

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Alloway, Bolin, Bradford, Fech, Flowers, Prochaska-Cue, Rapkin, Zimmers

Absent: Hachtmann, LaCost, Ledder, Lindquist, Moeller

Date: Wednesday, April 16, 2008

Location: 201 Canfield Administration Building

Note: These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the Executive Committee meeting as corrected by those participating.

1.0 Call to Order

Bradford called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Perlman/SVCAA Couture

2.1 Strategic Plans – Diversity Section

SVCAA Couture was asked whether the strategic plans from academic units include diversity plans. She stated that the first year of the strategic planning process, we included a template that asked a number of questions about how colleges/departments define diversity and what activities they do to support diversity. She stated that the intention was to get general information from the colleges and departments about what they thought diversity is and how it should be supported. This information was passed onto the Chancellor's task force to develop a diversity plan. She pointed out that the administration has not asked for the diversity part of the strategic plans since then but this does not preclude them from asking for it again in the future.

Bradford asked if this means that the strategic plans do not include a plan for diversity. SVCAA Couture stated that, in the first year of the planning process, they only received answers to a series of questions about diversity and how it is supported, and no actual plans were developed. She noted that the questions were focused more on attitudes and practices relating to diversity. She stated that the administration thought that the information gathered might be helpful to the original diversity committee that was formed by the Chancellor.

Rapkin wondered if there were any good ideas in the strategic plans on diversity. He noted that there have been so many various efforts to work on diversity and there is concern that we are reinventing the wheel. Fech stated that the Committee was hoping that there might be some best practices listed in the strategic plans.

Flowers noted that the Senate's committee in 2004 headed by Past President Moeller listed some best practices for diversity and an effort was made to collect this data from other institutions. He noted that there might be some information in this report.

Chancellor Perlman stated that we did have a diversity plan and technically we probably still do. He noted that at one point it was a five year plan. He stated that the initiative he started was an effort to take the old diversity plan and bring it up to date. He noted that the effort was to create a plan with three priority steps that could be accomplished in a short period of time. He pointed out that the draft plan that was created did not fully fit the model he intended. He stated that SVCAA Couture is now handling the effort and will go back to focusing on a few best practices.

SVCAA Couture stated that the university is now working with a consortium of over 20 universities through the Advisory Board in Washington, DC. She reported that the work began when chief academic officers from these institutions met in DC and were asked what their biggest concerns are. She stated that as a result of this meeting the Advisory Board agreed to produce a national report on best practices for hiring faculty members to achieve diversity on campus. She noted that the report has just been finished and once published it will be available to everyone on campus. She stated that representatives from the Advisory Board will be coming to campus to discuss the report with deans and chairs.

SVCAA Couture stated that the colleges and chairs at UNL were asked what practices they use and this information was turned over to the Advisory Board. She noted that the information gathered here will be matched up with the findings in the report.

SVCAA Couture stated that Academic Affairs is going to look at best practices across universities and also on this campus. She stated that our recent survey of chairs and deans asked colleges to report what practices they have initiated and maintained that led to successful recruitment and retention of a diversity faculty.

Bradford asked if the report will be available before the meeting with the Advisory Board. SVCAA Couture stated that she is not sure but she has a call scheduled next week with the Advisory Board and will ask them at that time.

Bradford asked if the Senate can have a representative attend the meeting with the Advisory Board. SVCAA Couture stated that this would be possible.

Bradford stated that in terms of what will happen at the April 22nd Senate meeting he believes that the majority of the Senate will want to get past the Diversity Committee report quickly and let it go. He stated that he thinks it is clear that a dissenting report from a minority of members of a committee cannot represent the entire Senate. He stated that he hopes the administration will continue working with the Senate on the diversity plan. Rapkin pointed out that this fall there will more than likely be a ballot initiative that will put the issue back before us. He stated that it would be helpful to see the different work that has been done on diversity at UNL.

