Minutes of the January 11, 2010 Meeting

I. President Baker called the meeting to order at 4:04 PM.
II. Invocation was offered by Dr. Mike Milks.
III. Minutes from December 14, 2010 were approved as submitted.
IV. Unfinished Business: None
V. Questions for the President:
   a. Dr. Kim Broekemeier inquired about the results from the student center survey. She asked whether the results will be made available to everyone and specifically to the committee and outside consultants (the Dillin Group) that are examining the interaction between ONU and the town of Ada. Dr. Baker responded that all Powerpoint slides regarding the survey results will be available on the President’s website as well as that of Institutional Research.
   b. President Baker presented results from the student center survey (see the President’s website for Powerpoint slide presentation). From the ONU community, 2292 people responded. These responses represented 50% of the student population, 72% of faculty and 45% of staff. In addition, the survey generated 880 written comments (600+ from students and 200+ from faculty and staff).
      i. How important is a student center to ONU as a whole? Overall, 60% responded that the student center was important/very important. Sixty-three percent of students and staff indicated that a student center was important/very important. Only 38% of faculty thought a center was important/very important.
      ii. What should be in the student center? Respondents indicated that dining (81%), recreation (72%) and meeting spaces (58%) were important/very important. Students seem to have a strong commitment to dining and recreational services, while faculty and staff are less enthusiastic about a recreation option in the student center. Students, faculty and staff all seem to agree that a dining space, a retail space and a “hang-out” space are all important to include in the new student center. Students are particularly interested in a 24-hour study facility, while faculty and staff are interested in retail facilities, such as a bookstore, coffee shop or post office.
      iii. Where should the new student center be located? There was no clear consensus. The location on the tundra and the location next to Hakes-Pierstorf were often in the lead, but respondents chose all locations.
      iv. How much would you be willing to pay in fees to help support a new student center? This question was only asked to students. There were 1674 respondents. Forty-six percent said they would be willing to pay $100 - $150. Many other students said they would be willing to pay $0.
v. Dr. Baker also highlighted some common themes that emerged in the written comments. Faculty members were concerned with the cost of the new student center, students were worried about additional fees and everyone seemed concerned about placing the student center on the tundra. President Baker then opened the floor for questions from the faculty.

c. Dr. Kim Broekemeier expressed concern over keeping Ada businesses strong if a food court goes into the new student center. President Baker responded that the university is still gathering information and attempting to establish priorities before moving forward with concrete plans.

d. Dr. John Lomax commented that the site of the proposed student center is his concern. He noted that every great university has a large lawn (e.g. Notre Dame, Ohio State University, University of Kansas, University of Virginia) and expressed concern about losing ONU’s tundra space. Dr. Baker responded that a similar view was expressed by current ONU students. Students were also concerned that an iconic part of the university would be ruined by placing the student center on the center of the tundra.

e. Prof. Paul Logsdon raised the thought that alumni might share similar concerns. He also asked about the level of coordination between planning for the student center and planning for the town of Ada (the Dillin Group). Dr. Baker shared that there is some overlap in membership between the two planning committees.

f. Dr. Ray Person commented about the lack of cost questions on the student center survey. While students were asked about fees, he suggested a better question might have been to state that $30 million could be spent on these items: which of the following do you prefer?

g. Dr. Tom Hunt noted that asking whether something is important yields a different response than asking whether something is important relative to other options.

h. Dr. Nancy Woodley commented that Meyer 107 is frequently complained about by students. Perhaps providing a list of items would show whether students prefer a new student center or a classroom renovation instead.

i. Dr. Adam Steinecker suggested that survey data should be compared by student rank (e.g. freshman, sophomore, junior, senior). Senior students and freshmen might feel very different about priorities.

j. Dr. Larry Robinson commented about the location of the new student center. He wondered whether survey respondents realized that a building also comes with parking and access roads. He expressed that these other factors could be especially cumbersome at the proposed tundra location.

k. Dr. Catherine Young asked whether any student comments vocalized strong support of the tundra site. Dr. Baker could not recall, but noted that written
comments can be reviewed by anyone interested. Please contact his office or Institutional Research.

