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Meeting of the Winthrop University Board of Trustees

November 10, 2017

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

Members absent: Donna Glenn Holley, Scott Middleton

Representatives present: Tadean Page, Student Representative; Michael Lipscomb, Faculty Representative

Representatives absent: None

Others present: David Thackham, The Herald; members of Winthrop faculty and staff

The Board of Trustees met on Friday, November 10, 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 1:00 p.m. He welcomed all present.

Executive Session

Tim Sease made a motion with a second from Julie Fowler to move into executive session pursuant to South Carolina Ann. §30-4-70(a)(1) and (2) for the purposes of

discussion of employment matters involving certain current and former university employees and for a discussion of proposed contractual arrangements. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Julie Fowler moved with a second from Tim Hopkins to end the executive session without any actions and return to public session. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Approval of Minutes

Glenn McCall moved to accept the minutes from the meeting of August 23, 2017. Don Long seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor of the minutes as submitted.

Report from the Board Chair and Executive Committee

Mr. Folkens reported the Board has successfully concluded the arbitration procedure with Dr. Jamie Comstock Williamson. Mediation with Dr. Williamson was conducted in the fall of 2014 but did not result in a settlement. Her contract with the university stated that if mediation was unsuccessful, arbitration could be used to resolve a dispute.

Dr. Williamson chose to file an "Arbitration Demand" in which she named Winthrop University as the sole respondent regarding her June 26, 2014 termination of employment. In her Demand, Dr. Williamson sought a declaratory judgment that she was terminated "without cause" and damages for an alleged breach of contract.

Prior to the scheduled hearing, Dr. Williamson through her attorney notified the University that she was dismissing her claim and releasing the University, its current and former employees and trustees, the Foundation, and others with prejudice, which means she will not be able to bring that claim or any other claim she may have had in the future.

The dismissal and release end the legal process between Dr. Williamson and the University with finality. Mr. Folkens thanked Trustee Kathy Bigham, Provost Debra Boyd, and Chief of Staff Kimberly Faust in particular and the faculty and staff in general for their good work and support during the mediation and arbitration process.

Mr. Folkens also thanked the Winthrop Foundation and Real Estate Board for including him in their regular meetings as well as joining the Trustees for a social event last night and a fundraising presentation this morning. The increased interaction of Winthrop's Boards will result in a stronger base for the university.

As a precursor to the Committee on Finance report, Mr. Folkens shared a chart documenting Winthrop's unrestricted net position from 1988 through the present. He noted the peak of \$20,400,000 in 2008, a subsequent low point of \$10,641,000 in 2013, and back up to \$18,751,000 currently. The low point was partly due to Phelps residence hall being offline for repairs for two years as well as spending on other campus development projects. The return to a currently stronger net position is due to Interim President Boyd's budget freeze of 10% in 2015 and President Mahony's budgeting since then.

Mr. Folkens concluded his report by congratulating the University for its good showing in a state-wide review of travel expenses among public universities. Of the nine state institutions reviewed, Winthrop had the lowest mileage expense per FTE.

Report from the President

Dr. Mahony presented an update on the Winthrop strategic plan. He reviewed a number of metrics highlighting those goals that were quickly met including student faculty interaction, scholarship funding, and technology upgrades in classrooms.

Five strategic plan action groups have been formed to provide leadership and coordination in developing and monitoring future initiatives in the Winthrop Plan. Each is chaired by a vice president and includes faculty, staff and student representation. A total of 75 employees and students are involved in the groups. Building upon the work done by the original strategic plan working groups, these action groups will not only monitor progress but also suggest new ideas and modifications/new goals as the original goals are met or exceeded.

Committee on Student Life and Athletics

Chair Tim Sease reported on Athletic Director Ken Halpin's presentation on his department's strategic plan. Goals in the plan include Winthrop student-athletes fully develop as persons with a focus on academic achievement, personal wellness and professional success and are prepared to be active citizens after graduation; Winthrop Athletics is competitive in all inter-collegiate sports; Winthrop Athletics is fully integrated into the university culture; Winthrop Athletics is recognized as essential to the well-being and vitality of the community and region; Winthrop Athletics is a national model for innovative operations of an athletic department; and Winthrop Athletics creates an environment that promotes inclusive excellence.

Mr. Sease brought forth a motion from the Committee to endorse the candidates for the Winthrop Athletic Hall of Fame. They are: Vinevius Bortolatt formerly on the men's

tennis team; Saidi Isaac – formerly on the women’s soccer team; Lisa Kingmore formerly on the women’s softball team; Joe Hudak formerly the men’s baseball coach; and Vernon & Ann Terry who are donors and supporters of Winthrop Athletics.

