Representatives Present: Ashley Andrews, Jacob Cann, Anette Christensen, Katherine Dirk (Secretary), Peter Dieringer, Jorge Farinacci, Melodie Gander, Lee Green (Public Relations Coordinator), Rebecca Hess, Nancy Horowitz, Kristen Kabrin (Chair), Nancy Kelly, Cheyenne Magpantay, Lynda McLellan, Chris Mikulich-Cook, Maureen Morton, Asta Ratliff, Augusta Washington, Barbara Wiley, and Erik Williams (Ex-Officio Chair).

Representatives Absent: Christopher Chadwick, Nancy Grower, Linda Kuchenbecker (Vice-Chair), Jennifer Nelson, Cynthia Olivo, Judy Otteson, Gary Price, Phyllis Snedeker (Treasurer),

Guests:

I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 2:00 pm.

II. Roll Call: Introduction of two new members, Ashley Andrews and Maureen Morton.

III. Announcements:

a. Committee assignments: new members were asked if they had picked committees or if the current representatives could provide insight for them on the open slots. The new members determined which committees they would serve on.

b. Review of committee charges: Chair Kristen Kabrin explained that each standing SEC committee has been given charges, some already existed and some are new. Each standing SEC committee will be asked to provide an annual report that will be due at the June 2013 meeting. The Executive board will provide a template for the annual report. The reports will then be used for an SEC annual report for reporting to Administration and for historical purposes. All committees are also asked to put their documents on SharePoint to replace the binders that had been used in the past.

c. Chair Kristen Kabrin reminded the council that we are using Robert’s Rules of Order, and to turn one’s name plate on its side to indicate that you would like to speak. When you are called on by the chair you can place your nameplate back down.

IV. Guest Speakers:
a. President Marc Johnson

- President Johnson spoke briefly on the budget. The revenue estimating group got together and gathered materials. The state revenue is not climbing and is not looking good. The Governor is putting together his budget, and is going to take out money for pay cuts or furloughs and set it aside. It won’t be in his message, but he apparently still wants to do something.

- UNR will seek approval to spend $10 million from the student fees and out-of-state tuition since our institution continues to grow. It is typical to go to legislature’s Interim Finance Committee and ask for that money, which is treated as one time funds. If approved, the funds must be spent, and will be. UNR is looking to spend it on instructional equipment, temporary instructors ($2.2 million), and classroom renovations ($2 million construction into campus). Some pre-hiring has been done to restore some positions in departments that are tight, like the Cashier’s Office, Financial Aid, and the Office of Sponsored Projects. Many of these positions will be classified staff. President Johnson expressed his appreciation as he knows that staff has been asked to be doing things with fewer people, so we are doing more and that we feel it, especially as the demand of services goes up. He is grateful that staff has done more and stepped up.

- Recent newspaper articles have been questioning hiring of certain people “when the University is broke.” The University isn’t broke; there is $10 million going back into the campus, and the University is working to get another building on campus. This would collect services for student achievement that are scattered around campus and put them together in one place. The marketing and communication team is working to tell the community that the university is not broke. The number of students is increasing, so we are putting money back into hiring and buildings.

- Split Commencement for spring 2013. This is a new arrangement, driven by the number of graduates and attendees. The University owns 10,000 chairs, but last spring 14,000 people attended commencement. So this spring is split – Friday will be 5 colleges and Saturday will be 3 colleges. Not only was the overcrowding inconvenient, but it was also a safety hazard, so this new arrangement will allow for better and safer viewing of the ceremonies.
• Something new that President Johnson is looking forward to is meeting the classified employee of the month. Each month, President Johnson will meet for coffee as a way to congratulate the recipient and stay informed of campus matters.

• Public Relations Coordinator Lee Green thanked President Johnson for taking time to meet the Employee of the Month, and expressed how the Painting department appreciated the money for deferred maintenance, as they have been able to get much-needed painting done. He asked if the funding formulation will stay the same? President said it is possible, but that the formula funding may change since it is not finalized yet. The University hopes to keep tuition money; enrollment has been growing, so if that continues, we ideally will have funds. Two years ago it was 5.1, last year it was 10.3.

