**Western Washington University**

**Services and Activities Fee Committee
Meeting Minutes**

**Friday, February 19, 2021; 9:30-10:30am**

**Teams Virtual Meeting**

**Present:** Kurt Willis, Eric Alexander, Noemi Bueno, Steve Card, Emma Duff, Adam Leonard, Caitlin Summers, Danil Sonjaya, Travis Cram, Rebecca McLean, Evan Shuster

**Absent:** Debbie Curry (recorder), Abdul-Malik Ford, Raquel Vigil, Ichi Kwon, Kevin Harris

**Guest:** Megan McGinnis, Michael Sledge

Kurt Willis called the meeting to order at 9:33 am.

**Agenda Items:** 1) Introductions, 2) Approval of February 12 meeting minutes, 3) Questions or Comments from Last Week, 4) Information Presentation: Athletics, 5) Information Presentation: Campus Recreation,
6) Election of Committee Chairperson

**Approval of Minutes**

The approval of the minutes for the February 12, 2021 meeting were not approved today as there was not a quorum at that point in the meeting. The minutes will be approved at the February 26th meeting.

**Information Presentation – Athletics:**

Steve Card and Emma Duff conducted the presentation for Athletics. Steve started off with a review of the revenue overview provided below:

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| **WWU Athletics Operating Budget 2019-20** (typical year) |
|   | State Funds  |  $     1,421,399   | 33.1%  |
|   | S&A Funds |  $     2,163,302   | 50.3%  |
|   | Fundraising  |  $        186,511   | 4.3%  |
|   | Ticket Sales  |  $        135,650   | 3.2%  |
|   | Advertising/Marketing  |  $        315,941   | 7.4%  |
|   | Other Revenue (student athlete health fee/events/misc) |  $          75,500   | 1.8%  |
|   | **Total Budget**  | **$     4,298,303**  | **100.0%**  |

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| **WWU Athletics Operating Budget 2020-21 (Covid)** (estimation) |
|   | State Funds  |  $     1,431,928 | 40.9%  |
|   | S&A Funds |  $     1,990,675 | 56.8%  |
|   | Fundraising (due to lack of play/fan attendance) |  $        -   | 0.0%  |
|   | Ticket Sales (due to lack of play/fan attendance) |  $        - | 0.0%  |
|   | Advertising/Marketing  |  $        60,000 | 1.7%  |
|   | Other Revenue (student athlete health fee/events/misc) |  $          22,700   | 0.6%  |
|   | **Total Budget**  | **$     3,505,303**  | **100.0%**  |

Steve stated that revenue is down about $800K, as well as travel expenses which have also reduced due to the lack of play this year. A large portion of the Athletics S&A Fee is used to support permanent staff and benefits, but enrollment has been down this year which will affect the S&A Fee revenue for this year. What the committee will see from Athletics moving forward may look more like what is represented in box one as a more typical year with regards to our anticipated revenue for 2021-22, however that will be determined by this committee.

Steve asked if there were any questions – there were no questions and Steve passed the presentation off to Emma.

Kurt encouraged the voting representatives to closely consider these budget presentations as the committee will be asked to make budget decisions in the coming weeks. The purpose of these presentations is to give perspectives from both sides of the equation (current year vs. future year). Kurt then passed the presentation to Emma.

Emma provided a review of what Athletics does and what they are about:

* **This is WWU:**Western Washington University is a four-year public institution located in Bellingham, Washington (population 87,000), and 90 minutes North of Seattle and 55 miles south of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Surrounded by the San Juan Islands and Bellingham Bay to the West, and Mt. Baker and the Cascade Mountain Range to the East, the Western campus is an idyllic setting for outdoor adventure, community involvement and higher learning.

