

**Meeting Minutes**  
**University Athletics Council**  
**Friday, Feb. 13 2015**  
**1:00pm**

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**PRESENT:** Austin Anderson, Christy Baker, Linda Bennett, Karen Bonnell, Steve Bridges, John Campbell, Alex Eaton, Katie Ehlman, Andrea Gentry, Jon Mark Hall, John Key, Brian McGuire, Sean Riley, Jeff Seyler, Linda Tribble, Lucas Woodford

**CALL TO ORDER:** Dr. Karen Bonnell calls the meeting to order at 1:00pm. Dr. Bonnell acknowledges new Council members, Lucas Woodford, Andrea Gentry, and Brian McGuire. Dr. Bonnell thanks new members for agreeing to serve on this Council and asks them to tell a little bit about themselves. Dr. Bonnell tells these new members that she has assigned them to subcommittees and will discuss further with them later. Dr. Bonnell thanks University President Linda Bennett for attending and asks for her remarks regarding the role of this Council; and the work that she anticipates from this group in the future.

Dr. Bennett explains that this Council was put together in 2009-2010. The biggest reason she created this Council was her desire to see a better understanding for, appreciation, and oversight of athletics on this campus. She feels that Athletics is a very important center of campus life. She adds that USI has established a reputation for sportsmanship and she states that this is as important to her as the national championships we win. She feels that it is all important to have a diverse body of people around the table to discuss where we are at, what do we need to be doing next, and the current challenges, struggles? President Bennett adds that in terms of Division II, the GLVC Council of Presidents are having conversations looking at 5-10 years down the road; regarding what's going on with Division I. She feels that there could be some schools looking to come back into Division II for a host of reasons. Dr. Bennett feels that we are in a time of change for collegiate athletics and that it is important to be diligent and to make sure that we are telling the good story of the hard work that happens on this campus. She says we have a great investment in terms of the success of our student athletes and their coaches. President Bennett calls these athletes and their coaches' powerful ambassadors for the University of Southern Indiana. She adds that they need to feel our support and we need to be engaged in the hard issues that they deal with. President Bennett adds that she feels that USI has an Athletic Director and coaching staff who really do emphasize the best about participation in Athletics and she feels that it is very important to reinforce them, to be involved and to help tackle some of the tough issues. President Bennett announces that they just went through architectural presentations for renovations to the PAC; one of the most important buildings on campus. This renovation could possibly include an expansion and Dr. Bennett reiterates the importance of the timely completion of this all important project; siting the many uses that this building has. She states that this is an opportunity to continue the mission of USI Athletics and possibly expand.

President Bennett states that after attending the latest Capital Campaign meeting, her strong desire is to increase scholarships for USI student athletes. As a charter member of the GLVC, she feels that USI should be at the top of the GLVC spreadsheet for athletic scholarships, and we are not.

Dr. Bennett thanks members for their work on the Dashboard. It has given a mechanism in which to talk about Athletics on this campus. When looking at GPA's, and graduation rates of USI student athletes; Dr. Bennett feels that because of the success of our student athletes this is the very best example of powerful learning communities. She reminds of her deep commitment to this group and how important it is to come together in support of athletics on our campus and to find ways to grapple with many issues. Dr. Bennett asks Jon Mark Hall about his thoughts regarding issues possibly coming in 5-10 years. Jon Mark Hall remarks that there is a little buzz about some confidential calls that the NCAA has received regarding what does the reclassification for Division II look like? NCAA Leadership is saying they typically haven't fielded these type of calls, that traditionally it has been the other way around from Division II to Division I. Obviously, should the regions get larger this would change the landscape of Division II.

**MINUTES:** Dr. Bonnell distributes unofficial minutes from May 7, 2014 meeting. Dr. Bonnell asks for any changes, recommendations to May minutes. Motion to approve May minutes is made by John Key, and seconded by Steve Bridges. Minutes are approved.

### **USI ATHLETICS INCLUSION STATEMENT**

The following statement is considered for approval:

In conjunction with University policy, University of Southern Indiana Athletics embraces Screaming Eagle fans, athletes, coaches and administrators of every race, sex religion, ability, age, national origin, veteran status, sexual orientation and gender identity. We support equitable practices aimed at increasing opportunities for **all** members of our community, and we actively invite all persons to cheer, train, compete, and teach within USI Athletics. Eagles, flying on to Victory!

