

Minutes
Operating Staff Council
August 2, 2018
Sky Room – 9:00 a. m.
Approved September 6, 2018

Present: Rebekka Ayres, Stacey Bivens, Ellen Cabrera, Angelica Gutierrez-Vargas, John Hulseberg, Natasha Johnson, Renee Kerwin, Cindy Kozumplik, Jay Monteiro, Holly Nicholson, Jeffry Royce, Nancy Skelley, Karen Smith, Jesse Tellez, Patricia Wielert, Debbie Williams

Absent: Katja Marjetic, Rave Meyer

Guests: Therese Arado, Dennis Barsema, Wheeler Coleman, Cathy Doederlein, Sarah Klaper, Frances Mitchell, Joyce Pusateri, Pulchratia Smith

I. Call to Order

President Nicholson called the regular meeting of the OSC to order at 9:08 a.m.

II. Roll Call

Attendance was recorded by Stacey Bivens.

III. Approval of Agenda

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

IV. Approval of July 10, 2018, minutes

A motion was made by Cabrera to accept the July 10, 2018, minutes. The motion was seconded by Wielert and passed by unanimous vote.

V. Treasurer's Report

Kozumplik asked if the copy card was charged to OSC and not SPS Council. It was confirmed that the card is charged to OSC.

VI. Visiting Committees/Guests

Board of Trustees Chair Wheeler Coleman and Vice Chair Dennis Barsema attended the OSC meeting in order to get feedback regarding Acting President Freeman becoming the next president of NIU. While the Board of Trustees was preparing Dr. Freeman's review, it was apparent that she did not just babysit the university over the past year. She has moved NIU forward. The board approached Dr. Freeman and asked if she would reconsider her decision and put herself into

consideration for the presidential search. Chair Coleman explained that this is not a popularity contest, and the Board of Trustees knows there won't be 100% consensus. They want what is right for NIU, and they believe they will get better feedback from hundreds of people than from a search committee. Coleman stated that, as a trustee, he was attending the OSC meeting to listen, learn, and take viewpoints back to the board. The statement was made that Dr. Freeman once said that she did not want the position of president. Chair Coleman said that NIU still has a lot of mountains to climb, and there is a job to do.

The Board of Trustees has voted to change the interview process. On Thursday, August 30, 2018, there will be a forum for Dr. Freeman to share her vision for NIU. Royce commented that it was good for morale and good to see NIU hiring someone from within. K. Smith suggested that everything that Dr. Freeman has done in the last year be produced on some kind of media. It was noted that her CV has been posted on the website. Klaper stated there is a misperception at NIU that shared information gets to everyone, which is not the case. Skelley remarked that Dr. Freeman is genuine, and she agreed that it is great to hire and promote from within. Tellez shared that Dr. Freeman arranged to have equipment fixed, which had been ignored by the previous administration. Nicholson stated that Acting President Freeman understands the needs of faculty and staff, as well as budgets. She added that leadership under the president should have goals and be made accountable for them. Hulseberg said that he was in full support of Dr. Freeman. He posed the question whether the board had asked itself to ask Dr. Freeman what would happen if someone else is nominated. Trustee Coleman acknowledged that we are in a unique situation: we have an acting president who has the qualities we want in a permanent president.

VII. Public Comment

Barb Andree, a former OSC member, spoke to the issue that a number of employees do not have access to a computer. She shared her belief that an ethics clause be part of all contracts in the future. Andree added she fully supported Dr. Freeman, and found her to be genuine and discreet. Mitchell added that NIU has so much talent, it does not seem necessary to do a search.

VIII. Announcements/Correspondence

Pulchratia Smith from Human Resource Services reported that the steering committee charged with the provision for student health care met. Negotiations between NIU Health Services and Northwestern are continuing. If Northwestern is given a contract to provide student healthcare, it could affect close to 40 positions. NIU still has questions, including how students' records will be accessed and maintained. NIU Health Services is still in place.

There are currently several vacancies at Human Resource Services (HRS), including the front desk, payroll director, student employment, Employee Assistance Program, and Labor Relations. Also at HRS, the paperwork for onboarding new hires is becoming more online.

IX. Shared Governance Reports

A. Board of Trustees

There was discussion of the presidential search as it pertained to Acting President Freeman. The university asked the board for permission to file a lawsuit against a contractor hired by the city of DeKalb in 2017 to do a street repaving project on Normal Road. During the project, the contractor cut through a buried high voltage power line that led to LaTourette and Faraday Halls and damaged an underlying steam tunnel. The university has been unable to settle with the contracting company, and believes a lawsuit is the only way to recoup the money.

B. Faculty Senate

No report

C. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC)

Doederlein reported. The SPS Council discussed the Merit Board and the shift of AP (SPS here at NIU) positions to civil service. There are seniority concerns, and anxiety about the transition. Will it be handled humanely, and will employees be treated with dignity?

D. University Council

No report

E. University Advisory Committee

No report

X. Committee Reports

A. Civil Service Celebration

The Civil Service Celebration will take place Thursday, August 9, 2018. All OSC members are expected to take part to help the event run smoothly. There will be a photographer there, and video streaming inside to the ballroom so everyone can watch the events outside.

B. Elections and Appointments

No report

C. Employee Morale

No report

D. Legislative Committee

No report

E. Public Relations/Activities

No report

F. Workplace Issues

No report

G. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)

Wielert reported. APAC's next meeting will be August 8, 2018. The group is collecting canisters of whipped cream for use in the pie toss at the Civil Service Celebration.

H. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC)

Hulseberg reported. EAC met July 12 and 13, and the committee discussed the migration of AP/SPS positions to civil service positions. This process has started, and universities have a 16-month window to complete it. There is a procedure to appeal at the state level. EAC is trying to support 900-hour and grant-supported employees to become permanent civil service employees. Hulseberg told Doederlein he would meet with the SPS Council if they would like.

XI. Prior Business

None

XII. New Business

None

XIII. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens, Secretary
Operating Staff Council

