

**Board of Trustees  
Special Meeting**

**Tuesday, March 3, 2020  
2:30 – 4:30 p.m. (or until business concludes)  
DeBoer Room, Hannon Library**

**MINUTES**

**Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum**

Board Members:

Lyn Hennion	Present	Deborah Rosenberg	Present
Les AuCoin	Absent	Daniel Santos	Present
Jonathon Bullock	Absent	Linda Schott (ex officio)	Present
Sheila Clough	Present	Barry Thalden	Present
Shaun Franks	Present	Bill Thorndike	Present
Megan Davis Lightman	Present	Steve Vincent	Present
Dylann Loverro	Present	janelle wilson	Present
Paul Nicholson	Absent		

Chair Lyn Hennion called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m. in the DeBoer Room of the Hannon Library. Chair Hennion announced agenda items would be taken out of order to accommodate presenters' schedules. The Board Secretary recorded the roll and a quorum was verified.

Other attendees included: Greg Perkinson, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Dr. Susan Walsh, Provost; Jason Catz, General Counsel; Janet Fratella, Vice President for University Advancement; Dr. Suresh Appavoo, Senior Executive for Equity and Diversity; Jeanne Stallman, Associate Vice President for Government Relations and Outreach; Sabrina Prud'homme, Board Secretary; Tom Battaglia, Chief Information Officer; Alana Lardizabal, Human Resources; Ryan Schnobrich, Internal Auditor; Michael McKelvey and Cristina Sanz, both from University Advancement; Joe Mosley, Community and Media Relations; Steve Larvick, Cynthia Ferrendelli and Colleen Martin-Low, all from Business Services; Dr. Lee Ayers, Undergraduate Studies and HECC; Josh Lovern, Budget Office; Hugues Lecomte, Campus Recreation; John Stevenson, Information Technology; and Kathy Park, Office of the Board Secretary.

**Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**Action, Information and Discussion Items**

Public Health Preparation Update

Greg Perkinson said President Linda Schott established an Emergency Operations Center and an Emergency Operations Team and appointed him as the incident commander. The team was established to transition from a green stage to a yellow stage for planning and preparedness actions in preparation for the outbreak of the novel coronavirus. The intent is to protect students, faculty and staff.

Anna D'Amato, who leads the Emergency Operations Team, said she is in regular communication with Jackson County Public Health (JCPH). JCPH is a primary information source. There are no confirmed cases of coronavirus in Jackson County but people are being monitored, watched and/or tested. She participates in weekly phone calls with the CDC and has been appointed to the governor's state-wide task force.

Discussing SOU's Student Health and Wellness Center (SHWC), Ms. D'Amato said many staff members have been there for 15 years or so and have been through similar situations. The SHWC is reviewing its protocols and is discussing how the center will serve students and take care of staff. Dr. Lorraine McDonald is monitoring the news and informing Ms. D'Amato of clinical plans.

Mr. Perkinson said the team meets daily at 7:30 a.m. for status checks and to discuss next actions. They share information within the team and with executive leadership. Ms. D'Amato said the team is working with SOU's communications and marketing office to create place on SOU's website to maintain information; this will serve as a single place to direct employees, students, parents and community members.

Responding to Trustee Vincent's inquiry regarding a social media communication strategy, Mr. Perkinson said key members of the team include Joe Mosley, Public Information Officer, and Nicolle Aleman, Director of Marketing. They discuss the social media communication strategy, which will ensure outreach to parents. Tom Battaglia, Chief Information Officer, is looking at an opt-in capability for emergency alerts. Ms. D'Amato said she is also in communication with SOU's International Programs.

Ms. D'Amato stressed the importance of basing information on facts and said she relies on data from the experts at the CDC, the World Health Organization and JCPH. President Schott said the administration will brief the campus in an employee forum.

Trustee Loverro expressed concerns about the misconceptions that the virus is coming from Asian individuals and the importance of addressing those misconceptions to ensure Asian students feel supported. President Schott mentioned her meeting with members of the Asian Student Union, where she assured them that they are most welcome on campus and asked if they were experiencing profiling behaviors; the students are worried about that, about their own health, and about the health of friends and family in other countries.

