

West Virginia State University Board of Governors
Erickson Alumni Center, Grand Hall
January 22, 2014
Minutes

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Susman was unable to attend until later in the afternoon due to a scheduling conflict. Dr. Smith called the meeting of the West Virginia State University Board of Governors to order at 4:01 p.m. and chaired the meeting until Chair Susman arrived.

Present: Dr. Guetzloff, Mrs. Jarvis, Mr. Konstanty, Mr. Lipscomb, Mr. Susman, and Dr. Thralls. Mr. Williams participated in the meeting by conference call.

2. **Verification of Appropriate Notification of Public Meeting**

Mrs. Jarvis motioned to verify the appropriate notification of the meeting and Mr. Lipscomb seconded the motion. The motion carried.

3. **Review and Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Mr. Konstanty motioned to approve the agenda as presented and Dr. Guetzloff seconded the motion. The motion carried.

4. **Announcement from the Chair**

Dr. Smith said the meeting was being held in accordance with West Virginia Code to provide an opportunity for campus constituent groups to share their thoughts and ideas about the University. She said each group was allotted time on the agenda to participate in a roundtable discussion.

5. **Roundtable Discussions**

- Item 5.a: Dr. Smith welcomed the faculty members in attendance and opened the floor for discussion. Dr. Ruhnke said, as Chair of the Faculty Senate, he has an opportunity to discuss matters each day with the administration. He said he would like the faculty members present to address the Board about questions or comments they may have. Dr. Palubinskas said she would like to see faculty members be able to move around the campus and work together quickly to identify funds to assist with programs and travel opportunities for students to attend conferences. She said there seems to be a communication protocol on campus that requires faculty to go through several levels of administration for various items. There are times when suggestions and ideas are delayed or rejected as they move through the administration and often the faculty do not receive feedback on requests or proposals. She said she feels that a more collegial discussion across campus could assist faculty in being more efficient.

President Hemphill said there is no policy or communication protocol and he holds general conversations with faculty members regarding programs and projects. He suggested that the Deans or Department Chairs be made aware that conversations are being held with the administration, but said there is no reason why faculty members cannot bring items to their attention. President Hemphill said, in terms of the funding approval process, the University needs a systematic process due to budgetary issues.

Dr. Fultz said he also feels there is a breakdown in communication at times. He gave an example of when Marshall University contacted his department last year about the institution serving as a pipeline for a new program. He said, after he submitted the idea and it moved through the chain of command, he did not receive any response as to whether or not it was possible.

Dr. Vaughan said Political Science faculty members have made great progress in growing the program. He would like to know what could be done to help increase resources to support ideas that are generated by the faculty.

Dr. Ruhnke asked when the administration may be able to determine that the University is financially strong enough to consider requests from faculty for funding of projects. President Hemphill said higher education was fortunate that the mid-year budget reduction is only one percent and that the reduction for next fiscal year may only be 3.75 percent. He said a budget reduction of one percent results in \$116,000 for the University.

Even though the University had a significant increase in freshman enrollment, our overall FTE only increased by 3.1 or 3.2 percent after the add/drop period. The President said that speaks to the University's continued focus on retention and that recruitment and retention are key to its financial future.

He said the Budget Efficiency Summit report, which will be released later in the week, includes plans to initiate cost saving measures. President Hemphill said he is working on an article on financial change in the academy and one of the sections is about state funding. The numbers continue to decline statewide for financial support to the colleges and universities.

Dr. Guetzloff inquired about the reduction of employees in terms of the size of the institution. President Hemphill said, since 2000, the University has had a staff reduction of 6-7 percent and the Research and Development Corporation had a reduction of 19-20 percent. The administration continues to be mindful of retirements and vacancies and identifies ways to cover duties and responsibilities with available resources as opposed to automatically replacing the positions. He said such efficiencies may reduce the need to continue increasing tuition.

Dr. Ruhnke said he does not want students to pay increased tuition; however, he also understands that faculty and staff need a salary. He also feels that the University should not be the lowest in terms of tuition, because it could actually deter potential students who think low tuition equals a low-quality education, which is not the case.

The President said the University is the fifth lowest in the state in terms of tuition and fees. Dr. Thralls said this is also a national issue and there is no clear answer at the moment. President Hemphill said the administration will continue to monitor the situation very carefully and do all they can to advance the University.

