with the cabinet and with the deans’ councils and with various other groups.

And the entire point of today’s discussion is just that – to have a discussion with you because there are a lot of new concepts that we’re thinking about. We’re in the process of implementing some of them at the cabinet level so there’s good progress to report there. And so I’d like to also use today’s discussion as an opportunity to fill in where I can where we are making progress and also to give you a glimpse of some of the things to come over the coming six months, and even beyond that, for probably a period of up to two years. The changes that we’re talking about for our financial planning and budgeting processes are indeed transformational, and transformation doesn’t happen overnight. It happens through an orderly process. It happens in a way in which all key decisions and changes are reflective of the dialog that’s taken place that goes before. And part of the reason that I think we’re anticipating that it might take as long as 18 to 24 months to get where all of us would like to be, is because we want to build in ample opportunities for dialog.

I know you all have had an opportunity to take a look at the draft of the guiding principles that Lisa and I have put together. Instead of going through page-by-page or line-by-line the elements of that draft, I thought that I would just condense it all down to the primary areas of interest along thematic lines into a PowerPoint and do that at the 50,000 foot level as a place to begin our
dialog. So that’s one of my underlying motives here in concentrating on a PowerPoint today rather than the document itself. I’m certainly happy and interested to hear your comments and questions about the draft document itself, but one of the other things that I quickly came to learn when I moved to North Carolina that talking to people about budgets or financial concepts were often received as about as interesting as watching the mud dry. We’ve long ago passed drying mud in Illinois, we’re into frozen mud. I would like to make this as productive and lively a discussion as possible.

Let me just begin by saying that, in my opinion and in my previous experience over 20 years as a CFO, I think that opportunities for dialog like this one are the essential building blocks for transparency and building trust. In addition to that, I would like to talk a little bit more about how what we’re doing relates to the president’s interest in transparency and interest in building a sustainable model.

Let’s go, first of all, to a quote that I’ve lifted from the president’s inaugural address and you’ll notice here that, in addition to his reference to transparency, there is a focus on priorities. While transparency, I think, in everybody’s mind relates to sharing information and sharing information leads to building trust and both of these are very noble goals, these are not the primary goals that the president has in mind. Without transparency about the financial situation and the budgets there are unnecessary obstacles in our ability to address all of our highest priorities in teaching, research and student life which are our raison d’être.

Moving on to the next page, I don’t know what you think about Wal-Mart or Queen Elizabeth but I did do a little Google on the theme of working together and I thought both of these quotes captured what we’re trying to accomplish here. Whether you’re talking about the singular focus of a major retailer to the complex economic and social challenges of a major nation, working together is seen as the secret that amplifies the impact of all individual actions and I think that’s where we are trying to go at NIU especially as we are concentrating right now on all of the different steps that need to be taken and can be taken to increase student recruitment and retention. With that framework in the back of our minds, Lisa and I asked ourselves how specifically might we begin to build transparency at the university and focus on our priorities. We answered that question by making concrete the essential changes that when all of them are put together will be transformative. We identified guiding principles that I have used throughout my career as well as others that Lisa and I identified based on Lisa’s knowledge and experience at this university. What we’ve tried to weave throughout in our concrete expressions about what we want this new financial planning and budget process to look like are, first of all, the transparency that has been promised to the campus community which is all about openness and honesty in all that we do. Not just in budget matters but in all key decisions. Clarity and what that means is in putting together new budget and financial planning processes we want to have practices that are expressed in ways that are easily understood and easily remembered and importantly written down somewhere. I haven’t found a great deal that’s been written down about decisions that were made in the past. That’s really unimportant anyway; this about going forward and redefining the kind of budget processes that make sense for the university where it is today and in relation to where it wants to go.

The other element that’s really important, and this is really the place where we start and will be my next subject here, is alignment. Basically what we’re talking about in alignment is that for those that have always had the responsibility as well as the accountability for operating within
their budgets and accomplishing key programmatic or operational goals, they will have full authority over their budgets. They will understand what the total budget looks like not just a part of the budget with another part of the budget held centrally.

Lastly, a theme that is imbedded throughout and this is fact one of the president’s three pillars for student success, relates to sustainability. Lisa and I describe that very broadly. It’s not just about sustainability of the financial structure and the budget, it’s sustainability in terms of assuring that we have a vibrant university programmatically, environmentally and in all the things that we do related to education, research, public service and campus life for our students, faculty and staff.

