<div align="center">**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES**</div>

Present: **Bearnes, Boudreau, Dawes, Eklund, Kopocis, Minter, Paul, Shrader, Tschetter, Vakilzadian, Zuckerman**

Absent: **Baesu, Lott**

Date: **Tuesday, July 25, 2023**

Location: **Nebraska Union, Platte River Room South**

Guests: **Vice President Doug Carlson, Assistant Dean Joy Boggs, Interim Business Manager Corey Cook**

Note: **These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the Executive Committee meeting as corrected by those participating.**

1.0   Call *(Kopocis)*
Kopocis called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m.

2.0   Vice President Doug Carlson
    2.1   Problems associated with getting invoices and people paid and other problems with centralized services.
VP Carlson stated that he is the Chief Procurement Officer and oversees Procurement Services for the university. He noted that previously he was the Chief Procurement Officer for the State of Nebraska, prior to joining the university two years ago.

VP Carlson reported that in 2020 the budget reduction taskforces worked to centralize some services within the university to deal with the university's budget deficit, and from this effort Procurement Services was created. He acknowledged that there have been some failures with the Procure to Pay (P2P) process, particularly on the payment side of the process, but he has worked to make the procurement process more effective and efficient. He noted that for a time there was a shortage of staff members but currently the office is fully staffed, and he has even hired eight temporary workers to help deal with the backlog of work that occurred when the office was short-staffed.

VP Carlson stated that the number one complaint he hears about is that people do not get a response to the emails they send to Procurement. In a PowerPoint presentation he showed that on January 25 there were 2,967 unread emails in the queue but as of July 18, 605 were left. During the same time period, eShop invoices went from 1,327 to 192; visiting personnel forms went from 335 to 33; travel reimbursements went from 1,890 to 195; and non-travel reimbursements went from 88 to 20. He pointed out that it was totally unacceptable that faculty and staff members were not getting reimbursed for travel in a timely manner and his goal was to have reimbursements issued in five business days, and he is happy to report that Procurement Services is now starting to hit that goal. He

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stated that non-travel reimbursements are now being handled in-house and currently 100 of these are being dealt with each day.

Kopocis asked if travel is being moved from Concur. VP Carlson stated that consideration is underway on whether we should retain Concur because there has been a great deal of negative feedback about it. He noted that there is a new version of Concur that looks better, but there is consideration on whether the work could be handled in house. He reported that an RFP is being generated to see if there may be a better vendor for the university rather than Fox Travel. Kopocis pointed out that finding a simpler system for people to use, even if it is slightly more expensive, might be less costly in the long run because faculty could concentrate on the work they were hired to do rather than having to deal with problems encountered with Concur. VP Carlson reported that we were paying Concur $22 per transaction for non-travel expenses when we could be handling them in house. Vakilzadian reported that faculty members have stated that they can get better airfare rates on their own rather than using Fox Travel and that they do not get timely responses from Fox. VP Carlson stated that he has spoken with Fox about the delayed responses and told them they need to respond quickly. He stated that anyone who can find a cheaper rate on their own should take a screenshot and send it to Procurement Services as soon as possible so the cheaper rate can be obtained. He noted that airfare rates change rapidly so if a lesser fare is found, it needs to be purchased quickly.

Kopocis stated that sometimes getting approval for purchases through eShop vendors can take months. She noted that a recent delay in getting an item wound up costing an additional $3,000 due to a late response. VP Carlson stated that incidents like this should be challenged, and people should contact Procurement Services if a situation like this arises. He pointed out that the current process for eShop requisitions and purchase order workflow is much too lengthy, but he said changes are coming.

VP Carlson reported that in January a project was started to consider the process involved for every type of transaction handled by Procurement Services and he challenged the team to rethink how the process could be more efficient. He stated that beginning soon there will be a program in SAP called Ariba which will enable us to take the requisition and purchase order process down from 21 steps to only 6 steps. He noted that Ariba will not solve all the problems associated with Procurement Services, but it should definitely help to improve efficiency and effectiveness. He pointed out that we currently have 67,000 active vendors in our system and five different people are involved when a new vendor needs to be added into the system. He said that with Ariba, the vendors will upload their required information into the system and the program will check to ensure that all the information is entered. He reported that departments that purchase heavily will be invited to test pilot Ariba and he is hoping that this will occur soon.

