

Minutes of the Operating Staff Council

June 4, 2020

Approved July 9, 2020

Teams Meeting

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Present: Ayres, Berg, Bivens, Gingrich, Gutierrez-Vargas, Hulseberg, Johnson, Kerwin, Kozumplik, Meyer, Mitchell (Admin Aide), Monteiro, Nicholson, Royce, Skelley, Smith, Teso-Warner, Ward, Wielert, Williams, Yates

Absent:

Visitors: Bradley Beyer (SGA), Cathy Doederlein (SPSC), Sarah Klaper (Ombuds), Miriah Ranken (APAC), Pulchratia Smith (HRS), Kendall Thu (FS)

Guest Speakers: Matt Streb (Chief of Staff); Sam Hancock, Morgan Haga, Olivia Monteiro, & Hannah Secor (OSC Dependent Scholarship winners)

1. Call to Order & Roll Call: President Royce called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and congratulated the newly elected representatives, announced the new alternates, and thanked those who are leaving the council. Royce confirmed a quorum. Attendance recorded by Bivens.

2. Agenda Approval: Royce called for a motion to approve the Agenda. Kozumplik moved, Skelley seconded; motion passed by unanimous vote; the June 4, 2020 Agenda is approved.

3. Review & Approval of Minutes: Royce asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 7, 2020 meeting. Nicholson moved, Wielert seconded; motion passed by unanimous vote; the May 7, 2020 minutes are approved as written.

4. Treasurer's Report: Wielert reported. She gave an update on the balance we have for the Civil Service Dependent Scholarship Award. We currently have \$52,920.96 with \$1,234.04 available for scholarships. Regarding the Civil Service Celebration (CSC), Wielert was assured the event can still be held. Williams pointed out we may have to cancel the event due to Covid-19. Skelley wondered what we could do instead of the lunch, and suggested t-shirts. A motion was made by Royce to the Public Relations Committee to think of alternative options to the CSC and other ways to reach out to campus; Nicholson seconded; motion passed by unanimous vote. Kozumplik advised that the OSC try to keep the CSC money, because if we give it up, we probably won't get it back.

A motion was made by Hulseberg to accept the Treasurer's Report; Johnson seconded; motion passed by unanimous vote; the June treasurer's report is accepted.

5. Visiting Committees/Guests:

Dependent Scholarship Award Recipients: The students who received the Dependent Scholarship Awards were recognized. They are Morgan Haga, Sam Hancock, Olivia Monteiro, and Hannah Secor.

Matt Streb, President's Chief of Staff: Streb thanked the staff for everything we did to get through spring semester, especially helping the students. There was a collective responsibility shown for NIU which included employees donating their parking refund to the Student Emergency Fund. A \$45 million budget deficit will be presented to the Board of Trustees in June. Student Enrollment is a huge part of the budget. Applications were up 30% this year. Re-enrollments were up, while enrollment leveled out on transfers. It was asked if deans and vice presidents have given up anything. Streb answered that they have taken pay cuts amounting to around \$500,000. Asked if we can anticipate more layoffs, Streb

responded that he would like to say no, but they will probably happen. The deadline for the Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program for operating staff has been extended. Skelley asked if an idea like furlough Fridays would be considered. Streb explained that there have been discussions with all 17 unions on campus. There have been around 100 layoffs. Many were seasonal, and many workers are in the process of being brought back. We did have a \$5 million deficit before Covid-19. Transparency is important. We are taking a hit on housing this year, because there were no summer camps scheduled. Johnson asked if there is a time frame to pay off the deficit. Streb said that it can't happen immediately. He did point out that NIU is in better fiscal shape than some sister institutions. Skelley asked if there are layoffs in other categories besides Civil Service. Streb answered yes, a handful of Supportive Professional Staff (SPS), instructors, but no faculty. P. Smith shared that the process started in April. The majority of Extra Help were discontinued May 15, non-renewal notices of contracts for some SPS, and limited student employment. Wielert pointed out that non-renewal of an SPS contract usually requires one-year notice, with three-months' notice for those employed less than three years.

6. Public Comment: None

7. Announcements/Correspondence:

a. President's Announcements: Royce shared, "I think it goes without saying that 2020 is a year which will certainly be in the history books, and whatever one's opinions are on the way this pandemic has been handled by governments and employers or on the demonstrations happening across the country and world; we all will have the ability to pass on our first-hand experiences to the generations to come- and that is a powerful realization."

Royce indicated appreciation for the administration's recognition of staff layoffs and acknowledgement of OSC Resolution 2020.1 via shout-out in President Freeman's Friday email announcement. He also drew attention to the "Return to Work guidelines and protocols" document shared in a previous announcement, along with a reminder to take the 15-minute return to work BlackBoard training.