I’m going to say a little bit more now alignment. In addition to aligning authority with responsibility and accountability, alignment also means that in all of the decisions that we make about how we allocate or reallocate our budgetary and other resources that we’re making those decisions within a broader context starting with the overarching mission including the vision for where all of us want to go; the key values that are important to the environment that we want at the university; how we will interact with one another; how we will interact especially with students as faculty and staff that are facilitating their education and their experience; and then again I keep coming back to strategic goals.

In discussions just yesterday with Carolinda on my left, we were talking about how important these things are to the university’s accrediting body when it comes for its site visit in early March. So we’re working on the right things that are of interest to the accrediting body and represent consistent best practices within higher education. Alignment is also about academically responsive budget decisions again aligning with our strategic priorities and our vision but also about preserving flexibility in the academic enterprise in the years to come so that we can accommodate a changing world and vibrant new ideas and initiatives that usually bubble up from across the institution. The best ideas don’t come from any single place; they come from an entire campus community.

So in this new structure we want to make certain that we have created enough flexibility and adaptability that as great new ideas emerge we are able to take advantage of them with resources that may be required. And fiscally responsible simply means that we’re always keeping as a framework, those factors that represent prudence in how we make financial decisions which then gets to the redefinition of the roles of the executive vice president and provost and the chief financial officer. In this new structure where we have an executive vice president and provost, we will have a partnership between the individual that has the authority, the responsibility and the accountability for all things academic. And the other part of that partnership equation involves the chief financial officer. And the chief financial officer becomes an enabler and an individual who identifies the various financial strategies that are options to help the provost accomplish the academic and student goals and support the president and the Board of Trustees in what they see as strategically important to the university.

Again, I wanted to use this opportunity to give you a status report so I’ve put in parenthesis and big capital letters what’s done, what’s in process, what will come down the road. So obviously this reorganization is done and it represented a major and a fundamental step that had to happen before some of these other changes could take place. So what will be the benefits of this partnership? Better informed, more strategic, budget decisions.
The other important theme that we talked about in putting together these principles is clarity. And again it’s about communicating budget practices as well budget decisions that are easily remembered and easily understood. It’s always been my view that having a printout of your own department’s budget and looking at somebody else’s budget, those are all rudimentary steps towards transparency, but they fall short of real transparency. So what we’re after is making certain that the entire budget process as well as the resulting decisions about that process give people the information that they need in order to carry out their own roles within the institution and we’re really withholding no information that anybody needs to be as successful as possible.

It also means that, and this is all in progress I almost skipped over one of the things that we have actually gotten concluded and it’s in process for implementation. Five D in that draft document talks about reassigning centrally held budgets that have been previously held but still covered recurring annual expenses like a number of faculty positions were actually budgeted in the CFO’s office, even though obviously these faculty positions are assigned out in an academic unit. We identified all of those and we’ve gone through them one by one and we have reassigned the budget resources for those recurring expenses to the responsible dean or the responsible vice president so they have their entire budget to manage.

The issue of clarity also means that one of the things that we think we need to add and this represents a best practice – and it is something that is done in just about every other large, medium size, small, public or private university – is an opportunity every year for discussions with individual deans, individual vice presidents, various groups, to talk about the priorities for the coming budget cycle, talk about what is needed in the individual units, go through many iterations and seek a lot of input through various discussions with stakeholder groups to get to a preliminary budget which then is reviewed in entirety again through an inclusive process.

People have asked me: When will we see that process? That process will probably not fully evolve for at least another year because a lot of budget decisions are quite urgent right now and the provost is having informal discussion with the deans at deans’ council. There are informal discussions taking place at the cabinet, but without there being a formal process that reflects all of the information that needs to be gathered, analyzed, summarized, reported and discussed, the discussions aren’t taking place in the vein of having an inclusive process where a lot of inputs are possible, but it’s not a formalized process yet. There will be more to come as that process is better defined in the coming year.

One of my real interests, and this goes back to the point I made about budgets and financial presentations often being about as exciting as watching the mud dry, is having different ways to communicate about our fiscal situation and our fiscal prospects. I like to use the term, reports that tell a story. Rather than just use budget reports, I like to have graphs, I like to have historical trend data, I like to have some interpretation of what the data are suggesting and talk about what I see with groups like this group and other stakeholder groups to hear what else that may be there that others see that I am missing so that we can have a fuller discussion and a fuller picture. Just this morning in the Resource, Space and Budget Committee, we had a discussion about some trends that we had been looking at and some excellent points were made. Well these trends may look very different if you go to an individual academic unit or an administrative unit and those are the kinds of comments that really add value to an analytical process that captures the full picture and leads us to informed decision making.
Benefits: Obviously, enhanced communication and more opportunities for collaboration can be identified. And again, when individuals have access to the whole financial picture for their department as well as for the university, those opportunities become more apparent. And what is collaboration? It’s working together.

