



MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM
Board of Regents

MINUTES

Montana Board of Regents Conference Call Meeting

March 21, 2008

Friday, March 21, 2008

The meeting convened at 11:10 AM.

Roll Call indicated a quorum present.

Regents Present: Lynn Hamilton, Chair, Todd Buchanan, Clayton Christian, Janine Pease, Kerra Melvin, Stephen Barrett Vice Chair, all by phone, and Sheila Stearns *ex officio* in person. Lila Taylor, Governor Schweitzer *ex officio* and Linda McCulloch *ex officio*, all excused.

Others Present by Phone: Present at the Commissioner's Office were Mick Robinson, Cathy Swift, Kevin McRae, Roger Barber, Arlene Parisot, Brad Eldredge, Alyssa Hudders, and Lynette Brown all of OCHE, and Dean Daniel Bingham of UM-Helena COT, and Jane Baker of MT Tech of The UM COT; President Gamble, Craig Roloff, Peter Fields, and Allen Yarnell, all of MSU-Bozeman and Tom Gibson of OCHE; Chancellor Sexton, John Cech and George White, all of MSU-Billings; Mary Ellen Baukol, Joe Schaffer and Judy Hay of MSU Great Falls COT; Interim Chancellor Rolf Groseth, Joe Callahan, and Greg Kegel all of MSU-Northern; Royce Engstrom, Bob Duringer, Teresa Branch, and Jim Foley all of The UM-Missoula; Chancellor Richard Storey and Karl Ulrich of The UM-Western; President Hicswa of Miles Community College; President Jim Cargill of Dawson Community College; Pat Wise and Evan Barrett of the Office of the Governor; and Victoria Clark and Patty Furniss of the BVCC work group.

ACTION

- a. Authorization to Lease Bobcat Stadium Playing Field to MSU Foundation for Installing an Artificial Playing Surface; MSU-Bozeman.

ITEM 138-2003-C0308

President Geoff Gamble explained that current legislation permits leasing for purposes of the construction of athletic facilities. Money is available to cover the \$900,000 by private and in-kind gifts. The Foundation has raised \$4M and is authorized to cover any expenses that are not covered by the in-kind donations.

The motion by Regent Barrett moved approval of Item 138-2003-C0308. Motion passed unanimously.

- b. Authority to Plan and Design New Sky Suites at Bobcat Stadium; MSU-Bozeman. **ITEM 138-2002-C0308** | Supporting Material **ITEM 138-2002-C0308**

President Gamble explained this is a request for authority to proceed with planning and design work only and to allow for expenditures to cover the costs associated with this portion of the plan.

Regent Barrett moved approval. Motion passed unanimously.

INFORMATION

Elevation of Position of Director of Two-Year Education to Deputy Commissioner for Two-Year Education; OCHE. Position Description.

Regent Hamilton reminded the group this was an information item only and that continuing discussions of two year education overall would continue at later meetings. The intent of this discussion was not to determine a particular person for this position.

Regent Barrett supported the concept of elevating 2-year education to a deputy commissioner level position. He recommended strengthening the job description, circulating it and acting swiftly. With the legislative session approaching and the interest of Postsecondary Education Policy and Budget (PEPB) Committee and the legislature, as well as the reality of the budget process beginning soon, Regent Barrett reiterated the need to have a decision made and a candidate in place by the June 12 PEPB meeting.

Commissioner Stearns noted that, in this case, she wanted to do an internal search because of the need to fill the position promptly after Dr. Parisot's retirement, due to the workload and expectations related to the position. Dr. Parisot's retirement is effective April 30.

Regent Pease wanted to know the other regents' viewpoints on the issue and cautioned making the decision too hastily. She suggested considering a state-wide search, rather than an internal search.

Commissioner Stearns made the following points:

- that extensive collaboration and discussion had already taken place;

- she has consulted with the 2-Year Council which supported a stronger role for this position;
- the individual in this position will work with the commissioner and regents on the recommendation regarding a new community college in Ravalli County; and
- the need for this individual to work closely with legislators, the Governor's Office, business and labor, etc...

