



**ATHLETIC BOARD MEETING**  
**September 14, 2022 – 2:00 pm**

Present: Courtney Hughes (Chair), Vincent Becker, Aaron Fogleman, Lesley Gilbert, Kari Hickey, Michele Hunt, Jeanna Hunter, Tom Libert, Brian McCormick, Aidan O'Brien, Marcella Otto, Jerri Reynolds, Glenn Roby, Laura Sala, John Siblik

Guests: John Cheney, Deputy AD/Executive Assoc. AD/Operations; Lisa DeRango, Sr. Assoc. AD/Human Resources & Finance Administration; TJ Feuerbach, Sr. Assoc. AD/Development & Revenue Generation; Anton Goff, Sr. Assoc. AD/Director of SAASS; Ryan Sedevie, Sr. Assoc. AD/Collegiate Advancement & External Affairs; Courtney Vinson, Sr. Assoc. AD/Sports Administration; Jacob Hinkle, President of NIU Dawg Pound

- I. **Call to Order** – C. Hughes called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.
- II. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes** – G. Roby moved to approve; A. O'Brien seconded; motion carried unanimously.
- III. **Faculty Athletics Representative** – C. Hughes introduced herself as the new Faculty Athletics Representative and iterated the purpose of the Athletic Board serving to direct the policies that help the athletic department function as an organization within the University. As this was the first meeting of this fiscal year, C. Hughes asked the group to go around the room and introduce themselves.
  - i. John Cheney, Deputy Athletic Director
  - ii. TJ Feuerbach, Sr. Associate Athletic Director of Revenue Generation
  - iii. Jerri Reynolds, School of Nursing and Supportive Professional Staff Representative
  - iv. Courtney Vinson, Sr. Associate Athletic Director of Sports Administration
  - v. Aidan O'Brien, Student Government Representative
  - vi. Glenn Roby, Representative for the Huskie Athletic Fund
  - vii. Jacob Hinkle, President of the NIU Dawg Pound
  - viii. Marcella Otto, Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Sports Management
  - ix. Kari Hickey, Associate Professor and Acting Chair for School of Nursing
  - x. Vincent Becker, Director of Athletics for the Student Government Association
  - xi. John Siblik, School of Art and Design
  - xii. Lara Sala, Office of General Counsel
  - xiii. Lesley Gilbert, Assistant Director of EAP and Training, and Civil Service Representative
  - xiv. Jeanna Hunter, College of Law Representative
  - xv. Aaron Fogleman, Professor, History Department
  - xvi. Brian McCormick, College of Business
  - xvii. Ryan Sedevie, Sr. Associate Athletic Director of External Affairs
  - xviii. Lisa DeRango, Sr. Associate Athletic Director of Human Resources and Finance Administration
  - xix. Anton Goff, Sr. Associate Athletic Director, Director of the Student-Athlete Academic Support Services
  - xx. Tom Libert, Alumni Association Representative
- IV. **Athletics Director Update** – J. Cheney provided the Athletics Director Update in Sean T. Frazier's absence (document available in the Teams folder). He provided a brief overview of the status of

the current fall sports. Football is underway with Coach Hammock leading his fourth season. They will play Vanderbilt this Saturday, celebrating family weekend, Band Day, and the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Orange Bowl team. Men's Soccer is currently working to reestablish themselves after having lost several key players to graduation last year and are currently 2-2-2. Women's Soccer is also currently at 2-2-2 and is developing the program under an entirely new coaching staff and several new players. Volleyball has started off at a record of 5-3 and will start MAC competition in a few weeks. Cross Country hosted their first home meet last weekend with a couple of top 10 finishers. This year marks the first year that Coach Moreno has had the opportunity to recruit and train the student-athletes as last year he came into the program just one week before season started. Men and Women's Golf are also competing, and both come into season with high expectations.

Other updates included:

- NIU Black Wall Street – J. Cheney asked C. Vinson to provide additional insight on this event. C. Vinson noted that this was a new opportunity, working in collaboration with ADEI, Student Affairs, the Alumni Association and the NIU Foundation, to provide an educational experience to students on the history of Black Wall Street in Tulsa in conjunction with the Football game. On the Friday prior to the game, 18 students and staff attended the cultural center and several landmarks. J. Cheney added that they hope to be able to continue to promote those types of programs moving forward as we continue to travel to different areas.
- Hall of Fame – Athletics is hosting the Hall of Fame induction ceremony the Friday before the Homecoming game (October 7<sup>th</sup>). This year's class of 13 inductees includes teams, individuals, and several special categories.
- The Football 115<sup>th</sup> Homecoming will be on October 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:30PM.
- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Title IX – This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Title IX, and Athletics will be hosting an event the Sunday after Homecoming, celebrating current and former female student-athletes.
  - J. Cheney noted that members of the Board should reach out to L. Bernardy should they wish to attend any of the many events coming up.
- Mental Health Seminar – A. Goff indicated that a large emphasis has been placed on mental health this year, particularly as Athletics' works toward their new Strategic Plan. This past year, they brought on Shyann Beach to assist with student-athlete mental health, but they felt there was a gap for staff and coaches. They will be hosting a Mental Health Seminar on October 10<sup>th</sup> for coaches, featuring guest speaker Dr. Emmitt Gill.
- Huskies Invest will commence October 24-28<sup>th</sup>. This is one of Athletics' main fundraising campaigns.
- Athletics Organization Chart – With the departure of Debra Boughton, the Athletics Sr. Staff has redistributed her previous responsibilities amongst themselves rather than replacing her position. J. Cheney noted that they would send out the new organization chart after the meeting.
- NIL Summit and Summer Circuit Recap – This event was held at Whiskey Acres, with several local businesses invited to attend to discuss engagement with NIL, what they can and cannot do, etc.

V. **Liaison Reports:**

- a. **Diversity Integration Group (D.I.G.)** – G. Roby/C. Vinson – C. Vinson indicated that the Diversity Integration Group met for the first time on Monday and went through the action plan for 2021-

2024. Social Justice programming has been waylaid as they are still looking for a director. The group is currently focusing its attention on the upcoming elections and other initiatives. C. Vinson also added that the Richard A. Flournoy Homecoming Inclusion Reception, hosted by ADEI, will be just before the Athletics Hall of Fame.

- b. **Finance and Facilities** – K. Hickey/J. Cheney/L. DeRango – There was no report at this time as the group will meet for the first time at the end of this month.
- c. **External Affairs** – TBA/ R. Sedevie/ TJ Feuerbach – The External Affairs Working Group is looking for a chair to serve as a liaison to the Board. Once they have secured a volunteer, they will work on scheduling their first meeting.

VI. **Athletic Department Reports:**

- a. **SAASS Academic Report (prior year)** – A. Goff gave an update of the past year SAASS Academic Report (document available in the Teams folder). A. Goff indicated how important it was to the mental health and communication/engagement of the students to be back in classrooms and provided an overview of the fall and spring semester grades.
  - Fall semester cumulative GPA 3.355 | Semester GPA 3.236
  - Spring semester cumulative GPA 3.345 | Semester GPA 3.240
    - i. NIU student-athletes are usually around the 3.3/3.4 mark, so this is on par with what we would usually see.
  - The total number of teams with a 3.0 or higher was 14 for both semesters.
  - There were 299 student-athletes with a 3.0 or higher in the Fall and 267 in the Spring. The goal is to always get over 250.
  - There were 66 student-athletes with a 4.0 in the Fall and 64 in the Spring. The goal is 50 or above.
    - i. A. Fogleman asked how the student-athletes compare to campus. A. Goff responded that student-athletes have higher graduation rates (84% compared to campus' 47%) but noted that some of that has to do with Athletics being a captured population with a higher support system than the general student population.
  - Student Development – Student-athletes are now working with an app called Game Plan. The app requires student-athletes to go through educational seminars, each being tasked with completing 20 modules per year. This year, NIU was rated the #2 user of the app out of 400-500 athletic users from other DI, DII and DIII Institutions. Modules covered varying topics, including financial education, sports wagering, mental health, sexual violence prevention, nutrition, etc. A. Goff added that these modules have been great in engaging student-athletes, and will, hopefully, guide them through their college careers into becoming better adults.
  - Over 2900 hours of community service between all student-athletes were logged during the 2021-22 school year.
- b. **Facilities Improvements (prior year) and FY plan** – J. Cheney went over the prior year Facilities projects and upcoming projects in FY23 (document available in the Teams folder). A lot of projects had been put on hold during the pandemic, but this past year, with the help of generous donations during Huskies Invest in October 2021, several projects have been able to move forward. Projects that have been completed in FY22 included: Baseball and Softball bullpen/batting cage renovation, Phase 1 of the Dave and Linda Nelson Tennis center at Chick Evans Fieldhouse, improvements to the Outdoor Recreation Center Softball and Baseball fields,