#### Naming of Outdoor Space (Action)

Janet Fratella said the naming of physical spaces is a way to recognize contributions of philanthropic partners. Ms. Fratella said Peg Evans is an emeritus faculty in SOU's music program, her sister [Barbara] is an Ashland community member and the family has endowed a fund in the Oregon Community Foundation. They have also made significant contributions to the OLLI renovation project. Ms. Fratella proposed that the Campbell Center would retain its name but the inside complex area would be named the Evans Family Learning Commons. Ms. Fratella said the University Planning Board approved the naming recommendation and forwarded it to the president. Ms.

Fratella later said the grand opening would be on March 27 and the name would be announced then.

Trustee Rosenberg moved that the space would be named the Evans Family Learning Commons. Trustee Loverro seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### Legislative Update

Jeanne Stallman said the legislative session had been going well until it came close to a full stop when some of the legislators walked out. The universities were making substantial progress on their shared agenda: HB 4160 (create a work group to determine how underrepresented groups are served), SB 1521 (transfer credits and accelerated learning), HB 4055 (food and housing insecurity) and capital construction (which included \$3.5 million for the demolition of Cascades). Voting on the bills is postponed until the return of the legislators. Responding to Trustee Franks' later inquiry, Ms. Stallman said, if the legislators do not return, the bills on the table will be dead unless the governor calls a special session.

The seven universities are working on the consolidated funding request to submit to the HECC. The HECC would prepare its agency request budget for submission to the governor, who would then submit her request budget to the legislature.

Ms. Stallman then discussed the consolidated funding request. She has heard members of the governor's staff use the phrase "equity of place," which is ensuring access for Oregonians across the state regardless where they live. She and her colleagues are working to ensure a common understanding of how important that concept is and that equitable access means equitable funding for the universities. Discussions are being held in the work groups for the consolidated funding request and for the Student Success and Completion Model (SSCM). Ms. Stallman said she has had conversations with some members of the governor's staff regarding equitable funding, the HECC's support and subsequent media coverage of that. She hears strong support from the governor's office for solutions being brought forward that would strengthen and ensure regional access and be part of the governor's recommended budget.

### **President's Report**

Addressing news coverage of racially-motivated incidents on campus, which included a racial slur written on a resident assistant's door, swastikas and other vandalism, President Schott discussed SOU's response to ensure all students feel welcome and comfortable on campus. Dr. Suresh Appavoo and Angela Fleischer provided background information on the incidents. Ms. Fleischer said the incidents were investigated but the responsible parties were not identified and the incidents did not seem related. Regarding the incident involving the racial slur, she said an immediate response was made to the resident, including an offer of any needed accommodations, and the dean of students sent an email message to the residential community notifying them of the incident and providing a link for additional information. The bias response team met to discuss the various issues that had occurred in one of the residence halls. The team decided it would be appropriate to provide education to the community even though the responsible parties could not be identified and to have an intervention with the residents of that hall to discuss community standards, what it means to be in a

community and what happens when a community breaks down. It would also be an opportunity to ask if anyone had information about the incidents.

Dr. Appavoo said the bias response team also reviewed all the reports presented and came up with a sanction for a particular floor of the residence hall, which, predominantly, was composed of first-year students. The sanction was coordinated with the Multicultural Resource Center, Ms. Fleischer, and student leadership so it would be peer-to-peer learning rather than punitive. The intervention would be a first step and later steps could intensify when more facts were known. A student leader felt the first step was not intense enough and did not appropriately and directly address the slur; that student leader talked with other student leaders and they protested the second part of the intervention. At that point, Dr. Appavoo said he met with the students to ascertain what their particular grievances were. Following that, students began to air their experiences and wanted to meet with President Schott and other leaders on campus. He said the senior leadership has been meeting with various student leaders and groups on campus and have planned an open forum as an opportunity to hear from the campus community.