Okay now we come to transparency. What’s new is dialog of the kind that we’re about to have at this meeting. In coming months we’re hoping to put together some training opportunities for faculty and staff about what people need to know about and learn in order to be able to function in this new environment where a whole lot more information will be shared. And again, what are the benefits? Deeper engagement, better collaboration, each person understands how in their role they can make a difference towards strategic goals like recruitment and retention of students.

And, going back to Queen Elizabeth’s comment, an amplified impact as an individual when working with others.

I’ll skip over the rest of this and move on to sustainability. Sustainability is all about having a financial structure and annual budgets that permit equilibrium over the longer term. It’s about having balanced budgets which this university has a long history of achieving. It’s about looking at the drivers of both our revenue as well as our expense to make certain that we’re pushing revenue up at the same time that we’re pushing costs down. Everybody can play a role in their own unique individual way in offering ideas or actually being empowered to take their own steps to drive revenue up and cut costs. When we look at the one revenue driver that we have control over, it’s really enrollments. And enrollments times tuition generate dollars for all of the things that represent strategic priorities to faculty, staff and students alike. When we look more deeply at all of these revenue drivers, there’s a place for each and every one of us to make a contribution.

I’m going to jump now to page 11 in the interest of time because I want to open the floor up for discussion. On slide 11 I’ve listed some of the things that will be coming soon and will be the subject of further discussions with this group as well as other groups. These are things that kind of get down into the detail of processes and the processes themselves need to be determined in the same way that we’re determining these guiding principles, in consultation with the campus community and the key stakeholders and anybody else that has ideas that they would like to offer.

Finally, I would like to not only invite your comments, your input, your questions at today’s meeting, but also I’m available at any time and I invite you to contact me by my e-mail. Some people may be afraid to extend that invitation, but in the 20 years that I have been a CFO, that has always been a standing practice for me and I make a personal effort to try to respond to any e-mail question that I get. If I don’t know the answer, I will tell you I don’t know. If I can find out for you, I will do my best to find out for you. But I take great pride in hearing from people that have a question or concern and being able to get back with you. So that is a genuine invitation to let me hear from you and I’d like to say that now before we get into the discussion and lose sight of it. Alan we’re ready to open it up to the floor I believe.

D. Schoenbachler: Okay, thank you, Nancy, for a great presentation and are there questions from the floor for Nancy?

K. Thu: Well, first of all maybe Queen Elizabeth isn’t the best person to invoke in the context of
budget handling and efficiencies, anybody who’s seen the national news last night.

N. Suttenfield: Point well taken, I did see that story.

K. Thu: But, all kidding aside, this is really a welcome development in my eyes and I was just talking to my colleagues about it. I’ve been here 15 years. I’ve never seen any sort of overview of how the budget is put together. I’ve just never seen it. So the idea that we’re going to have a policy in place that identifies the budgeting process and structure is a welcome development and kudos. I do have one question and then a comment. The question: Is the draft policy, is that something that’s going to be housed internally as a cabinet document or is this something that’s going to be vetted and you want the University Council to consider? Because there are bylaws on the books right now that pertain to budget planning specifically for the UC. Of course it’s Paul Carpenter’s group the Resource, Space and Budgets Committee. They are required to be involved in the long-term planning of a budget and you probably already know that. The question is: Where will this policy be situated?

N. Suttenfield: The way the president has organized what is an administrative and management function for putting together a budget that he will approve and then take to the board as a recommendation, is again a reflection of the org structure with the provost and CFO co-leading that process. I don’t believe we really need to imbed it into any formal governance document, but I believe there is a genuine commitment on the part of the president, the provost and I, all three to have ongoing discussions and dialog with the established groups at this university, the University Council and the RSB Committee and I’m not sure I even know all of the groups that are part of our government structure since I’m a relative new comer. I’m learning them all, so I don’t want anybody to interpret by omission I’m excluding anybody, but it’s very much intended to be an inclusive process. And I’d also like to add that I think it will be a living process because, if this is successful, we will be evaluating it as we go along and things that work well, that’s great. Things that are not working well should be revisited and should be adapted to fit the circumstances, the needs, the feedback, whatever cries out for some sort of change.