* **Student-Athlete Success:**In 2020-21, approximately 300 students will participate in 15 varsity sports at WWU, 6 for men and 9 for women. WWU is in its 23rd year as a member of NCAA Division II since joining the ranks in September 1998. While play has been limited in 2020-21 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 2019-20 season was one of the best in history. Seven programs captured Great Northwest Athletic Conference titles, with all five teams during the fall sports season advancing to the NCAA Division II Championships. The Women’s Soccer team played in the national title game, the volleyball team won its third straight GNAC title, both cross country teams advanced to nationals and the men’s soccer team played in its second NCAA Tournament, and the men’s’ basketball squad won the GNAC Tournament.

* **Excellence in the Classroom:**WWU Athletics has enjoyed success not only in competition, but also in the classroom. In three of the last four years, Western has earned the Presidents' Award for Academic Excellence, awarded to schools having an Academic Success Rate of 90 percent or higher in the latest NCAA Graduation Rate report. With an Academic Success Rate of 90% in 2019-20, WWU was one of only six public institutions out of 42 NCAA II schools to earn the prestigious NCAA award. The Vikings earned a record 111 GNAC All-Academic awards in 2919-20 with a combined department GPA of 3.29 (14 of 15 programs recorded at least a 3.00 team GPA).

* **Excellence in Competition:**Following the fall sports season 2019-20, WWU held the No. 2 ranking in the first edition of the 2019-20 Learfield Directors' Cup NCAA Division II standings. WWU has finished in the top 50 in the Directors’ Cup standings in 15 of the last 16 seasons, including an 11th-place finish in 2016-17. WWU has also placed in the top 20 in eight of the last 12 years, including 26th in 2015-16, 36th in 2014-15 and 20th in 2013-14, and has been among the top 100 in each of its 21 seasons as an NCAA II member. WWU has won 11 team national titles, including the 2016 women’s Soccer and 2017 Women’s Rowing national titles.

* **Dominating the GNAC:**WWU has won 12 Great Northwest Athletic Conference All-Sports Championships, including eight straight from 2008-09 to 2015-16. WWU finished 2nd in the all-sports standings each of the last three years after a new point system was developed, ending the string of eight consecutive titles. WWU was poised to add another trophy to the collection last year winning six of seven team titles before the season was halted due to Covid-19.

* **National Success:**WWU has won 11 team national championships in the history of the athletic department, including recent national titles by Women’s Rowing (2017), Women’s Soccer (2016), and Men’s Basketball (2012). The rowing program has won eight NCAA II titles, including an unprecedented seven consecutive from 2005-2011. The Volleyball program has competed in the last eight NCAA Championships, winning the West Region title on its home court in Carver Gym in 2018, and was the national runner-up in 2018. In addition, several Track & Field athletes have won individual national championships, including two-time winner Bethany Drake in the javelin (2014, 2017).

* **Hardwood Success:**Both the WWU men and women’s basketball programs have recorded over 1,000 wins in the history of each program. The men’s program has advanced to NCAA II Tournament eight times and the women’s program has played in the NCAA Tournament in 17 of 22 seasons at the NCAA II level. The women’s program is one of only 16 programs across all levels of women’s collegiate basketball to record 1,000 all-time wins.

* **On the Pitch:**The WWU women’s soccer program has risen to the top of the collegiate ranks advancing to the NCAA II championships in each of the last eight seasons, building a 159-17-9 (.884) record over this stretch. The Vikings have played for the NCAA II West Region championship in seven of the last eight seasons, recorded a 39-game winning streak from 2016-17 for the 4th-longest winning streak in NCAA II history and won the 2016 national championship.

* **Spiker Success:**The WWU volleyball program has advanced to the NCAA II Championships in each of the last eight seasons (2012-19) and won three consecutive GNAC Championships, going 84-11 during this three-year stretch. Led by 20-year head coach Diane Flick-Williams, WWU is 202-40 for a .835 winning percentage over the last eight seasons.

* **Community Service:**WWU student-athletes are consistently active in the community, with the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) leading activities that benefit the community. SAAC has helped raise funds and awareness for the Washington Make-a-Wish chapter and created care packages for Lydia Place helping homeless families. Teams have also been involved in food drives to benefit the Bellingham Food Bank and visit classes in Bellingham Public Schools reading books and playing games.