Chancellor Perlman noted that the Advisory Board's report could be very helpful to move the campus forward on this issue. He stated that he agrees about how to create a process to deal with faculty hiring practices and thinks faculty members should consider specific

items. He noted that it would be better to see if there are some best practices that we could adopt and suggested that the Senate might embrace the process.

Bradford stated that it doesn't make sense to create a new committee to develop a new plan. He pointed out that neither of the two committees that were formed developed a product that could go forward.

Bradford asked if the Chancellor heard what the status is of the affirmative action petition. Chancellor Perlman stated that he did not know but he knows that the petition failed to get enough signatures in Oklahoma.

2.2 Update on Status of Report from Advisory Board

See above.

2.3 University Exclusion of Press Because of Content of Articles

Bradford noted that the Governor started the practice of excluding selected members of the press from open meetings. He stated that he guesses that this is not legal and he hopes the university has some policy about this. He stated that he thinks strongly that as a university we should be dedicated to honest and open debate and should not be restricting reporters because we do not like things that they write. He pointed out that there should be a general policy for everyone at the university. He noted that Coach Pelini recently restricted the Daily Nebraskan from attending a meeting with the press. Alloway agreed and stated that either all of the press is invited to a meeting or not.

Chancellor Perlman noted that reporters have to have credentials in order to have access to Athletics. He stated that he is not sure about the law in regards to the exclusion of the press member. He stated that he believes that in some cases the public reaction to incidents such as these can be a better cleanser of incorrect behavior than a university policy.

Bradford stated that if this is just a one time incident and doesn't become a trend then the incident can slide. Alloway pointed out that as a learning institution wouldn't it be best to sit down and talk to the person about the problem rather than just denying them access because you thought they wrote something that was incorrect.

2.4 Issues on the Horizon

Chancellor Perlman reminded the Committee that someone raised concerns at the March 5th meeting with the change in status in the Agricultural Research Division. He stated that he asked the Institute about this and received a long letter which essentially said that the faculty advisory committee in IANR was aware of the staff changes. He stated that the change was a product of a review and a change in title and this change will be put into effect for a trial period of a year. He noted that he checked further and it seems that there was some faculty understanding about the change.

Chancellor Perlman noted that the last bill being considered by the legislature was the state fair grounds and it looks like the university will get the property. He noted that it

will now be up to us to do something with it and pointed out that a lot of people will be watching us. He reported that we will not actually get the property until 2010 but there is a lot of work that needs to be done between then and now. He wanted to emphasize that the money that the university pledges for the project will not come from tax dollars or tuition. The funding will in part come from money recovered through research grants and off budget revenue that we have collected. He noted that there may be some tinkering of the university's property at 84th and Havelock Avenue although there is some angst about the research farm located at this site. He stated that he understands the concerns and he will work through them with the faculty. He pointed out that IANR stands to benefit as much from the Innovation Campus as City Campus will because many of the private sector businesses will probably be agriculturally related. He stated that the purchase of the property will not add to our budget woes.

Bradford noted that the race track people are saying that they have the facility until 2014. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that the legislature did not speak to racing at the fair grounds. He stated that the horse people have been very supportive of the Innovation Campus and we have been supportive of them keeping racing in Lincoln. He stated that horse racing will probably move out to 84th and Havelock but they will need some time to build another racetrack. He noted that the racetrack people want to get out of the state fair grounds as quickly as possible. He stated that with the help of the racetrack people there may be a way to phase in the Innovation Campus so that the racetrack and facilities around it are isolated from the first building phase.

Alloway stated that one of the things he hears from people is the assumption that the university already has a lot of land so why do we need more. Chancellor Perlman stated that the only land that is suitable for attracting private sector businesses is the state fair ground. He noted that if people drive around campus they can see land but there isn't any place where a cluster of buildings can be placed. He stated that if we are trying to preserve the future we have little land to use when we are trying to compete with research. He stated that everyone has advised him that having some recreational fields on campus is necessary to help create community life for the students. The northern slope of east campus is all flood plain. He stated that the Governor suggested land around Oak Lake and the Mayor's people looked at this but again it is all flood plain and the part that isn't is covered land fill.

