

NOTES
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
RETREAT
PENSACOLA, FLORIDA
JANUARY 18-19, 2011

The Chair, Ava L. Parker, convened the Board Retreat, held at the Hilton Garden Inn, Pensacola, at 1:15 p.m., January 18, 2011, with the following members present: Dean Colson, Vice Chair; Dick Beard; Ann Duncan; Charlie Edwards; Pat Frost; Mori Hosseini; Dr. Stan Marshall; Frank Martin; John Rood; Commissioner Eric Smith; Gus Stavros; John Temple; Norm Tripp and Dr. Rick Yost.

1. Introductions

Ms. Parker thanked the members for participating in this retreat. She said she had been thinking about the business of this Board and its responsibilities for planning and governing. She said she wanted to discuss how to move the State University System forward effectively.

Chancellor Brogan also welcomed members and said this was an opportunity to discuss broad policy issues and discuss the Board members' vision for the State University System.

Mr. Colson thanked Dr. Yost, as he had been the one who had suggested holding a retreat. He introduced the retreat facilitator, Dr. Paul Lingenfelter, the Executive Director of the State Higher Education Executive Officers organization. He said Dr. Lingenfelter had been the Executive Director of the MacArthur Foundation and had long focused on higher education accountability.

2. Discussion

Dr. Lingenfelter invited each member of the Board to describe themselves, their education, their experiences and how they came to be a member of the Board of Governors. He also asked that they address what they hoped to achieve in the retreat.

Many members said the Board would need to be prepared to advocate the needs of the universities in the current tough economy and how the universities would become great without leaving financially needy students behind. They also expressed the need for the Board to delineate and differentiate the distinct roles for each of the 11 institutions and to emphasize the role of the System, not as a loose coalition of universities.

Dr. Lingenfelter asked the group to talk about “pre-eminence,” what it means, what are appropriate measures, whose job it is to get there and who has to be at the table. Should there be a standard baseline for all the universities? Or should there be different standards for different programs?

The universities should demonstrate through their plans what additional revenues would mean. It was noted that external organizations make judgments about institutions based on certain metrics; universities have identified peer institutions and should measure their metrics against those of their peers to determine if they were improving.

Members also discussed the extent to which the Board of Governors should be involved with the universities’ strategic plans.

The new Higher Education Coordinating Council is working to establish a vision across all education sectors, rather than “every man for himself.”

The Board’s strategic goals are too broad and should be more narrowly defined. It is not possible to build excellence on every dimension all at once. Each university has now established baseline data. The Board should choose the metrics important to it for defining a high quality system, and which would inspire the public. Members discussed how to balance quality with providing access for Florida students.

3. Mid-point Summary

Asking universities to think strategically is relevant for this Board. The Board should ask the universities to present their plans for advancing programs. Board members should visit with Governor Scott, as well as with Senate President Mike Haridopolis and Speaker of the House Dean Cannon.

4. Meeting Formats; Logistics

Chair Parker said she had given some thought to comments made by Board members about the format for Board meetings to get the most from the time spent at meetings. Chancellor Brogan said he had heard that members wanted to spend more time discussing major policy issues. It was suggested that the Board develop a consent agenda for those items viewed as non-controversial to allow time for policy discussion. Another suggestion was that committees should meet at times other than the regular scheduled Board meetings. It was suggested that the committees might meet in advance of the meetings and items would be presented then as consent items.

One member said he preferred not touring around the state, and that meetings held in a central location were more efficient, others said that having meetings around

the state provides better access to the Board. It was also noted that having in-person meetings were good for the conduct of the Board's regular business.

It was also suggested that the Board should try more joint meetings with the State Board of Education. Chancellor Brogan said the new Higher Education Coordinating Council was now in place to facilitate cross-sector discussion.

Trustees should be invited to Board workshops where Board members were learning about topics in depth; likewise, Board members could attend meetings of the university boards of trustees.

5. Staffing

There was an expression of concern about staff-burnout. Members need to be cognizant about the use of staff and whether there were enough staff members to do what members wanted them to do.

6. Quality, Access and Growth

Dr. Lingenfelter said there had been studies about the public and private benefits of higher education, and the question of who pays and who should pay, the students or the state. He said the agreed "right amount" seems to be that students pay one-third of direct costs, and the state pays two-thirds of these costs. He said the question now is different, and now was how to get the most education they need to survive. In the twenty-first century, universities needed to pay attention to student financial aid and the sticker price.

The Board's Strategic Plan should articulate what the State University System would look like in 20 years. The Board should have a plan regarding the future development of educational sites.

The Board needs to have a plan for working with legislative and institutional initiatives. The Board needs to build an orderly scheme for growth based on enrollment and programs. The Board also needs to be able to show the Legislature, in the face of potential budget reductions, that the universities can solve many problems with the addition of few dollars. How the Board addresses growth in the System is a process for the Strategic Planning Committee. There is also an evolving relationship of the universities with the state colleges.

7. New Florida Initiative

Chancellor Brogan said the Board would continue to go to the Legislature for funding for the New Florida Initiative. The Board needed to be able to show results

from this funding.

The Board should seek proposals from the universities and demonstrate to the Legislature what the SUS will do with the money. In the Legislative Budget Request, the Board may show enrollment growth being requested. There should be some portion of flexibility in the expenditure of State funds.

8. Board of Governors Foundation

The Board discussed the role of our Foundation relative to its support of Board expenses and Board initiatives. Funding is primarily provided by a voluntary contribution from each University Foundation. There are also scholarship funds which pass through the Board Foundation such as The Helios Foundation, which has contributed money for scholarships for First Generation Scholars, and the Johnson Foundation, which has contributed scholarship funds for disabled students.

9. Summary

Dr. Lingenfelter said the Board's direction should be clear from its Strategic Plan and in its vision for the System. He suggested that the Board provide a list to Legislators as to what the universities can do for the state, and the value they provide to the state. He suggested that there might be imbalances in sustaining everything at the universities; there should be re-balancing in a strategic and incremental way. It would be outstanding if the Board could give the state a vision of what higher education could be in the state for the next 20 years, being fair to the institutions and helping them to reach their goals.

10. Adjournment

The Retreat concluded at 11:55 a.m., Wednesday, January 19, 2010.

Ava L. Parker, Chair

Mary-Anne Bestebreurtje,
Corporate Secretary