K. Thu: And I want to clarify, I’m not advocating for it to be brought before the UC for approval. Thank you.

D. Schoenbachler: Any other questions or comments for Nancy?

J. Novak: Three times in your presentation you mentioned an item as vibrant and I understand that word artistically but I don’t understand what it has to do with money. Could you explain what vibrant means in this situation because you used it so I’m imagine it’s something I’m missing?

N. Suttenfield: It means that the money follows the vibrancy. Where there exists vibrancy and opportunities for growth. Where there is not yet vibrancy and with an investment of money, vibrancy can be created, the money goes there. It’s all about taking that constant mission of education, research, public service, student life and making it relevant to today. Just this one aside here as an example: We’re in the process of reforming the way in which decisions about student fees have been handled. Over the years what has evolved, it’s been an inclusive process, the managers of particular activities that are supported by fees and some student representatives come together every year to talk about what should the fee increase be? But that could be more
inclusive. Vice President Weldy and Vice President Cunningham and I have talked about opening that process up and providing more opportunities for student information, student feedback and not just looking at the increment which has been the practice in the past, but looking at all of the ways in which the fee dollars are being spent and many of the ways the fee dollars have been spent reflect what past generations of students have been interested in. We need to be looking at what current students are interested in and if we have opportunities to reallocate and add vibrancy to all of the student activities supported by fees, we should make that a part of our annual review cycle.

J. Novak: Thank you very much.

A. Rosenbaum: Nancy, I’d like to ask a question. This is sort of taking off a little bit about what Kendall was talking about even though I don’t know if this was exactly what he had in mind. I don’t want to speak for him. But in talking about the budget process, there seemed to be a strong emphasis on the provost, the cabinet, the deans’ council. Whereas, I think, one of the views we might have is the Resources, Space and Budget Committee, the joint committee of the Faculty Senate and the University Council, is a very, I think, an important body and it feels almost like that’s being included as “and everyone else” as opposed to this being one of the most important committees…

N. Suttenfield: That was certainly not my intent and I apologize if it was heard that way. I thought I did mention that committee by name. We still have a lot of discussions that we need to have about how we formalize the role and the kinds of discussions that we have going forward. So again, my apologizes if I’m not mentioning all of the groups in appropriate terms.

A. Rosenbaum: It wasn’t so much that you didn’t do it, I just again was wanting to have it on the record that the importance of this group…

N. Suttenfield: Understood.

A. Rosenbaum: …in the budgeting process…

N. Suttenfield: Understood.

A. Rosenbaum: …so that they are not just one of many.

N. Suttenfield: I agree. Kendall?

K. Thu: I just want to clarify that Alan said it more clearly than I did, that the bylaws make clear that the University Council committee is a partner in the development of the budget rather than a reaction to the budget that has been developed.

N. Suttenfield: Okay, and when I responded, the question I was responding to the principles themselves. Point taken.

D. Schoenbachler: Okay, any other comments? Andy?

A. Small: I happen to sit on the Resource, Space and Budget Committee and we had a little
discussion afterwards today, Paul and myself and a few others. We’ve learned as much in six months and had as much input in six months as we’ve had in recent memory. So your concern about whether or not the Resource, Space and Budget Committee is involved in the particular budgeting process, I think we can put those concerns aside. I really appreciated Nancy’s transparency and her vibrancy and all of those good things that have come with the Resource, Spaces and Budget Committee’s input. So I truly do appreciate that and as long as I have the mic I’m going extend an invitation to you. I think you’re on our agenda for the Operating Staff Council on February 6 in this room so we look forward to your presentation then for our council group too. Thank you so much.

D. Schoenbachler: All right, anything else? Again, Nancy, thank you so much. I appreciated your presentation and your transparency. Not on your agenda but we have invited and asked Carolinda Douglass to speak for a few moments and give you an update on the very important HLC visit. Carolinda.

C. Douglass: I don’t have a PowerPoint but we might have one at your next meeting so look forward to that. We have one more meeting, I believe, before the HLC comes. As many of you know, the Higher Learning Commission is our institutional accreditation body. They come every ten years. They do a 360 degree look at everything that’s happening at the university over the past ten years. For the past two years, about 120 people on campus have been very actively working on putting together a self study, putting together a resource room, gathering evidence for this visit. The visit is March 3-5, 2014. You’ll hear that many times over the next four weeks.