Responding to Trustee Vincent's comment, Dr. Appavoo mentioned various ways students can discuss issues in confidence. President Schott added that she has offered to meet with any student organizations, has met with the Black Student Union, and will meet with the Native American Student Union. She said the administration needs to hear what students have to say and have serious reflection about the institution and how to move forward and do better.

Responding to Trustee Franks' inquiry, Dr. Appavoo said SOU's response to these incidents will inform the institution on how to respond better when another incident occurs. Discussions are being held about how best to inform others of such incidents, without causing panic or leaving students feeling uninformed.

Responding to Trustee Wilson's request, Ms. Fleischer discussed the average response time, saying it varies given the severity of the reported incidents. In the case involving the racial slur, her office, the Housing Office, and Marvin Woodard contacted the victim the same day and the student was in Ms. Fleischer's office the next morning. Often people in this situation do not know what they want. Ms. Fleischer said that, although the entire campus was not notified, the residential community was. She said much of the hurt feelings and outrage, which are understandable, are coming from people who are not part of the residential community. President Schott added that Ms. Fleischer has reported aggregate data to the president's Executive Council.

Trustee Loverro said she believes students are concerned about the transparency of the process. It is a legitimate concern, but must be balanced with protecting the affected individual. She said it sounds like that discussion will be held and it would bring students into the conversation and make everyone feel like equal players. She said she was impressed with President Schott's email message addressing the topic.

Chair Hennion wrapped up the discussion by saying it is important to emphasize that this type of behavior will not be tolerated. How that is communicated must be done appropriately while conveying that this is not the kind of university that SOU is.

#### Higher Education Coordinating Commission Update

President Schott said the HECC completed biannual reports for the TRUs this year. Senior leadership corrected errors of fact and made a lot of improvements in SOU's draft report. The HECC delivered the report in its February 13 meeting and the HECC had a dinner the night before with trustees from all the universities. Trustees Franks, Bullock and Loverro attended the dinner and were fabulous representatives for the board and the university. President Schott said Trustee Loverro wowed the crowd and was the only student in attendance.

Trustee Loverro summarized the conversations held at her table, which included discussions on thoughts and concerns about the funding model. Trustee Franks said the main conversation at his table was how the HECC was perceived as an oversight authority, which was never the intent, and how the HECC and universities can become better allies; he was optimistic that people want to work together for higher education in Oregon. President Schott added that there was energy after the dinner around having additional such gatherings.

The day after the dinner was University Day in the capitol. President Schott said she spent the day with students and legislators and while Provost Susan Walsh and Vice President Greg Perkinson represented SOU at the HECC meeting when the report was delivered. President Schott said there was a fair presentation of the report. However, one commissioner wanted to probe more deeply into SOU's report. That commissioner's focus was on the downward trend in SOU's composite ratio. Mr. Perkinson and Mr. Pinkard had previously discussed the importance of context behind that number. In response to a question focused on enrollment, Mr. Perkinson presented commissioners with a handout showing SOU's enrollment, headcount and full-time equivalent (FTE) over the last 4-5 years; he explained that SOU's enrollment trend is not more negative than that of the other TRUs but is the opposite.

Mr. Perkinson said he then directed the discussion to viewing SOU's starting point when OUS dissolved and the board was formed. In 2014, SOU's ending fund balance was \$1.7 million. At the HECC meeting, he provided another handout showing the ending fund balance by year and what it would have been if SOU had received the \$2.3 million EOU has received each year. If SOU had received that additional funding, its ending fund balance would now be \$25.5 million. Chair Hennion said, when she mentioned that point to Chair Rives, he was surprised. She continues to not understand why the HECC keeps saying the other TRUs are doing fine, but SOU is not because of enrollment; it is obviously because of the inequitable funding.

Mr. Perkinson said, when the HECC Funding and Achievement Subcommittee was presented data in December regarding the mission differentiation funding categories, the reminder was given that the work group ran out of time 5-6 years ago and just carried forward that aspect of the previous funding model. He thought Commissioner

Duncan Wyse showed nonverbal agreement that the carryover was an issue. Mr. Perkinson said SOU's greatest opportunity is to impact the SSCM.

