

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR THE OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGES

May 30, 2012 – 11:00 a.m.

Notice of this meeting was filed with the Secretary of State on May 9, 2012.

The Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges convened a meeting on Wednesday, May 30, 2012, in the President Suite, Third Floor – Student Center, Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City, 900 N. Portland, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Present: Jay L. Helm, Chairman; Andrew W. Lester, Vice Chairman; Calvin J. Anthony; Douglas E. Burns; Rick Davis; Joe D. Hall; L. Tucker Link; and Lou Watkins.

Absent: Jim Reese

Others present: Mr. Jason Ramsey, Chief Executive Officer; Mr. Burns Hargis, President, Oklahoma State University and OSU System; Dr. David Bryant, President, Oklahoma Panhandle State University; Dr. Jeff Hale, President, Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College; Dr. Tim Faltyn, President, Connors State College; and Ms. Shari Brecht, Administrative Associate.

At approximately 11:08 a.m., Board Chairman Helm called the meeting to order.

Chairman Helm said he would entertain a motion to approve the agenda for this meeting.

Approval of Agenda

ACTION: Regent Burns moved for approval of the agenda for this meeting, and Regent Davis seconded the motion.

Those voting aye: Regents Anthony, Burns, Davis, Helm, Lester, Link, and Watkins. No: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Hall and Reese.

(A copy of the agenda, as posted, is attached and considered a part of these minutes.)

Chairman Helm noted that the agenda provides for consideration regarding the methodology used for evaluation/assessment of institutional presidents under the governance of this Board.

He said former Regent Greg Massey started the Board on a different evaluation process, and it never actually got completed or changed. The consultant that Greg Massey brought in met with Regents.

Regent Burns clarified that the consultant met with the whole Board of Regents.

Chairman Helm said the change in process never occurred. This agenda item allows for the Board to voice further ideas or different ideas regarding the evaluation process.

Regent Burns said his recollection of why the change in process was advocated by Greg Massey was that he thought the current system didn't really provide the presidents much direction on how they might improve. The whole concept of evaluations was to help identify areas of deficiency and then give people the tools with which to improve. The process that he was advocating not only encompassed an evaluation system that would involve review by the Regents, but also a 360-degree review where people under the supervision of the president would provide review and the results be incorporated into the process. Regent Burns said he believed the Board initiated a pilot program of that 360-degree review process or at least said it was going to and received a lot of push back from the presidents. He asked the other Regents if his recollection of this is correct.

Regent Anthony said that is his recollection also. He said he knows several of the presidents expressed concern that they preferred a direct communication with the Board and believed having employees under their supervision ranking them to be inappropriate in some cases.

Regent Burns said the message he got was some of the presidents believed that type of process would undermine their authority. They felt it would damage their relationship with others. Regent Burns said he believed a consultant actually met with some of the A&M institutional presidents.

Other Regents indicated that is correct.

Regent Helm said the consultant met with Burns Hargis.

Regent Anthony said he believed the consultant may have also met with JoAnn Haysbert.

Regent Burns said the feedback he got from Burns Hargis regarding this was pretty good.

Regent Helm said Burns Hargis was used to such a process from his days with Bank of Oklahoma where a 360-degree review process is used. He noted that the evaluation form that is used by the Regents in the current process has questions that Board members don't really have information to evaluate. He said unless a situation is really bad, the Regents don't hear about it.

Regent Burns said the feedback he got from Burns Hargis that was good was that the one-on-one sessions with the consultant gave him some input with regard to how other effective leaders had improved their skills in certain areas. He believed Burns Hargis found that useful. Regent Burns

said the Board should ask President Hargis about that now that it is over--it was ongoing at that time.

Regent Link said the times he has seen a 360-degree evaluation process in action leads him to believe that one must have a consultant specialist doing the interview process on the way up; otherwise, it can disintegrate or deteriorate very quickly.

