University Recreation & Wellness Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes

Date: Friday, April 27 2018
Time: 9:00am
Location: Campus Club of the University of Minnesota

Attendees:
Sam Palmer - Chair, All Campus Representative
Sarah Heemstra - Vice Chair, All Campus Representative
Bennett Olupo - Minnesota Student Association
Fred Clayton - Civil Service St. Paul
Keerthanaa Jeeva (proxy for Sonya Ewert) - Professional Student Government
Max Chu - Minnesota Student Association
Amelia Kreiter - Council of Graduate Students
Billy Langer - Interfraternity Council
Azhar Akesh - International Student and Scholar Services
Abby Doeksen - Undergraduate Housing Representative
Ryan Warren - P & A Staff Representative
Brandi Hoffman - Faculty P & A, School of Kinesiology
Dr. George Brown - Ex-Officio, Recreation and Wellness

Staff Advisors:
Ryan Townzen - Recreation and Wellness
Mikayla Miller - Recreation and Wellness

Guests:
Beth Ashfal - Recreation and Wellness
Mark Joekel - Recreation and Wellness
Cody Mikl - Recreation and Wellness
Ray Muno - Civil Service
Rahul Rajan - Recreation and Wellness
Giovann Alarcon Espinoza - Candidate, At-Large Representative
Noah Webb - Candidate, At-Large Representative

Regrets
Samson Ghirmai - National Pan-Hellenic Council
Makayla Koehn - Panhellenic Council
Karen Lovro - Budget Subcommittee, Recreation and Wellness
I. Call to Order
Chair Palmer called the meeting to order at 9:01am.

II. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
The March 2018 meeting Minutes were distributed to all attendees. After a short review by the Board, Vice Chair Heemstra motioned to approve the Minutes, with a second from Mr. Chu. All were in favor, and the motion to approve the Minutes passed.

III. Introductions
Chair Palmer welcomed the group, and invited all attendees to introduce themselves.

IV. Internship Program
Chair Palmer invited Mr. Rahul Rajan to speak on the Summer 2019 University of Minnesota Recreation and Wellness Internship Program. Mr. Rajan introduced himself and then began his summary of the 2019 University Recreation and Wellness Summer Internship program. His summary noted that the program will be scheduled during a six to eight week period during Summer 2019 and will have eight to ten open spots. Together with Mr. Mark Joekel and Dr. Tony Brown, Mr. Rajan explained that the goal of the internship program is to promote the University of Minnesota and University Recreation and Wellness brand nation-wide, and to provide a “wholesome experience for each intern.” The group is currently working on program curriculum and welcomes ideas from current Advisory Board members and Recreation and Wellness staff, and plans to publish final marketing materials to the public in October/November 2018. He asked attendees to direct all questions about the Internship Program to himself or Mr. Joekel.

Dr. George Brown added that the Department is looking to absorb costs (food, lodging, and a stipend) with this program, and will seek support from NIRSA - Region V with the agreement that we would recruit members directly from that Region. He highlighted the opportunity for the Department to highlight the Recreation and Wellness brand, the University, and the Twin Cities area. He anticipates a strong, competitive applicant pool and is excited about the next steps in the planning process.

Ms. Hoffman asked how large the expected applicant pool is. Mr. Rajan and Dr. George Brown responded that they expect a large, competitive applicant pool. Vice Chair Heemstra added that programs like this are popular topics of conversation at NIRSA events (National and Regional conferences, etc.).

Mr. Chu asked if our Department would be reserving spots for University of Minnesota - Twin Cities students. Mr. Rajan responded that the planning committee has not made a final decision on that specific topic, but has considered it. Mr. Joekel noted that in their request for financial support from NIRSA - Region V for the program, that idea was presented. Mr. Chu noted that with the difficulty of landing an internship, he feels strongly about providing University of Minnesota students with as many opportunities as possible.

