

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

December 3, 2021

9:30 a.m.

Chancellor's Boardroom, H.F. Robinson Building, Room 501A

The Board of Trustees of Western Carolina University met in regular session on December 3, 2021 in Room 501A of the H.F.R. Administration Building. Chair Roberts called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

**ATTENDANCE**

**The following members of the Board were present:**

Present from the Board: Chair Bob Roberts, Mrs. Haden Boliek, Mr. William Brawley, Ms. Becky Brown, Mr. Casey Cooper, Mr. Joe Crocker, Mrs. Kathryn Greeley, Mr. Tim Haskett, Mr. Ken Hughes, Mr. Bryant Kinney, Mr. Jake Robinson, Mrs. Rebecca Schlosser, and Ms. Rebecca Hart.

**Others Present:** Board of Governors Liaison, Terry Hutchens.

**Present – Faculty and staff of Western Carolina University:**

Chancellor Kelli R. Brown; Dr. Richard Starnes, Provost; Ms. Deidre Hopkins, Staff Senate Chair; Dr. Laura Wright, Faculty Senate Chair; Mr. Neal Andrews, Alumni Association President; Dr. Melissa Wargo, Chief of Staff; Mr. Mike Byers, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance; Mr. Shea Browning, General Counsel; Ms. Jamie Raynor, Vice Chancellor for Advancement; Dr. Sam Miller, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; Mr. Craig Fowler, Chief Information Officer; Mr. Alex Gary, Athletics Director; Dr. Cory Causby, Associate Vice Chancellor of Human Resources and Payroll; Ms. Karen Woody, Budget Officer; Ms. Lisa Gaetano, Internal Auditor; Mr. Benny Smith, Executive Director of Communications and Public Relations; Ms. Ivy Gibson, Associate General Counsel; Ms. Kelly Tornow, Assistant General Counsel; and Ms. Jessica Woods, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

**WELCOME**

Chair Roberts welcomed Governor Terry Hutchens, the Faculty and Staff Senate Chairs, Alumni Association President, as well as staff and faculty attending the meeting, via Zoom and joining, via LiveStream.

**ROLL CALL**

Ms. Woods called the roll of the Board members in attendance. A quorum of the board was present.

**ETHICS STATEMENT**

Chair Roberts read the Ethics Statement as follows:

“As Chair of the Board of Trustees, it is my responsibility to remind all members of the Board of their duty under the State Government Ethics Act to avoid conflicts of interest and appearances of conflicts of interest as required by this Act. Each member has received the agenda and related information for this Board of Trustees’ meeting. If any Board member knows of any conflict of interest or appearance of

conflict with respect to any matter coming before the Board of Trustees at this meeting, the conflict or appearance of conflict should be identified at this time.”

Chair Roberts reminded the board that the meeting was a public meeting and is being recorded, via the Zoom platform, and is being livestreamed.

### **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Chair Roberts read the Land Acknowledgement as follows:

“The Western Carolina University campus is situated within the ancestral homelands of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. At WCU our work seeks to embrace and connect to this Cherokee landscape as we work to reinforce our mission at WCU. We will work to actively engage our community with the extraordinary indigenous identity and culture of this special place.”

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Roberts asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 3, 2021 Regular Session, Board of Trustees meeting (TAB B-1); minutes of the October 29, 2021 Special Called Meeting of the Board of Trustees (TAB B-2); and minutes of the November 4-5, 2021 BOT Retreat (TAB B-3). Mrs. Greeley made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Crocker seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved.

### **COMMENTS FROM CHANCELLOR KELLI R. BROWN**

Chancellor Brown welcomed the Trustees, Executive Council, and the Faculty Senate and Staff Senate Chairs and Senators who joined the meeting in person, or via livestream or Zoom. Chancellor Brown also welcomed faculty and staff and members of the news media and others who participated, via livestream.

Chancellor Brown thanked the Trustees, staff, and faculty who have worked so hard to launch the fall semester, while concentrating on the future for WCU, due to the ongoing pandemic.

