

College of Arts & Sciences
Minutes of meeting with Chancellor Belcher
April 10, 2012 8:30 AM

The meeting consisted of informal discussion, which is roughly paraphrased below. There were about forty in attendance.

- Interim Dean Gibbs introduces Chancellor Belcher and Interim Provost Lofquist. The meeting will be a chance for faculty to bring up issues and questions for discussion with Belcher and Lofquist. These meetings are a part of several processes being started to bring faculty into more communication with the chancellor, such as the new monthly “Lunch with the Chancellor.”
- **Question: Can you speak more about the budget process? We all appreciate the increased transparency. What can we expect going into next year?**

Belcher: He made changes for transparency rather quickly when he got here. Based on experience at previous institution as provost, where the Dean’s budgetary council was open for members of the faculty budget committee to sit in on.

He wants to push the budget process back earlier in the year because of timing challenges. Important one-time expenses require more time to process than is currently allotted for spending one-time funds. We used lapsed salary to meet a lot of one-time needs.

News on enrollment money is positive. No one is talking about reversions. But we won’t know until the first of August, if last year is an indication. (NC rules are much more complicated than anywhere else he’s been).

Lofquist: She wants to explain why we have been ‘doing without’ and now have one-time pots of money. We did not get carry-forward. Academic affairs did not keep lapsed salary to itself, in order to help with other things. And we saved some for fear of reversions.

Belcher: There was uncertainty in lapsed-salary funds, because last year we wiped out many vacant positions which would have been generating lapsed salary. We got more than we thought.

An academic area should normally receive priority with its own lapsed salary. We have reduced the amount of ongoing expenses covered by onetime monies from over 4 billion to just over 2 Billion. Sharing of lapsed salaries have helped us in this bad situation.

- **Question: Our college needs a dean. It made sense to put it off some because of Provost, but we need one now.**

Belcher: He understands the difficulties, having once been appointed the 8th dean in 11 years for a college, on six days notice. He has great hopes that we will have a provost by the fall. The committee meets today to identify finalists. So stability should be coming there.

It will be a tricky, challenging year for the college with a new interim. Be careful not to withdraw into your own departments, as often happens when there are interims. You can lose sense of connection as a college.

He anticipates that it will be a wide open search. Although he would listen if the college wants an internal search. It's healthier to have a broader pool, even for the internal candidate.

- **Question: What if the provost search fails again?**

Belcher: He feels sure that we will get a provost. But we would have the conversation about whether to go forward with a permanent search for a dean. It would probably be a good idea. Some potential candidates might not apply, since they wouldn't know who their boss would be.

We are going forward with the Business College dean search. We didn't have enough time notification from Gibbs, to go forward with a permanent search in A&S.

Lofquist: Lofquist will hang around (*i.e.*, not retire) until a permanent provost is hired.

- **Question: [Question regarding Scott Higgins's retirement as Dean of the Graduate School and Research]**

Belcher: Scott's retirement was a surprise, but it gives us an opportunity to consider whether a restructuring might give more support for research.

We have a largely external group looking at the Millennial Campus. They are almost done, and will produce a white paper about process and determining of priorities. It includes a big focus on faculty involvement in decision making. They toured other millennial campuses, and UNC Charlotte, one of the others, has a position over research and economic development, which might be an interesting option for us.

Research is being interestingly redefined here, and we are open to possibilities. He is reluctant to add another administrative position, but it may be justified.

- **Question: Regarding retention and recruitment of faculty. Very happy that you spoke about salaries at your installation. We are losing candidates, because we cannot get close. We are the lowest for faculty salary in the NC system.**

Belcher: NC can only give raises when the legislature says so. There were Raleigh types in the audience who needed to hear it. He will keep talking about it and pushing it. Some institutions have private money slush funds for faculty retention, but not us. It looks like they may reauthorize us to use state monies for faculty retention. But we also have got to work on salaries. The chancellors are absolutely adamant about this.

- **Question: I have been working on NSF review committees. Part of what we review is budget and salary. I have yet to review one where the salary of junior faculty isn't completely out of range with anything in my department.**

Belcher: He was surprised at the salaries when he got here.

- **Question: Back to research support, you gave long-term planning answers. What is going to happen July 1?**

Lofquist: The structural change is a possibility. Not sure if one could be interim and one permanent. So many things are still up in the air.

- **Question: Where will we be teaching our graduate classes in Asheville**

Lofquist: You will be teaching at UNCA during the summer and then at Biltmore Park.

Belcher: Hypothesizing that we do split the position, things will not change overnight. The offices will continue to function. Only one person is leaving, not all the staff in the offices.

- **Question: Will there be consideration of moving the authority for assistantships to the college deans? That would be helpful.**

Lofquist: That has been brought up in several meetings, but there has been no decision.

- **Question: Faculty involvement in these processes is low and time consuming. How could you bring more in, to spread the load? The withdrawal you mentioned has happened.**

Belcher: There is a downside to transparency. It takes a ton of time. You are feeling the onus of having to respond to all these things.

Pulling people out of withdrawal takes time. Lunches with chancellor and leadership programs for faculty and staff are examples of things that will pull people out of withdrawal and engage them.

- **Question: There are roles for faculty leaders on campus, but some things only the chancellor can handle, such as transportation issues, like widening the roads off campus. Speedwell road, among others, needs bike lanes and greenways so that students can get to campus safely.**

Belcher: He can take an advocacy role for those things.

- **Question: A lot of junior faculty have budget neutral needs that are not being met. Salary isn't the only reason we are losing faculty.**

[little discussion]

- **Question: What do you see for strategic planning?**

Belcher: He still thinks we have a long way to go. There are lots of fabulous ideas in the document so far, but it needs refining and more focus.

Questions and discussion continued somewhat beyond 9:30, but the secretary had to leave for a class.

Respectfully submitted,

David G. Henderson
Faculty Secretary to
the College of Arts & Sciences