I. Call to Order

Co-Chair Nelson Lacey called the January 30, 2015 meeting of the Athletic Council to order at 11:32 a.m. and welcomed guest speaker, Coach Sharon Dawley. Each council member and guest introduced themselves and their role to Athletics or the Council and guests. Gordon Palley, Director of the Court Club was introduced and a guest to the council for the afternoon.

II. Approval of the Minutes of November 30, 2014

Co-Chair Lacey opened the floor to discussion of the Athletic Council minutes from November 2014. With minor corrections on attendance that were duly noted prior to the distributed minutes at the meeting, those corrections had been made. There being no other discussion, it was so moved by George Richason and seconded by Ed Ward to accept the motion to approve. All were in favor of approving the Minutes from the November, 2014 meeting. Note. The December 2014 meeting was cancelled due to absences and scheduling conflicts with the meeting.

II. Meet the Coach: Sharon Dawley, Head Coach of Women’s Basketball

Chair Nelson Lacey thanked Coach Dawley for speaking to the council and asked her to introduce herself comment on her season. Coach Dawley indicated that this was her 31 season coaching basketball and fifth season at UMass. She indicated that the team is making progress, not as quickly as they had initially hoped but this season they are doing much better. She is fond of UMass since she grew up in Massachusetts and loves to recruit as many MA D1 women’s players as possible to keep them home. The key goal for the team has been to be one of the top teams in the A10 and as a league she described the talent across the league as a very highly competitive D1 women’s basketball league. The team’s current record is 8-11 and they are on a three-game win streak with St. Bonaventure coming to the Mullins Center on Saturday. She has been especially excited about the progress of Kim Pierre-Lewis, senior PG who has
lost weight and become a dominant player in the league averaging nearly 18 points per game since her Freshman Player of Year a few years ago, she has matured into a dominant player and scholar-athlete being awarded player of the week on several occasions. Coach also noted the play of Ciara Dillard and the assistance of strength coach Rick Golden who has helped both the men’s and women’s team to be both stronger, quicker and in better condition. She also commented on the play of Rashida Timbilla and the work with new Assistant Coach, Yolanda Griffith for helping her excel as a post player. Yolanda was also lauded as a significant upgrade to the coaching staff for instruction and recruiting given her stellar career in the WNBA. Coach field questions about the new Champions Center and how it is helping with recruiting, and especially noted that the new complex will help them especially with shooting. An example is they will now have seven practice hoops where in the Mullins Center they would have only two hoops for 13 players. She also commented on their status at this stretch of the season, how challenging the A10 league is without much difference between the top and bottom teams. The games are typically very competitive. Other questions were fielded on scholarships, how the assistant coaches work with the players, the convenience of being in one place for practice, study hall and strength and conditioning in the new complex, conference affiliation preferences, and academic success of the players. Coach Dawley felt that the A10 was the best league for the women’s team at this point due to its highly competitive league balance and was much better balanced than the Sun, CUSA or AAC Conferences.

III. Athletic Council Membership

Two items were discussed including two open faculty positions and the vacant Co-Chair position. Tracy Schoenadel has left UMass for another opportunity. Nelson felt that he could take nominees or recommendations and Pat Vittum said they would have to be approved by the FS nominating committee. George Richason was asked if in the years on the council had we ever had to replace a vacant co-chair position and he indicated that he never recalled this happening. Nelson opened the floor for discussion regarding the open co-chair position to determine if a single chair would be acceptable. Some members asked if he could handle it with the support of Rod Warnick as Secretary and the assistance of Julie Sarpinsky with her work as recorder. After some discussion Rebecca Spence made a motion for Nelson Lacey to continue as chair, Ed Ward seconded the motion and all were in favor. Any nominations for faculty representatives should be send forward through Nelson to the Faculty Senate Office and Anne Benz.

IV. Announcement – Rod Warnick – USGA Award

Rod Warnick announced that Pat Vittum of Plant and Soil Sciences had been awarded the USGA Highest Award for contributions to the field of turf management. The award will be given to Pat in the coming months in NYC and this award was at the level of the Heisman in Turf. Rod explained that the turf program here at UMass is one of the oldest in the country and many golf course superintendents have graduated from the program and work at many of the best golf clubs and country clubs in the US and at some of the biggest tournaments
such as the Ryder Cup, UMass Turf Management graduates can be found in significant numbers and also at many collegiate and professional sport venues throughout the US including some with the Red Soxes and other professional teams.

Ernie May also commented on the awards and recognition of Sam Hazen for his research work in biology that had been recognized recently.

V. **Update NCAA and A10 Meetings – FAR Representative, Rebecca Spencer and John McCutcheon, AD**

Rebecca Spencer updated the council on the NCAA in Washington, DC and indicated that the agenda was rather bland as much of the interesting topics were being held behind closed doors with the Power 5 Conferences. Rebecca commented on post-graduate scholarships and more equity on how these would be distributed through the A10. There appears to be agreement among the FARs to distribute 14 scholarships @ $5,000 each with only a few small changes in the qualifications. Other items reviewed were the peer comparisons of missed academic time reporting and how some schools in the A10 league are at a disadvantage due to travel schedules and the impact of full cost of attendance. The A10 will offer full cost of attendance for men's and women's basketball and Hockey East. Rebecca has also been working with the SGA on school spirit and ways to get the students more involved and examining why more faculty don’t attend athletic contests and promoting the idea of wearing more school logo apparel.

