Minutes
Board of Director’s Meeting
April 10, 2019
Location?

Attendees:
Steve Deutsch
Ryan Goodwin
Michele Halstead
L. David Eaton
Stephanie Blaisdel
N’della Seque
Juan Molina
Samuel Halligan
Clare Del Grosso

Others Present: Kevin Paige, Scott Myers
Recording Secretary: Amanda Hamilton

ED Report

Steve asked if there were any questions on the report he submitted, the answer was no. Steve announced exciting news that the accounting issues from the RHSA stipend awards were resolved and they will be added to the budget under RHSA programming. An additional $12,000 will be added for a new food insecurity scholarship program which will be administered by Financial Aid. Maureen will be at the next meeting to discuss the details.

Steve discussed details and presented images of the new Open 24.

Construction Projects

Melinda discussed the benefits of replacing the dishwasher machine in Hasbrouck Dining Hall which includes energy efficiency and substantial savings on water usage. The walk-in cooler in the Student Union Building will also be replaced to improve energy efficiency. Melinda noted that these projects will be updating the current infrastructure and cosmetic renovations will take place. Steve asked about the current budget for these projects. Melinda stated the budget is between $600,000 and $700,000.
Juan asked if the Hasbrouck Dining Hall sign will be updated to the new building name. Melinda answered yes, in May or June the signage will be updated. The committee discussed everything on campus that needs to be updated with the new building names.

The committee discussed how the replacement of the dishwasher machine and new stone hard flooring should reduce the leakage problems that have been occurring.

**Dining Services**

Ryan discussed dining changes occurring in the Summer which included the menu and signage in Element 93 being simplified to feature all vegan and vegetarian options. Sodexo’s graphic design interns are working to redesign the logo for Peregrine Dining Hall. Sweets & treats will also be restructured to offer candy by the bulk and an increased number of bakery items. This is expected to be completed before orientation begins.

The food stations in Peregrine Dining Hall will be relocated to better suit the needs of the students. “Wild Mushroom” will be removed and healthy, clean, protein options will be added to focus on people who are athletes or want healthier hot food options. The grill area will move to a Made-to-Order area. The deli has changed this semester with the addition of a turbo chef, falafels, and expanded menu selections. During the day, the 360 Grill will continue to offer stir-fry and we will be adding a vegetarian broth opti. At night “South of the Border” station will be rebranded to offer Caribbean and Latin cuisines. The burrito station will change to a smoothie station. The reasoning behind this is the large amount of waste, broken equipment and loss with the current DIY smoothie station. Dessert selections will be moved to the area where the blenders and waffles are now. The coffee selection in the dining hall will move to Seattle’s Best. The current milk provider, Byrne Dairy is being sold. Starting in June we will move to Hudson Valley Fresh which is located in Ronnybrook Farm. The focus of this change is to improve the quality of the ingredients and foods being offered.

**Student Union Building**

Ryan announced Lou Herman is returning to oversee the front of the house operations. An executive chef from Vassar College, Mark Landers, will also be joining the team. We are seeking to improve the Culinary Program by removing Lorenzo’s, which is York Street and making the foods ourselves, increasing staff on the second floor with a supervisor and lowering the price points. The packaging, labels and menu selections of the Vegetarian and Vegan -graband-go has improved and will be fresh.

Ryan explained the changes that will be made between Nestor’s Grill and N’Pressed. Nestor’s Grill will now open at 10:30 in the morning. The breakfast items that are typically offered in the morning, will now be offered at N’Pressed. The menu will be expanded to offer breakfast sandwiches, smoothies, pre-made juices. N’Pressed will become the main breakfast location. The coffee will change from “Brooklyn Coffee” to a company called “Vega” which is woman-
owned and comes from two countries in Latin America. Ryan explained that the cost of the coffee will decrease by $5.00 a pound and the quality will improve.

Ryan discussed the planning stages of an additional outlet in the Hugo’s location to offer freshly made perogies which will include vegan and vegetarian options. The dough will be made at the bakery and a machine will be added in Hugo’s to make the perogies and toppings. These will be set at a value price which is great for people who are on a budget or want a late-night snack.

One big change that Ryan mentioned is during the Summer and Fall there will be a Union rebid. Currently we have heavy full-timers in the morning and struggle to find full-timers during the dinner and late-night shifts. Ryan expressed his concerns about the student workers being unskilled and not having enough experience.

