The Cowboy Parents Council held its summer meeting on Saturday, September 20, 2014, at 8:00 a.m. at the University of Wyoming Alumni House. Members present: Stan and Pat Horton, Riki and Kevin Haukaas, Kathi Morrison, Julie Stewart-Anderson, Karrie Tracy; Ex-Officio members: Sara Axelson and Sue Heide (Student Affairs), Keener Fry and Tiffany Young (Alumni Association).

Pat Horton called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. The council reviewed the minutes from the July meeting, and there were no questions.

Student Affairs update: Sara Axelson talked about the President’s draft out to the community and the participation of the vice presidents and deans. Enrollment has been up; there are 12,900 students enrolled, as of 9/19/2014. Enrollment has increased on campus but has decreased for the outreach program; however, all the seats in the outreach program are filled. The goal is to reach 15,000 students by the year 2020. The STEP program has tutors available Monday-Thursday and offers supplementary instruction for students. Phase 1 of the Half Acre renovation will open in January. Residence Life has a $100 million plan to remodel/revamp the residence halls. They have selected a vendor for the master plan. Sara talked about the new Associate Vice President and Dean of Students, Sean Blackburn. She said that Sean is very thoughtful and energetic and has been great for student development.

Budget update: Keener reviewed the account balances for the Endowment Fund, Operating Fund, and Student Emergency Fund. The two largest outflows from the Operating Fund were from the transfer of money to the Student emergency Fund and the printing of calendars. There are still several boxes of calendars left, so maybe consider printing fewer calendars next year. The goal is to get the Operating Fund balance back up to $30,000 with the help of the Foundation mailing and Cowboy Call Center. Last year, a letter went out to every parent, and we received $8,000 in donations. Pat, Stan, and their son will be pictured on the letter that will be sent out in October/November. The Cowboy Call Center will make phone calls in January/February, and Keener anticipates that this will increase donations by 25-30%. The council agreed that the Student Emergency Fund will be replenished at the beginning of each fiscal year (July 1st) in order to bring the balance up to $10,000. The money received at this year’s silent auction will boost the current balance past $10,000.

Cowboy Connect Update: The Cowboy Parents reception during Cowboy Connect took place on August 29, 2014 from 1:00-3:00 p.m. In their brochure, Residence Life and Dining printed the incorrect time (3:00-5:00 p.m.); therefore, some parents arrived at the reception later, and we kept the reception open past 3:00 p.m. There were several parents at the reception who were interested in serving on the council or becoming members of Cowboy Parents. The council discussed that more parents would probably attend the reception if they were more aware of it. To increase awareness, Karrie suggested making pins, invites, and/or signs and handing them out during check-in.
Mom and Dad of the Year Award: There were 38 nominations for the award. The UWAA staff selected 10 semi-finalists, and then 9 Wyo-Gold members selected the winner, based on a point system. The winners received complementary tickets to the UW vs. Florida Atlantic football game. Tiffany created an award for the winning parents, and Pat and Stan signed the certificate. Pat, Stan, and Keener will present the award to the family during the first media timeout of the 3rd quarter at the football game.

Family Weekend Agenda and Weekend Support: Tiffany discussed the responsibilities of the council members for the tailgate/silent auction and the President’s Brunch. After the meeting, the council will go to Tailgate Park to help set up for the auction. The big tent, tables, and chairs have been already set up. Council members will need to assemble the two pop up tents, put out items and bid sheets, and set up a table for Cowboy Parents t-shirts, calendars, and brochures. After the tailgate is over, everyone needs to help fold up tables and chairs and put them in the bins provided by UW Moving Services. Council members need to arrive at the Hilton at 7:30 a.m. on Sunday to help with decorations for the brunch. Keener will be the emcee. Pat will speak on behalf of Cowboy Parents and will help with the raffle drawings. Kathi talked about how many families may not be able to attend Family weekend because of the high costs for hotel, travel, meals, in addition to the registration fee. Also, hotel rates are higher on football game weekends. Keener discussed hosting Family Weekend on a football weekend every other year, but this will depend on the athletics schedule and the gap between the first day of class and Family Weekend. This year, there gap was only 16 days, since school started after Labor Day.

Cowboy Parents Nominations and Elections: The meeting handout included a list of names of those who are interested in serving on the council. The goal is to have at least 12 members on the council. New members will be voted in by current council members via email and will be invited to attend the spring council meeting. Sue will give Pat a list of additional parents who may be interested, and Pat will personally contact these individuals. Pat will also call Bryon, Mary, and KariLynn to see if they are still interested in being on the council. Pat and Stan are now co-chairs, and Kurt will serve one year as past chair. Kevin made a motion for Riki, Karrie, and Kathi to renew their two-year terms, and Julie seconded the motion. Therefore, Riki, Kevin, Kathi, and Karrie will serve until the fall of 2016. Julie will serve until the fall of 2015. The council discussed the importance of having meetings “set in stone” to accommodate those who have to travel long distances. Skype can be an option for those who cannot attend meetings.

New business and open discussion: Julie talked about how the council has an impact on all students, not just their own kids. During the spring meeting, the council will need to review “Each Person- A Student” Award nominees, the Cowboy Parents Strategic Plan, and dates for 2015 freshman orientation sessions.

Next council meeting: Friday, March 7, UW Alumni House, morning (time TBD); Informal meeting: March 6, 2014, Women’s basketball game vs. New Mexico, 7:00 p.m.; appetizers and cocktails immediately following the game (location TBD)

Pat adjourned the meeting at 9:58 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tiffany Young