Motion to approve this statement is made by Jeff Seyler, seconded by John Campbell. Statement is approved.

### **ATHLETIC DIRECTORS REPORT**

Baseball team won the Division II National Championship and Johnny Guy was the National Champion in 2000 Meter Outdoor Track and Field Meet making for a very exciting spring. The Baseball team was honored at the St. Louis Cardinals Baseball game, Johnny Guy and the Baseball team were honored at the State Capital in Indianapolis. Baseball has been invited to be honored at halftime of the NCAA Division I Basketball Tournament at the YUM Center in Louisville. Baseball opens season tonight against Tampa in Florida. Jon Mark tells the Council about a woman calling the Athletic office yesterday because she and her young son ended up on the same flight to Tampa as our Baseball team. She was calling to let us know that our young men were very polite, moving seats to allow her and her son to sit together. She felt it necessary to make the call to let us know how impressed she was with their behavior.

Athletics has to complete an NCAA Self-Study every five years; this must be done by June 1, 2015. Jon Mark explains that this process is a large amount of questions. Yes answers – provides amounts of documentation and carry on; no answers – they address what level of risk your deficiency might be. He and Alex Eaton, Associate Athletic Director, have gone through these questions. Jon Mark says that they may need some assistance from some areas represented in this Council in answering these questions and obviously if there are deficiencies, how we would address solving those. Mr. Hall feels that the area that will need the most attention will come as no surprise and that is specific strategic plan for Athletics. President Bennett remarks that Kevin Valadares and Matt Hanka will be presenting to the USI Board of Trustees about the environmental scan for the University. She cautions to be mindful in terms of integrating this component. Dr. Bennett also notes that on the Blueprint that was done five years ago, the existence of this Athletics Council was noted as “best practice” and reiterates the importance of those sitting around this table. Another area that Mr. Hall feels that might be examined a little deeper might be the student athlete welfare/life-skills type things that are done. Brian McGuire suggests that perhaps asking someone from the Center for Applied Research to come in and help facilitate might be beneficial. Jon Mark Hall completely agrees with this suggestion as a great place to start.

The Elite Eight, NCAA Division II Men’s Basketball Championships will be held again this year at the Ford Center in Evansville, in March, 2015. USI Athletics plays an integral part in hosting that event along with the Evansville Sports Corporation. USI did host the Cross Country Regional Championships last fall in conjunction with the Evansville Sports Corporation which has been a great partnership for USI, as most of the collegiate events that they have been involved with have been geared to the Division II level.

Athletics hosted their annual Hall of Fame Banquet early Feb., and the Athletes Scholarly Luncheon is coming up next week which honors a lot of USI student athletes who carry 3.5 and above GPA.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Academic Progress and Integrity**

Mr. Brody Broshears is unable to attend today's meeting. Karen Bonnell reports that as a member of this Committee, it will be working with Jon Mark Hall and Alex Eaton on the Self-Study and as Jon Mark stated might be calling on other members of this Council for help.

### **Fiscal Integrity and Facilities Planning**

Mr. Steve Bridges reports focused on two items: making a recommendation for a process that would be the right path if we were to add or enhance a sport. There is not a whole lot of documentation available in terms of what people do when adding a sport. He assumes an endorsement from this Council might be a good place to start. President Bennett suggested that academic program approval procedure used for the Commission for Higher Ed, might be a good model, without being so involved. She adds that perhaps a quick, tight target market study of number of high schools with that sport might be a possibility. Mr. Bridges added that perhaps discussions with other UAC Committees might be helpful.

The second focus item was architect presentations for PAC renovations. Architect recommendations will be made at March 5 Board of Trustees meeting leading to the design phase. Mr. Bridges states that while 16 million dollars is a lot of money, the PAC was built in 1980 and you never really know what you will find until you are into the project. Mr. Bridges reminds that while of course Kinesiology and Athletics need to be involved, he feels that in reality this building is probably one of our biggest community buildings. A lot of outside groups only come to the PAC. Re the facilities side of this UAC Committee, they will try to focus on being a liaison on this project. Jon Mark Hall states that he feels like the campus could look quite different with these renovations to this building and added that it is an exciting time.