Regent Burns said with that backdrop he will say that he thought it was a good idea for the Board to initiate such a process, and he still does. He is not quite sure why it was totally abandoned, although he is sure it has something to do with push back being received from the presidents. Somehow this seems to have fallen through the cracks. He said the reason that it was determined to do it to begin with and the reason he still thinks it is a good idea is that the current presidential review process has not served the Board well in terms of helping presidents get better in areas where they are deficient. It has been viewed by a lot of the presidents that if they get anything less than a rating of Excellent, their feelings are hurt. Consequently, the current process has not served well to be a tool to help them get better. He said he believes there is often a tendency for the Regents, himself included, to give higher marks than he would if he were really being candid with a president about where there could be work done to improve. He said he tries to do that with remarks and personal comments to the presidents as opposed to something that goes in their file. Regent Burns said he believes the current review process has failed in terms of what it was really designed to accomplish in the beginning, which was for the Board to be a partner with the presidents and help them do better.

Regent Helm said there was a peer review process used for President Schmidly during his presidency at OSU, and from some of the review results it was obvious who was making some of the review comments, and that process got to be a pretty negative exercise and was discontinued. Then, Greg Massey initiated this other process that has been referenced but was not completed.

Regent Anthony said the comments made by Regent Burns have been right on. He said he remembers Executive Secretary Doug Wilson consulting with him as Board Chairman at the time and discussing this process. He said he believed Doug Wilson felt discouraged in that the people the Board was trying to help were opposed to the process. The primary reason to do it was to offer coaching opportunities for the presidents, and except for Burns Hargis who was used to such a process, the presidents indicated they didn't find it so useful. That was a problem. Regent Anthony agreed that it is very difficult to get accurate input from the community, staff, etc., in many cases with the current process. He said he doesn't know if the consultant the Board tapped to do this previously is the right person or not, but he believed it is important to find some way of getting a window into those feelings that would be helpful to the Regents.

Regent Lester said he completely agrees that with the current system the Regents do not get the most accurate information. The current review process is a matter of the perception of the Regents, which is based in large part on what the presidents tell the Board. It is something, but it is not very helpful. Regent Lester said he views this particular meeting each year as the second most important thing that the Regents ever do, the most important being the hiring of the institutional president. The Board just doesn't get great information until something negative happens. He said he has been on the Board for 4½ years and there have been 2-3 instances

where the Board has had, essentially, a disaster happening before the Board really received some good information about what was going on at the campus. The evaluation review didn't tell the Regents that; people told Regents that information. Regent Lester said he has no particular reason to think the Board needs to utilize the person previously consulted, whose name he cannot recall.

Mr. Ramsey identified the consultant being referenced is Michael McElhenie.

Regent Lester said he has nothing against this individual. He said he would say he is agnostic on whether it needs to be him or somebody else doing this type of thing; but he feels pretty strongly that the Board needs to go forward with the 360-degree review type of process.

Regent Burns expressed agreement. He said he has felt that this annual meeting as far as the written reviews did not do much. The comments made to the presidents sometimes does. But, what has been provided more than anything else was the opportunity that when things have gone badly, someone got fired and things moved on. That is how it really worked out. The difficulty with that was that other than Regents speaking to presidents privately, it wasn't providing the opportunity to turn a situation around when it was salvageable as a result of the Regents not knowing until it was too late. He said maybe the 360-degree review would have done that. It cannot be known for sure that it would have. Regent Burns expressed his belief that part of the problem with the A&M presidents not having a 360-degree review is that the presidents, themselves, sometimes develop a false sense of how they are doing.

Regent Anthony said it sounds like the Regents are all in favor of this type of 360-degree review, and he asked if it would be appropriate to ask each president today as the Board meets with them what their current feelings are about this type of review.

Regent Davis noted that the Board did that last year during this meeting. He said he recalls clearly one president saying he preferred not to have this type of activity out in the community. He mentioned the community and asking people in the community about him because, in his opinion, it planted a seed of doubt in the community about his leadership.

Regent Anthony said he does recall that now.

Regent Burns said that president was the most vocal of the presidents about changing to this process.