Not needing a second as the motion was from a standing committee; Mr. Folkens called for a vote. It was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Mr. Sease concluded his report with a summary of the Vice President Frank Ardaiole’s presentation on the history of student discipline in universities.

Report from the Committee on Compensation

Chair Glenn McCall informed the Board on the work of the Diversity Council. It reports directly to the president and advises on diversity issues and serves the university’s populations by recommending institutional procedures and initiatives that help achieve the objectives as outlined in the Winthrop Plan. Recent diversity initiatives include the first Diversity Task Force meeting for the College of Visual and Performing Arts in November. The group discussed ways in which they can increase the number of diverse faculty in the college and serve as diversity advocates on all faculty searches within CVPA. The College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Education currently have similar committees within their colleges and the College of Business Administration (CBA) is set to form their own diversity task force in the near future.

President Mahony, Dr. Takita Sumter, and Zan Jones attended the Compact for Diverse Faculty conference in Atlanta, GA on October 26 – 28. The conference is the largest gathering of minority Ph.D. scholars in the country. To date, Dr. Mahony is the only university President who has attended the conference. While at the conference, he meets individually with attendees to review and give feedback on their curriculum vitae. Interim College of Arts and Sciences Dean Sumter followed up with all attendees who showed interest in Winthrop to thank them for considering Winthrop for future employment.

Human Resources is in the process of submitting the annual EEO report to the state. The SC Human Affairs Commission (SCHAC) requires that all state agencies and universities report their current workforce, new hires, and promotions each year. SCHAC determines compliance with affirmative action goals for black males, black females, and white females based on job availability as determined by the 2010 U.S. Census Data. Each state agency must meet an overall goal of 70% of the availability. Winthrop ranked number two in 2017 among the four-year colleges and universities in the state for meeting our goals.

Report from the Committee on Academic Quality

Chair Hopkins summarized recent activities of the Faculty Conference as reported by Dr. Lipscomb. Moving forward the Provost will appoint a task force to review tenure and promotion policies, as well as, guidelines for pre-tenure, tenure, post-tenure, and promotion review.

The Committee was provided with a brief history of the first-year experience at Winthrop University. The First Year Seminar was implemented in 1985 and has undergone a few changes over the years including recent creation of the Office of the First-Year Experience with Leah Kendall serving as Director. Mr. Hopkins praised the staff of the First-Year Experience for their exceptional work in producing the “You Belong” video for new freshmen as well as their outstanding efforts related to retention.

The Committee also received a status update of the Bachelor in Professional Studies program. They received information on demand and supply, enrollment changes in higher education, degree-completion opportunities, challenges facing the post-traditional learner, local demographics, and potential employer partners. Next steps include work groups to study and make recommendations on prior learning assessment and the Bachelor of Professional Studies degree. The program launch is expected in Fall 2019.

As the final item, Mr. Hopkins spoke of the Committee’s examination of the accountability data site maintained by the Office of Accreditation, Accountability, and Academic Services. Committee members were instructed on how to access data and perform quick analyses.

Report from the Committee on Finance

Chair Randy Imler began his report by reviewing the report from external auditor, Mr. Ben Kochenower. There were no material weaknesses, significant deficiencies or questioned costs thereby resulting in an unmodified opinion on the financial statements and the federal programs.

A report on the on 2017-2018 Budget showed fall semester revenues were less than originally projected but the State’s Appropriation allocation was more than projected plus Vacancy Management Savings to date are tracking ahead of the original amount. Consequently, adjustments were made to offset the shortfall.

The Committee reviewed the Governor’s Executive Budget Request with clarification that it included a request to increase the budget authorization level for “Other Funds” in the amount of \$9,000,000 as flow-through funds and was not a request for Winthrop to receive \$9,000,000 in additional funding.

Mr. Walter Hardin presented a PowerPoint to the Committee of a 10-year projection of

campus maintenance needs. The Committee reviewed the estimated costs of each of the Auxiliary, Education and General, and Athletics infrastructure and maintenance projects. The Committee was made aware of the imminent ending of the current food service contract and the development of a request for proposals (RFP) to advertise for a new contract.

Report from the Committee on Institutional Advancement and Development

Chair Janet Smalley reported on the information shared with the Committee regarding the changes to the Office of University Events. The Office has been restructured to better serve campus and external clients, play a more prominent role in the region, and generate more revenue. Previously the Office did not share revenue with other university offices nor did it support all campus offices, resulting in disjointed operation and multiple versions of contracts being used across campus.