Faculty members asked about the long-term plan to keep the University sustainable. The President said recruitment, retention, philanthropy, and an entrepreneurial spirit

are all critical to sustainability. It is important to explore every possible way to generate revenue to support the University. He said this may include increased promotion of facilities for rentals, etc. The University is also taking bold steps in terms of online learning and research programs.

Mr. Lipscomb said it was interesting to hear Dr. Fultz's earlier comments about submitting ideas or project interests. He asked if there is a timeline or deadline for faculty to receive a response. He also encouraged faculty to connect with alumni who may want to provide financial assistance to support faculty and student programs.

Dr. Smith thanked everyone for participating in the discussion. She said Dr. Guetzloff represents the faculty on the Board and asked him to wrap up the session and share his comments. Dr. Guetzloff said he reiterates Dr. Fultz's comments and that he is unaware of any protocol to ensure responses are received in a timely manner.

- Item 5.b: Dr. Smith welcomed the classified staff members. Dr. Guetzloff noted that he would have to leave early to teach a class at 5:30 p.m. Dr. Smith opened the floor and asked Classified Staff Council Chair Tom Hunt for general comments. Mr. Hunt said he appreciates the work of the Board and fully supports the President in his efforts to move the University forward.

He said a large number of classified staff work in Physical Facilities and are not privy to plans and decisions the way other staff may be who work in offices. Mr. Hunt noted that, prior to the meeting with the Board, the Classified Staff Council met and developed a list of questions. The first question relates to the new athletic facility and if the project is moving forward. President Hemphill explained the approval process and financing for the project and the discussion regarding whether it should be a note or a bond. He said University officials have been working closely with the Higher Education Policy Commission and the Governor's Office. The President said everyone has come to an agreement and they are in the final stages of the approval process.

Mr. Bill Porterfield said he serves as the Advisory Council of Classified Employees (ACCE) representative. He said classified staff members have approached him with concerns about the budget and not knowing if their positions are secure. He said Senate Bill 330 contains a reference to studying outsourcing and reduction in force, which heightens concern among employees. President Hemphill informed the staff about the percentages of the mid-year reduction and Fiscal Year 2015 proposed reduction, which was shared with the faculty earlier. He also reiterated his comments on reassigning the duties of vacant positions and the forthcoming Budget Efficiency Summit recommendations.

Mr. Hunt said members of the staff have raised questions about plans for revenue from the leasing of space in Ferrell Hall and the gas lease. The President said revenue has not been received yet from those leases and no commitments have been

made on these additional revenues. He said as the revenue streams comes in, the administration will be intentional about how it is utilized across the campus.

Dr. Smith said many of the larger universities generate the majority of their revenue from their football programs and all of the smaller schools are experiencing similar funding issues. She said public colleges and universities are becoming more state-assisted rather than state-funded, while identifying new ways to generate revenue, such as leasing space for cell towers.

Mr. Hunt said another concern involves the University's facilities in Malden and the Capital Center in Charleston. Classified staff members are inquiring about the plans for these properties. President Hemphill said the Board is currently researching the Malden property and will have further discussions. He noted that the Malden property is a historical part of campus and the University will continue to support it at this time. He said there has not been discussion on the future of the Capital Center.

Mr. Porterfield said that, when the PROMISE Scholarship Program was created, a trend started resulting in a steady decline in state funding. He asked if the Board could hold a forum to address the impact on smaller schools and unite with those institutions. Dr. Thralls said the term mentioned earlier about being state-assisted is more common than many schools prefer, and there may be some relationship between the PROMISE Scholarship and decline in funding. Mr. Porterfield said he is not advocating that the state eliminate the PROMISE Scholarship Program, however, it seems that the decline in state funding began at that same time.

Mr. Hunt said many classified staff do not understand why the University is building a new residence hall when it is unable to fill the ones it currently has. President Hemphill said the University is unable to fill the residence halls, because students see those facilities and opt not to live in them. The University cannot recruit and retain students with its current facilities. The new residence hall will be a major recruiting tool and is a key piece of growing the student body. Mr. Hunt asked what Sullivan Hall will be utilized for when the new residence hall opens. The President said part of the building will be used as overflow space for student dorms, but it will mainly serve as office space.

Dr. Smith said she appreciates the classified staff attending the meeting and is pleased to have this opportunity to hear from them directly. She acknowledged Mrs. Jarvis' participation on the Board and how well she represents the classified staff. Mrs. Jarvis said she has received positive feedback on the summaries she sends to classified staff following the Board meetings. She believes that an informed staff helps communicate clearly and effectively across campus and in the community. She said her door is always open for discussions regarding University matters.