Chancellor Brown shared her appreciation for the completion and implementation of WCU’s revised strategic plan, Honoring Our Promise, including directives of Academic Excellence, Student Experience, Employee Excellence, Regional Development and Economic Engagement, Inclusive Excellence, Vision Advancement, and Responsible Stewardship.

Chancellor Brown discussed strategic enrollment management. She shared that Provost Starnes and Vice Chancellor Miller are implementing a top to bottom review and overhaul of strategic enrollment priorities to maximize enrollment and to strengthen student support services to aid more students in getting to graduation. She shared that educational attainment is the path to economic prosperity for our students and for our region and our State. Chancellor Brown noted that the future of WCU must include a stronger and more visible regional presence particularly in the far west and in the metropolitan areas of Buncombe and Henderson Counties. She noted that WCU is the comprehensive, regional university servicing far western North Carolina and, increasingly, upstate South Carolina and North Georgia, and we must be more intentional about our presence.

Chancellor Brown shared an update on the Campus Master Plan. She shared that the master plan that was presented to Trustees in November is the bridge to the future of WCU. Trustees will be asked to approve the Campus Master Plan in an upcoming meeting. She mentioned that Western must engage with our state legislature to procure the resources needed for success and mature and evolve our efforts around philanthropy and private support. She commented on improving our public-facing entities to showcase WCU and act as a force multiplier in service to our educational mission.

Chancellor Brown provided an update on Legislative activity. She discussed the recently passed budget and noted that it was incredibly good for the UNC System and for WCU. She shared those members of the NC General Assembly and the Governor deserve thanks. She noted that the budget included \$35.5M for Moore Building, \$12M for other R&R, recurring funding for enrollment growth, NC Promise, and operations and maintenance for the Apodaca Building. She noted that the most significant was the support for a 5% pay raise for faculty and staff across the biennium, as well as bonuses. Chancellor Brown noted that for the first time in recent memory, every single item on WCU's legislative agenda was funded in the budget and this means that WCU has a clean slate to develop the next legislative agenda. The updated legislative agenda will be brought forward for approval in March and will be consistent with our future aspirations.

Chancellor Brown shared information on the Comprehensive Campaign. She shared that Trustees will be asked to approve a primary lynchpin in Honoring Our Promise, the recommendations necessary for success in our next comprehensive campaign during the meeting. She shared that upon approval, WCU will act immediately to begin execution of the strategies outlined in the feasibility study. The months of January through July 2022 will include campaign planning and formal training for both internal faculty and staff and external groups. She shared that WCU will launch a 14-stop Honoring Our Promise Campaign Tour where WCU will host both VIP Visioning Sessions to share campaign priorities with small groups and large Campaign Preview Events to reconnect with our alumni and friends and share her philanthropic vision with them.

Chancellor Brown thanked the Trustees for their support they provide to Western Carolina University.

#### **COMMENTS FROM BOG LIAISON**

Chair Roberts welcomed and recognized Terry Hutchens, Board of Governors Liaison, to the meeting and for remarks. Governor Hutchens extended his appreciation for serving as the WCU BOG Liaison. He shared his appreciation of the faculty, staff, and students. He discussed the importance of the vision of education. He also shared information on the Athletics Facilities. He shared that he looks forward to continuing to work with Western Carolina University.

#### **COMMENTS FROM CHAIR**

Chair Roberts thanked Chancellor Brown for her Chancellor's Report and Governor Hutchens for his BOG Report. Chair Roberts shared that Trustees have been busy since the last board meeting, including witnessing success of the WCU athletic teams; listening to the POTM marching band; attending the annual scholarship luncheon; attending the UNC System Board of Trustee workshop & 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration; and attending the BOT Retreat in November. He reminded the board of the discussion of the seven (7) Strategic Directives at the BOT Retreat. Chair Roberts thanked the Trustees for their tireless dedication and effort to be present at many of WCU's events.

He mentioned that he would like to utilize some of his chair comment time to feature a trustee and their advocacy for WCU. Chair Roberts asked Mr. Brawley to share his story with the board. Chair Roberts thanked Mr. Brawley for his remarks. He shared that he would reach out to other trustees for future meetings.