Kevin Saunders asked if the sandwiches that currently come out of Nestor’s Grill will still be available and if Made-to-Order was still a possibility. Ryan answered yes, the sandwiches and Made-to-Order will now be available at N’pressed. The committee was happy to hear that colleagues of Kevin Saunders said “The breakfast sandwiches made at Nestor’s Grill are some of the best made anywhere.”

Stephanie mentioned an article she read in the Chronicle of Higher Education. The article describes a deep data-dive that showed that the best predictor of retention was the number of times a student went to the dining hall and who they were going with. Stephanie asked about promoting “take away cartons” at Freshman orientation and reconsidering this. Ryan answered that we don’t have to promote it at orientation, but we do promote it because it’s another food option. Stephanie also questioned that if students are opting to leave the dining hall because of social anxiety, is there a way to make a “low stimulus” or quiet space in the dining hall similar to the allergen-free zone for these students. Ryan explains it is very hard in that room. The committee agreed to keep the idea on their radar.

Ryan mentioned that when he was at SASA he met with dining engineers and architects and shared with the committee that one of the SUNY Schools has a dining hall that offers cooperative learning spaces. The committee thought this was a nice idea. Ryan asked if there were any other questions. The answer was no.

Jim Fredrick’s Scholarship

Michele said to the committee that “We accidentally found out that the scholarships for the Jim Fredrick’s that comes from CAS haven’t been appropriately disseminated to the students.” Michele notes that it is not anyone on the committee’s fault and that this decision was made years ago to change the way the scholarships were done. A meeting was held between Niza’s Office, Financial Aid, Michele and Melinda and in that meeting they discovered that the endowment that the foundation holds for the Jim Fredrick’s Scholarship is throwing off more money than we were spending. We now have the ability to increase the scholarships available from $575.00 to $1,000.00. Students will receive $500.00 in the Fall and $500.00 in the Spring.
Typically, we have the committee meet in the fall and the awards went out in one shot in the spring. Now the committee meetings will occur at this time of the year, or sooner and the scholarship will be available on the overall foundation website. Michele notes that you will still need to be a Sodexo, CAS or Follet employee to receive the scholarship. Going forward, awards will be done in the Spring for the following year. This is being completed now for Fall 2019 and Spring of 2020. Michele explains that the process will be managed by the foundation as far as the distribution of the awards, but the committee for CAS will still be making the determination for who is eligible and will be the successful awardees. Michele motions that she would like to change the current process and begin the new process to get us into compliance and to get the students more money. Michele asks how many students will be eligible for the awards. Melinda answers between 9 and 10 students. Niza notes that this will give the students more incentive to apply for the scholarship. Michele notes that Melinda has been working with the foundation to craft this award as a non-tuition therefore students with Excelsior will not be impacted. The agreement with the Foundation will state it is for non-tuition which means it can be used towards the student’s bill and if they have more aid than they need, it will be refunded to the student. David says “second?” Committee agrees. Michele asks if anyone wants to discuss this further. Steve asks if this will be starting now, Michele answers yes. Steve notes that we will need to form another committee now. Michele agrees and notes that we need to act upon this quickly so that it is available to go into student’s financial aid packet which typically goes out in May.

Committee session adjourns – all in favor

Steve asked for volunteers for the committee. Niza volunteered. (One student is needed)

Niza asks how quickly we can get the word out about this scholarship. Steve asks Ryan, Ryan says he can start today. Steve agrees to meet again in a week. Melinda asks with this timeline; can we accept the same essays from last time. Committee discusses that we are at the end of with finals and graduation coming up. Steve mentions that we will most likely receive applicants from previous years. Ryan asks if anyone is going communicate the message out, Steve agrees to provide that.