* **Hall of Fame:**WWU’s Athletic Hall of Fame has inducted over 150 members that span the 119-year history of Western’s athletic programs. The WWU Hall of Fame is the second oldest among Pacific Northwest colleges and universities.

 Emma asked if there were any questions.

Kurt inquired about governance programs unique to the Athletics program vs other constituent’s programs. Steve responded that Athletics is a member of the NCAA Division II as well as part of the NW Athletic Conference. This is significant every year, however this year in particular, due to Covid, these organizations developed their own restrictions and protocol guidelines which have guided how our organization responds for the health and safety of our athletes, in addition to Western’s internal organization structure that we also have to be responsible to. It is also not uncommon for us to be identified in the Washington State Legislature with regards to items being discussed in Olympia; one of those items having been discussed on a national level over the last couple of years is Name Image and Likeness, which the NCAA is currently working on with the US Congress. Governance structure does reach beyond the boundaries of this institution and how it impacts our program.

Noemi asked Steve to confirm the $1.4M in State Funding and what those funds are used for. Steve responded that 100% of state funds go to support the salaries and benefits for approximately 50% of Athletics permanent full-time staff members. The other 50% ($1.3 or $1.4M) of staff costs (coaches/asst coaches, etc.) are paid from the S&A Fee allocation). Athletics has 40-45 administrative staff in total.

Noemi also asked Steve to address the spending for this year. Steve explained the primary operation expenses are salaries, benefits, and travel (approximately 80% of the operating expenses). For this year, the institution has secured employment for the permanent staff (approximately $2.7 or $2.8M in salaries for our organization). Our spring sports have just been approved to start play again and travel will resume; as well as women’s basketball which will start again next week (although our travel will still not look like a typical year). In addition to salaries, benefits, and travel, things like equipment and uniforms are also major expense categories, as well as contractual agreements, travel agency commitment, insurance costs, etc.

Kurt added that each constituency will have the opportunity to share budgets allowing for further and more in-depth conversation, but that Noemi’s question was a good opener to that topic.

Evan asked Steve how Covid and the reduction in funds has affected his ability to operate and what changes he has needed to make to serve the students and his constituency. Steve commented that the impact has been significant. From an administrative perspective we have had a hiring freeze which was has limited our ability to hire part-time coaches, the protocols we have had to work with have been very extensive and difficult to manage (sterilization of equipment, rooms, etc.) in addition to social distancing. Training athletes has been a real challenge for coaches, increasing their work hours in some cases up to 80 hours a week just to get all athletes their training time. Getting authorization for the athletes to practice was a challenge and was a very heavy lift for the university, but we have managed to navigate our way through that. Yesterday was a huge day for us getting the word that we can return to competition. Thanks to the collaboration of the Vice President of Enrollment & Student Services, President Randowa, the Student Health Center, Whatcom County Health Department, the WWU ICS Team, along with the NCAA and the NW Athletic Conference – that news was very exciting for us. Getting them comfortable with us returning to play was a real challenge. It’s been a tumultuous 12 months for everyone, but everyone is happy to see that we are returning to some semblance of normalcy. Steve then turned it over to Emma to address this question from a student athlete perspective.

Emma, speaking on behalf of all student athletes, agreed it has been a year of challenges for sure. She shared that March 2020 she had gone to Hawaii for her first NCAA II March Madness tournament and the day after they arrived, the team learned that play had been cancelled due to Covid – it was very disappointing. Since then it has just been adapting to what we have been allowed to do; being divided up for training, trying to practice outside with just a few people and being reported for it by neighbors – it has been a weird dynamic for sure. It has been a tough year, but it finally looks like we are headed in the right direction so it’s a big step.

Evan asked if any of the protections put in place during Covid will remain once things have gone back to normal. Steve responded that those specific discussions had not taken place, but he believes that there are some things that will probably be looked at, as an institution, around how we manage ourselves that may become permanent. And there are some things that our organization may choose to make permanent; virtual meetings for example – not only for safety reasons, but also for efficiency. We have also had time to reflect on the way we practiced and further discussions may effect changes around those activities as well.