#### **REPORT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Chair Roberts recognized Ms. Boliek to give the report of the Academic Affairs and Personnel Committee. The Academic Affairs and Personnel Committee reviewed a few discussion items.

Ms. Boliek shared that Dr. Starnes provided an update on numerous campus activities and initiatives; and an update on the administrative searches for the Dean of the College of Engineering and Technology and

the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success. She shared that Dr. Starnes provided a review of “What is Tenure?” in preparation for the spring Tenure and Promotion process and the role of the trustees within that process.

Ms. Boliek shared that Dr. Lori Anderson, Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences; and Dr. Dave Hudson and Dr. Ashley Hyatt, from the Department of Physical Therapy presented an overview of the MAP (Mountain Area Pro-Bono) Health Clinic. Dr. Hudson shared the history of the clinic, how it has evolved and become an integral part of our curriculum, with significant value to our program, our students, and our faculty.

Ms. Boliek shared that Dr. Causby provided a brief overview of WCU’s EEO Plan. The summary report provides a brief overview of WCU’s full EEO Plan to include a focus on historically underrepresented employee groups (racial/ethnic minorities, females, veterans, individuals with disabilities) and looks to determine if an underrepresentation exists in the current workforce. Overall racial/ethnic minority representation in the workforce is currently 11.4% which reflects an increase of 0.8% from last year and 3.1% since 2016. Racial/Ethnic minority representation for Faculty is 14.3% while overall staff minority representation is 9.8%. Female representation is 50.3% which represents a 0.9% decrease from 2020. Overall representation for Veterans and Individuals with Disabilities is 2.3% and 2.1% respectively.

Ms. Boliek also shared that Dr. Causby mentioned that WCU hired a total of 192 new full-time faculty and staff during the last plan year. Racial/Ethnic minority and female representation for this group of new hires was 28.1% and 44.8% respectively.

Dr. Starnes shared information on administrative appointments in TAB C-5 of the Trustee materials.

### **REPORT OF ADMINISTRATION, GOVERNANCE, AND TRUSTEESHIP COMMITTEE**

Chair Roberts recognized Mrs. Greeley to give the report of the Administration, Governance, and Trusteeship Committee. The Administration, Governance, and Trusteeship Committee considered two action items, two discussion item, and four information items.

Mrs. Greeley shared that Ms. Raynor presented the Campaign Feasibility Study and Campaign Recommendations. She shared information from the study and recommendations. The Administration, Governance, and Trusteeship committee recommended to the full board the approval of the Campaign Feasibility Study and Campaign Recommendations. The motion comes from committee and does not require a second. The Campaign Feasibility Study and Campaign Recommendations was approved.

Mrs. Greeley shared that Mr. Browning and Mr. Gary presented the Proposed Resolution on Full Scholarship and Residence. The Resolution can be found in your Board materials under (TAB D-2).He mentioned that the state statute was amended in the recently enacted budget bill. To implement the revised legislation, the statute requires that campus Board of Trustees pass a resolution. Mr. Browning then shared next steps. The Administration, Governance, and Trusteeship committee recommended to the full board the approval of the Resolution on Full Scholarship and Residence. The motion comes from committee and does not require a second. The Resolution on Full Scholarship and Residence was approved.

Mrs. Greeley shared that Ms. Gibson and Dr. Smith presented on the processes related to Title IX and Student Conduct which can be found in the Board of Trustees material under TAB D-3. Ms. Gibson concluded the presentation with information about training and ongoing campus engagement.

Mrs. Greeley shared that Ms. Gibson and Mr. Gary presented to the committee the outcomes of the Athletics Title IX compliance review. She shared that the evaluation of WCU’s overall compliance was

favorable and did not detect any violations of Title IX. The law firm provided some recommendations for next steps WCU can take to strengthen its commitment and compliance with Title IX. The report can be found in the Board of Trustees material under TAB D-4.

