

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
July 22, 2009**

Executive Committee Members Present: David Olson, Chair, Duane Benson, Ruth Grendahl, David Paskach, Thomas Renier, Christine Rice and Scott Thiss

Executive Committee Members Absent: None

Other Members Present: Cheryl Dickson, Jacob Englund and James Van Houten

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees Executive Committee met at Wells Fargo Place, 30 7th Street E., 4th Floor, Board Room, Saint Paul, on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, at 2:30 p.m. Chair David Olson convened the meeting.

(1) Minutes of June 18, 2009, Meeting

The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting on June 18, 2009, were accepted as written.

(2) Review Meeting on September 8-9, 2009, and Retreat on October 20-21, 2009

Chair Olson referenced a document that lists each of the committees' work plans for FY 2010. Staff will track the agenda topics and provide an updated document to the Board as changes occur. Chair Olson requested staff to schedule an hour on the Luoma Leadership Academy during a future Board meeting. Trustee Thiss suggested having a discussion on tuition differential, and Vice Chancellor King explained that this discussion is scheduled to occur in November when the Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee will discuss strategies and the costs of narrowing per-credit tuition rate differentials. Trustee Benson suggested adding a discussion on creating an incentive for four-year graduation rates. The system currently tracks six-year graduation rates. He also was interested to know of changes that have occurred as a result of increased federal government grants and how they may provide additional incentives for programs such as the Power of You.

Chancellor McCormick noted the interest in paying instructors for results and not attendance. He continued that one way to attract more students in math and sciences and special education would be to give students a break in tuition if they agree to work in the public sector for five years. One concern is to what degree do we want middle class Minnesotans to pay more for higher education? Another is the cost of administering another financial aid program. Vice Chancellor King commented that 40 percent of the system's students will not see an increase this year because of support which may reveal that the middle class is very narrow. Chair Olson remarked that these are ideas that can be discussed at the retreat. He encouraged members to forward their suggestions for topics for the retreat agenda.

(3) Leadership Council Comments

President Davenport commented that budget planning over the next two years will be challenging. The coming year is a bonding year. Bargaining will be a serious issue. An area that many people have not thought about is increased enrollments.

Senior Vice Chancellor Baer summarized national conversations about the stimulus funds. Presidents around the country are concerned about what will happen when the stimulus money ends. An important topic for them is how to structure higher education for tighter times, while also facing challenges and opportunities with rising enrollments. Chair Olson commented that while the economy is not making life any easier, the system is helping students obtain skills and degrees. Chancellor McCormick noted that more students today are likely to start at two-year colleges. Can the system make the first two years more economical or even free? President Davenport commented that he sees more dual enrollment, which could provide an incentive to reducing the time it takes to earn a four year degree.

Trustee Benson proposed that the Board consider having a conversation that begins with an understanding of what it would take to run all of the institutions, including: how much money it would cost; where the money is coming from; and where the students are getting the money to pay for their education. The next conversation would be what the Board would like to see for results. Chancellor McCormick suggested that the Board may want to consider restructuring regions similar to the efforts underway in the Metropolitan area. Trustee Van Houten suggested adding operations to the agenda. For example, if a student is going to two campuses, is there any reason why one campus cannot provide administrative functions for tuition, fees, etc., for both institutions as a way to make progress on consolidating functions. Chancellor McCormick explained that the Students First Initiative is addressing issues such as these. Vice Chancellor King noted that the Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee will receive a couple of reports on pilot projects for consolidating services.

Chair Olson commented that this is exactly the kind of conversation that he hopes to have at the retreat in October. Trustee Van Houten requested sufficient time on the agenda for ample discussion. Chair Olson responded that the agenda will include small group discussions that have worked well in the past.

(4) Other

Trustee Thiss reported that he has received favorable comments from people on the audio broadcasts of the meetings.

Trustee Van Houten commented that he received a call from a news station about the number of systemwide layoffs. He requested that the Board be provided with this information. Trustee Rice commented that she received an inquiry about the system office's downtown Saint Paul location and she inquired if there were plans to move? Vice Chancellor King replied that the current lease runs until 2015. She continued that the lease terms are very favorable, in fact the best in state government, and that she would recommend an extension as there is no interest in pursuing capital financing to build a building. Chair Olson said there is no need to defend the lease, adding that it was a very good deal. Many companies are renewing leases at this time.

Trustee Benson recommended that Trustees refrain from responding and direct inquiries such as these to the Office of the Chancellor.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.