Mr. Warren asked if there would be any opportunities to create an “exchange program” with other institutions that offer similar programs. Dr. George Brown commented with positive support of that idea, and encouraged the planning group (Mr. Rajan, Mr. Joekel, and Dr. Tony Brown) to consider it in the remainder of their planning.
Ms. Hoffman commented that she believes we can find creative ways to engage University of Minnesota students that are passionate about RecWell program areas more often during the academic year, and that she is excited about the opportunity to launch and grow this program.

Dr. George Brown commented that he believes we (RecWell) are realizing the potential of our Department’s students to be great collegiate recreation leaders, and that he is excited about the launch of this program. Mr. Joekel commented that this is a great opportunity for us to be leaders in our Region (with NIRSA), and that this has the potential to help support our summer programming preparation.

Chair Palmer thanked Mr. Rajan and the group for sharing in this discussion.

V. Marketing Update
Chair Palmer invited Mr. Mark Joekel to share updates on his program area with the Board. Mr. Joekel shared that in October/November 2017 he kicked off an internal review of RecWell’s Marketing program, and worked with the Office of Student Affairs and Student Unions and Activities. He noted the following findings of that internal review as:

- The Department was operating on a one year basis with marketing materials and concepts.
- The Department was spending a “significant amount of time, money, and resources each year without a strong return on investment” on marketing efforts and social media and website projects.
- The Department had no consistency with it’s identity, graphics, and messaging.
- The Department’s marketing team was understaffed.

Mr. Joekel noted that after reviewing those findings and the Marketing budget, and with support from multiple RecWell professional staff members, he was able to add some additional student staff to better support the Marketing program (adding four more positions). In addition to the student staffing changes, Mr. Joekel noted that the program will be introducing a new brand strategy. Scheduled to launch in Fall 2018, the new strategy is planned to last three to five years, help reduce program expenses while increasing productivity, and provide more stability in the program moving forward.

Mr. Joekel invited attendees to review his research in more detail and send their questions directly to him.

Chair Palmer thanked Mr. Joekel for sharing his update with the attendees.

VI. All-Campus Presentation
Chair Palmer introduced the At-Large Representative candidates, Mr. Giovann Espinoza and Mr. Noah Webb, and thanked them for coming to the meeting. He then extended a thank you to Mr. Townzen, Dr. George Brown, Vice Chair Heemstra, and Mr. Olupo for their work in the review and candidate selection processes.

Chair Palmer explained to Mr. Espinoza and Mr. Webb that they would both have a brief opportunity to present to the Board individually (introduce themselves, share their reasons for wanting to join the Board, etc.). Mr. Webb volunteered to present first.
Mr. Webb shared that he is a sophomore in the Carlson School of Management from New Ulm, MN, is an active facility (RecWell) user and program participant (Intramurals), and is interested in joining and being an active participant with the URWAB to gain leadership experience during the rest of his time on campus. He shared that through previous internship experiences off-campus with sales and logistics firms, he gained valuable communication, interpersonal, and problem solving skills. He was invited to apply for this opportunity by RecWell staff. Finally, he shared that he is excited about the opportunity to join the URWAB. Ms. Hoffman thanked him for his presentation and sharing his story with the large group.

Chair Palmer invited Mr. Espinoza to present to the Board next. Mr. Espinoza shared that he is a graduate student on campus studying applied economics, and that his campus experience has been positively influenced by RecWell. As an active RecWell program participant (Intramurals) and international student, he noted meeting new, diverse groups of people, and those interactions have helped provide balance to his college experience. He was invited to apply for this opportunity by RecWell staff. Finally, he shared that he would like to bring his strong leadership skills to the role to help engage new voices and ideas to enhance the RecWell experience for all students on campus.

After both candidates completed their presentations to the Board, Chair Palmer opened the floor for discussion from Board members. Mr. Olupo commented that Mr. Espinoza’s experiences as a graduate and international student could have the potential to bring a fresh and interesting perspective and voice to the URWAB. He also noted that the graduate student voice is often underrepresented in RecWell, and supports Mr. Espinoza’s candidacy.

