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## Board of Trustees Minutes February 3-4, 2017

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## Meeting of the Winthrop University Board of Trustees

Members present: Kathy Bigham, Karl Folkens, Glenn McCall, Jane LaRoche, Janet Smalley, Tim Hopkins, Don Long, Randy Imler, Donna Glenn Holley, Julie Fowler, Tim Sease, Ashlye Wilkerson (via phone), and Dan Mahony (ex officio).

Members absent: Shane Duncan, Sue Rex, Scott Middleton

Representatives present: Beth West, Student Representative; John Bird, Faculty Representative

Representatives absent: None

Others present: David Thackham, Herald newspaper; various faculty and staff of Winthrop University

The Board of Trustees met on Friday, February 3 and Saturday, February 4, 2017 on the campus of Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC.

### **Public Comment**

There were no requests for public comment.

### **Call to Order**

Chair Folkens called the meeting to order at 1:14 p.m. He welcomed all present.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Don Long moved to accept the minutes as written from the meeting of October 1, 2016. Tim Hopkins seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the minutes as submitted. Randy Imler moved to accept the minutes from the meeting of November 4, 2016 with one change. The change requested was to substitute “unfunded pension liability” for “retirement benefit rates.” Tim Sease seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the minutes as amended.

## **Executive Session**

Don Long moved with a second from Tim Sease that the Board meet in executive session pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §30-4-70(a)(1) for the purposes of discussion of employment matters involving certain current and former employees and pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. §30-4-70(a)(2) for the purposes of discussion of negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements. The vote was unanimous. Kimberly Faust was invited to remain for the executive session in its entirety. John Bird and Beth West were invited to remain in the executive session for the discussion of personnel matters pertaining to a former employee of the university. Janet Smalley moved the Board end executive session, Julie Fowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote. No actions were taken in executive session.

## **Report of the Executive Committee and Chair of the Board**

Chair Folkens reported on the Executive Committee's meeting in December 2016. Per the duties of the Executive Committee as described in the bylaws, the Executive Committee met to perform an informal personnel evaluation of President Mahony. The general outcome of the evaluation was a rating of good.

## **Retreat Session # 1 FY 2017 & FY 2018 Budget Discussion**

Year to date comparison of actual costs versus budgeted costs does not show significant differences. Housing revenues are slightly up from expected totals.

In 2010, Winthrop's operating budget was \$103 million. In 2016, it is \$120 million. The growth in the budget is approximately 2.5% per year. Therefore, the increases in tuition have kept pace with the increases in the operating budget.

In 2011, Winthrop spent \$10 million on institutional scholarships. Today, spending on scholarships is \$18 million. The increase in amount of institutional scholarships mitigates the increases in tuition resulting in the net cost to students being lower than the tuition increases may indicate.

At this point in the year, FY2018's budget is expected to include approximately 41,612,560 in additional costs related to State mandated health and dental insurance increases, software subscription increases, faculty promotions, additional costs related to growing the number of online classes, and continuation of the competitive compensation initiative.

The Trustees discussed the costs and benefits of tuition discounting and its effects on net tuition and perception of high tuition rates.

## **Retreat Session # 2 Tuition Models**

President Mahony led the Board in a discussion about their goals related to tuition costs. One option is to lower costs for all students. This would have the result of cutting Winthrop's operating budget yet would not noticeably lower an individual student's costs. For example, a \$200,000 budget reduction would translate into a cut of \$1 per student per week. In order to make this a goal a viable option, Winthrop would have to experience high growth of tuition, retire current debt (scheduled to end in 2021) and not add any additional debt service, or consider a move to a Division III athletic conference.

A second option is to lower costs for a subsection of the student body while increasing costs for another subsection. This is a fairly common occurrence in universities. Often, high demand classes or high delivery cost classes have supplemental fees. Conversely, Winthrop could eliminate merit scholarships in order to focus on need based scholarships or lower costs for freshmen and increase costs for upper class students.

A third option is to address the perception of high costs. Currently, Winthrop has a reputation of having the highest tuition. However, when fees and other costs are included, Winthrop's total cost drops as compared to the other public universities in the State. The others have chosen to charge a lower basic tuition and supplement with a large number of optional fees. Winthrop includes most fees in the basic tuition.

A fourth option is to maintain predictability of tuition increases. During the last 20 years, tuition has fluctuated widely. However, in the last few years tuition increases have been held to under 3% increase per year. Stating a goal of keeping tuition increases at about 2.5% per year could assist families with long term planning.

### **Retreat Session # 3 Housing Options & Campus Facilities Update**

The results of the housing study completed by Danter consultants were reviewed. Based on current enrollment the study reported there is demand for an additional 300 beds on or adjacent to campus from the existing enrollment numbers without affecting campus occupancy rates. This is predicated on the new facilities having the amenities in the survey. Given existing numbers and enrollment projections, approximately 120 beds will be needed at the end of five years. This number can be absorbed within Winthrop's current housing capacity. Additionally, the proposed private student housing facility next to campus for 300 beds, if successful, will absorb the potential 300 student increase reported by the housing study. No additional on-campus student housing is required based on current enrollment and projections.

Current housing bonding capacity is \$11,000,000 (200 beds) when assuming current occupancy levels. If replacing current beds with new beds, the debt capacity will be significantly less.