Mrs. Greeley shared that Dr. Wargo provided a legislative update. Dr. Wargo reported Governor Cooper signed into law the conference budget (SB 105) proposed and passed by the NC Senate and the NC House. The enacted budget is the first since the 2018 session and includes all the items in Western Carolina University's legislative agenda and the additional capital and R&R funding needed for critical infrastructure projects. The summary of funding items specific to WCU can be found in the Board of Trustees material under TAB D-5a and TAB D-5b. Dr. Wargo provided a handout of the Summary of UNC System provisions and funding items with updated budget technical corrections for review.

Mrs. Greeley shared that Ms. Raynor presented an Annual Advancement Update which can be found in the Board of Trustees material under TAB D-6. Ms. Raynor shared that moving forward the Advancement Division would be restructured and consist of the Vice Chancellor's Office, Office of Advancement Services, Office of Development and Office of Engagement. Ms. Raynor reviewed the Giving Societies levels of giving and a summary of unrestricted giving.

Mrs. Greeley mentioned that Dr. Miller gave an overview of enrollment numbers and stated WCU is running ahead of this point in time last year.

Mrs. Greeley shared that Ms. Carpenter shared the Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule for 2021-2023, which can be found in the Board of Trustees material under TAB D-7.

The Committee has one closed session item to be considered.

#### **REPORT OF FINANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Chair Roberts recognized Mr. Cooper to give the report of the Finance and Audit Committee. The Finance and Audit Committee discussed one action items and reviewed a couple discussion and informational items.

Mr. Cooper shared that Mr. Byers and Dr. Miller explained the annual process for tuition, fees, and rate adjustments and that the governing board(s) must first approve the schedule of tuition, fees, and rates suggested by the University before they may be implemented. The schedule of all tuitions, rates, fees, and charges, including the proposed changes that were discussed at length in the Board of Trustees Retreat last month can be found in the Board of Trustees material under TAB E-2 and E-2A. Mr. Byers and Dr. Miller reported that in the weeks since the Board Retreat, the Tuition and Fee Committee, which is made up of half students and half faculty & staff, endorsed the proposed changes. He shared that Student Government Association has since passed a resolution in support of the proposed changes in tuition, fees and rates. Mr. Cooper shared that fellow Board member and President of Student Government Association, Rebecca Hart, serves on the Tuition and Fee Committee. He expressed his thanks to Rebecca for the hard work she has put into the difficult and important process. Mr. Cooper shared that the Tuition and Fee Committee, the Student Government Association and the administration recommend an increase in room rates for residence halls, an increase in meal plan rates, an increase in the CEAP Course Fee and an increase in the Athletics fee, and also recommended a decrease in the differential tuition for the Master of Science in Athletic Training degree program.

The Finance and Audit Committee recommended to the full board the approval of the proposed 2022-23 Tuition, Fees, Rates and Surcharges, authorizing the University to implement and/or seek necessary authority from the Board of Governors to instate the proposed schedule for tuition, fees, rates, and surcharges for the 2022-23 academic year as presented in Tabs E-2 and E-2A. Discussion ensued

regarding the Athletics fee. Mr. Cooper made a motion for a companion resolution to be presented at future Board meeting, but no later than March 4, 2022, to clarify details related to the amount of student athletic fee revenue that Western Carolina University will pledge to the potential construction, upgrade, or renovation of intercollegiate athletic facilities be brought forward for approval at the March 2022 BOT meeting. Mr. Brawley seconded the motion in support of Mr. Cooper's requested resolution and timeline. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr. Cooper shared that the annual IT Security Update was provided by Mr. Fowler and Mr. McKenzie. Ransomware is the number-one threat facing universities and Data breaches were the number-two threat. The cyber insurance market continues to change with potential higher premiums and coverage restrictions. Mr. Fowler and Mr. McKenzie stated that with support and suggestions from the Committee during last year's update, WCU's spring 2021 security training reached an all-time high for completion compliance. WCU reached a milestone in implementing the ISO 27002 Security Framework with all 114 controls now complete. An external maturity assessment using this framework is currently underway. Additional security activity details were provided in closed session.