After the short discussion, Chair Palmer called for a vote from all Board members between the two candidates, Mr. Webb and Mr. Espinoza. Dr. George Brown reminded all attendees that all Board members get one vote through this process (no guests are allowed to vote), also noting that the Ex-Officio role (filled by Dr. George Brown) is not allowed to vote. The candidate with the majority of the votes will fill the seat of an ‘At-Large Representative’ on the 2018-2019 URWAB.

Two votes were cast in favor of Mr. Webb’s candidacy. Eleven votes were cast in favor of Mr. Espinoza’s candidacy. With the majority, Mr. Espinoza will sit on the 2018-2019 URWAB as an At-Large Representative. Chair Palmer tasked Mr. Townzen with extending the invitation to Mr. Espinoza via email on 04.27.18.

Dr. George Brown thanked the Board for their support of a formal voting and recruiting process, and willingness to cast a wide net at the University.

Vice Chair Heemstra asked the Board to share their thoughts and opinions on the recruiting and interview processes used with this search. Responses to her question (invitation to share) included:

- It is important to recruit women in future searches to help ensure a more diverse applicant pool.
- Post the opportunity much earlier on a more diverse grouping of University channels (URWAB page on the RecWell website, on the MyU portal, student weekly updates, etc.) - the timing of the posts created was too close to the deadline to apply.
Ms. Doeksen noted that as future opportunities become available with the URWAB, she would like the Board to consider keeping Mr. Webb involved. Dr. George Brown shared his support for her comment.

Chair Palmer thanked the Board for their work through this process.

VII. Hours Expansion Vote
Chair Palmer invited Vice Chair Heemstra to open the discussion on the Hours Expansion proposal. She read a statement provided by Ms. Beth Ashfal aloud:

“Effective Fall semester of 2018, we will adjust our Fall and weekend hours at the University Recreation and Wellness Center to the following hours - Saturdays we will be open from 8:00am - 9:00pm (this is an extension of two hours in the evening), and Sundays we will be open from 9:00am - 10:00pm (opening two hours earlier). In addition, for May term of 2019, we will make these hours consistent with the Summer term hours, staying open until 9:00pm Monday through Friday (this is an extension of one hour). Break hours will not change, and St. Paul Gym hours will remain consistent. We will continue to review our hours on a regular basis to best meet the students’ and our members’ needs.”

Chair Palmer called for a motion to vote on the Board’s support of the submitted formal statement by Ms. Ashfal, and noted that RecWell managers should be encouraged to staff appropriately based on the results of the vote. A motion to support the submitted formal statement from Beth Ashfal on the RecWell hours expansion was presented by Mr. Chu, with a second from Vice Chair Heemstra. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

VIII. Sport Clubs Vote
Chair Palmer invited Vice Chair Heemstra to review the resolution from the Board about the Men’s Hockey Club membership application with the Sport Clubs Program, and read a statement provided by the Director of Sport Clubs, Ms. Jessica Couillard.

Vice Chair Heemstra read Ms. Couillard’s statement aloud:

“The Sport Clubs Program is currently reviewing a membership application from the Men’s Hockey Club, and financial resources are one element required in order to offer membership to the club. The Sport Clubs Program is requiring additional funding which will be used to support the Men’s Hockey Club and to assist the Women’s Hockey Club with changes as a result of the new addition. We thank the Advisory Board for considering support of expansion to the Sport Clubs Program.”

Chair Palmer asked if there were any questions from the Board on this resolution. Ms. Hoffman asked for clarification if the Sport Clubs Program decision to offer membership to the Men’s Hockey Club was dependent on the result of this vote of support. Ms. Miller confirmed that yes, the Sport Clubs Program will use this decision to help determine if the offer of membership should be extended to the Club.

Dr. George Brown noted that extending an offer of membership will have more than a financial implication on the Women’s Hockey Club (current members of the Sport Clubs Program), and
should the offer be extended, the Department recognizes the need to help ease those potential burdens. He specifically noted that should the Board vote in support of this resolution, the Department will find appropriate internal funds to help support any burdens.

