

Chair's Report

Submitted by: John Smith

June 14, 2022

Hi everyone,

Last month I told you there were two things of particular importance taking place. One, the ongoing presidential search and two, the athletic director search. I am happy that the athletic director search has been completed. Not only that it has been completed, but more so in the person we have selected to be our athletic director. I will tell you I support that decision 100%. I am thrilled that Josh will be with us in our June meeting.

Presidential Search: The Listening Tour is almost wrapped up. We have conducted 16 sessions with various groups of stakeholders. We have one more, with community business leaders, next Tuesday which will complete that portion of the search. I am happy to report the sessions for staff were both well attended and highly engaged. Numerous trustees commented to me on the keen insight and recommendations that came from the floor during those sessions. We are now in the process of drafting the position statement that will be used in publicity and advertising for the position. Our search firm, WittKieffer, has or will soon begin, reaching out to potential candidates they feel would be outstanding candidates for our specific position. As they have reported to the search committee, the best candidates likely are not ones who will respond to advertising but ones who are sought out. Personally, I am excited to be at the stage of the search that names will start to be generated. I anticipate a strong pool for several reasons. We are in a much better place than we were for our last presidential search. The SACS accreditation study is behind us. Our financial situation is much more stable. We have established new bars in research funding solidifying our status as a Research 1 institution. Our former president left to accept a position at one of the leading institutions of public higher education in the nation. Had Neeli left for a more parallel position somewhere, the message would be much different. One thing we have viewed as a negative may actually prove to be a positive for the search. We talk about the high number of interims we have. The opportunity to shape a significant portion of the senior leadership team will be attractive to potential candidates. I will keep you as informed as possible as we move through the process.

Athletic Director Search: I am excited not only to have the athletic director search behind us, but in the results. I believe Josh Heird will be an outstanding athletic director and will soon have a national level of recognition of being so. I was part of the larger search committee group but not of the smaller group that made the final selection. I will say the process Lori implemented was much more open and transparent than similar searches I am familiar with on other campuses. The listening tours that were conducted were the only ones of their kind I have ever known of for an athletic director position. Typically, AD searches are conducted by the president and small group of advisors and done very confidentially. I am thankful for our process and especially for the results of this search. When I look at what has taken place in Athletics since Josh became the interim director, I can be nothing other than hugely impressed. The negotiations with Chris Mack, the narrative around football, the success of so many programs like women's basketball and volleyball, the commitment to diversity and inclusion, the hiring of Kenny Payne, all are things that healthy and healing for our university and weave through much of our culture university wide.

Budget: We have discussed the proposed budget in depth on the listserve. Naturally I fully support the actions proposed within it moving our minimum starting salary to \$14.74 then soon to \$15.00 per hour and the 2.5% COLA adjustment. Like everyone else, I know the 2.5% is not keeping up with the escalating inflation our entire nation is dealing with but it is more than originally thought could be provided and represents a lot of work and effort to make as much of an increase as possible for our staff and faculty. The combination of the two actions are highly significant and move us forward a great deal at a single time. Board of Trustees committees meet June 23 when the Finance Committee will hopefully approve the budget and move it forward to the full Board of Trustees at our annual meeting on July 14.

Meetings Attended:

Wednesday, May 11, President Search Tour, 8:00 – 9:00, Noon – 2:00

Friday, May 13, Budget Meeting, Dan Durbin, 10:00 – 10:30

Tuesday, May 17, CR Staff Meeting, 1:00

Thursday, May 19, Tuition and Fees, 9:00

Thursday, May 19, Board of Trustees, 9:00, Jefferson Room

Thursday, May 19, SA Assessment Committee, 3:00

Monday, May 23, Covid Planning Committee, 4:00

Tuesday, May 24, CR Staff Meeting, 1:00

Tuesday, May 24, Orientation Training Session, 2:00

Tuesday, May 24, Staff Senate EC, 3:00

Wednesday, May 25, Board of Trustees, 9:00, 429 W Muhammad Ali Blvd

Thursday, May 26, Lori Gonzalez, 10:45

Thursday, May 26, Board of Trustees, 1:00

Monday, May 30, Workday Implementation, 9:00

Tuesday, May 31, CR Staff Meeting, 1:00

Thursday, June 2, Student Affairs Social Media, 10:00

Thursday, June 2, Presidential Search Committee, Noon, Jefferson Room

Thursday, June 2, SFL Meeting, 2:00, Teams

Monday, June 6, Workday Implementation, 9:00

Monday, June 6, Orientation, 2:45

Monday, June 6, Covid Planning Committee, 4:00

Tuesday, June 7, Board of Trustees, ULAA Joint Meeting 9:00 AM

Thursday, June 9, Orientation, 2:45

Monday, June 13, Mark Watkins, 11:00