Recognizing that employees on layoff are not permitted to participate in shared governance, Royce asked that any council members who experience a change in employment status please share the update to a council officer "in their own time, and in their own way" so that we can keep the council operating at its peak.

b. Pulchratia Smith, HRS: At least 100 employees have been met with regarding layoffs. She clarified seasonal employee layoffs. There is no such thing in Civil Service. Positions are either being cut or the employees are not working currently. Workers can exercise bumping rights. When laid off there are no health benefits and no time benefits paid out. Those laid off got an explanation about requesting a benefits payout after 120 days.

c. Cindy Kozumplik, 125th Anniversary Committee: Kozumplik will continue to report on any anniversary events, although they will most likely be virtual.

8. Shared Governance Reports:

a. Board of Trustees (BOT): Royce reported. Met briefly on May 14. President Freeman reported that she used the expanded powers granted to her on two occasions: to allow employees to utilize unaccumulated sick leave without the required pause in pay, and to commit the Holmes Student Center as a quarantine site. She then returned her expanded powers back to the board. Royce made comments regarding employee layoffs and asked for continued transparency and equity.

b. Student Government Association (SGA): Beyer, the newly elected Speaker of the SGA, reported. He is working with Antonio Johnson, the Student Body President. They have a limited

staff, because 15-18 student employees were told they could not work this summer. They have had to adjust the budgets they administer, because they fund many student organizations. They are trying to be strategic and cut non-essential spending.

c. Faculty Senate (FS): Thu reported. The Faculty Senate finalized a letter to Congress requesting more support for higher education. They're close to finalizing a letter to students showing support during the pandemic and the racial injustice protests. Lastly, the shared governance changes are close to implementation.

d. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC): Doederlein reported. The SPS Council is looking at a copy of the resolution the OSC sent to university administration. She says they will probably make some modifications to it but will likely pass it.

e. University Council (UC): Did not meet.

9. Committee Reports:

a. Elections & Appointments: Monteiro reported. OSC's annual election was held with the following results: Elected to three-year terms were Holly Nicholson, Lauren Teso-Warner, and Linda Yates. Elected as alternates were Sarah Richter, Jeffry Royce, and Mary Schlagel. Brand new members will attend an orientation program. Officer nominations are usually done at the June OSC meeting. It was decided that self-nominations be e-mailed to Monteiro by Friday, June 12. Hulseberg pointed out that people sometimes nominate the day of the election. The election will be held at the July meeting. Monteiro plans to use the Polly function in Microsoft Teams to make the ballot. It will give the tally, but not who voted.

b. Legislative Committee: Did not meet.

c. Public Relations/Activities Committee: Ayres reported. The committee discussed announcing the Outstanding Service Awards and the luncheon.

d. Workplace Issues Committee: Johnson reported. Met May 27. The committee is discussing renaming itself the Workplace Betterment Committee. They had questions for CFO Chinniah, but these were answered in the Board of Trustees meeting. There are issues with PPE (personal protective equipment) protocols. Instead of the N95 masks he was told he'd receive, an OSC member was given a bag of disposable surgical masks, which he is supposed to spray, put in a bag, and not use for seven days. Also, there was a question about people who did not want their name to appear in the OSC newsletter. Royce contacted HRS to resolve this issue.

e. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC): Ranken reported. APAC did not meet but will meet next week. The Patricia Siebrasse Award recipient has been selected and will be notified soon.

f. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC): Hulseberg reported. He will keep the council informed about other campuses in regard to Covid-19. Hulseberg did not run for re-election to OSC, but will continue as ex officio on the council.

10. Prior Business:

a. Communication of Resolution 2020.1: Royce indicated that he heard from a staff member who was disappointed about learning of the resolution by President Freeman's recent email rather than directly from the OSC. He admitted that he was hoping for an official response from

the administration, as well as feedback from our counterpart representative bodies before communicating the resolution to our constituents. It was suggested that this communication can be grouped with an update regarding the Civil Service Celebration as well as the next newsletter.

11. New Business:

a. APAC Proposal: Ranken shared that APAC has been evaluating its role as a group. Currently, they select the recipient of the Patricia Siebrasse Award and organize and host the Administrative Professionals Day Breakfast. They are asking that the OSC absorb APAC as a subcommittee, similar to the CSC Committee. Royce explained that the Executive Committee had discussed this previously, but details need to be ironed out. Skelley talked about APAC's history. Ranken shared that there are approximately 250 APAC members. Royce made a motion for the council's endorsement to create an ad hoc committee tasked with the creation of an APAC subcommittee, and to identify any of the necessary legislative changes; Gingrich seconded; motion passed by unanimous vote.

b. July meeting date: There was discussion about changing the date of OSC's July meeting. Skelley made a motion to postpone the OSC meeting from July 2, 2020 to July 9, 2020 in favor of the holiday weekend; Johnson seconded; motion passed by unanimous vote.

12. Adjournment: Royce called for a motion to adjourn. Hulseberg so moved, Johnson seconded; all in favor, no abstentions, none opposed; the meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens, Secretary
Operating Staff Council