

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Baesu, Boudreau, Dawes, Kopocis, Lott, Minter, Paul, Shrader, Tschetter, Vakilzadian, Zuckerman

Absent: Bearnes, Eklund

Date: Tuesday, September 26, 2023

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 (*Kopocis*)

Kopocis called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Bennett/VC Boehm

2.1 Lapse of SAM registration (VC Wilhelm)

Chancellor Bennett noted that he asked VC Wilhelm to attend the meeting so he could explain what has occurred with our SAM registration and pointed out that this situation is very serious and needs to be fixed immediately in a way that is sustainable for us in future years. He pointed out that the possibility of a federal government shutdown exacerbates the situation because we could not receive federal funding for several weeks.

VC Wilhelm explained that we submitted our SAM renewal application six weeks ago, similar to what has been done in the past but there has been a change at the government level with a new vendor resulting in technical difficulties, not only for us, but for other universities as well. He reported that currently we are in a position where we cannot submit new proposals, and at this time we can't accept funding for new awards. He noted that we cannot draw any funds but in anticipation of a possible shutdown, we took proactive steps and drew some funds earlier so we would not need to draw funds again until the end of October. He asserted that this situation will be resolved.

VC Wilhelm stated that ORED is working to determine all the proposals that are currently pending that could be awarded during this lapse in our registration. He noted that there are some proposals that need to be submitted tomorrow afternoon and we are requesting an extension of the deadline date given our current situation. He reported that we have reached out to our congressional staff to help expedite us through the approval process. He noted that there are three steps in the approval process, and he stated that ORED has been working very hard on the third step to get it expedited. He stated that he anticipates that the last step in the process would be finished sometime tomorrow and then the process will take 2-3 days for completion.

Vakilzadian asked what the plan is during this interim period. VC Wilhelm stated that ORED has been communicating with faculty members who have or are planning to

submit applications very soon. VC Boehm suggested contacting the Associate Research Deans to help facilitate communication with these faculty members whose proposals are pending.

Minter asked how we can we make sure that this situation does not happen again and asked if there were safety valves in place to ensure that our registration is always current. VC Wilhelm stated that the automated process that is now being used by the government will be tested earlier and we will be more aggressive with our congressional staff asking them to make sure that getting our renewal is a priority. He noted that often in dealing with government agencies, extensions for proposal submissions are typically granted. Minter asked if Central Administration could exert some pressure too to get this resolved. VC Wilhelm stated that Central Administration has been engaged to help get this situation resolved as quickly as possible.

2.2 Has any information been provided by Central Administration yet on the actual numbers for UNL's budget reductions?

Chancellor Bennett consulted with the Executive Committee regarding UNL's budget situation and the need for budget reductions. He reported that he would be meeting with the Academic Planning Committee on October 4th to begin the process for identifying budget reductions.

2.3 Has the Big Ten Council of Presidents and Chancellors voted on whether to accept the President of the University of Nebraska as a member of the Council since he removed the Chancellor of UNL as overseeing UNL Athletics?

Chancellor Bennett reported that he is not aware that the Big Ten Council voted on the issue. Chief of Staff Davis stated that there has been considerable public discussion about the issue, but the understanding is that President Carter is representing UNL on the Big Ten Council. Kopocis noted that there is considerable interest about moving Athletics back to UNL.

Shrader noted that funds are being raised to do further renovations of the stadium and asked if any general funds are being used for this project. Chancellor Bennett stated that he is not aware of any general funds being used for the renovation.

2.4 What is the status of the Haskell Agricultural Lab regarding the budget cuts?

VC Boehm noted that in 2017-2018 Haskell Laboratory was put on the reduction list which caused a great deal of media attention, and in the end the Laboratory came out stronger and was not put on the budget reduction list during the 2020-21 and 2021-22 budget reduction process. He stated that if anyone has more concerns about Haskell Labs, they should give him a phone call.

2.5 Is it possible to have green-card sponsorship for non-tenure track Extension Educators?

VC Chancellor Boehm reported that he has asked staff in the General Counsel office to review this request and they will report back to him about whether this is possible.

3.0 Approval of September 19, 2023 Minutes

Kopocis asked if there were any revisions to the minutes. Hearing none she asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Lott moved to approve the minutes, motion seconded by Vakilzadian and approved by the Executive Committee.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Finalizing Legislative Engagement Guidelines

Kopocis reported that she has not heard back from AVC Walker yet about the guidelines, but she did hear from Director of Government Jessica Herrmann who reviewed the document and felt that it was well written and accurate.

4.2 Update on Professional Code of Conduct

Minter reported that AVC Walker sent the draft document to General Counsel and the document was considered fine, but the need for a friendly amendment was proposed. General Counsel noted a statement early in the document says that the Code applies to “Academic Personnel on or off campus, only when they are engaged in work for the university or explicitly identify themselves as a member of the campus community acting in some official capacity. This Code does not apply to the private lives of Academic Personnel except (as in the case of sexual misconduct) when the conduct was intentional and caused injury to a university employee or students.” This statement conflicts with an example that appears later in the document in which types of unacceptable conduct that may violate the faculty member’s responsibilities to the civic community are listed. The Code lists, as an example, a criminal conviction which “clearly demonstrates unfitness to continue as a member of faculty.” Minter stated that she would draft language to correct the discrepancy and share it with the Executive Committee.

5.0 New Business

No new business was discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, October 3, 2023, immediately following the Faculty Senate meeting. The meeting will be held in the Nebraska Union, Platte River Room. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Signe Boudreau, Secretary.