Questions/Answers.....

Are these renovations being funded by the state, student fees?

State funds

Proposed time line?

Construction would begin in early 2016, how long it would take would depend on what is done.

Are there contingency plans for moving sporting events?

It has most definitely been thought of. Volleyball will be easiest to move/reschedule. Basketball games are more difficult because high school gyms are not regulation size for collegiate games so the only real option to relocate basketball games (in Evansville) would be the Ford Center. Complications would arise mainly during Conference play periods because games need to be scheduled on a particular night, etc. Of course, a nice facility is desired/needed for Commencement as well. Seating capacity for athletic contests and commencement would have to be considered when relocating.

Is there an issue with the pool because there was some thought that swimming might be a new sport for consideration?

Pool could be used as is in some capacity but probably not capable of hosting events. Locker room entrance is a complication as well

## **Governance and Compliance**

Ms. Mary Jo Harper was unable to attend this meeting. Sean Riley reports that their Committee has met and was mainly working on coordinating information for the Self Study that Jon Mark Hall mentioned, and rubberstamping some final action items on the Blueprint. This Committee feels pretty comfortable with their progress on the Blueprint and reports that a handful of items remain on the Blueprint, the last major one being developing the Strategic Plan. At the end of the month, Sean Riley, Alex Eaton, Brody Broshears and Linda Tribble will attend GLVC Conference meeting on compliance.

## **Student-athlete Welfare and Equity**

Katie Ehlman reports that this Committee met in late January to discuss current items and strategic planning items. Two areas were the focus of this meeting.

1. Review Gender Equity Plan. Year three of monitoring includes the following areas as far as gender equity.
  - a. Publicity
  - b. Travel and per diem allowances
  - c. Accommodations of interests and abilities of students

It is desire to of Committee to integrate these questions into an already existing format to pole some initial information perhaps through Admissions, or Assessment Day program.

2. Providing leadership and advocacy, raising awareness of and providing resources to address issues related to equitable opportunities, fair treatment, and respect for LGBTQ student athletes, coaches, administrators, and all others associated with the University athletics programs. Committee members brainstormed ideas and starting points. A Committee member will contact Pat Griffin, a national expert in this area. Committee has identified an NCAA resource Champions of Respect, a 92 page document offering programmatic ideas.

Katie Ehlman describes desire to have discussion with coaches and/or students to start a dialog to later help use what is learned to develop a policy. She also mentions that they will reach out to other universities who have LGBTQ athletic policies. Jon Mark Hall comments that he thinks this is a good start and expresses that he feels it very important and really wants the student athletes, coaches to have input on these discussions toward such a policy; with ultimate desire being that everyone feels comfortable with it. President Linda Bennett comments that though this focus is on student athletes, she feels that this really has the ability to help campus as a whole. She feels this is a great example of how this body can begin a process that helps the structure of conversations across campus.

## **New Business**

Karen Bonnell draws attention to Membership Roster 2014-2015 handout distributed with today's meeting agenda. She points out that there are several Council members whose terms are set to expire at the end of 2015, and some of those have already served two consecutive terms. She points out that while there is nothing in the by-laws that states that a person cannot serve more than two terms but she reminds that when the by-laws were created the desire was to have more input from different people across campus, while also maintaining stability. Consequently, in the cases of these particular positions, if these Council members decide that they are ready to leave, Dr. Bonnell asks that if you know of someone that you would like to recommend to take your place, please bring it to her attention. She states that there is a great group of people serving and reminds that it does involve a lot of work and dedication.

## **Data Dashboard**

Karen Bonnell commends the excellent work done by Katie Ehlman and the Data Dashboard taskforce to update/maintain the data and format; and asks for others who might be willing to serve on the Data Dashboard

taskforce for the coming year. Katie Ehlman states that former Council member Laci Rogers was great and added design elements through an Excel spreadsheet and everything is set up to be updated. Karen Bonnell asks if Alex Eaton would be willing to serve on this taskforce, and she agrees. Linda Tribble volunteers to help on this taskforce as well. President Bennett suggests an email link to this Dashboard be sent to faculty to let them know about successes, and what's going on in Athletics.

Meeting is adjourned at 2:05pm.