

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 16, 2008**

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Executive Committee Members Present: David Olson, Chair; Trustees Duane Benson, Ruth Grendahl, Clarence Hightower, David Paskach, Christine Rice and Scott Thiss

Executive Committee Members Absent: None

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees Executive Committee met on Wednesday, January 16, 2008, at Anoka-Ramsey Community College, 11200 Mississippi River Boulevard in Coon Rapids. Chair David Olson called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m.

**(1) Minutes of November 14, 2007**

As there were no corrections to the minutes, Chair David Olson declared that the minutes were accepted as written.

**(2) FY 2008 Second Quarter Board Operating Budget**

Trustee Scott Thiss, treasurer, reported on the second quarter of the Board of Trustees FY 2008 operating budget. At the end of the second quarter, \$81,652, or thirty percent of the budget, had been disbursed. Encumbered funds for the same period were \$107,269, leaving an available balance of \$78,992. For comparison purposes, at the end of the second quarter in FY 2007, the available balance was \$51,574.

**(3) Trustee Attendance at National Conferences**

Chair Olson commented that the reason this is on the agenda is that when a delegation of Board members is attending national conferences, he will ask one trustee to coordinate their attendance at the sessions so that all of them are covered.

Chair Olson explained that he asked staff to prepare some guidelines for him to use when approving per diems for trustees when they are engaged in meetings or other activities on behalf of the Board. A draft of the suggested guidelines was distributed. The guidelines make clearer which activities require prior approval. Chair Olson asked the members to review it and forward any comments to him or Board Secretary Inge Chapin. The guidelines will be discussed at the next meeting of the Executive Committee. Trustee David Paskach, immediate past chair, expressed that the guidelines are a good idea.

**(4) Discuss March 18-19, 2008 Meetings**

Chair Olson reported that major policy decisions in March would be presidential appointments and the operating budgets. Chancellor McCormick explained that staff has begun planning for next year's work plan. Trustee Clarence Hightower commented that the Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee may need more time in March to consider the operating budgets including tuition and fees. He said that the numbers could change given the discussion in the committee meeting. Chancellor McCormick commented that the Board could change the recommendation if they wished to do so. Chair Olson commented that there would have to be a very compelling reason to change the Chancellor's recommendation.

## **(5) Other**

### **Chair's Informal Meetings with Presidents**

Chair Olson reported on the informal meetings that he had with presidents in conjunction with the Chamber's Regional Policy meetings that were held last fall, number one is that there is tremendous respect for the Chancellor and the work he has done for the system. The presidents would appreciate a little more access to the Board to discuss policy issues for their respective groups of two-year and four-year institutions. Some presidents feel that the bonding process ought to reward innovation a little more. Attendance at Board meetings for some is a huge commitment especially considering the driving time and overnight stays. Some presidents asked if the Board books could be distributed with a little less paper. There is huge support for customized training. Presidents need more flexibility in dealing with the faculty. There was a lot of support from presidents for merit pay. Spending on technology is strategic and important for our campuses.

As a follow-up to these, Chair Olson commented that Treasurer Thiss has talked with Vice Chancellor Ken Niemi about the possibility of video streaming. Treasurer Thiss called on Vice Chancellor Niemi who reported that the estimated costs he received from various vendors were for sophisticated technological equipment and they exceeded his expectations. He has asked the vendors for alternative proposals

Chair Olson also inquired about making the board meeting materials available on-line. Treasurer Thiss reported that he spoke with Board Secretary Chapin and that a work group has been convened to take on this task. Treasurer Thiss called on Board Secretary Chapin who reported that the group has met once to evaluate what is currently in place as well as to determine software and training needs. She reported that two committees, the Audit and Finance, Facilities and Technology, already post their meeting materials on their division Web sites. Chair Olson said that the Board members will still receive a packet of meeting materials, but once the packet is online the presidents and any others will be able to access specific committee meeting materials rather than the whole packet.

Chair Olson noted that another recommendation was to update the bonding process. Trustee Hightower and the Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee have already begun reviewing it.

Chair Olson commented that another idea that has not been discussed, but which he supported, was to have the three leaders of the Leadership Council address the Executive Committee once a quarter. Chair Olson said he had no concerns about which presidents addressed the Executive Committee as long as it was in a five-minute report from time to time. Chancellor McCormick commented that a four-year president could address Executive Committee one quarter, followed by a two-year president the following quarter.

### **Informal Evaluation of Meetings on a Campus**

Trustee Rice commented that it was a lot of work for both the campus and system staff to prepare for a Board meeting on a campus, but that it is extremely valuable to take the Board away from downtown St. Paul and to have the opportunity to meet on a campus. Chair Olson suggested that perhaps the Board could schedule meetings on a campus a couple of times a year. Chancellor McCormick noted the importance of balancing the

meetings between campuses in the Twin Cities and in greater Minnesota. It was suggested that perhaps the Board could have its retreat, combined with a meeting on a campus in greater Minnesota, and a regularly scheduled meeting on a campus in the metro area.

Upon query, President Pat Johns commented that the extra effort was worth the benefit of having the Board on campus. He agrees with the Chancellor about balancing meetings between urban and rural institutions.

Chair Olson directed staff to make recommendations for which campuses and dates depending on the schedule for next year's, FY 2009, meeting calendar. Trustee Paskach commented that he thought that the schedule for this meeting, one day at Wells Fargo Place and the second day on a campus, worked very well.

### **Revisions to Strategic Plan**

Trustee Rice reported that the Advancement Committee had a discussion on the revisions to the Strategic Plan. The revisions related to clarifying redundant language and better aligning the strategic plans with the Board's goals. She explained that some of the members recommended that Goal 3.2, Supporting Regional Vitality, be kept in the document. Also, Strategic Direction 4: Innovate to Meet Current and Future Educational Needs Efficiently, was put under measurement. Trustee Rice recommended that 3.2 be put back into the document. Following a discussion, Chair Olson requested that Trustee Rice continue to work on the revisions and present them for approval at the March meeting.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:13 p.m.