

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY RETREAT

The Omni Grove Park Inn, Asheville, NC

November 4-5, 2021

The Board of Trustees of Western Carolina University (Board) met for the Board of Trustees Retreat on November 4-5, 2021 at The Omni Grove Park Inn, Asheville, NC. Chair Roberts welcomed everyone to the retreat and called the meeting to order at 11:45 am.

Thursday, November 4, 2021

Attendance

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.

Present – Board of Governors Member, Carolyn Coward; Faculty and Staff of Western Carolina University: Chancellor Kelli R. Brown, Dr. Richard Starnes, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; Mr. Shea Browning, General Counsel; Dr. Melissa Wargo, Chief of Staff; Mr. Mike Byers, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance; Dr. Sam Miller, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs; Mr. Craig Fowler, Chief Information Officer; Ms. Jamie Raynor, Interim Vice Chancellor for Advancement; Mr. Alex Gary, Director of Athletics; and Ms. Jessica Woods, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

Guests Present – Ann Bennett-Phillips, Vice President and Lilly Skok Bunch, Senior Counsel of Capital Development Services.

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Roberts welcomed the trustees and Executive Council to the retreat. He thanked the trustees for taking the time to attend the retreat and their dedication to the board. He shared that the annual retreat is a great time for us to have open discussion and networking. He also shared that this retreat allows time to discuss future plans and continue to build on the knowledge of WCU and the boards' role.

Chair Roberts also shared that Trustees would hear from Capital Development Services on the Campaign Feasibility Study and Board of Governor's member, Carolyn Coward, during the retreat. He shared that the Board Assessment survey is conducted every other year, so this is our "off" year. He shared that WCU will be conducting the assessment in 2022 and discussing at next year's retreat. He mentioned that the Trustees will be discussing their roles and responsibilities this afternoon.

Comments from Chancellor Brown

Chancellor Brown welcomed trustees and thanked them for their service and attending the retreat.

Working Lunch with Capital Development Services

Ann Bennett-Phillips, Vice President and Lilly Skok Bunch, Senior Counsel of Capital Development Services shared information on the Assessment and Feasibility Study: Results and Recommendations. Discussion ensued. They shared the recommended goal of the campaign for the needs outlined in the case for support. They suggested that the campaign leaders re-evaluate and revise the goal based on the success of the leadership “silent phase” They also shared their recommendations and timeline. The Campaign Feasibility Study and Campaign recommendations will be brought forward to the Board of Trustees for review and action during the December 2-3, 2021 BOT meeting.

WWCU FCC Biennial Ownership Report

Mr. Browning shared the WWCU FCC Ownership Report Memorandum. He noted that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires the University, acting through its Board of Trustees, to report annually and required to file an Ownership Report biennially.

BOG Update

Carolyn Coward, Board of Governor’s member, provided an update on the Board of Governors tasks and committees. She shared information on the Board of Trustees Workshop scheduled for November 16th. She shared information from the Strategic Initiatives and Tuition and Fees BOG committees. She shared recommendations regarding cost of attendance from the Board of Governors. Discussion followed on the budget, legislative increases, salary equity compressions and salary increase.

COVID-19 Updates/Impact on WCU

Provost Starnes and Dr. Miller provided a COVID-19 Update/Impact on WCU and discussed demographics, enrollment, engagement, and academic metrics. Dr. Miller shared the Profile Booklet and Fall 2021 Census Statistics. Dr. Starnes provided an Academic Affairs update including Academic Affairs Highlights for 2020-21. Discussion ensued on the profile booklet information. Dr. Miller shared the Scholarship/Award Opportunities for NC Residents handout. He discussed the necessary steps to be considered for scholarships and awards. He discussed how students can use NC Promise to their advantage. Discussion ensued on applications, admits, and enrollment.

Virtual Presidential Portrait Unveiling

The Trustees watched the virtual Presidential portrait unveiling for Margaret Spellings.

Review of Board Roles

Chair Roberts reviewed the Board Roles with Trustees. Chair Roberts shared that Shea Browning, General Counsel, covers many of the “legal” roles biannually, but that he wanted to cover the list of board responsibilities that have been developed over the years at WCU. He shared the general fiduciary duties of Trustees: duty of care, duty of loyalty, and duty of obedience. He mentioned that all board members should be engaged in discussion and have good, informative conversation. He noted that Trustees must have tolerance for tough questions and should be able to reach a conclusive decision, with those who object agreeing to uphold and support the decision in public. He shared that the relationship Trustees have with Chancellor Brown should be open, transparent, problem-solving, and strategic. He noted that committee chairs should have a clear understanding of how committee work fits into the goals of the Chancellor and her leadership team and committee structure should work well at informing and guiding policy and practice. He

asked Trustees to let him, or Chancellor Brown know if they ever feel that they are not receiving the right information for thoughtful analysis and decision making and maintain open communication channels. He shared that the executive committee could handle issues outside of normal meetings but should be used sparingly. He noted that when the executive committee does act, it must make a full disclosure of the actions it has taken to the rest of the board. He noted that members should understand their role and the board's role with other important constituencies, such as the administration and the faculty and that the board should have realistic expectations of its ability to impact the institution or system over a period. He also mentioned that Trustees should also be focused on a shared strategy and implementation that moves the institution in a clear direction.

Discussion (Feedback/Future Recommendations) – Chancellor and Board Only

The Trustees and Chancellor Brown discussed the feedback and future recommendations for Chancellor Brown and Western Carolina University.