Mr. Cooper shared that an Internal Audit Update was provided by Ms. Lisa Gaetano in the Board of Trustees material under Tab E-4 A, B, and C, regarding the status of engagements in the 2021-2023 Audit Plan. Also provided were the results of the Self-Assessment Maturity Model (SAMM) and corrective actions to be implemented by Internal Audit.

Mr. Cooper shared that a Capital Projects Status Report was provided for information in the Board of Trustees material in Tab E-5.

#### **FACULTY SENATE INFORMATION REPORT**

Chair Roberts recognized Dr. Wright to give the Faculty Senate Report. Dr. Wright discussed and shared the Faculty Senate Chair reports for three meetings that were held during the fall semester. (FACULTY SENATE REPORT IS IN REPORT MATERIALS ON FILE).

#### **STAFF SENATE INFORMATION REPORT**

Chair Roberts recognized Ms. Hopkins to give the Staff Senate Report. Ms. Deidre shared her appreciation for the opportunity to the Trustees for providing a report on quarterly activities of the WCU Staff Senate. Ms. Hopkins thanked the Trustees for their leadership and continued support. Ms. Hopkins gave an update and provided materials on the Staff Senate Initiatives including Leadership Development, Staff Senate Connection and Visibility Expansion, Staff Senate Organizational Structure, and Staff Emeritus Recognition. Ms. Hopkins gave an update on the work of Staff Senate Committees. (STAFF SENATE REPORT IS IN REPORT MATERIALS ON FILE).

#### **ALUMNI ASSOCIATION INFORMATION REPORT**

Chair Roberts recognized President Neal Andrews to give the Alumni Association Report. President Andrews gave an update on the WCU Alumni Association Board of Directors Activities and Initiatives. He shared information on the Quarterly Alumni Association Board of Directors Meeting, WCU Alumni Scholarship Fund, Alumni Board Participation Rate, Class of 2020 Celebration, Legacy Pining Ceremony, Homecoming 2021, Giving Tuesday, and WCU Alumni Association Bylaws Review and Revisions. He shared other engagement opportunities offered by the WCU Office of Alumni Engagement. (ALUMNI ASSOCIATION REPORT IS IN REPORT MATERIALS ON FILE.)

#### **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT INFORMATION REPORT**

Chair Roberts recognized Ms. Rebecca Hart to give the SGA Report. Ms. Hart shared information on the Judicial, Legislative, and Executive branches. She shared the goals/next steps for SGA. She shared external update. Ms. Hart also provided information on the UNCASG meetings to be held in person. Ms.

Hart shared that WCU will be advocating for mental health days across the UNC system, the addition of the cost of a laptop to the cost of living for all institutions, internal changes to ASG, and a vote for the ASG President on Board of Governors. Ms. Hart presented the Resolution from Student Government Association to support the Tuition and Fees Committee's Recommendations for the 2021-2022 Tuition and Fees Changes. She also noted the Student Senate support for the Athletics Fee increase. (SGA REPORT IS IN REPORT MATERIALS ON FILE).

#### **CLOSED SESSION**

Chair Roberts asked for a motion to go into closed session. Ms. Greeley made a motion to go into closed session to prevent the disclosure of privileged or confidential information, or information not considered a public record within the meaning of the NC Public Records Act to: Prevent the disclosure of information considered exempt from public disclosure pursuant to § NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(2) and § NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(3) as described on the December 03, 2021 Board of Trustees of Western Carolina University Closed Session Agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Brawley. The motion was unanimously approved by the board.

Chair Roberts asked Chancellor Brown, Dr. Wargo, and Mr. Browning to remain for the Honorary Doctorate Nomination discussion. Discussion followed on the Closed Session Agenda Items.

#### **RESUMPTION OF OPEN SESSION**

Chair Roberts asked for a motion to return to Open Session. Mrs. Greeley made the motion to return to Open Session. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cooper. The board unanimously approved to return to Open Session.

Chair Roberts reminded the board of the December 18 Commencement Ceremonies.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Roberts asked for a motion and a second to adjourn. Motion to adjourn from Mr. Schlosser and a second from Mr. Crocker. The motion was unanimously approved by board.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 am.