

Operating Staff Council
August Regular Meeting Minutes

Virtual Teams Meeting
August 5, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

Approved September 2, 2021

Present: Rebekka Ayres, Zac Birch, Evan Forbes, Patricia Gingrich, Angie Gutierrez-Vargas, John Hulseberg, Sandy Jakubiak, Natasha Johnson, Cindy Kozumplik, Rave Meyer, Frances Mitchell (Administrative Aide), Jay Monteiro, Kathy Mosher, Holly Nicholson, Sara Richter, Jeffrey Royce, Mary Schlagel, Jim Slagstad, Lauren Teso-Warner, Linda Yates

Guests: Caroline Kosmel, Daksha Patel, Felicia Bohanon, Lauren Kurpius, Marzena Szymdt, Merlynette Griffin, Miriah Ranken, Patricia Erickson, Patricia Wallace, Peter Chomentowski, Pulchratia Lacey, Renata Catlett, William Hodson, Miriah Ranken

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I. Call to Order

Nicholson called the August regular meeting of the Operating Staff Council (OSC) to order at 9:00 a.m. and Forbes began the recording of the virtual Teams meeting.

II. Roll Call

Attendance was vocally called by Forbes and recorded. Sara Richter was recognized as a voting alternate member.

III. Approval of Agenda

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

IV. Approval of July 1, 2021, Minutes

Birch made a motion to accept the July 1, 2021, minutes. The motion was seconded by Meyer and passed with sixteen aye votes and one abstention.

V. Treasurer’s Report

Yates reported the budget remains at \$9462.54. The budget is the same as last year and there were no cuts. The FY22 allocation for the Operating Staff Dependent Endowed Scholarship is at \$1830.87, the full report was sent by Nicholson to the Operating Staff Council. Royce made a motion to accept the Treasurer’s report. The motion was seconded by Kozumplik and passed by unanimous vote.

VI. Visiting Presenters & Guests

No visiting guests presented.

VII. Public Comment

No public comments were made.

VIII. Announcements/Correspondence

A. President's Announcements – Holly Nicholson

Nicholson thanked the OSC for the support and confidence they show in Nicholson's leadership. Nicholson welcomed Bill (William) Hodson as the new Chief Human Resources Officer. Hodson said it is great to be at Northern Illinois University (NIU) and has spent the last nine years at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, so is hoping for warmer winters. Nicholson reported the [President's Budget Roundtable](#) met last Monday, and the administration is focusing on multi-year planning. Nicholson had brought up that that people may be skeptical, and they discussed messaging to demonstrate true transparency. Nicholson also brought up the immediate need to level set staffing levels. They discussed the exhaustion and burnout that staff are facing, even the faculty are feeling as well.

B. Council Spotlight

Kozumplik recognized Jay Monteiro.

“The person that I am spotlighting is someone who I am honored to work with. This person has been at NIU for 23 years. This person has worked on council for 20 years, serving as president at least 6 times, also serving as vice president, and parliamentarian. As well as serving on multiple committees.

This person provides a kind word when needed, offering a helping hand, and provides guidance on all matters to NIU.

NIU is very honored to have Jay as a member of the Huskie Community. I am honored to work with him and call him a friend and fellow Huskie. He goes above and beyond in all that he does.

Thanks for all you do, Jay.”

Nicholson recognized John Hulseberg as phenomenal. Hulseberg has earned an MPA, served as an officer on the council, piloted the personnel advisor role for six years, and is NIU's Employee Advisory Committee (EAC) representative. Hulseberg remains calm in the tensest of situations and never gives up, is also encouraging and uplifting, encouraging Nicholson to run for OSC president each time. Nicholson applauded Hulseberg for all the work put in for NIU and is an excellent painter and sculptor.

C. Human Resource Services (HRS) Update

Lacey reported that the State University Civil Service System (SUCSS) has revised many classification series, including Financial Analyst/Planner series, Business/Administrative Associate, Admissions and Records series, Business Manager Series, and Health Information series. More information at the SUCSS site [here](#).

The SUCSS audit is scheduled for the end of September. They will not be on-campus, and the audit will be completed remotely. They are waiting on the request for information so they can collect the information. The audit covers a two-year period from February 2019 through June 2021. They will also randomly select Supportive Professional Staff (SPS) and Civil Service employees to review to make sure their job description is accurate and up-to-date, and SPS job descriptions do not match civil service job classifications.

SUCSS will instruct HRS which job classifications and employees are subject to a change in title process. Any employees in those classifications are able to move directly to the new classifications without an exam or probationary period. HRS will evaluate the job description of the position to ensure it still meets the new classification.

IX. Shared Governance Reports

A. [Board of Trustees \(BOT\)](#)

No report given; the Board of Trustees did not meet.

B. [Faculty Senate](#)

No report given; Faculty Senate did not meet.

C. [Supportive Professional Staff Council \(SPSC\)](#)

SPSC made amendments to their bylaws, particularly their succession plan when a vacancy exists. Bohanon is now officially president of SPSC. In their next meeting, they will hold elections for additional officers.

D. [Student Government Association \(SGA\)](#)

No report was given, student is not present during the summer semester.

E. [University Council](#)

Chomentowski reported the Governor signed a new Declaration of Disaster that removed the Open Meetings Act (OMA) reference. Greg Brady, lead counsel for NIU, interpreted that any meetings falling under the OMA must meet in-person. Future Faculty Senate, University Council, and Board of Trustee

meetings will be in-person. Chomentowski relayed the understanding that if a member is elected and the meeting is slated to be in-person, then they must be present or find a substitute. The governor will be able to re-sign the Declaration of Disaster each month, so Chomentowski is keeping an eye out for any changes.

