Northern Illinois University  
Operating Staff Council  
Meeting Report: Thursday, February 5, 2015

The Operating Staff Council (OSC) met on Thursday, February 5, 2015 in the Holmes Student Center Clara Sperling Sky Room. The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. by Jay Monteiro, OSC President.

During announcements:
1. It was announced that The Friends of the NIU Libraries is sponsoring a presentation by Geoffrey Baer from channel 11 WTTW, discussing Chicago’s skyscrapers and their role in helping Chicago rebuild after the 1871 fire. The talk will take place February 12 at 7:30 PM in the Regency Room.
2. Nominations for the Operating Staff Outstanding Service Award are due Friday, February 27, 2015.

Sub-committee reports included:

Workplace Issues
The committee is planning to have brown bag lunch series to assist operating staff with advancing to or finding new jobs. These will be titled:
- Steer Your Career: resume building,
- Moving On Up: talking about testing for different positions at NIU,
- How to Expand your Horizon: taking advantage of training and educational benefits that NIU offers.

Karen Smith, Workplace Issues Chair, shared the results of the operating staff survey for the OSC members to read.

Ad hoc Employee Morale Committee
Met February 4, 2015. John Hulseberg shared the “Employee Morale” Action Plan. The plan lists a number of free proposals to help morale including greater communications and brown bag lunch presentations. President Baker has been invited to the OSC’s March meeting to further discuss employee morale.

Elections and Appointments
There was an Operating Staff vacancy on the Parking Committee created from a retirement. Melissa Folowell-Vargas was elected to finish out the term based on her submitted interest form.

Public Relations
At its January 15, 2015, meeting, the Public Relations Committee worked on the re-wording of bylaws to bring them in line with current practices in regards to OSC membership. Patricia Liberty-Baczek reported that there have been six applications submitted for the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship Award for 2015.
Employee Advisory Council (EAC)

Andy Small reported that EAC met in January at University of Illinois Champaign/Urbana. A 36 page document detailing the differences, advantages, and disadvantages between SPS and CS positions had been produced, and most EAC members felt it was finished, but then University of Illinois backed out. NIU was audited by the State University Civil Service System (SUCCS) in September 2014, but the results have not been returned to NIU yet. There are 1150 tests in the Civil Service testing system. Out of those, 65% are e-tests. The SUCCS is incorporating positions throughout the state, and is looking intensely at eliminating all typing tests. Andy Small was re-elected EAC Chair for the coming year.

Old Business:
1. Proposed Non-Smoking Policy – The Smoke Free Campus Task Force is looking for input from NIU employees who are smokers. Karen Smith said that there will be a website with resources to help smokers quit if that is what they would like to do. NIU is trying to make the proposal reasonable. The state law goes into effect July 1, 2015. There have been discussions here at NIU about how to enforce the law.
2. Program Prioritization – This group has been meeting regularly. On Monday, February 9, 2015, an online survey will begin to determine potential criteria to be used in evaluating academic and administrative programs. The survey will close Monday, February 23, 2015.

New Business:
1. Recycling – Robin Andersen from the Administrative Professionals Advisory Council stated that it appears that recycling is not being practiced as much as it used to be, and it should be advertised more. Patricia Liberty-Baczek stated that this would be a great idea for the Northern Staff News. David Smith spoke about his concern that Waste Management is “double –dipping” when picking up garbage and recycling. The company is paid for picking up garbage, but can also profit from recycling materials NIU could be recycling but does not.
2. Town Hall Meetings – It seems as if people understand prioritization. A number of OSC members attended both town hall meetings. Two questions got applause: one on compensation and the other on morale.
3. Flex-Time – After discussion, the OSC decided to support proposing flex-time for summer 2015. The OSC will contact the other councils to rally efforts to encourage the university administration to continue flex-time as we saw in 2014. The feeling was that this could help improve employee morale.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Jay Monteiro
President, Operating Staff Council