UNIVERSITY BENEFITS COMMITTEE
March 6, 2014 Minutes

Members Present: Terry Borg, Cliff Bottiglieri, Dennis Davito, Liz Guess, Deborah Haliczer, Sue Mini, Gina Shannon, George Slotsve, Sherilynn Spear

I. The meeting was called to order at 12:15 pm.
   - Debbie requested to amend the agenda, with moving item E-1 first because the Parking Committee Chair-David Long was invited to attend the UBC. (Spear motion, Guess second) Motion was made and was approved as amended.
   - There was a request from S. Spear to amend the minutes from Jan 30. She requests to delete the last half of the last (......new pension plan.) sentence of the first paragraph in II-C Annuitants Association report. (Mini motion, Spear second), approved as amended.

II. Old Business:

A. Insurance and Benefits report (Davito and Guess)
   1. Guess reported the 403(b) Fair was a success. Attendees had time to talk to the vendors and get questions answered. Shannon reported that there were concerns from the OSC about the memo that was unclear. It seemed to be just a miscommunication concerning the fear of being dropped from certain carriers. Current participants can continue their payroll contributions. New enrollments in those plans will no longer be possible.
   2. Guess reported that there is a meeting at the end of March where she will get more information about benefit changes for the Benefit Choice period. CMS will not be moving forward with the Consumer Driven Health Plan – High Deductible Health Plan this year. The dependent audit has been put on hold until August.

B. Pension Issues
   Davito reported that all the information from SURS on pensions now posts disclaimers. Human Resources is not allowed to counsel any NIU employees about the pension situation but are told to refer employees to the Surs representatives. Surs is beginning to schedule group counseling sessions because all the appointments are filled. Surs is also telling people they can retire on any date of the month but there is a problem with health insurance coverage depending on when during the month you retire. Pension annuities begin the first day of the month after a resignation, but insurance coverage ends on the last day worked. This could become a problem quickly. There is a lot of anxiety about which dates of retirement that are best or what benefits will be lost if retiring after July 1.

   Haliczer shared a copy of the Power Point from the Surs webinar. They are updating this information daily and have scheduled 4 webinars because of overwhelming interest.

   Borg suggested repealing the 6% rule and the 40% rule to allow people to work more to cover the employment crisis that will be evident in the Fall. Since these are state laws and Surs and federal guidelines, trying to change the situation in a timely manner would not be possible. Mini responded that some of the retirees, after they are gone for 60 days, could be eligible to be rehired.

   April 24 -Surs will be at NIU with a presentation for current employees.

C. Annuitants Association report
   Spear reported that the lawsuits have been consolidated into one against the pension reform.
A table will be staffed at the Wellness Fair, March 26 in the Ballroom, byr the Annuitants Association.
April 23, 5-7pm. The State Universities Annuitants Association will have a session delivered by SURS especially designed for the Annuitants.

D. Other benefit updates-none

E. Morale and workloads
   1. In response to the letter sent to the Parking Committee from UBC requesting that fees not be raised, David Long –Chair of Parking Committee and a member of the Operating Staff Council attended. He explained that there was not a raise in parking fees but there may be one next year. The Parking Services is a self—supported department mainly by the fees and fines. Any discussion of a graduated fee scale has been tabled until the Parking Services can update their soft-ware that enables access to the payroll data.

   With the loss of faculty, Slotsve reports that the Economics Dept has begun to work on a type of electronic advising software that would replace faculty advising for students. Hopefully this would be shared with the rest of the University but would start as a Pilot program.

F. Salaries and increments
   No salary increases being discussed.

G. SPS “Odd Contracts”
   There were 18 people identified who might have been affected. The staff from the Office of the Provost were thanked and congratulated for the research and quick reaction from the team for this data. Half of them have been updated and contracts changed in a timely manner.

H. Dual Career issues.
   Women’s Commission (PCSW) has done research on this issue and will be proposing their results and suggestions.

III. New Business:
   none

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Gina Shannon, Co-Secretary