

Minutes
Operating Staff Council
March 2, 2017
Sky Room – 9:00 A. M.

Present: Barb Andree, Stacey Bivens, Angela Bollinger, Nancy Brown, Ellen Cabrera, Leah Davis, Angelica Gutierrez-Vargas, John Hulseberg, Cindy Kozumplik, Jay Monteiro, Holly Nicholson, Pamela Pittman, Carlos Raices, Mary Wyzard

Present: Jeffry Royce (alternate)

Absent: Colleen Leonard, Patricia Liberty-Baczek, Patricia Wielert

Guests: Dr. Doug Baker, Gay Campbell, Catherine Doederline, Sarah Klaper, Greg Long, Rose Miller, Frances Mitchell, Andy Small, Rhonda Wybourn

I. Call to Order

President Nicholson called the regular meeting of the OSC to order at 9:00 A.M.

II. Roll Call

Attendance was recorded by Stacey Bivens.

III. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Andree to accept the agenda. The motion was seconded by Wyzard and passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of February 2, 2017, minutes

A motion was made by Wyzard to accept the February 2, 2017, minutes. The motion was seconded by Raices and passed by unanimous vote.

V. Treasurer's Report

Davis reported that the only item to report was the refreshments from the OSC's February meeting. A motion was made by Hulseberg to accept the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Andree and passed by unanimous vote.

VI. Visiting Committees/Guests

NIU President, Dr. Doug Baker, was the guest at the OSC meeting. He answered questions that had been submitted to him by OSC members prior to the meeting. He first addressed fiscal matters by saying that Illinois is experiencing an unprecedented budget issue. NIU currently does not have MAP money that is needed. The university cannot address the questions about increased compensation due to union negotiations currently in progress. In response to a question about tiered fees for parking permits, he said that

is part of the negotiations between the AFSCME 1890 bargaining unit and the university. Dr. Baker pointed out that there are purple permits, which are free, that allow employees to park out by the Convocation Center and take a bus in to campus. Raices mentioned that this arrangement does not work well for many employees, and Hulseberg noted there is not a shelter at the location. Dr. Baker explained that NIU is part of a joint task force with DeKalb called the DeKalb Sycamore Area Transportation Study (DSATS) to work on a mass transit system and the fact that there are two bus systems operating in the same community. John Heckmann is representing NIU on this task force. DSATS provides transportation planning assistance and coordinates state and federal transportation investments in the DeKalb-Sycamore area. Doederlein stated that SPS employees are not in a bargaining unit and asked if they should pursue that. Dr. Baker responded that he did not know and said he would ask Jesse Perez about that. Dr. Baker discussed the applicant tracking system, and shared a form entitled Position Vacancy Request. This form can come up from individual units to the president, but can be nixed at any level before reaching him. The tracking system questions help units prioritize hiring needs based on how the position would help grow revenue, be sustainable, and contribute to the university's mission. Klaper noted that there is a perception that faculty positions are being filled, but not staff or SPS. Dr. Baker said that there is no bias one way or the other, and that this is done by each department. The hiring unit makes the case for filling the position, and the request is signed off on as it comes up the hierarchy, but he acknowledged that the request could be stopped at the Dean level. Dr. Baker noted that positions were lost in his department, citing the example that when Bill Nicklas left the university, his responsibilities were divided between two other administrators. Andree asked if any new Associate Vice-President positions have been created, and Dr. Baker answered no. He did admit that the Chief Diversity Officer is a new position. The subject of the operating staff handbook came up. Dr. Baker stated that it will be online by the end of March with a searchable table of contents. Dr. Baker also talked about student recruitment and retention. Illinois is the largest exporter of students by state. One bright spot is that retention rates are improving. Doederlein shared that student recruitment and retention are talked about at SPS meetings. Bollinger commented that a training opportunity for operating staff is being developed to tell us exactly what we can do to help with recruitment and retention.

VII. Public Comment

None

VIII. Announcements/Correspondence

The #OneLoveNIU mural will be unveiled today, March 2, 2017, on the ground floor of the Holmes Student Center outside The College Grind Café.

Kozumplik volunteered to give instruction on Office 365 for OSC members (especially new members). She will be put on the agenda.

Hulseberg shared the information that fees for all trades on campus will increase by 33% starting July 1, 2017.