Dean Jane Baker assured the group that following discussion, all 3 committees of the 2-Year Council gave a very strong recommendation to re-establish the Deputy Commissioner of 2-Year Education.

Dean Daniel Bingham supported the position and agreed with the need to act swiftly. He recommended adding more detail to the job description and recommended considering hiring an interim person for this during the search process.

Regent Christian supported the enhanced position as well as the need to fill the position expeditiously. He suggested the need for the position description to remain fluid, allowing for changes as it goes along.

Evan Barrett stated the governor supported the elevation of this position and that this is a direction for 2-year education the governor is highly interested in. He told the group the governor wants the regents to help shape this policy for 2-year education. Mr. Barrett cautioned that group that if the Board of Regents does not get this done soon, then other stakeholders will fill the perceived vacuum. He stressed the following points:

- strengthen the position description;
- engage in some process in order to (1) help protect the candidate and (2) secure a strong person to help lead the effort due to the resistance to change that must be anticipated;
- include the Governor's Office in the process;
- act promptly.

Campus comments:

President Stefani Hicswa expressed strong support for the position, stronger wording in the position description, as well as the need to fill the position promptly.

Provost Royce Engstrom supported the need for the position, but encouraged a national search be done on an accelerated timeframe.

President Gamble supported the concept for the position and stated the importance of keeping the needs of the Commissioner's Office in mind relative to this position. He stated this has been discussed with the board for many years and, therefore, recommended without undue delay.

Interim Chancellor Rolf Groseth supported the position and the need to act quickly. He recommended having someone in this position in 30 days. He expressed support for the position description as written because the position would naturally evolve as it goes along. This is of importance to all the campuses because of some 2-year programs on the 4-year campuses.

Dean John Cech supported the position and stated the level of discussion on this issue was very important.

Public comment and additional board discussion:

Victoria Clark, Bitterroot Valley Community College representative, expressed support for more attention to two-year education, including strengthening this position.

Regent Pease suggested including the tribal colleges in the search, rather than having an internal search only, consistent with the Board's policies and goals related to diversity.

Regent Barrett stated that given the restraints, the time to act is now. He reminded the group it could be revisited later if needed. If the legislature perceives a vacuum in this area, they may act without sufficient interaction with the Board of Regents. He strongly recommended making a preliminary decision and getting the position filled.

Regent Hamilton clarified that the policy issue before the Board of Regents is to determine if they support elevating the position to the level of Deputy Commissioner of 2-yr Education. The regents all agreed to the elevation of the position.

Regent Hamilton asked if there was agreement of the board for the commissioner to determine the process for filling this position. She said the role of establishing the process and making the appointment is the commissioner's decision.

Regent Buchanan did not agree with the urgency to fill this position and wanted more conversation and clarification on what the goal of 2-year education should be. Regents Pease and Melvin agreed with Regent Buchanan as to more clarity regarding the destination of 2-year education.

Regent Hamilton asked the commissioner if she had gotten the needed direction from the board. Commissioner Stearns responded she understood the board agrees with the importance of elevation of the position and that this position is critical for Montana. She heard concern from board members regarding the process. By policy, the board has delegated leadership to the commissioner, who can promote within the system. She stated that OCHE will look carefully at this and that elevating this position would align with the policy agenda for the entire country, which is to have a more educated population. She advised the regents she would take a few days to consider the comments provided and to meet with her senior staff, as well as others; she stated she

would get back to the board on her recommendations. The Regents agreed with this approach.

Public comment on items not on the agenda: None.

Meeting adjourned at 12:30

Posted on

Approved by the Board of Regents on

(Date)

(Date)

Sheila M. Stearns
Commissioner of Higher Education
and Secretary to the Board of Regents

Lynn Morrison-Hamilton
Board Chair