Current or near term facilities projects include completion of the Withers roof, Thurman

roof at \$500,000 replacement, Dinkins porch roof replacement at \$150,000, and repair of Coliseum roof at \$1 million.

#### **Retreat Session # 4 Board Self-evaluation**

The Board discussed their roles and responsibilities as Trustees.

#### **Session # 5 Community Partnerships Update**

The bus survey was received positively by the Winthrop students. Most are willing to pay a small fee to ensure the bus lines pass through the campus.

Discussions are continuing with The Tuttle Company to explore use by Winthrop's exercise science program of the sports complex building in Knowledge Park.

Dean Jack DeRochi is leading Winthrop's engagement with the upcoming BMX World Championships scheduled for late July in Rock Hill. A number of initiatives are underway including a Winthrop Sponsored Cultural Event on Sports Tourism in Rock Hill held on July 24. The purpose was to raise awareness of opportunities with cycling tracks and BMX.

Other initiatives are: Winthrop's department of World Languages and Culture will help provide translation services for international visitors at BMX site; Orientation for domestic riders will take place at the Winthrop Coliseum; students in the Mass Communications department will be producing documentary film of 2017 World Championships; two internship opportunities have been identified: one in the area of sustainability; the other in marketing/social media; students in the Integrated Marketing department developed a promotion plan for the city with the objectives of creating awareness of the BMX event in the community and increasing community attendance at event; a strategy for creating a college competitive cycling team that serves to recruit new students and offer even more community engagement between our current students and city of Rock Hill is in development; and a reception for donors for the World Championship and city leaders will be held at President's House.

#### **Session # 6 Campus Updates**

Provost and Executive Vice President Debra Boyd joined the retreat on Saturday, February 4, 2017. She reported on a number of campus activities including the relocation of the artwork titled "Low Tides." The piece was moved from Tillman Building to Dacus Library to better showcase the work and help students understand the broader concept of diversity.

The Heritage committee meeting on a semi-regular basis and continues to discuss how to educate the campus about diversity and the history of the university. Through outreach efforts, more students now understand the scope of the Heritage Act.

The Board discussed the students' concern about the alma mater. The authors of the current alma mater were contacted to request they change the words to eliminate "Tillman" from the lyrics. They declined to make a change. A number of ideas were discussed that ranged from a survey of current students, a survey of alumni, and a contest for a new alma mater. The Board will take the matter under advisement.

### **Session # 7 Strategic Plan Update**

The Trustees reviewed the over 100 action updates to the Winthrop Strategic Plan.

Selected updates include:

- Substantially revised the BS in Special Education with Multi-categorical Teacher Certification
- Recruiting first cohort for EdS in Educational Leadership (SACSCOC approval pending)
- Identified "anchor" programs for transition to online platform (MBA, MSW, MEd-Special Education, MA-Arts Administration)
- Exploring options for unique sport management track within existing MBA degree
- Offering new Project-based Learning Endorsement for first time to cohort of teachers from Rock Hill Schools
- Developed 5 new minors offered for the first time in 2016 to support student persistence and interest: Educational Studies, Community-based Learning, Digital Information Design, Civic and Public Engagement, and Human Development and Family Studies
- Minors or certificates in Internal Audit, Music Technology, and Arts Management are in the curriculum pipeline
- New graduate certificate implemented in Middle Level Education
- Increased online and second-half-of-semester courses to allow students to stay on track for graduation
- Created new ACAD (Introduction to the Academy) course for transfer students
- Increased number of international recruitment-partner agents to 8 with a goal of 10-12 representing targeted markets abroad
- Launched virtual campus tour, "You Visit"
- Adding a completely online option to the MSW program
- Began operating "CreatorSpace" in Fall 2016, includes light lab, 3D printer, laser cutter, video/audio equipment, and whisper booth
- In process of converting the MEd in Literacy and MEd in Special Education Intervention to fully online programs
- In process of implementing contractual partnership with Deltak/Wylie to develop targeted online programs based on completed market analysis
- Enhanced WiFi in Richardson Ballroom to provide density coverage for large crowds



- Developing impact profiles to inform key donors about University priority needs for scholarships, facilities, technology and programs
- Hosted two events showcasing student undergraduate research program to encourage further investments in infrastructure
- Expanding the Winthrop Women's Coalition, a fee-based membership group for alumna interested in assisting with fundraising

President Mahony discussed the analysis he performed on the data related to retention of freshmen to sophomore status. Among the results he noted that high school GPA seems to be the best predictor of success at Winthrop while the scores of ACT and SAT do not predict likelihood of retention. Students who live on campus are retained at a slightly higher rate than those who live off-campus. Father's education level is a better predictor of retention success than mother's education level. Most surprising, losing or keeping a Life Scholarship is not a significant predictor of retention to the sophomore level. Of the students who transfer out of Winthrop, about 50% transfer to technical colleges. Contrary to common thought, only 14 students transferred to Clemson in the previous two years.

Next steps in the retention analysis will be to capture data that measures the level of engagement of students on campus and analyze how that impacts their likelihood to be retained.

### **Adjournment**

Jane LaRoche moved to adjourn the meeting with a second from Kathy Bigham. The vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Kimberly A. Faust, Secretary to the Board

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ON APRIL 7, 2017