John McCutcheon also reported that he felt the NCAA Convention was a rather benign conference with the Power 5 voted behind closed doors. He noted that the D1 programs outside the Power 5 agreed to vote as one voice with those that have football and those with no football programs. He also indicated that it is not clear how reimbursement for cost of attendance will occur or how reimbursements to families to the Final 4 Football Championship games was a new program that not many were aware of until it was discussed. He suggested that there is no real clarity on full cost of attendance for a scholarship per sport and what sports will be actually covered by leagues and how the implementation might affect Title IX. He did indicate that the A10 would do men's and women's basketball and the amount would be roughly $1600 per UMass student athlete and overall cost for UMass would range between $200-$250K. It appears that the full cost of attendance could come down three ways – 1) league decides it is full cost; 2) not at all; or 3) individual school decides. John did indicated that depending on how the other teams all faired in the bowl games and the payouts from the playoffs that between $12 and $18 million would be distributed to the non-power conferences including the MAC. Athletics is estimating that our share would be about $500K from the playoff monies.

VI. **Report and Update on Ad Hoc FBS Football Report at Faculty Senate.**

Nelson Lacey reported on the interim report presented at the December meeting of Faculty Senate by him and Max Page. (Note. A full copy of the report can be obtained at the Faculty Senate web site along with the minutes from the
Nelson indicated that the issue at this meeting was a suspension of the rules of the Faculty Senate to take a vote to poll the faculty on the decision to move to the FBS Level in Football. The Chancellor spoke against the motion to poll the faculty recommended against the polling by indicating that this polling would make his job more difficult and most all of the administrators spoke in favor of the Chancellor. The final outcome was the motion to poll the faculty was defeated. Nelson indicated that Max gave his opinion and was largely negative on all points while Nelson indicated that the he felt the AC Subcommittee on Finance could do the same work in reviewing the football finances over time and the work the Ad Hoc Committee on FBS Football was largely redundant. Nelson indicated that Max Page now felt that he had lost the arguments on the FBS Football decision through this committee and was ready to move onto other discussions including such topics as concussions in football. Rebecca Spencer indicated that we have moved and were out in front on the concussion issues and suggested that perhaps we form at Concussion Subcommittee and work with Jeff Smith as the Athletic Administrator on the issues. Others felt we should broaden the scope and perhaps put this topic under Student Athlete Welfare Subcommittee and that we should also involve Pierre Rozier. Most felt that the finances issue for football can still be handle by the AC Finance Subcommittee and that the Ad Hoc FBS Football Committee had likely run its course. Rebecca Spencer will talk to Jeff Smith about some of the issues regarding concussions and bring into our discussions as best we can.

VII. Athletic Department Update

- Search for Men’s Soccer Coach is nearing completion. There were 90 applicants and the pool was reduced to 7 candidates and four were brought to campus and the finalist should be selected soon after references and recommendations are completed and the review and the committee’s final recommendation are made.
- Winter Sports are well under way with Women’s Basketball on the upswing at 8-11 and Men’s Basketball at 10-8, but both appear to be well position for their conference play and runs in the conference tournaments.
- Spring Sports are underway with lacrosse opening against Army and women’s lacrosse.
- Baseball, softball, and tennis and track and field all in practice mode with seasons ready to open soon.
- The search for Assistant AD for Business, (Jamie Seguin’s position) has now been approved and is opened to filled.
- Questions fielded by John included conference affiliation and realignment, independent football scheduling, ESPN3 independent contract, weekday games.
- UMass has announced a home and home game with Georgia Southern in football and there may be some opportunities to play other teams in the Sun Belt and perhaps CUSA. The status of UAB and the opening created there may provide UMass with the opportunity to join CUSA as a football only member. MAC Conference opponents are now known but the dates and times for the schedule have not yet been set and will occur probably in March. John expressed his thanks to the council for their work over his term and felt the Athletic Department
was in good shape and ready to move to the next level and was especially happy with the progress in facilities and the upgrade for football, the Champions Center, and a whole host of new facilities during his tenure including upgrades to soccer fields, the McGuirk Stadium, the softball field and baseball field, the track, the Champions Center and even improvements to both Boyden and the new Rec Center. John indicated that he felt the Ad Hoc FBS Football Committee was not necessary and the work was being completed well by the Finance Subcommittee of the AC. Nelson Lacey and Ed Ward commented and praised John for his leadership over the last 11 years and all felt we were in a good position. John closed by stating that UMass is and always will be a special place and our uniqueness is in the residential, academic, athletic and flagship presence we bring to the Commonwealth as a campus. He said the first 12 hours after his decision was filled with praise, but the attention then quickly shifted to the opening and the announcement of the position vacancy.

VIII. New Business

- Ed Ward brought to the table the on-going discussion about the Bubble and inviting Ted Fay and Joe Balzano from Campus Planning to the next meeting. John McCutcheon indicated that it might make sense to locate the bubble next to the old football locker room and use it as the support structure for the bubble structure.
- Announcements of the Interim Athletic Director and the Search Committee for the New AD should be forthcoming in the next week.

George Richason moved to close the meeting at 12:49 pm. Ed Ward seconded the motion. The next meeting of the AC will be on Friday, February 27th.