l. Dr. Nancy Armstrong noted that negative comments about the tundra location might be due to the fact that many staff/faculty parking sites are also located near the tundra.
m. Dr. Sami Khorbotly interpreted the survey results as 27% of respondents in favor of the tundra location and 73% opposed because of their choice of one of the three other locations. He wondered if people chose a random location other than the tundra and whether the results might have been different given only two options: tundra or elsewhere.
n. Dr. Baker wanted to address concerns about the proposed 80%/20% tuition remission plan for faculty and staff. He noted that they are trying to find other solutions to protect this benefit at its current 100% coverage. He also expressed appreciation for all the input he has received regarding creative ways to reduce expenses or to generate revenue.
o. Dr. Baker also wanted to revisit the budget process. He expressed that the budget is a projection or a recommendation at this point. The budget is not finalized until the October Board meeting. A preliminary budget is presented to the Board in February because a good estimate of the budget is needed by June 1 (start of the new fiscal year). The budget is then finalized at the October Board meeting once enrollment is firm.
p. Dr. Baker then fielded questions regarding the new presidential search.
q. Dr. John Lomax felt the message from John Bishop was not informative and he disagrees with the confidentiality requirement.
r. Dr. Jon Smalley, as a faculty representative on the presidential search committee, reported that the committee met in Columbus with semi-finalists and has reduced that to a group of finalists. The expanded faculty role at this point includes a few groups that will meet with candidates. The participating faculty could include the four chairs of the constitutional committees and those elected to University Council. Faculty involved must sign a confidentiality agreement.
s. Dr. Natalie DiPietro reported that the best practice is to use the confidentiality approach.
t. Dr. Bill Theisen asked whether all finalists were external to Ohio Northern University. Dr. John Smalley could neither confirm nor deny that claim.
u. Dr. Kay Zekany commented that confidentiality would not be maintained if we see the candidates on campus with the faculty representatives.
v. Dr. Jon Smalley encouraged all faculty members to address concerns to their elected representatives that are included in the expanded presidential search committee. The expanded search committee also includes a group of staff, students and deans.
w. Dr. John Lomax questioned the value of having an indefinite non-disclosure clause. Why is there not an end date on confidentiality? Dr. Natalie DiPietro commented that candidates might not want employers to be aware of the search after it is completed. Dr. Ray Person added that there is implicit indefinite non-disclosure in other personnel searches also.

x. Prof. Nils Riess asked whether the search committee has visited the candidates’ current or former work situations. Dr. Jon Smalley responded that deep background checks on the finalists are occurring.

VI. Report from University Council: Dr. Mike Milks announced that a meeting will be held next Tuesday.

VII. Reports from Constitutional Committees:
   a. Budget and Appropriations: No report.
   b. Academic Affairs: No report.
   c. Student Affairs: No report.
   d. Personnel: Dr. Kay Zekany announced that the personnel committee received excellent proposals for sabbatical requests and has recommended eight semester sabbaticals to the administration for 2011-12.

VIII. Reports from Operational Committees:
   a. Athletic Events: No report.
   b. Cultural Events: No report.
   c. International Affairs: No report.
   d. Religious Affairs: No report.
   e. Information Technology: Mr. George Gulbis acknowledged a catastrophic failure of the network last night. Two core pieces of the network failed at the same time. He appreciates the patience of the faculty, staff and students as repairs were made. He also noted that information technology has begun moving ONU email to Google Apps. This transfer has begun in the College of Engineering. He also commented that the transfer to Google Apps will be beneficial for everyone because there are a number of file and calendar sharing capabilities.

IX. New Business: None

X. Announcements:
   a. Dr. Kelly Shields gave birth to a daughter this afternoon.
   b. Professor Tom Simmons announced that wrestling, basketball and track all have events this week. He also announced that the women’s basketball team is currently in first place in the OAC.
   c. Dr. David Smith of the Department of History, Politics and Justice will be delivering a talk to the Social Studies Colloquium on Wednesday night at 7 PM in the Dicke Forum. His talk will address the possibility of conflict over water in Asia.
d. The Martin Luther King, Jr. observance speaker, Tracy Love, will be here tonight at 7 PM in the chapel. He is a 1957 graduate of ONU.

XI. The meeting adjourned at 5:15 PM.

Submitted by,

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Dr. Leslie A. Riley
Secretary