Chair Palmer called for a motion to vote on the Board’s support of the formal statement submitted by Ms. Couillard on behalf of the Sport Clubs Program and the offer of membership to the Men’s Hockey Club. A motion to support the formal statement submitted was presented by Mr. Clayton, with a second from Mr. Olupo. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

IX. Updates
Chair Palmer invited Vice Chair Heemstra to kick off the ‘Updates’ discussion item on the agenda.

- **2018 Student Celebration Recap** - Vice Chair Heemstra shared the event, the student appreciation gala, in April 2018 was a “really wonderful night.” Hosted in the MAC gym at RecWell, the event featured a social hour, dinner, and student awards ceremony. RecWell professional staff helped support the event’s operations, and about 150 total people attended the event. Dr. George Brown noted that RecWell plans to grow this event, and consider alternate spaces to host it outside of RecWell in the future. With the goal of unifying student groups and recognizing them on this special night, he felt the event was a great success and looks forward to next year’s event. Vice Chair Heemstra invited questions from the Board.
  - Ms. Hoffman asked how many students are employed with RecWell. Dr. George Brown answered that RecWell employs about 750-800 students, many of those seasonal (or work a small number of shifts), but with a core group of about 400 students.
  - Chair Palmer noted that he gathered a lot of positive feedback from students about the event.

- **Adaptive Sports Event** - Dr. George Brown reminded the Board and guests that on Saturday, May 19th, RecWell will be hosting an Adaptive Sports Event from 10:00am - 3:00pm in the MAC Gym. Put on with the support of the Courage Kenny Research Institute and the Disability Resource Center (DRC) on campus, he noted that the event will feature a wide variety of activities and a vendor/student group expo (Admissions plans to attend). He is expecting this event to be a catalyst to revive the Adaptive Sports Program at RecWell, kick off some Unified Sports programming with Kinesiology, and is looking to maintain a working relationship with Courage Kenny and the DRC. Dr. Brown invited the Board and guests to attend the event.

Chair Palmer thanked the group for their updates.

X. URWAB in Year Ahead
Dr. George Brown noted his excitement for the Board’s on-going commitment to represent their constituencies. He shared the Board has purposefully expanded the roster to better represent the campus community, and intends on continuing those efforts. He is proud of the Board and all guests for continuing to provide valuable feedback and insight into RecWell’s “on-the-ground” opportunities and/or threats (i.e. the hours expansion, Sport Clubs Program growth, dress code, etc.). He challenged the Board to continue to take on these opportunities and threats, and
encouraged them to come back from the Summer break engaged and ready to share their thoughts and ideas.

Dr. George Brown wished any departing Board members well and thanked them for their service, and noted his excitement for any returning rostered members and their commitment to the URWAB mission. He shared that the Board will be looking to fill the Vice Chair position in the Fall, and invited returning Board members to thoughtfully consider filling that role.

Dr. George Brown invited any questions from the Board, and noted he “had a blast” this year and is looking forward to serving again next year.

Vice Chair Heemstra reminded the Board and guests to continue to bring their thoughts and ideas to the Board and Board leadership. Dr. George Brown added that the Board will continue to face “tough issues” (such as the RecWell dress code policy), but is confident the Board will continue to handle those “tough conversations.” He also added that the Board’s deliberation, perspective, and input will add value to those tough conversations.

XI. URWAB Acknowledgements
Dr. George Brown acknowledged the service of all Board members, and thanked them for their spirited participation during 2017-2018. He wished departing Board members well in their future endeavors, and encouraged returning Board members to stay engaged over the summer months.

XII. Announcements
Dr. George Brown called for any last announcements from the Board and guests. Ms. Ashfal thanked Chair Palmer for his service on the Board, and his contributions to the Department during his time on campus. Mr. Clayton thanked Dr. George Brown for his great work and engagement with the Board during the 2017-2018 term, and noted he is looking forward to serving in 2018-2019.

XIII. Adjournment
Chair Palmer called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Warren motioned to adjourn the meeting, with a second by Mr. Langer. With no objections, the motion to adjourn was passed (10:14am).