The self study was sent in on January 3 and we were assigned a team. There’s an 11-person team that will be coming to campus. I’ve been working closely with the chair. Just this week she sent me a list of the meetings that she would like to have – or the 11 people on campus would like to have. It includes meetings with faculty, operating staff, SPS, it includes meetings with students. Some of these are with leadership. Some of these are with open forums for people. It really is trying to get a sense of everybody and their understanding of the institution and the reflection of the institution, how we have operated for the past ten years and how we will operate going into the future.

Given all of the new leadership on campus, we are definitely poised to be going in a very different direction in the future. That said, there’s a lot to be proud of in our past, and so as these individuals come and talk to us, obviously, we want people to be very honest in their discussions. We want you to come. We want you to be very honest in your discussions and we want you to also think about, not just want we’ve done in the past but where we’ll be heading in the future. As I said, if possible, I’d like to invite Doris McDonald to come to a future meeting. There’s one more meeting before the team comes.

Soon you will get an e-mail regarding the HLC self-study report which will be posted on the HLC website for NIU as well as wide distribution of an executive summary of that report. I think that’s about it. Are there any questions?

D. Schoenbachler: Anybody have any questions for Carolinda?

R. Holly: Carolinda, thanks. Would you be into making a brief video which is essentially what you just did and that could be e-mailed to every faculty and staff member because we want them
to participate, we want them to know about it. And, obviously, we’ve been getting blurbs about it and stuff like that but I think the video would have some impact for some people that a written blurb does not.

C. Douglass: Are you offering to help with that video?

R. Holly: Absolutely.

C. Douglass: Yes, and we might want Doris to star, but absolutely. Actually Kathy Buettner and her team are also dedicated to making sure people get this message out in the next four weeks.

D. Schoenbachler: Deborah.

D. Haliczer: I would like acknowledge and thank Carolinda and Doris for the incredible work that has gone into this and all of the team leaders some of whom are around the room here. This was a lot of work by the leadership and it is essential for portraying the university accurately and positively as we move forward so great work, A plus.

D. Schoenbachler: Okay, any other comments for Carolinda? Carolinda I want to echo an appreciation to you for all the work that’s gone into this. We look forward to the visit and then we look forward to having the visit over with.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A. 2023-2024 academic calendar – refer to University Affairs Committee – Page 8

B. Periodic evaluation of the university ombudsperson, NIU Bylaws, Article 19.4 – refer to University Affairs Committee – Page 9

D. Schoenbachler: Okay, next item is the consent agenda. We need a motion to accept the consent agenda.

M. Theodore: So moved.

D. Schoenbachler: Second?

A. Rosenbaum: I’ll second it.


VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES


January 17, 2014 – Pages 12-13
D. Schoenbachler: Under reports we have the first report is a written report only and that was available in the packet?

A. Rosenbaum: It’s in the agenda.

D. Schoenbachler: In the agenda okay. Then we jump down to the Board of Trustee.

A. Rosenbaum: If I could have just one moment. The representative to the FAC, Sonya Armstrong, is on sabbatical this year. I don’t know if I mentioned here. I think I might have only mentioned it at senate. So for this year we will only be having written reports unless she just happens to be on campus. I think she spends most of her time in Cincinnati and so what she has asked is that if anyone has a question for her that we can provide her contact information. I think she still checks her e-mail here at the university so if anyone has a question about her reports, you can direct those to her. If you have trouble getting her you can direct them to me and I’ll make sure that she gets them and will make sure that you will get a response to that.

D. Schoenbachler: Thank you Alan.

B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Dan Gebo and Andy Small – no report

C. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum – no report

D. BOT Legislation and External Affairs Committee – Deborah Haliczer and Rosita Lopez – no report

E. BOT Compliance, Audit, Risk Management and Legal Affairs Committee – Deborah Haliczer and Alan Rosenbaum – no report

F. BOT Ad Hoc Committee on Sponsored Research Activity and Technology Transfer – Greg Waas – no report

G. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – report – Page 14

D. Schoenbachler: Okay your report. You’re next.

A. Rosenbaum: Again, the next report is the Board of Trustees meeting from December 5, which seems like an eternity ago. You’ve had a chance to read it. I’ll address any questions that people have rather than report on the whole thing. The one point I will focus on just for a moment relates somewhat, I think, to what Nancy was starting to talk about and that is that the president made it clear that he is well aware of the need for faculty and staff salary remediation. So he is on board with the idea that staff and faculty salaries need to be improved. The discussion I think mainly was in having a good financial underpinning for any salary increases so that we don’t get into a situation where we’re getting salary increases and then, when the state cuts back on our appropriation, we’re laying people off. So it seems very responsible in that sense and I know people have been waiting for salary increases and, of course, we haven’t been able to get those. I think it’s important, though, that the president is very mindful of that and we
also continue to keep him mindful of that and that I believe that he has really had Nancy focus on what can possibly be done. And, of course, there are external forces that have a lot to do with that as well. So we’re going to have to wait and see what the state appropriation is, what kind of percentage cut the university takes. And I believe the president when he says that he will do everything in his power to try and free up funding for some type of salary increment as quickly as possible. So that was I think an important point. Any questions about anything else on this? We bought a bus, it’s a used bus, but a bus all the same. That was important. Any questions about the Board of Trustees meeting from December?

**D. Schoenbachler:** Okay, thank you Alan.

**H. Academic Policy Committee – Sean Farrell, Chair – no report**

**I. Resources, Space and Budgets Committee – Paul Carpenter, Chair – report – Pages 15-17**

**D. Schoenbachler:** The next report that we have today is from the Resource, Space and Budget Committee Paul Carpenter.

**P. Carpenter:** Thank you. I’m going to start out by just echoing the comments that Andy made about how this year compared to previous years. We’ve had a lot more information given to us. The tenor of the meetings we’ve had is such that it really is a case of it’s open and engaged conversation. This morning’s meeting was a good example of that. So I really encourage people to get involved in this process. And, if you have comments or you have questions or issues, please feel free to send them to me or through the committee, as well as to Nancy.

It’s really important that we do take a look at that draft document and that we have as broad an input as we possibly can on that as we move forward. We’ve already had two lengthy conversations at Resource, Space and Budget about the document, specifically, and that will be ongoing as well.

The report here summarizes some of the comments that came up. I encourage you to take a look through that and maybe that will prompt some questions. I know it’s a lengthy document and perhaps with all the things that have been happening recently perhaps people haven’t had a chance to look at it. But maybe look at those comments, some of the issues that we’ve raised may spark some additional questions and comments from you. So please get those to me or any member of the committee. I know there’s a few members of the committee here and I want them to raise their hands so people see who they are. I see Brad back there. So please engage with the process and get us the information.

We are about to put together our annual statement of budget priorities which is the sort of document that Kendall referred to in terms of one of the charges for the committee to the University Council and Faculty Senate. A key part of what we discuss is exactly what role the Resource Space and Budget Committee will play in this entire budget process. So if you have specific ideas or things you’d like to see in place, please also get that to us so we can include it in that document. That document will come here and to senate for review and hopefully we can ensure that the faculty and the University Council voice is heard in that process. If anyone has any questions about the report I’m more than happy to entertain those.
D. Schoenbachler: Any questions for Paul? All right thank you very much for your report.

J. Rules and Governance Committee – Jeff Kowalski, Chair – no report

K. University Affairs Committee – Bill Pitney, Chair – no report

L. Student Association – Jack Barry, President – report

D. Schoenbachler: The next report we have today is our Student Association. President Jack Barry, are you going to make that report today?

J. Barry: We’ve had a busy second semester I’m sure just like most of you. We hosted IBHE this past Saturday. Rebecca Clark put it on so I am going go ahead and turn the mic over to her and let her talk a little bit more in depth about it.

R. Clark: All right, so on Saturday we had the IBHE Student Advisory Committee here. We hosted them at NIU. We actually put a couple of them up in the hotel so it would make it easier for those people coming from Southern Illinois Carbondale in the middle of the snowstorm. In the morning we started, President Baker welcomed us and we got to hear about – they actually requested that he was there because they got to hear about the pillars and everything that he’s been doing since he’s been here. Everybody was really impressed. Last time he actually got a shout out from the governor. So they were really excited to hear from him and then at lunch, there were actually around 40 of us students from all around the state and at lunch our representative Tom Demmer showed up and he answered a lot of questions just about where everything’s going with higher education, general questions that people had and yeah I’d say that it was really successful and they really enjoyed the facilities here at NIU as well.

J. Barry: And just to talk briefly on the bigger projects we have coming up for the remainder of this semester. One big key thing we’re looking at is our election process. Currently we do it in the fall and so our senate isn’t in session until almost two months into school. And so we’re looking to try to move that back [up] with our executive elections which are held in the spring so that would give some of our senators a chance to meet over summer and help plan some of the Welcome Days stuff because we know how important engagement is and that can happen right in the beginning of school year especially during dorm move-in stuff. That’s a big project; hopefully we can get that on line as well. Those are big steps.