Royce clarified that the OSC is not subject to the OMA but recognized that members of OSC are also members of other shared governance groups that are. Forbes questioned if anyone was lobbying the governor's office to include another lapse in the OMA, but Chomentowski was not aware of anyone at NIU working towards that. Nicholson recognized NIU has a state representative position that would probably be most suited to doing so.

X. Committee Reports

A. Elections and Appointments

Royce has not called a meeting for the Elections & Appointments committee this fiscal year. Royce is prioritizing time to fill the university committee vacancies. The committee continues to work on recreating the election procedures manual and will provide regular updates. Royce presented an action item to the council for consideration. The Provost's office requested a single representative from the Operating Staff Council to participate in the Student Mandatory Fee committee. The committee reviews fee proposals and may occasionally meet with managers to review proposals. Royce asked for interested parties from the OSC. Monteiro, Meyer, and Forbes were the initial three representative selected that expressed interest. Voting was held to select one representative out the three. Monteiro won representation, Meyer will be first alternate, with Forbes as second alternate.

1. University Committee Appointments

Monteiro recognized that Karen Smith had expressed interest in the Parking Committee. Royce motioned for provisional acceptance of Smith to the Committee, using Smith's email and supervisor's email with approval until an official narrative is received. The motion was seconded by Birch and passed by unanimous vote.

Royce shared the official narrative from Sandy Jakubiak for joining the Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee. OSC representatives voted unanimous approval for appointing Sandy Jakubiak to the Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee

B. Legislative Committee

Nicholson has a meeting scheduled for August 13. They will be finalizing the election procedures and bylaws for the OSC. For now, University Council and Faculty Senate members have three-year terms, and those representatives will remain in place, until the university bylaws are updated to reflect a one-year term.

C. Public Relations and Activities Committee

Johnson informed the council that the committee did not meet. Nicholson apologized for getting the newsletter out late.

D. Workplace Guidance Committee

Yates welcomed Hodson to the university. Yates gave a brief history on a letter from APAC from around March, asking for assistance in coming up with processes and identifying ways to deal with the documented twenty percent decrease in administrative professionals and the additional workload left in their wake. Yates is planning to schedule a meeting with Hodson to discuss. There has been great conversation over the past couple months, especially with Meyer, the President of the Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC). Royce scheduled a brainstorm with APAC, OSC, and HRS in preparation for the meeting.

The Committee is working to get a sliding scale for childcare services. Yates referenced an employee who needed to leave the university because they could not afford childcare. They have identified key players, Kristen Schulz and Dr. Thomas Pavkov to work with regarding this situation. Hodson looks forward to the meeting.

E. [Administrative Professionals Advisory Council \(APAC\)](#)

Ranken shared that the council was in the final stages of putting together a training to go out to all employees regarding the use of SharePoint. They are always looking for more ideas for additional training that employees could use.

F. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC)

Royce read Hulseberg's report, "The State University Civil Service Employee Advisory Committee (also known as EAC) met Thursday, July 27, via Zoom. Some highlights included several changes to different classifications. Changes should provide greater clarity to the different job duties and task performed in each class. Several changes to constitution and bylaws, making it easier to conduct business in new remote world. Merit board's next meeting is August

19, no discharge cases involving NIU. Larry Curtis from the State University Retirement System (SURS), spoke about two new retirement plans, that replace the self-managed plan. New plans give members more control over investment options, two new plans are Retirement Savings Plan (RSP) and Deferred Compensation Plan (DCP). Please visit SURS.com for more info.

Council of Councils is scheduled to be a virtual event hosted by Northeastern Illinois University on Friday, October 22. Hopefully more info can be sent out soon. Thank you, hope everyone enjoys the last few weeks of summer.”

G. Civil Service Emergency Fund (CSEF)

Nicholson discussed that HRS is willing to partner with OSC on a booth at DeKalb’s Cornfest. Nicholson motioned that OSC spend \$200 to fundraise for the Civil Service Emergency fund; \$125 to pay for half of the booth cost at Cornfest and an additional \$75 to fund small gifts in return for a donation. Meyer seconded. Birch complemented the use of funds and promotion of NIU. A vote was held with the chat feature of Microsoft Teams and passed with unanimous vote.

The CSEF committee is working with Sophia Varcados in Creative Services to create an initial design for a poster to go into break rooms to help make the operating staff aware of the resource. They will be working on a second posting or the pamphlet that will contain information about how to apply for the fund.

XII. Prior Business

A. Approval of OSC Regular Meetings Schedule for the year

Nicholson and Mitchell reviewed the schedule for the year. Birch motioned that all OSC Meetings in the fiscal year of 2022 to occur on the first Thursday of each month at 9 a.m. Seconded by Mosher and passed by unanimous vote.

XII. New Business

A. Future OSC Meetings – Virtual vs. Hybrid vs. In-person

The council held a discussion regarding the merits of continuing to meet exclusively virtually or turning to a hybrid model to allow an in-person portion. A vote was held for the September meeting and called at ten for continuing virtual only and four for a hybrid meeting. The September meeting will be exclusively held on Microsoft Teams.

B. Remote Working Committees

No update from the Remote Working committees and sub-groups. Individuals will reach out to Forbes with updates to add to the agenda.

XIII. Adjournment

Kozumplik moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Meyer and passed by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evan Forbes, Secretary
Operating Staff Council