Eric asked a question around retention wondering if the decision not to play winter sports 1) if there were other institutions/GNAC play happening and 2) does it seem like there may be retention issues here at WWU now because of the restriction. Emma responded that from her perspective most players just look at this as having been a hard year and it helps they have been granted an extra year of eligibility, two seniors have decided to move on, three are returning, and the underclassman have yet to decide. She does not know of anyone choosing to leave and go to another school but will just graduate and finish out the year. She hasn’t been around other teams so has not heard what they are thinking, other than that everyone is excited to get back to playing and some sense of normal.

Steve responded that there were some teams in GNAC that chose to play winter sports who were motivated by different factors than we were (small private institutions driven by enrollment numbers), not to say that Western wasn’t or isn’t driving by enrollment numbers, but on different levels. We have had some athletes who were given the opportunity by the NCAA to opt-in or opt-out and some did choose to opt-out for Covid related safety concerns; and in those cases, mandates were put in place to ensure their scholarships would be maintained and they would not lose their position on the team. The majority of athletes had the hope that they would get back to playing and that’s why yesterday was so significant for our program. We have had a tremendous success rate with our students, both in the classroom and on the field – when you look at those success rates; they are staying in school, finishing their degree (90% graduation rate), and contributing in other ways. Steve added that had we not be able to participate in spring sports, that decision would have impacted our student athlete enrollment in spring and impacted our program enough that it would have taken a decade to rebuild. Steve believes athletics can be viewed as the front porch to a university because is a very public/visual department. Athletics has also been a proven tool for major marketing/advertising to a very large audience which has also been good for the university. Steve thanked Eric for his question.

Kurt thanked Steve and Emma for their great overview and the others for their questions. Kurt then handed the floor over to Adam, Danil, and Caitlin.

**Information Presentation – Campus Recreation:**

Danil conducted the presentation for Intramural Sports and Sports Clubs, which operates under the umbrella of Campus Recreation.

Reverting to Evan’s question on continuing current protocols, Danil shared that he felt things like attestation could be carried forward, from personal experience he feels it’s very easy to do and would be easy to maintain.

Stating that Campus Rec is a smaller but very beneficial athletic organization on campus, Danil presented a brief overview of the following:

**Campus Recreation Services:** Campus Recreation Services strives to empower the Western community to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle and develop leadership abilities by providing the highest quality of recreational and co-curricular programs and services in an environmentally sustainable facility.

Campus recreation is made up of all the happenings inside of the Wade King Student Recreation Center including fitness classes, aquatics, fitness machines, climbing wall, and health and wellness, but the reach of campus recreation is much further than the center. Offerings also include summer sport camps, intramural sports, and sport clubs.

Seventeen professional staff members and over 250 student staff make up Campus Recreation Services.

**Sport Clubs**: Sport Clubs are student organizations run by, and for, students. Although many clubs allow faculty, staff, and alumni to participate, operations of the club must be by student membership. Ninety percent (90%) of all Sport Clubs must consist of full-time Western Washington University students. Club participation opens doors for students to develop leadership skills while they’re involved in recreational and social interaction with others who have the same interests. It also allows students to have a more competitive athletic experience while attending Western.

Our sport club program currently consists of 25 teams and over 700 student athletes. Sport club teams are required to not only compete in sanctioned league events but must also give back to the community. Each team is required to do between 150-200 hours of community service a year. Along with volunteering each team is required to fundraise at least half of what their team is allocated from the Service and Activities Fee.

**Intramural Sports**: Campus Recreation Services provides Intramural Sports as an opportunity for current students, faculty and staff as well as current students from university affiliates such as Whatcom Community College and Bellingham Technical College to compete in a variety of organized competitive sports on the campus of Western Washington University. These programs exist to provide our participants with opportunities in personal development in: a variety of programs of leisure activity, social interaction and the development of lasting relationships, leadership skills in directing group participation, voluntary participation, regardless of ability level, in a safe community, establishing positive attitudes toward recreational activity to carry with them past graduation.