• Melodie Gander expressed excitement about the student success achievement center, and asked if that is what will replace Getchell? President said yes, the University is working to contract a designer. President Johnson is a preservationist and wants to keep the façade, but the building needs to be reworked, especially because it is not seismically sound. Other projects on campus is that the structure lab will be finished, and renovation of entry of Church Fine Arts and Gallery should begin soon.

b. Dr. Robert Dickens

• Dr. Dickens, who requested to go by Bob, is director of Governmental Relations for UNR, and was excited to speak for the first time to SEC. The office consists of Robert Dickens and Vicki Healey since 1985.

• This is a critical time ahead with the upcoming legislative session, especially because the funding formula change will affect UNR. Compensation is also important an important topic. It may be one of most critical legislative sessions since 84, which took 2 biennium to get back on track.

• Committee assignments for senate look positive, don’t know the assignments for assembly yet. UNR has good relationships with the education committee, and other members are higher ed. supporters.

• UNR’s Governmental Relations supports lobbying for campus. Vicky electronically tracks legislation and policy developments. Bob goes to Carson City to speak to colleagues. Have been lobbying with Chancellor Klaich. There are other development officers and
lobbyists that are part of a team that try to meet fairly regularly by teleconference. Interesting to see model of Chancellor-led team.

- How can staff employees be active in this year’s legislature? Learn from Jim Richardson, Faculty Alliance. During session, faculty and staff become motivated to talk to legislators. Don’t use University resources. Put together a gmail account. Say that you are doing this as a concerned voter. Be courteous. Don’t expect a response, but inquiries are tabulated and shared with the legislator. If constituents ask to please restore cuts, it will resonate. The University has to compete for state’s money, and has become more entrepreneurial.

- How are these windfalls of $5.2 and $10 million perceived? Accepted because the money is being spent on students. Campus team of former President Glick, Bob, and then-Provost Johnson worked with external relations, which was beneficial because the legislators knew President Glick and President Johnson and how UNR worked. Had the money, had to get the plan approved by the Interim Finance Committee. First thing President Johnson had to do in Dec. 2011 was approval at the Committee’s Work Program Revisions. Sometimes institutions have a lot of revisions, they will get called if revisions needed, and must defend request. UNR did not get called – passed! This was due to spending the money on students.

- Representative Rebecca Hess asked if funding will change if we continue to get tuition fees; can the state decrease funding and say we’re on our own? Bob responded that for the state budget this year it will stay about the same, but there is the question of if legislators will feel they need to direct how it will be spent. Don’t know how it will play out.

- Bob spoke about the state employee system. One benefit of being part of the state system is that while the legislature might do something mean and nasty to Higher Education, they don’t want to do the same to Health and Human Services. They would have to do it to all divisions. Another conundrum is PEBP retirement actuary – there are less state employees, so state employees will have to pay more.

- Public Relations Coordinator Lee Green asked if the funding formula changes and UNR keeps students fees, is it possible that classified staff would become NSHE employees? Bob felt that no, it would not happen, but this has not been addressed. There is a
question about NSHE and if PEBP may be pulled – if so, how would this affect staff? Currently state employees, county, etc. are all treated the same.

- The question arose if it is possible that pay cuts and furloughs will be addressed in the near future? Bob believed that it will be addressed soon. Can’t cut way to prosperity.
- Bob and Vicky track bills and policies through newspapers, reading the bills, listening to colleagues, and legislative website.
- Staff can stay informed and participate! Bob encourage staff to check the University’s administrative manual on governmental relations. If staff take furlough or leave to lobby or testify, it is important to say “I am on my furlough” or “I took annual leave.”

V. Using/Navigating SharePoint. Secretary Katherine Dirk gave a brief presentation on the SEC SharePoint site and how to navigate to committee sites, the calendar, and shared documents. She passed out a guide to assist in navigating the site.

VI. Committee Reports Questions/Comments:

a. Representative Barbara Wiley suggested that committee members use full names of people and explain acronyms in the reports since other representatives may not be familiar with the verbiage used within a committee.

VII. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 3:22 pm.