And also I know we already briefly touched on it, but the student activity fee we’re going to try to make sure that that’s totally transparent to our students and just try to look at the priorities of where it goes. Currently, 38 percent goes to the bond revenue fee. We don’t know what that 38 percent consists of really. And then 18 percent goes to the student athletes. And then 19 percent goes to technology. What exactly is that money going to? I know you will be able to help us out with that. Looking forward to that.

D. Schoenbachler: Thank you. Do we have any questions for our student president or our representative, Rebecca Clark? Questions for the students? Thank you both very much for your report.
M. Operating Staff Council – Andy Small, President – report – Page 18

D. Schoenbachler: Next report, Operating Staff Council, Andy Small.

A. Small: Thank you. Good afternoon everyone. Just a quick comment before I begin my report. Resource, Space and Budget Committee, there were some interesting questions, some dialog about the input and things like that. The one thing that I will assure you is that Paul Carpenter is doing one hell of a job over there. He is involved and is detailed in his reports, really kudos to you for doing that on our behalf. We appreciate it.

I will publically acknowledge Al Mueller, he came and discussed some issues with the council, cleared up some things that we were concerned about. I also want to publically acknowledge Vice President Cunningham, Vice President Kaplan and Provost Freeman who had a very lively discussion about hiring practices here at the university. I personally pledged to get involved with Tom Morelock in the systems office down there to try and make sure that we’re all clear on those types of situations. I feel that there’s some benefit to that. If there are any questions I’ll be glad to try and answer them otherwise that concludes my report.

D. Schoenbachler: Okay, any questions for Andy?

A. Rosenbaum: One point, Andy that you neglected to mention is that you were just elected to a very prestigious position in the state Civil Service System. I know you don’t like to blow your own horn, but could you explain that a little bit?

A. Small: Thank you, Alan.

D. Schoenbachler: Let’s move on to Deb.

D. Haliczer: I know that I don’t look like Andy but Andy, as Alan has said, has just been elected to a statewide organization, the Employee Advisory Committee to the State University Civil Service System, is a very important contributor to the well-being and welfare of our civil service colleagues. Andy has been our what’s been called EAC, Employee Advisory Committee representative, and how long now Andy? And not for the first time.

A. Small: Two years.

D. Haliczer: Two years, but he’s done it before too. And this individual represents the university at different Merit Board and Employee Advisory Committee and SUCSS, State University Civil Service System office proceedings. They use that acronym not me. I did not name it. And so, as president, he will have an important voice in the ongoing discussions about employment of non-faculty in state universities and that includes both SPS and Civil Service employment. As he said in his report, Operating Staff Council, SPS Council and the administration have been having a lot of discussion about the classification of positions in non-faculty roles and it is an issue that has emotional content for many. But we really look forward to Andy representing us and join me in congratulating him.

D. Schoenbachler: Thank you for taking on that service, Andy.
D. Schoenbachler: Next report we’ll go back to Deborah.

D. Haliczer: Okay, SPS Council you have our summary but we are going to be working hard at analyzing the findings of our SPS survey of all of our SPS employees. We got about a 30 percent return to our surveys and so a lot of comments of issues that were of no surprise in many cases to those of us who have been looking at it. So we’re preparing our report and be looking at it in detail, presenting our findings to President Baker and the administration and collaborating with Operating Staff Council on disseminating results of our two surveys.

I want to thank all people who contributed to nominating Supportive Professional Staff members for the Presidential Award. This was the highest number of nominations we’ve had in years and as I predicted, many of these nominations came from faculty whether it was department chairs, faculty and departments, people who really see the work that our SPS colleagues do around the university. So thank you so much for that. President Baker communicated his decision to me this morning and I’m working on getting the letters out to those who will be a recipient of that award this year. You’ll hear about it after they do. But thanks for the increase in nominations.

And let me use this commercial to remind you that it is time and the deadline is approaching, to nominate operating staff members for February 28 Andy says is the deadline. You have time. The materials are posted on their website. Think hard about nominating deserving people from all walks of life throughout the university who make a difference in students’ lives and our lives as well. Again the morale burst of the nomination comes from being recognized not even necessarily from getting that award. Recognize colleagues.