Mr. Konstanty said he attended WVSU Day at the Capitol and that his law firm is very involved with the Legislature. He shares information with legislators regarding all of the great initiatives and programs State has to offer. He said he also takes every opportunity to share information about the school in his professional life. Mr.

Konstanty said he feels that being active, doing good work, and sharing ideas to help the University is part of the obligation of being a member of the Board.

- Item 5.c: Dr. Smith welcomed the students and opened the floor for discussion. Student Government Association (SGA) President Vasilios Dianellos said the SGA will host a student forum in February.

Dr. Thralls asked how the students feel about the campus in general. Mr. Dianellos said, since he has been here, he can definitely see a big difference in school spirit and a new excitement. Ms. Greenleaf, a senior and member the women's basketball team, said that her last two years have been much different and more positive than her first two years.

Dr. Thralls asked what the students thought about their courses and the faculty. The students who were present said they have great class experiences. The science professors are very engaging and create different ways outside of class time to expand learning opportunities. Ms. Greenleaf said she appreciates how the campus is like a family. She said that, during the water crisis, basketball games were rescheduled and faculty members contacted her to make sure she was okay and had water.

Mr. Konstanty inquired as to how many of the students have attended State for their entire collegiate career and three students responded positively. Mr. Dianellos said he attended another college prior to enrolling at State and he has been on-campus for four years. Ms. Greenleaf said she received academic scholarships and considered transferring after her sophomore year; however, WVSU's program was more challenging, which was a good fit for her, because she wants to be as prepared as possible when she goes onto professional school. Another student said he stayed at State due to the level of faculty involvement and the outreach he received from his faculty. Other students came to State because of the location and low cost, but they chose to stay due to the sense of family and are proud to be a part of the University.

Chair Susman expressed appreciation for the students' participation. Mr. Lipscomb said he often receives questions and hears concerns from individuals about intramural programs and if the University is offering the right opportunities for students. He said he realizes activities being held and students do not participate, but he would like to know more about the students' interests. Ms. Greenleaf said many students do not participate if there is no prize or other incentives.

Ms. Dunn said she feels that some activities or meetings are not planned or promoted early enough to allow time for students to plan to attend. This is especially the case for commuter students who have families, full-time jobs, etc. She said it is a challenge to know how to keep commuter students informed about campus events and get them involved.

Mr. Dianellos said, when he speaks to new students at orientation, he strongly encourages them to become involved in student organizations. He said it is also

important for upper-class students to think outside of the box in terms of mentoring new students to engage them on-campus.

Chair Susman inquired if the students felt the new residence hall would increase the level of campus activities. Ms. Greenleaf said she feels it will bring more students together, because most of the on-campus students will be in the same building, compared to how they are currently located in multiple locations across campus. The students tend to socialize more with students who live in the same residence halls.

Mr. Williams said the University has individuals who are talented and may not want to be part of a permanent group, but would like to participate in ad-hoc activities. This may be a way for some students to share their gifts and talents without fully committing to an organization.

Mr. Dianellos said the Student Activities Office is doing a great job. They have a committee where they receive input from students and involve them in selecting the activities.

Chair Susman said the Board wants to help students in any way possible. He said the Board welcomes ideas from students and encourages them to reach out and share their suggestions. He said the Board wants to grow the University and ensure that the students have a great experience.

Mrs. Jarvis asked the students about their interaction with staff. The students said it has greatly improved over the last year. Mr. Dianellos said he knows a student who left State because he was frustrated with the staff and the processes, but that he returned to campus after hearing all of the positive feedback about how the campus has changed.

President Hemphill encouraged students to share with their peers that, if they e-mail a member of the faculty or staff about an issue and do not receive a response, to contact Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Kitty McCarthy. He said Vice President McCarthy will reach out to the appropriate person and work through the issue.

Dr. Thralls noted that the Board members hear many positive comments and have much to be encouraged about, but he cannot think of anything that makes him feel better than hearing from the students and having this type of dialogue.

6. **Next Meeting Date**

January 23, 2014

7. **Adjournment**

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. Vincent Williams', written over a horizontal line.

L. Vincent Williams
Secretary

Approved:
Tom Susman
Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Susman', written over a horizontal line.