The Committee was excited to see plans for the new Winthrop website. The new design, developed with the consultant, FMB, will be on a video loop and include “Apply Now” and “Choose Your Path” links, as well as a link to the “YouVisit” virtual tour. Along with developing templates for the new website design the project includes transitioning 40,000 website pages to a new content management system. Completion of the new design is expected in early summer 2018.

In the presentation by Mr. Evan Bohnen, the vice president of university advancement, the Committee heard about the formation of the Scholarship Task Force to address persistent issues with maximizing the value and impact of the Winthrop Scholarship program, plans to increase the alumni giving participation rate, and an update on the Winthrop Women’s Coalition (WWC) plans to bring more attention to leadership annual giving and to segment the engagement and solicitation strategies of alumni and friends. Annual membership in the WWC is \$2,400.

The Committee was informed of discussions with the Real Estate Foundation and Winthrop Foundation to consider shifting responsibility for receiving, managing, and processing gifts of real estate to the Winthrop Foundation.

The Foundation’s new endowment asset manager, Vanguard, is outperforming its benchmarks at a reduced investment fee from 1.00% to 0.26%. For FY17, endowment assets under management exceeded a \$47.5M stretch goal and currently stand at \$52.1M. The university and the Foundation Board have been working to lower the endowment management fee (EMF) from a historic high of 6.00% in 2009 to a target of 1.50%. In the current 2017 calendar year, the EMF is 2.25%.

Report from the Committee on Enrollment and Retention

Chair Julie Fowler told the Board of Dean Jack DeRochi's presentation of graduate enrollment initiatives including the Degree-Completion Program, Education Specialist in Educational Leadership and the partnership with Wiley and Sons who are delivering the suite of four 100% online programs. The Degree-Completion Program will offer a Bachelor of Professional Studies and will begin in Fall 2019. The Education Specialist in Educational Leadership degree will begin in Summer/Fall 2018. The online graduate programs will include the Master of Business Administration, Master of Social Work, Special Education-Intervention, and Arts Administration and will begin in Fall 2018.

Work is pending on new contracts for a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to process recruitment data for students for Fall 2019 and beyond. Financial Aid is also working on a new contact process for software to assist in awarding financial aid to students beginning in Fall 2019.

New enrollment goals for Fall 2018 include 1,100 freshmen students and 354 transfer students. Sub-goals were presented and include a 15% increase over last year's number of first-time freshmen from the Fort Mill/Rock Hill area; a 2% increase over last year's number of African-American/Latino American/Native American (AALANA), Asian and international student enrollment; a 2% increase over last year's number of out-of-state students; increase/maintain the average high school GPA, SAT and ACT; and increase the number of valedictorians and salutatorians. Correspondingly, the recruitment goals for the Fall 2018 cycle include increasing activity in primary South Carolina Markets; increasing outreach at targeted feeder and non-feeder high schools; continuing to actively recruit in the Charlotte/Mecklenburg County market; increasing outreach in Georgia, Florida, and continuing to utilize agents to assist with the recruitment of international students.

Report from the Chair of Faculty Conference

Dr. Michael Lipscomb began his report with acknowledgement of the six faculty members who were awarded tenure, the twelve who were promoted to the rank of Professor and the four promoted to the rank of Associate Professor at the end of the spring 2017 semester. Forty new faculty members (24 as tenure track) were hired and eight new administrative positions were filled to begin the fall 2017 semester.

A new task force will be created to review tenure and promotion policies, as well as, guidelines for pre-tenure, tenure, post-tenure, and promotion review. Additionally, there has been a request to create a standing committee to consider and make recommendations regarding the creation of an Honor Code.

Looking forward, faculty are involved in national searches for a Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, as well as, thirty new faculty positions.

Dr. Lipscomb concluded his report by recognizing the President and the Provost on their commitment to address the threat of faculty burnout related to workloads across the areas of teaching, service, and scholarship.

Report from the Chair of the Council of Student Leaders

Mr. Tadean Page updated the Board on recent activities of the Council. Currently, they are preparing for Homecoming and looking forward to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. Last year more than 350 students contributed 1,558 hours of service to the local community during the MLK, Jr. Day of Service.

Other activities the Council has been engaged in include working with students from Sullivan Middle School to prepare 1,000 care packages for local homeless shelters.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjournment

Chair Folkens adjourned the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

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