Trustee Clough added that it seems SOU's current situation is stemming from a poor funding model, a decision that happened many years ago; SOU is in a unique situation since the funding model currently is being assessed. In response to further questions from Trustee Clough, Mr. Perkinson responded that Jason Catz is SOU's primary contact and Britney Sharp is the student representative on the SSCM work group; they are doing a great job advocating for specific changes.

Mr. Catz provided an update on the work group's efforts. He said they have had only one meeting since the last board meeting. The meeting focused on two issues: (1) how certain student populations (e.g., veterans, bilingual educators and rural populations) are rewarded under the model and if those definitions are accurate; (2) incentive stacking (e.g., a 20 percent bonus for STEM degree completions). Mr. Catz detailed the incentive stacking, the policy reasons that justify it and arguments against it. The work group's next meeting is on March 13, where the discussion will be on affordability and mission differential, and the last meeting is on April 10. Mr. Catz said he thought there were people at the HECC and at the other institutions who are sympathetic to SOU's need for change but the other universities do not want to see themselves harmed by any change. It can be stressed that all the universities should continue to improve while also declaring that there are ways SOU is being starved, cannot be its best self, and cannot keep costs down for students the way it intends.

President Schott said SOU has been assembling data as evidence of SOU's efficiencies. Mr. Perkinson reviewed some of that data and compared SOU's statistics to the other universities. He said some of the universities are allies in the efforts to change the funding model, and Mr. Catz stressed that SOU has no desire to see any of the TRUs harmed by even \$1. President Schott said the university presidents can and should discuss what is needed from the state for the regional universities to meet their missions and serve citizens in their parts of the state.

Trustee Clough said the situation is a zero sum game and at some point being nice to each other is going to get thrown out the window. Responding to her question about whether that can be avoided, Mr. Catz said the point is always made at the work group meetings that the size of the pie needs to increase and there is a need to balance the benefit to one institution with the impact it may have on the others.

ASSOU President Britney Sharp said she and Mr. Catz have been making SOU's case at the table, have highlighted disparities in the funding model, and have argued for the ability of each institution to provide its own report at the conclusion of the work group.

Responding to Trustee Vincent's comment about acknowledging inequities in the funding model regarding disadvantaged populations and the resulting discrimination, Mr. Catz said it would be known by mid-May if this dialogue is starting to resonate because that is when recommendations will start to go forward. The work group should lead with the best policy for the state and what the state would look like if these institutions were not supported and did not exist. President Schott added that there is

considerable research showing outcomes-based funding models often contribute to disparity and they disadvantage the very students they intend to serve.

President Schott turned the discussion to the HECC's evaluation report for SOU and how *The Oregonian* used the report in a way that was unfortunate. She said Chair Hennion had talked with Chair Rives about the HECC doing no harm to the institutions and she does not feel the HECC lived up to that. Janet Fratella informed the board of ways SOU is getting out its good news stories to counteract the aforementioned article in *The Oregonian*.

President Schott mentioned new businesses and scholarly enterprises being created to help determine when an institution is in financial trouble. Wanting predictors is understandable but must be handled carefully so they do not become self-fulfilling prophecies. She said she wants to come back at a future meeting with recommendations on what metrics SOU and the board should be tracking along with more education to support informed discussions with the HECC on the use of ratios. SOU has been using a legacy metric: the ending fund balance as a percentage of operating revenue. Other peer institutions use that as well. The result is that the boards have a set of metrics to monitor their institutions' financial health, the HECC has its metrics, and entities external to the institutions are also creating metrics.

In closing, President Schott mentioned the upcoming open forum for employees to address various issues, including the work to obtain equitable funding.

#### Future Meetings

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the board will take place on Tuesday, April 21.

#### **Adjournment**

Chair Hennion adjourned the meeting at 4:33 p.m.

Date: April 21, 2020

Respectfully submitted by,



Sabrina Prud'homme

University Board Secretary