addition of a weight room in the Convocation Center, upgrades to the graphics outside the Basketball suite at the Convocation center, and phase 1 of reupholstery to chairs in the Stadium Skybox. Projects that are currently under way or have been completed in FY23 include: Soccer field turf replacement (completed), LED lighting upgrade in the Convocation Center arena and Victor E. Court (completed), phase 1 of the Walt and Janice Owens Park infield and backstop replacement for Baseball (in progress), new roof for the Softball dugout (in progress), Basketball alumni recognition wall (in progress), Yordon Center graphics and technology upgrades (in progress), photo and graphic upgrades in the Convocation Center Athletics main hall (design phase), phase 2 of the Dave and Linda Nelson Tennis center at Chick Evans Fieldhouse (design phase), and the 1899 project in the Yordon Center/Huskie Stadium (design phase).

G. Roby asked what else the Chick Evans Fieldhouse is being used for. J. Cheney responded that ROTC, the food bank, Victor E.'s Closet, Health and Wellness classes and various classrooms are still housed in the Fieldhouse. He noted that they will be offering tennis memberships to the community (when not being used for practice/competition). G. Roby asked if there were any plans to relocate the current space occupants. J. Cheney replied that while they are looking at how best to utilize the space, they have not started conversations to date on relocating any current occupants.

- c. **Complimentary Ticket Policy** – J. Cheney provided the group with a document breaking down the Complimentary Ticket Policy (available in the Teams folder). This document showcases the different distributions of complimentary tickets.
- d. **Evaluation of Staff and Coaches** – L. DeRango gave a brief overview of the Athletics' staff and coach evaluation process (PowerPoint available in the Teams folder). As part of the Strategic Plan, it was decided that a review of the current evaluation process was needed. A committee was put together in FY22, comprised of head coaches, department heads and Sr. Staff members to review the current evaluation process and condense to a format that was a little more employee friendly. The final evaluation tool allows employees (non-coaching SPS and select Civil Service staff) to elaborate more on their skills, both professionally and personally, and to weigh in on their goals and community service. This new formatting allows the employee to provide more input while supporting conversation between the employee and supervisor. There is also an ability for the employee and supervisor to rate their skills in specific areas.

For coaching staff, the evaluation process is slightly different. New and returning student-athletes are given surveys at the end of their competitive season, assessing areas such as academic success, time demands, team conflicts, facilities, equipment, etc. (separate survey for departing student-athletes). Assistant coach evaluations are conducted by the Head Coach. Head Coach evaluations are initially conducted by their Sport AD, followed by a comprehensive meeting with the Athletic Director. All evaluations are conducted annually.

- e. **Sexual Assault Prevention Program** – C. Vinson indicated that she would provide the group with the policy document post-meeting. Back in 2016, the NCAA looked at a report from the Department of Education regarding student safety across the country. Legislation was created to require certain measures to promote safety, including Clery training, Title IX training, and Sexual Assault Prevention Training. As of August 1, the NCAA has now added a disclosure policy. When a student or prospective student comes to campus, they will now be required to fill out a disclosure form, essentially disclosing their history regarding Title IX and criminal accusations. If a student-athlete is transferring in and they had an occurrence at their previous institution, they

must disclose this up front so their case may be reviewed to ensure that they have met their previous institution's sanctions. NIU has had several meetings with the Title IX office to ensure that the disclosure form is comprehensive and includes all that they want it to include. C. Vinson noted that the coaches at NIU have always been very good at alerting the administration to potential student-athletes that have had previous issues to see if they would be admissible. Having this information up front allows the department to make decisions at the beginning versus finding out about an issue once the student-athlete is already enrolled. She also noted that they have been doing these types of things for a while now, it just happens that it is now mandatory by the NCAA. A. Fogleman asked what the history was at NIU. C. Vinson responded that there have not been any headline issues, just a handful of minor things that were dismissed by Student Conduct and Title IX as the students were determined not to be a danger to themselves or other students after investigation. J. Siblik asked if the policy was new, to which C. Vinson replied that the disclosure piece was. The logistics are still being worked out for what this will look like for high school students. J. Siblik asked if there was any pushback from the student-athletes. C. Vinson replied that they have not had any issues, and that the incoming students understand if they want to compete, they must complete the disclosure.

VII. **Announcements/Adjournment** – G. Roby noted that non-NIU personnel may not have access to the Teams materials and asked if there was a way to ensure those excluded are able to acquire the meeting materials. J. Cheney noted that the faculty/staff appreciation promo for Football (BOGO) will continue through homecoming and asked the group to share amongst their peers.

K. Hickey made a motion to adjourn the meeting; J. Hunter seconded; meeting closed at 3:04 pm.