Fech noted that in other parts of the state he gets asked what the university is doing. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that the senators of the legislature looked at the situation very clearly and 44 of them agreed with the project.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Report on the Deans and Directors Meeting

Bradford reported that the legislature passed \$20 million for a new student information system. \$14 million will go to the university and the rest will go to the community colleges.

He stated that the Chancellor reported that because of additional enrollment and revenue the campus' budget will be in good shape next year.

Bradford stated that at the meeting Dean Cerveny reported that enrollment figures for next year show that preliminary deposits are slightly ahead of last year but we are slightly down in the percentage of people being admitted although this is not a huge difference. Dean Cerveny is reasonably sure that we will have an actual freshmen enrollment over 4,000 but it will depend on what happens this month. We are slightly down in the number of African American students enrolling but slightly up for other minority groups but the overall amount of minority students is the same as last year. Bradford reported that the enrollment gain is going to be larger this year because the senior class that graduated is one of the smallest we have ever had.

Bradford stated that housing is going to have an overload again in the beginning of the semester but it is the same for all of the Big 12 schools. He noted that plans are to build an apartment style dorm at 17th and R Street.

Bradford reported that we are just about at the point where the number of graduating high school seniors is going to start decreasing. The same is true for all of the neighboring states except Colorado. He noted that South Dakota dropped by 22%.

Bradford stated that it was reported that there is a Board of Regents policy that administrative officers of the university cannot contribute to any Regents election. This includes donating money or putting up yard signs.

Bradford reported that the Infinity credit card program was discussed. This is an alumni association credit card and there was discussion on expanding the card to create a rewards program. Chancellor Perlman mentioned trying to tie the rewards program into having lunch with a faculty member.

Bradford stated that the Advisory Board came out with their suggestions on computing and the Computational Services and Facilities Committee also has suggestions. It is now time to have conversations about having a Chief Information Officer and computing efforts. Flowers pointed out that he will be the chair of the CSFC next year. He noted that the issues that the Committee is dealing with are the same ones that are in the best practices report. He stated that he is very optimistic that things will move forward. Bradford pointed out that the issue of centralized versus individualized computing is huge and there will be strong opinions expressed on the subject.

3.2 Wellness Committee

Bolin gave a progress report on the Wellness Committee. She stated that the Committee completed a proposal which has been presented to the Chancellor. Alloway asked how many people signed up to take advantage of the free membership at the recreation center. Bolin stated that she is not sure of the figures but she thinks a good number of people took advantage of it.

4.0 Approval of 4/9/06 Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes as amended.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Diversity Committee Motion

The Committee worked on revising a draft substitute motion.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Question Concerning Health Care Reimbursement

Bradford stated that he received an email message from a faculty member about losing money in the health care reimbursement account if it is not all used by the deadline. The problem is that for orthodontic care the university pays as the procedure goes along. Because of this the person lost \$1400 because the full prepayment could not be repaid from the reimbursement account in the year.

Bradford stated that another point that was raised is the IRS guidelines now allow people to carry this money over. Prochaska-Cue stated that it depends on what the employer plan states. There is a three month option allowed but the employer must agree to it. Bradford stated that he will raise this with Keith Dietze, Director of University Wide Benefits. He stated that he spoke with Greg Clayton, Director of Benefits & Risk Management at UNL, and said that most people use their money within a year.

Prochaska-Cue stated that we don't have a health savings account that allows people to carry over amounts they do not use. Bradford stated that Varner Hall is dead set against having a program like this because it is coupled with a high-deductible insurance policy that they believe would siphon off of all of the healthy people.

Alloway stated that he is curious to know how much money is left over from the reimbursement accounts and who gets it.

Bradford stated that as chair of the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee next year he will make sure the Committee deals with some of these issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:21 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, April 23rd at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Rick Alloway, Secretary.