Minutes
Operating Staff Council
March 7, 2019
Sky Room – 9:00 a. m.
Approved April 4, 2019


Absent:  Stacey Bivens, Ellen Cabrera, Angelica Gutierrez-Vargas, Renee Kerwin, Holly Nicholson, Jesse Tellez, Pat Wielert, Debbie Williams

Guests:  Miriah Ranken, Brian Smith, Pulchratia Smith, Susan Swegle, Katy Whitelaw

I. Call to Order
Vice-president Jeffry Royce called the regular meeting of the OSC to order at 9:05 a.m.

II. Roll Call
Attendance was recorded by Frances Mitchell.

III. Approval of Agenda
A motion was made by Kozumplik to accept the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ayres and passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of February 7, 2019, minutes
A motion was made by Skelley to accept the February 7, 2019, minutes. After a brief discussion of the reference to furlough changes, the motion to accept the minutes was seconded by Johnson and passed by unanimous vote.

V. Treasurer’s Report
There was some discussion about the status of the OSC budget relative to the Civil Service Celebration (CSC). The current balance is $464.79 and a note was made to follow up on the information reported by the Treasurer regarding the CSC budget. Smith made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s report. The motion was seconded by Hulseberg.

VI. Visiting Committees/Guests
A. Katy Whitelaw, IT Accessibility Officer
Katy explained the necessity for NIU’s compliance with federal and state law. Katy explained that NIU has policies in place to comply. There are four broad categories the policies address: disabled individuals, software, hardware, and support. The law requires our technology to be accessible to individuals who are blind, hearing impaired, unable to use a mouse or key or wheelchair bound. Our information and technology must make it possible for a disabled individual to access the same information as individuals who are not disabled. Besides being the right thing to do, doing so benefits NIU. We can recruit and retain students because they can be successful, compliance reduces the risk of litigation, and the success of our disabled students enhances NIUs reputation as a center of excellence. For in depth information about resources available to make your website accessible:

https://niu.edu/marcomm/services/web/resources/accessibility.shtml

Katy urged our group to think about the non-availability of access to textbooks. She is working with legal and procurement to see what she can do.

B. Brian Smith, Director, Employee Assistance Program
Brian introduced the new Employee Assistance Program and Training Center that provides counseling services and comprehensive training programs.

Brian described the supervisory training program as being set up as a cohort system to bring diversity from across the campus with a group of mentors, people of long standing with NIU, to serve as a resource for cohorts. The program runs from 3-6 months, meeting every other week for two hours and a couple of individual meetings as well, i.e. understanding emotions, understanding yourself, your priorities.

There were a few questions from the group about making the training required, surveying for feedback, and eligibility. There has been no measurable progress on making the training required, no current plan for capturing feedback, and only employees in supervisory positions are eligible.

C. Susan Swegle, Training & Development Specialist
Susan brought some handouts to pass around and talked about Human Resource Service’s (HRS) Career and Education Development Services. She introduced their new program, L.E.T.S. (Lead Employees to Success). Because it is desirable and cost-effective to retain employees, L.E.T.S. focuses on comprehensive onboarding
where new employees are “coached” for up to twelve months. They found some employees were not passing their probationary evaluations and were leaving without knowing why they failed the evaluation. Along with comprehensive onboarding, HRS also offers career and education development services which provide staff, retirees and their dependents with mentoring and consultant services for all aspects of educational development, career planning, and personal growth.

VII. Public Comment
None

VIII. Announcements/Correspondence
A. Pulchratia Smith introduced Miriah Ranken, the new Administrative Assistant, who came from the Payroll Division. Pulchratia also updated HRS vacancies. The Graduate Assistant processor position is still open. HRS is re-evaluating how to fill this position. Other positions to be filled include Accounting Associate in payroll, HRS Assistant, and HRS Assistant Manager.

From April 22 until April 25, a representative from Civil Service office will be on campus for an on-site audit of HRS. A visit with the OSC Executive Committee will be scheduled. The representative will also meet with Civil Service employees as well as Supportive Professional Staff employees to see what their duties are and if they are properly classified. The last time NIU was audited was October 2014. Audits are usually completed every two years. NIU is the first campus to be audited this year. They will prepare an Audit Finding, which will be made public, and compare it with the last audit to see if corrections have been made.

