Present:  Terry Bishop (Chair), David Changnon, Brian Hemphill, TJ Lusher, Paul Bauer, Todd Latham, Don Tidrick, Matt Streb, Jeff Compher, Gretchen Schlabach, Hamid Bateni, Peggy Simonds, Bill Cassidy, Rocco Taglia, Kristin Hoffman

Guests:  Carl Armato, Assoc AD/Facilities; Shelley Binegar, Assoc AD/Development and Marketing; Debra Boughton, Assoc AD/Business Affairs; John Ross, Head Women’s Soccer Coach; Christian Spears, Sr. Assoc AD/Administration

I.  Call to Order – T. Bishop (1:05pm)

II.  Approval of January 18, 2012 Meeting Minutes

TJ Lusher made a motion to approve the January 18, 2012 meeting minutes as presented. D. Changnon seconded the motion.

Having no corrections, deletions or additions, motion was carried.

III.  Introduction of New Athletics Staff Member – John Ross, Head Women’s Soccer Coach

J. Compher began by explaining that when there are new head coaches and administrators in the Athletics Department, it is customary to bring them to the Board to be introduced. C. Spears headed the search and did a fine job with the hiring of John Ross as our new Head Women’s Soccer Coach.

C. Spears then said he is very excited with the outcome of the search and believes the Women’s Soccer program can be very successful. With the Men’s Soccer team having gone to the NCAA tournament, it is possible build off that success and Athletics has identified someone who agrees with that. Coach Ross has been at North Dakota State University for the past nine years.

Coach Ross thanked both Jeff and Christian for giving him this opportunity. When he arrived on campus, he could feel the excitement. He definitely wanted to visit campus and during that visit, he realized that the resources and facilities here can help the team be successful.

He is originally from Elmhurst, IL, and has played soccer since he was a child. He is most excited about the possibility for the program to turn around quickly. If the work in the classroom and in community service is there, the wins will follow.
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IV. Faculty Athletics Representative – Matt Streb

Announced that we have nominated several student-athletes for post-graduate scholarships and he is working to prepare the information for submission.

V. Committees

A. Equity/Diversity – D. Tidrick

No committee report but D. Boughton reported that she presented a tutorial to the committee relative to Title IX.

B. Budget – P. Bauer

No report.

C. Student Wellbeing – D. Changnon

No committee report but C. Spears stated that Thursday, May 3, has been selected for this year’s Victors ceremony. He is in the process of securing The Egyptian Theater for the event. Athletics wants to open the event up to the public. The two previous years it has been a campus community and student event. This is a showcase event for Athletics and is an ESPY-type event. Please put that date on your calendars.

D. External Affairs – T. Latham

He and Shelley Binegar have discussed surveying people who attended last year’s game at Soldier Field to get their feedback on the event and look at ways to improve this year’s game.

VI. New Business

A. FY12 Second Quarter Report – D. Boughton

D. Boughton reported that as of December 31, we will have completed approximately half the year. She went on to explain that the Athletic Board budget is only a component of the overall budget so this report is just part. This second quarter is very similar to last year’s second quarter. She is still waiting for some things to come in but feels we are going to be fine.

As far as expenses, there is nothing major to report. Overall, the budget is in pretty good shape. D. Tidrick asked about licensing revenue and a comparison from last year but S. Binegar said there does not appear to be a spike in terms of all the success Athletics enjoyed this year. D. Boughton went on to state that Hy-Vee has the largest inventory of Huskie apparel, outside Village Commons
B. NCAA Working Group Summary – C. Spears

C. Spears said there was a conference call on February 14 comprising the MAC athletics directors, faculty athletics representatives, and senior administrators. The items focused on were the MEA (Miscellaneous Expense Allowance) and the multi-year scholarships.

As it relates to the multi-year scholarships, schools can award a prospective student-athlete a multi-year scholarship. NIU will have its own institutional policies about how Athletics will offer. In fact, Athletics honors its commitments to the student-athletes because it considers multi-years already.

The MEA is currently a hot topic and it has been suggested to rebrand it as “unmet need” but there is no decision as to who would determine “unmet need.” This is a topic that will continue to be monitored. The NCAA working group has tabled the entire slate of legislation for next year. There will be no new legislation for next academic year. J. Compher stated that he has met a couple of times with President Peters and NIU is very fortunate that President Peters is in the room and can always share information with us. It is very busy in collegiate athletics right now but it is good for NIU to have the opportunity to provide both input and feedback.

B. Hemphill asked if it seems that the playing field will be level regardless of where an institution stands in terms of the MEA. C. Spears explained that institutions can give up to $2,000 but how they choose to do that is up to them. It will be very interesting because some institutions will be able to provide for all athletes and others will be on a case-by-case basis. D. Boughton said it is difficult to calculate but she has done a basic analysis and the cost is substantial. This would be available for scholarship athletes only. M. Streb said the BCS schools will do this but the MAC has no official stance and will leave it up to each individual institution. The cost is approximately $500,000 per year to provide the MEA. D. Changnon asked where that money would come from and whether there is any process by which that money is identified. D. Boughton said it would have to be a discussion at the institutional level but it is very unclear at this time. C. Spears said nothing will come to fruition until August 1, 2013.

G. Schlabach then asked for the rationale behind the multi-year scholarships. C. Spears said it could be seen as a guarantee to get an education or if something happened in the program with a coach, the student-athlete would be OK. M. Streb said, however, if there were to be academic or other issues with the student-athletes, there is still the ability to release someone.
J. Compher then said the AQ (automatic qualifier) coaches don’t like it because they don’t have anything to hold the student-athletes to if the athlete is perceived to not be working as hard as a coach thinks they should. If coaches make recruiting mistakes, that is on them. If the athlete does everything he or she should do but is not performing on the field or court as the coach thought, that is on the coach.

C. Fall 2011 Recap
Athletics is very proud of the success experienced in the fall and wants to keep it going with the winter and spring sports.

VII. Announcements / Adjournment

A. Retirement of Pam Tyska – Head Women’s Golf Coach
Pam has been here for 26 years and has decided to retire and make this season her last with us. It is great that she was able to announce her decision now so people can recognize her for the value she brings to the Athletics program and Mid-American Conference. Following her retirement, she will be doing some things here on campus and within the local community. Women’s Golf does report to Shelley Binegar who stated that the search for Pam’s replacement will begin in March with a hire date, hopefully, in June so the new person will be able to spend time with Pam before her departure. M. Streb is involved with the head coach search process, as well.

TJ Lusher made a motion to adjourn the meeting. T. Latham seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:50pm.

The next meeting of the Athletic Board will be Wednesday, March 21, 2012, at 1pm in Holmes Student Center #505. The executive committee will meet on Wednesday, March 7, 2012, at 1:30pm in the Athletics Administration Conference Room, Convocation Center #200.