University of Massachusetts
Athletic Council Committee Minutes
March 4, 2011
Boyden Building Conference Room

Committee Members Present:
M. Billings, D. Brothers, J. Corriveau, J. Crimarco, S. Curran-Hays
Robert Goodhue, Z. Hathaway, S. Hayes, C. Morley, G. Richason,
T. Schoenadel, R. Spencer, S. Upton, P. Vittum, E. Ward
Co-Chair Nelson Lacey
Co-Chair Rod Warnick

Guests: J. Hesslein, T. McDonald, J. Maurer, J. Sarsynski, J. Yellin

Absent: D. Gore, S. Hazen, E. May, J. McCutcheon, Glenn Wong

I. Call to Order: Co-Chair Rod Warnick called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

II. Approval of the Minutes of February 4, 2011

Co-Chair Warnick opened the floor to any changes to the minutes. There being none, George Richason so moved and Ed Ward seconded the motion. All were in favor of approving the minutes from the February 4, 2011 meeting.

III. Agenda Items – Communication Theme Revisited


   - CBS Sports, an affiliate of WFSB and owned by the Meredith Corporation was formed eight years ago. The unique Western Massachusetts marketplace had an 87% cable penetration with their viewership and a need for a credible TV station to report on Western Massachusetts events. John Hesslein described in detail this impetus and beginning of the CBS3 station in Springfield, as well as its partnership with UMass Sports which has evolved throughout the last four years.

   - After connecting with Jason Yellin, Associate AD for Media Relations at UMass Athletics, there was a mutual excitement to embrace a TV broadcasting partnership with UMass Athletics and CBS Sports, and this innovative news product was formed. CBS3 drew the community to the live UMass games broadcast over the air through digital channeling. Popularity of these broadcasts spread quickly and now matches its top ABC Fox affiliates.

   - John Hesslein overviewed the adding of new sub channels within CBS 3 Sports and shared his goal of increasing viewing audience. Jason Yellin discussed the CBS3 halftime segments that interview and report on other
UMass projects throughout campus, such as Theatre projects and soil development projects.

- Ideas on the possibility of a new Sports Broadcasting course were exchanged with council members and John Hesslein and a more permanent presence on the UMass Campus for both athletics and university communication.

2. Media Relations and Broadcasting Issues, Jason Yellin and Josh Maurer

- Jason Yellin expressed sincere thanks to John Hesslein for his help in developing the UMass Broadcasts and in changing the location of the Coaches Shows to on-campus interviews. Broadcasts now include a full cross-section of UMass sports including soccer, field hockey, men’s and women’s swimming, men’s and women’s lacrosse, softball, men’s and women’s track and field.
- These broadcasts, produced entirely here at UMass are overseen by Media Relation’s Sean McClutsky who uses the TriCaster, basically a mini-TV station in a “box” that replicate the function of a full-service production truck TV production truck. Media Relations employs primarily UMass students who gain valuable work experience learning how to operate TV cameras, helping with audio equipment and running cable wires. Most productions use three to five cameras.
- Josh Maurer, Voice of the Minutemen discussed how the quality of the broadcasts reflects the costs associated with this level of production such as the IP addresses and the internet fee. Currently only two universities are using this technology to telecast a much wider array of athletic events – University of Oregon and UMass Amherst.


- Todd McDonald gave an overview of the launch of ‘The Revolution’. This full-scale campaign led by our mascot, Sam the Minuteman, draws on the strength and emotion of New England’s American History, paralleling the cohesiveness of UMass Athletics team. The focal points are “togetherness” and “band of players.”
- Todd showed impact photos of UMass group team mentors that recreate famous historical photos of Minutemen going into battle, a “call to action” of our teams as they go into battle on their playing fields.
- “Join the Revolution” grabs attention as seen by UMass fans in color in The Daily Hampshire Gazette and the moving billboards on PVTA buses. The council listened to samples of the broadcasts of Coach Kellogg’s radio commercial “I’m a Minute Fan, are you?”
- Mission 1000 was the fall pre-season Men’s Basketball campaign of numerous Meets and Greets as the coaches interact one on one with the community in local restaurants. It was noted that having players deliver season tickets for loyal season ticket holders had a very positive impact.
- The Mullins Militia is a core group of student boosters who sit court-side “in the Bunker” to cheer on their basketball team. This student involvement was an example of carrying the “Revolution Theme” forward.
• Some time was also spent discussing the student attendance issue with ice hockey and basketball and why these changes have occurred.
• Outsourcing of marketing rights was discussed in a lengthy discussion on demographics of UMass’s fan base, customer retention rates, and ways to involve the student and community fans. Methods include radio and TV ads, Facebook, Twitter, blogging, posters and table tents in dorms.

4. NCAA Audit Report – Nelson Lacey, Rebecca Spencer, Marilyn Billings and Co-Chair Rod Warnick

• Co-Chair Warnick distributed a progress sheet on the NCAA Audit Review since the last accreditation.
• Kim Callicoate and Elaine Sortino maintain the deadline of March 27, 2011.
• Rebecca Spencer and Rod Warnick met for a thorough review with student council members and drafted a student-athlete survey.
• Rod requested feedback from the council and indicated that the NCAA Student Athlete Audit survey will be conducted after Spring Break with the goal of concluding the data collection in early April.
• Marilyn Billings will be interviewing coaches Thursday, March 10, 2011.

5. Athletic Department Update (Jason Yellin, Associate AD Media Relations)

• Jason Yellin updated the council while the AD is travelling at the Women’s Basketball Tournament.
• The Football MAC situation is in a holding pattern but still is promising.
• If Men’s Basketball wins in the Fordham game, 3/5/11, UMass may be hosting an A-10 first round tournament game next Tuesday at the Mullins Center.
• Men’s Hockey, in 8th place plays Maine in a two game series, Friday, 3/4/11 and Saturday, 3/5/11 at the Mullins Center.
• Women’s Basketball, 12th seed is playing 5th seed today at 2:30 in Lowell.
• The softball team was playing on the road and updates were coming in on their progress.
• Men’s Lacrosse plays Brown, #20, tomorrow 3/5/11 and off to a strong start on the season.

6. Pending Topics for Future Review

• The remaining spring council meetings are Friday, April 8, 2011
  Friday, May 6, 2011 and future topics include a visit from the Chancellor, an update on the Campus Master Plan, the outsourcing contract and plan; and the strategic vision or plan review.