B. Cindy Kozumplik: 125th Anniversary Committee
The Activities Committee is still meeting monthly. The first Kick-Off event will be late January or early February. The 2019-2020 parking permits will have the 125th Anniversary logo on them. A lecture series is scheduled to take place during the anniversary celebration, along with four activities, including Barbara Peters and her work which may also be used in other ways. Departments will be able to apply for grants to participate in the activities. More information on this will be coming out later this month.

IX. Shared Governance Reports
A. Board of Trustees
No report

B. Faculty Senate
No report

C. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC)
No report

D. University Council
No report

E. University Advisory Committee (UAC)
No report

X. Committee Reports

A. Elections and Appointments
Call for Candidates will appear in the Monday Morning Announcements. There are six seats open on OSC. The Committee wonders if it is of value to add a seat for SPS transition. Think about this—this may be good time to extend an olive branch welcoming SPS. The Committee will be meeting regularly and voting will be electronic.

B. Employee Morale & Workplace Issues merger
It seems like everyone is in favor of having one committee – Workplace Issues – since morale is a workplace issue. After some discussion, Royce made the following motion:

Have the Legislative committee update the Workplace Issues committee definition to include matters and duties relating to employee morale. To also have the Legislative committee draw up any amendment/resolution necessary to subsequently dissolve the Employee Morale committee. VP and Elections & Appointments will follow-up to be sure that all council members are serving on at least one committee.

Monteiro seconded, and a vote was taken by show of hands. One opposed and all others in favor. This will be taken up again at the next meeting.

C. Legislative Committee
Marjetic reported on the following amendments to bylaw articles:
- Amendment to bylaw article 1.3 describing Secretary’s powers and duties
Documents: Proposal 1; Proposal 1 and 2 Justification
- Amendments to bylaw article 8 Nominations and Elections
Documents: Proposal 2; Proposal 1 and 2 Justification
- Amendments to bylaw articles 2.15, 2.16, 2.17 pertaining to membership on Standing committees
  Documents: Proposal 3
- Discharge of the Employee Morale Committee, bylaw article 2.17
- Amendment of bylaw article 2.15 Workplace Issues Committee
  Documents: Proposal 4
- Amendments to article 2.14 Public Relations/Activities Committee and articles 2.21 Editor(s) of Northern Staff News, 2.22 Annual Operating Staff Event, and 2.23 Outstanding Service Awards Selection Committee
  Documents: Proposal 5
- Proposed amendments to the bylaws as a whole
  Documents: Proposal 6 – Bylaws with corrections; Summary

D. Public Relations/Activities Committee
Ayres reported. She reminded everyone about bowling night on April 4. A flyer was made and the event will be advertised in the Clearinghouse. Discussed the process of dependent scholarships. The committee will meet to discuss and select candidates on March 14. Nothing to report on the Outstanding Service Award, except the deadline for applications was extended. Discussed the activity at the NIU Health & Wellness Table. The OSC will take part in the Wellness Fair on April 3. Handouts will be available, people can submit their e-mail address for the newsletter, and an activity will be provided. The Celebration Luncheon Committee hasn’t met yet. The PR Committee may invite them to a future PR meeting. There is no new hiring information to report. K. Smith invited suggestions for Brown Bag topics that might be useful to staff. The committee discussed the lack of funds for the printed copies of the newsletter, and will be creating a form to send to the employees currently receiving printed copies, informing them that if they would like to get a newsletter they could give us an alternative email if they do not access their NIU email, or they could opt out.

E. Workplace Issues – See X. B. above

F. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)
Ranken reported the APAC Breakfast will be April 24. The Siebrasse Award for Excellence nomination deadline is extended to March 22.

G. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC)
Hulseberg reported EAC is scheduled to meet on April 1. However, the Merit Board is meeting on April 17 so EAC may be pushed back until April 24 or
25. Hulseberg explained that when EAC does meet, the group will hear an update from across the state about the SPS to Civil Service transition and consider the question, do temporary SPS deserve the same protections as civil service employees?

**XI. Prior Business**
None

**XII. New Business**
None. Kozumplik mentioned need for heat in Sky Room.

**XIV. Adjournment**
A motion to adjourn was made by Marjetic, seconded by Meyer. All in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Minutes recorded by Frances Mitchell, SPSC/OSC Administrative Aide
Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens, Secretary
Operating Staff Council