In light of Program Prioritization, the Employee Assistance Program is working to create a position that will help people whose job has been eliminated by assisting them in training for a new position somewhere else on campus, and with résumé writing.

IX. President's Reports

A. [Board of Trustees](#)

Nicholson attended the Enrollment Ad Hoc Committee special meeting on February 14, where she discussed the Operating Staff Council, our constituency, challenges, and the dedication of the operating staff.

Four trustees were sworn in. They are: Dennis Barsema, Veronica Herrero, Timothy Struthers, and Eric Wasowicz.

Nicholson was only able to attend part of the Trustees' February 16 meeting, and suggested that anyone who was interested in the business conducted at that meeting should look at the Board of Trustees webpage.

B. Faculty Senate

Long reported. There are two nominations for Executive Secretary of the University Council and President of Faculty Senate for the next academic year, 2017-2018: Dr. Linda Saborio (Foreign Languages & Literatures) and Dr. Kendall Thu (Anthropology). Nominations for faculty/supportive professional staff personnel advisor are due by March 21, 2017.

C. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC)

Doederline reported. The SPSC recently completed its employee morale survey. There were 270 responses. There are around 800 supportive professional staff. Currently the data is being reviewed, and once that is done, the results will be shared with OSC. One aspect of the survey that is of particular interest is job satisfaction in relation to longevity. Doederlein commented that the SPSC is eager to work together with OSC to resolve issues the two groups have in common.

D. University Council

Long reported. The annual budget guidance letter was submitted. In the Resources, Space, and Budget committee, there was discussion on how to move forward considering Al Phillip's departure from the university.

There was also discussion regarding funding for accommodations for persons with disabilities. For example, if a student with a hearing impairment would like to participate in a study abroad program, the student can receive up to \$500.00 in financial assistance from the Disability Resource Center. Additional financial assistance would come from the student's academic department. This creates a problem because some departments are better off financially than others. One way to alleviate this is to centralize the funding for accommodations.

X. Committee Reports

A. Council of Councils Ad Hoc Committee

No report

B. Elections and Appointments

No report

C. Employee Morale

The committee has discussed and would like to present to President Baker the idea of allowing NIU employees to take their birthdays off without using benefits, with the intent of boosting morale. A draft of the proposal will be presented to OSC to review.

D. Executive Committee

Nicholson reported. The committee discussed final plans for the March 2, 2017, OSC meeting to ensure the meeting would run smoothly.

E. Legislative Committee

No report

F. Public Relations/Activities

No report. Andree asked for ideas for the April edition of the *Northern Staff News*. The due date for submissions is March 15, 2017. There have been over 25 applications submitted for the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship. This marked increase in applications is likely due to Academic Works, NIU's new online scholarship application system. Of course, all applications will have to be checked to make sure applicants' parents are operating staff. Bollinger asked if the Public Relations/Activities Committee had thought about using something like "GoFundMe" as another way to raise funds for the scholarship fund. Andree responded that it was something the committee might look into.

G. Workplace Issues

Bollinger reported. Would like to offer supervisory training to individual groups and offices, but need buy-in from individual management. Would also like to implement

management training. Each employee has 7.5 hours of personal development time. Wybourn advised that when using personal development time, the activity has to take place on campus. The committee would also like to see a motivational speaker brought to campus for a university-wide event. Nicholson added that an operating staff employee survey should be conducted soon. One has not been done in several years.

H. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)

Miller reported. The deadline for nominations for the Pat Siebrasse Award has been extended to March 24, 2017. There are 80 potential nominees, but no one has been nominated yet. APAC currently has two vacancies on its council.

I. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC)

Small reported. The next EAC meeting will be held May 3-4 at Illinois State University, and Human Resource directors will be holding their meeting as well.

J. University Advisory Committee

No report

XI. Prior Business

A. Wellness Fair

The Wellness Fair takes place March 29 from 10:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M. This year's theme is "Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy Spirit." Andree asked for volunteers to sit at the OSC's table. At this year's fair, there must be something for attendees to do at each table, so Andree gave a couple of examples of activities that passers-by could do. OSC brochures will be available, as well as the 50/50 raffle for the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship Award.

XII. New Business

XIII. Adjournment

A motion was made by Andree to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Kozumplik and passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 11:16 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens, Secretary
Operating Staff Council