The women’s commission also just sent out its announcement about the several awards that the President’s Commission on the Status of Women gives out. It’s the Wilma Strickland Award for an administrator who has made outstanding contributions to the status of women on campus, the Outstanding Mentor Award and the Women Who Make a Difference Award. And that award doesn’t need to be a woman. So think about awards, think about recognizing people and find ways to recognize good work throughout the university. Thank you.

D. Schoenbachler: Thank you Deb. Deb, did you also have an announcement or SURS-related announcement you were going to make today?

D. Haliczer: Yeah, I did have an announcement about SURS from the University Benefits Committee. For those of us who are all around the room concerned about what’s going on with pensions and many of us are around the room in the same cohort, HR has invited SURS to come to campus the 22nd, third and fourth of April and that will be for the traditional half hour counseling appointment about your retirement benefits if you’re within four years of retirement. And normally you can’t have been there twice within a 12-month period. They’re waiving that requirement just for this year because of some of the pension changes that have happened in the
law, if they survive the challenges. We have also invited SURS and SURS is giving presentations around the state about what the implications are of the pension changes and so, Steve, do we have a date on that confirmed?

S. Cunningham: We do, it’s April 23.

D. Haliczer: April 23. So we’re looking at a morning time on April 23 and I believe there will be a second session in the evening for retirees so that we’re having two separate sessions because the issues are different whether you’re retired or still working. We’ll be sending it out. Steve is wonderful at sending out those announcements. Thank you.

D. Schoenbachler: Thank you very much. I know it’s a concern for a lot of us.

P. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Abhijit Gupta, Chair – no report

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

D. Schoenbachler: Next item, any comments, questions from the floor?

K. Thu: I just wanted to bring to the University Council’s attention a concern that was brought to light to me by my colleague in the Department of Anthropology and has since sort of snowballed into a concern shared by not only faculty but staff, students and now alumni. And that is the arrival of a circus spectacular on March 4 in the Convocation Center and the concerns for animal welfare and the way these animals are treated. This particular circus is run by George Carden, Circus International. It has a long record of violations of the Federal Animal Welfare Act. Those are available in a letter that my colleague, Mitch Irwin, has penned and was submitted to the Northern Star yesterday and also out of courtesy shared with President Baker yesterday as well. That letter, and by the way, there are a number of countries around the world that have now banned the use of wild exhibition animals such as Great Britain, Greece and the Dutch and there are number of cities around the United States that have banned exhibition animals around the country. So the question is whether NIU should be associated with this kind of an event as an ethically inspired leadership institution. The letter that my colleague penned has now been submitted as a petition to ask the university to reconsider hosting this event. It has attracted over 500 signatories including faculty, some of whom are here in the room, also students and staff. And I want to just read very briefly a couple of responses or comments from our alum and others.

“I am an NIU alum and I’m appalled that NIU would have a circus with these live animals and the Convo Center. As an alum I would like to see NIU hold to its principles and be an example of ethical standards for the students, the community, the state, and the nation.”

“I spent a year working with the sanctuary of abandon abuse circus animals. The standard of care in circuses is minimal to the point of being abusive.”
And finally one which I find most interesting,

“I’m not a bleeding heart for animals. I enjoy hunting and fishing. I am required to inspect circus businesses from time to time. I do not find the way that they handle their animals as humane.”

So I offer this as a point of information and, if anybody is interested in seeing a copy of the letter that’s been submitted, I’d be happy to share.

D. Schoenbachler: Okay, thank you for sharing that. Any other comments or questions from the floor?

X. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Minutes, Academic Planning Council
B. Minutes, Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee
C. Minutes, Athletic Board
D. Minutes, Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
E. Minutes, Committee on Advanced Professional Certification in Education
F. Minutes, Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education
G. Minutes, Committee on Initial Teacher Certification
H. Minutes, Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Experience
I. Minutes, Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum
J. Minutes, General Education Committee
K. Minutes, Honors Committee
L. Minutes, Operating Staff Council
M. Minutes, Supportive Professional Staff Council
N. Minutes, Undergraduate Coordinating Council
O. Minutes, University Assessment Panel
P. Minutes, University Benefits Committee

XI. ADJOURNMENT

D. Schoenbachler: Okay, then, I would entertain a motion to adjourn.

D. Domke: So moved.

D. Schoenbachler: Do I have a second?

Unidentified: Second.

D. Schoenbachler: All those in favor?

Members: Aye.

D. Schoenbachler: Opposed? Abstentions? All right thank you very much.

Meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.