VP Carlson assured the Executive Committee that training will be widely available for Ariba, and it will include in-person, Zoom options and short videos will be created. He noted that the current system will be switched over to Ariba in April 2024. He pointed out that the Ariba dashboard is highly customizable, and he reported that people will be

able to see in real time where their requisition is in the process and people will be able to contact the person who is currently handling it. He stated that there will also be SAP Ariba guided buying which will assist you through the purchasing process and through the steps to create an RFP.

Eklund asked if being a part of the Big Ten consortium has helped us with purchasing items, particularly large items. VP Carlson stated that being in the consortium certainly helps and this has already been factored into the system. Vakilzadian asked how up to date the prices will be with Ariba. VP Carlson stated that the latest prices will be updated but contracted items will remain static. He noted that the system will automatically pay the vendor when the end user indicates the item has been received.

Vakilzadian asked what is the oldest requisition that is still pending noting that he has heard that some vendors no longer want to deal with the university because of the late payments. VP Carlson stated that if there is a late fee because of a problem with Procurement, it will be paid by Procurement Services. He reported that the university has increased its vendors by about 20% over the past year and stated that we should not be losing a single vendor because they have not been paid in a timely manner.

Cook asked if the process for getting contracts approved can be sped up. VP Carlson stated that Procurement Services is working hard to finish making templates of contracts which should help alleviate the work of the university's lawyers..

Eklund stated that sometimes it is unclear what things can be paid by UNL and what things must go over to Central Administration. He asked if the system could handle contracts with overseas vendors. VP Carlson stated that the system is free for all vendors including international companies and it works with vendors of all sizes. He noted that it is very easy to navigate and Ariba is intuitive, and an app can be used. Cook asked if Ariba is only for Procurement. VP Carlson stated that our SAP system is not being updated to the latest version, but Ariba will automatically communicate with SAP.

Eklund pointed out that getting independent contractors paid in a timely manner for doing work at the university is a problem. He noted that he had to fight from December until April to get someone paid and he just received 20 emails from people needing to get paid for work they did in association with a music summer camp that was held in early June. VP Carlson stated that payment for individual contractors, people outside of the university, get paid through Procurement. He pointed out that any student who is already an employee of the university would have to get paid through Payroll. He noted that he has a two-page document that he can share about the process and said that he would be happy to help out if there are delays with the Procurement process. Eklund stated that when he submits the paperwork to the Big Red Business Center to get the students paid, he never receives any correspondence as to what is happening with the process and doesn't learn about it until the student contacts him complaining that they haven't received payment for their work. VC Zeleny stated that this is an issue that needs to be discussed with the manager of the business center and he stated that he will visit the manager about the issue.

Kopocis asked how the simplified process with Ariba will be monitored to ensure that it is working well. VP Carlson stated that the system will generate a report which he will be looking at every day. He noted that he hopes with quick turnaround payments from us that we may be able to negotiate getting discounts with some of the vendors.

VP Carlson thanked the Executive Committee for the opportunity to speak with them about the problems and suggested they contact him if they run into any future problems.

3.0   Announcements
3.1   Email Regarding August 30th Classes
Kopocis reported that an email from Chancellor Bennett will soon be sent to the faculty about August 30th, being declared an instructional continuity day.

4.0   Approval of July 11, 2023 Minutes
Kopocis asked if there were any further revisions to the minutes. Hearing none she asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Vakilzadian moved for approval. The motion was seconded by Tschetter, and the minutes were then approved by the Executive Committee.

5.0   Unfinished Business
No unfinished business was discussed.

6.0   New Business
6.1   Reminder of Executive Committee Retreat
Kopocis reminded the Executive Committee that there will be a retreat held on august 15th for the Executive Committee to determine its goals for the 2023-2024 academic year. Kopocis suggested the Committee members might want to revisit the course evaluation process with administration.

6.2   Agenda Items for VC Boehm
The Executive Committee suggested asking VC Boehm what his philosophy is with dealing with budget reductions. Kopocis stated that an email will be sent to the Executive Committee seeking other additional items.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, August 8, 2023, at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in Nebraska Union, Big Ten Conference Room. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Signe Boudreau, Secretary.