This year we offered 20 sports with different opportunities for students to participate. These sports range from flag football to basketball and soccer to softball. These opportunities have attracted over 3,000 participants in the past years.

**Service and Activities Fee Allocation (Traditional Year):**

**Campus Recreation Allocation (Traditional Year):**

The $467,941 allotted to campus recreation from the Service and Activities fee is split up between Administrative support and benefits (47%), Sport Clubs (40%), and Intramural Sports (13%).

**Administrative support (47%):**  This funding goes toward paying the professional and classified staff that support intramurals and sport clubs. That includes 1-2 months of the Director, Associate Director, Fiscal Technician 2 and the Assistant Director of Sport Clubs and Intramurals. 100% of the Intramural Coordinator’s salary is paid out of this funding.

**Sport Clubs (40%):** Each team is allocated a portion of the roughly $187,000 based on travel needs, team size and other expenditures. This was increased by $75,000 six years ago by the S&A committee to support sport club needs with regards to travel. With 25 teams traveling across the country travel expenses make up 50% of the budget. The next largest amount of money goes toward rentals and leases for teams to practice and play such as Civic Field for the baseball team, The Sportsplex for the Ice Hockey and Figure Skating team and Whatcom Stables and Orion Equestrian for the Equestrian team. From there the funds are split between league dues, tournament fees, and official fees.

**Intramural Sports (13%):** The money that is allotted to Intramural Sports covers the salaries of the student positions including 25 referees, 7 supervisors, and 1 office staff member. There is enough roll over from past years that we do not need to allocate much money to supplies or equipment.

Adam addressed the two charts (noted above), which are based on a traditional year, explaining the two separate budgets represented in these charts and the difference between the S&A Fee allocation and the Campus Rec allocation.

Intramural Sports Club S&A Fee allocation is about $500,000 (which does not include the foundation budgets from various clubs).

The Rec Center budget is about $5M, a completely different subject and fee, which includes classes, fitness and open recreation and does not involve this committee – it is a different committee; the Rec Center Activities Committee (RCAC).

Campus Rec/Sports Club allocations are much higher because they include costs for facility rentals for clubs such as hockey, baseball, and equestrian which are all very expensive venues that must be rented as those facilities are not available on campus, accounting for much of the costs. Also included in the costs are traveling expenses that can be as high as $40,000 for just one event. Sports Clubs has a very volatile budget, but the big takeaway here is that the budget for this committee’s consideration is for the Intra Mural Sports Club program.

Caitlin added that it is important to be aware that club dues range anywhere from $50 (golf) to $1800 (hockey) per person, per season depending on the sport.

Eric asked how these numbers compare to other university sports clubs we compete with. Caitlin felt it was on par for the most part, although hockey is much lower at WWU than what other institutions we compete with pay – they pay up to $3000 for hockey (per person, per season).

Evan asked about fundraising and what the clubs are typically doing for community service for the required 150-200 hours, and do they have someone at the administrative level helping them to fundraise? Caitlin responded that on the community service side clubs have volunteer opportunities they complete as a club such as: coaching, running camps over breaks, trail clearing, stream clean ups, etc. Activities vary and it is their opportunity to give back to their community and those who support them. Last year we still required them to complete their community service even though they couldn’t do it in person so they made cards and messages of hope they sent out some senior facilities in town, and we also received help from foundations as well as promoting our give-day event; Caitlin stated that she helps out on the administration side.

Kurt asked for further questions – there were none. Kurt thanked Athletics and Campus Rec for their presentations. Next week we will hear presentations from DRAC and Associated Students.

**Chairperson Opportunity:**

Kurt concluded by again extending the opportunity to student committee representatives who would be interested in the learning experience of the chairperson position and encouraged those interested to contact him.

Today’s meeting adjourned at 10:26 am.

Next meeting: Friday, February 26, 2021, 9:30-10:30 am, Teams Virtual