Friday, November 5, 2021

Guests Present – Elizabeth Morgan, Scott Miller (via Zoom), Ashley Montgomery (via Zoom), Keith Storms, and Joe Walker were present for the Master Plan discussion.

Welcome

Chair Roberts called the meeting to order at 9:00 am and welcomed Trustees, Executive Council, and guests to the meeting. He mentioned that this is a public meeting and is also a Zoom meeting and members of the media may be present.

Funding WCU Presentation

Mr. Byers shared the WCU Funding presentation. Discussion ensued.

The “All-Funds Budget” will be proposed to Board of Trustees during the March 2022 BOT meeting for action.

Master Plan

Mike Byers, Elizabeth Morgan, Scott Miller, Ashley Montgomery, Keith Storms, and Joe Walker presented the Master Plan Update discussion. Mr. Storms provided information on the Master Plan Process, Plan Priorities, Plan Themes, Focus Areas, and Engagement Opportunities. The Master Plan Update will be proposed to Board of Trustees during the December 4-5, 2021 BOT meeting for action.

Tuition and Fees

Mr. Mike Byers and Dr. Sam Miller shared information on the Tuition and Fees. Mr. Byers and Dr. Miller shared the process for Tuition and Fee proposals and increases for room rates, book rental charge, and mandatory health fee. Dr. Miller provided a handout to the board and discussed the 2021-2022 Tuition and Fees applicable to all regular full-time Undergraduate students. Discussion followed on the Tuition and Fees proposals. Discussion ensued on the proposed Athletics Fee. The proposal for the 2021-22 Tuition, Fees, and Rates will be brought forward to the Board of Trustees for review and action during the December 2-3 BOT meeting.

Board Q&A

Athletics Update

Mr. Gary provided an Athletics Update. He shared information on the WCU Athletics Strategic Planning. He shared the Mission Statement, Guiding Principles, and Strategic Initiatives. Mr. Gary shared the 2021-22 Annual Objectives. Discussion ensued on Athletics and the “F-I-G-H-T-O-N” initiatives.

Academic Programs

Provost Starnes shared an update on Academic Programs. He mentioned that he completed an enrollment review with each Dean of each college. He noted that there was a hold on new Academic Programs in 2020, due to COVID. He noted that Provost Council is reviewing and updating a new Academic Program review process. He shared that the CFO is now required to sign off on financials. He mentioned that there are three programs in the review stage: Bachelor of Science in Economic Analysis; Master of Science in Engineering Management; and Health and Human Sciences - Master’s entry program for Nurses for licensure. Provost Starnes highlighted that there would not be any new initiatives proposed this year. He provided information on faculty research projects.

IT Update

Mr. Fowler provided an IT Update. He mentioned the staffing issues in IT. He shared an update on new technology and networking across campus. He also shared an update on MyWCU portal.

Marketing and Communications

Dr. Wargo shared an update on Marketing and Communications. She extended a thanks to Sam Wallace and the videographers. Dr. Wargo shared information and feedback on communications, social media, and billboards. She mentioned marketing for Graduate distance education, Asheville area, and other Academic Programs. She shared that Marketing and Communications have been supporting recruitment efforts. Dr. Miller shared the Admissions packet with Trustees. Dr. Wargo also provided an update on staffing issues in Marketing and Communications. Discussion ensued on marketing and recruiting students.

BOT Meeting Dates for June 2022 and June 2023

Ms. Woods provided proposed dates for the June 2022 and June 2023 Board of Trustees meetings, due to the meeting date conflicts with SoCon annual meetings. Proposed and approved dates: June 9-10, 2022 and June 8-9, 2023.

CLOSED SESSION

Chair Roberts asked for a motion to go into closed session. Mrs. 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)(1), (2), and (3) as described on the November 05, 2021 Board of Trustees of Western Carolina University Closed Session Agenda.” The motion was seconded by Ms. Brown. The motion to go into Closed Session was unanimously approved by the board.

Chair Roberts asked for Chancellor Brown, Dr. Wargo, Dr. Miller, and Mr. Browning to remain for the first closed session item.

Chair Roberts asked for Chancellor Brown and Mr. Browning to remain for the second closed session item.

Chair Roberts asked for Chancellor Brown, Mr. Browning, Dr. Miller, and Dr. Smith (via Zoom) to remain for the final closed session item. Ms. Rebecca Hart was excused from the discussion of the closed session item.

Resumption Open Session

Chair Roberts asked for a motion to return to Open Session. Ms. Brown made the motion to return to Open Session. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Schlosser. The board unanimously approved to return to Open Session.

Student Conduct Appeal

Chair Roberts asked for a motion to approve the Student Conduct Appeal decision, as discussed in closed session. Mr. Robinson moved to ratify the finding and sanction in the student conduct case discussed in closed session, as specified by Dr. BaShaun Smith in the hearing outcome letter dated August 30, 2021. Mrs. Greeley seconded the motion.

The decision to ratify the finding and sanction in the student conduct case discussed in closed session, as specified by Dr. BaShaun Smith in the hearing outcome letter dated August 30, 2021 was approved by majority vote.

Chair Roberts asked Mr. Browning to please communicate the board's decision to the appellant as soon as practical.

November 30th – Day of Giving

Chair Roberts - Homework – BOT December meeting – be prepared in advance for CapDev and Master Plan and Budget Process. Tuition and Fees – to Mike.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Chair Roberts adjourned the Board of Trustees Retreat at 4:30 p.m.