Water bottle Ban

Steve states that Coke approached Melinda and himself about the new water product and he did not want to improve it until he passed it by the board. The water bottle ban was passed a few years ago and we have since allowed seltzer water on campus. The argument was that you cannot get this particular type of water from a fountain. One product is an antioxidant and one is an alkaline free water. Steve passed around the product for the committee to review. Steve mentions that we don’t sell fewer plastic bottles on campus, we just sell more soda and iced tea. Steve notes that this is a healthier alternative and restates that the argument is that what’s in these water bottles, you can’t get from a fountain. Stephanie asks if we have a glass or carton option. Steve states we could do carton water, but it would be carton tap water. The committee discusses that we have offered carton water in the past, but it did not sell. Niza asks
if Steve has heard of a need for this alkaline free water. Melinda states that students just say, "I want water" and that sugary drink sales are increasing. She mentions that our intent is to reduce carbon footprint, and not give big corporations money. The committee discusses the cost of regular water verses the alkaline free water. Michele asks if a bottle this size would cost more than a regular sized water bottle. Steve notes that the seltzer bottles that they buy are the same size and price. David proposes the students need to take this back to their peers since this is their environment. David motions to table this conversation – all were in favor. Juan asks how many alternatives to the boxed water the committee has considered and mentions that a brand called "Just Water" comes in a 24-ounce bottle and comes in various flavors. Steve asks if Juan thinks students would be interested in that, Juan answers yes. Clare Del Grosso agrees that students would be open to this idea and mentions that while the cartoned water was offered in the bookstore, in her opinion students don’t typically go to the bookstore to purchase water. Ryan states that this water has been offered in the dining hall prior to Ryan being hired and it was not successful. Steve notes that today is a new day and the idea of boxed water has been out there for a while now. The committee discusses that they have an exclusivity with Coke, so they will need to discuss this with Coke and see if the company carries something similar. Steve loops back to the discussion on whether or not students would be open to the idea of boxed water. Juan states that the "Just Water" products are in something that is more easily recyclable than the plastic, and it does come in a smaller bottle, however it is not a Coke product. David states that the committee should revisit this conversation and make sure all information needed to make a decision is gathered and is accurate. Melinda mentions that Lisa Mitten asks for Coke data based on bottle sales and notes in the past four semesters that we have not reduced bottle sales, we have simply increased sugary drinks. This physical data is gathered from the Coke’s machines, there is not another way for us to gather this data. Melinda states. Niza mentions that at home her family stopped buying bottles of water and began buying gallons of water because it reduces the plastic waste. Niza then asks if the committee ever considered selling gallons of water. The committee agreed that most people want to be able to have "portable" water. Melinda states that when you see the students moving onto campus, many are carrying cases of water. N”della Seque mentioned that when working at Element 93, she hears students asking for water and they are often disappointed when they see there is only seltzer water offered. David notes that the RHSA Association should weigh in on this conversation. Steve asks if the RHSA Association meetings will occur before the next board meeting, the committee answered yes. The committee agrees to gather more information and data before the next board meeting to discuss this topic further. The committee discusses that there are hydration stations around campus but there are not enough of them around. Kevin Saunders states he does not think the hydration stations are filtered because at one point there was a discussion on the cost of the filters and how they would get replaced. Juan mentions a big concern from the students is that in Hasbrouck and the newly renovated resident halls the refillable machines are available, however the older resident halls do not have them. Stephanie asks if there would be an opportunity to establish a committee to look into student recommendations on water in general. Steve agrees this would be a great opportunity to inform the decision to offer more hydration spaces around campus. David states that this was never done as a referendum because if it was then the bottle ban would never have been put into place. Ryan restates that we are still using the same number of plastic
bottles, they are just more sugary drinks. **Stephanie** questions how they will get a committee formed. She asks do you need RHSA to come back with a motion and mentions that CAS will need to be involved. **David** says the two executive boards will need to discuss and come up with a joint decision. Steve asks who they should interface with between now and next board meeting in order to facilitate this decision. **Stephanie** advises to communicate with Student Activities. **David** motions that this conversation isn’t so much about the specific product, it is the whole concept of bottled water and that the alkaline free water is a distraction. Juan asks if there is a possibility to send out a Faculty & Staff Campus-wide survey detailing this. **David** states that he thinks majority will be in favor of bottled water. The committee converses the ideas of how the survey would be constructed and what questions will be asked. Juan asked what the timeline will look like to discuss the alternative packages with Coke. **Melinda** states she will have this conversation with Coke that day. **Steve** asks what the timeline should look like between sending out a survey and the next board meeting. The committee agrees this concept will be for next year. **Michele** asks if the reason the boxed water cannot go into the Coke machines is because they will get crushed, the answer was yes. **Steve** motions to have this conversation with the community, **Ryan** mentions they had this conversation last year and the conversation went both ways. **Stephanie** asks if the committee should be formed now, or before the next board meeting. **Steve** answers yes, everyone should consider being on the committee themselves.

**Steve motions to adjourn – all in favor.**