Regent Anthony said it becomes a question of how the Regents ascertain that needed information if there is not some input from the community and others.

Regent Davis said if the Regents decide as a Board that this is the approach that should be used, then it proceeds.

Regent Watkins said the Board has let a lot of people go since she has been a Regent. It seems to her that the current system may not be the prettiest, but it has worked pretty well.

Regent Burns said he does think the Board has done its job. However, that being said, the Board does a good job of hiring and a good job of firing, but the in-between part is the question. Where there is some opportunity is those instances where the Board might have been able to be successful in turning things around had it known about the situation earlier. Also, the Board might have fired some people earlier had some things been known earlier.

Regent Helm said this is a different era, and many young presidents have been through this type of process. He believed the Board would have been much more on top of certain institutional situations if it had been using a review system like the 360-degree review.

Regent Davis said Chairman Helm referenced that this is a new era. He said it made him think of Kent Smith. He noted that each time the two of them speak, Dr. Smith is asking for the Regents' view or for direction from the Board on things he should be doing. This 360-degree review may be a tool that allows the Board to give him more input about areas where he needs to work going forward. He believed there are other A&M institutional presidents who would be receptive to this also.

Regent Burns said he believes the concerns voiced by a president last year regarding community involvement in the evaluation process are legitimate concerns; but, he does believe there are ways for the Board to lessen the problem that he is worrying about. This needs to have the right public relations about why this is being done and should be viewed as a positive process.

Regent Helm said this process is an attempt to try to be helpful and to be sure that the Board of Regents is completely informed. He said it would not be fair to exclude one of the presidents from this process.

ACTION: Regent Lester moved to appoint a committee to establish a new review system and to report back to the full Board by the Regular Board Meeting in October. Regent Davis seconded the motion.

Those voting aye: Regents Anthony, Burns, Davis, Helm, Lester, Link, and Watkins. No: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Hall and Reese.

Chairman Helm said he would like to appoint to that committee Andy Lester, Rick Davis, and Tucker Link, who have less years on the Board under the current process and, therefore, a fresher view.

Regent Davis apologized to the Board that he is going to have to leave after the first presidential evaluation to attend a funeral in Tulsa. He said he did wish everyone to know why he will not be present this afternoon.

Executive Session

ACTION: At approximately 11:27 a.m., Regent Anthony moved that the Board convene in Executive Session for the stated purpose of considering evaluation/assessment and other information relevant to the employment of Oklahoma A&M institutional presidents. Regent Watkins seconded the motion.

Those voting aye: Regents Anthony, Burns, Davis, Helm, Lester, Link, and Watkins. No: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Hall and Reese.

(Regent Davis left the meeting at approximately 12:15 p.m., and Regent Hall joined the meeting just prior to the lunch recess.)

At approximately 12:30 p.m., the Board moved to New Conference 304, Third Floor – Student Center, OSU-Oklahoma City, for lunch; then, at approximately 1:10 p.m., the Board returned to the President Suite.

Open Session

ACTION: At approximately 5:15 p.m., Regent Burns moved that the Board reconvene in Open Session. Regent Link seconded the motion.

Those voting aye: Regents Anthony, Burns, Hall, Helm, Lester, Link, and Watkins. No: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Davis and Reese.

Adjournment

ACTION: At approximately 5:15 p.m., Regent Lester moved that the Board meeting be adjourned. Regent Burns seconded the motion.

Those voting aye: Regents Anthony, Burns, Hall, Helm, Lester, Link, and Watkins. No: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: Davis and Reese.

A G E N D A

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS FOR THE OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGES

May 30, 2012 -- 11:00 a.m.*

President Suite
Third Floor – Student Center
Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City
900 N. Portland
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma


Notice of this meeting was filed with the Secretary of State on May 9, 2012.

Business to be discussed:

- (1) Approval of Agenda.
- (2) Consider information and a possible recommendation concerning the methodology used for evaluation/assessment of institutional presidents under the governance of the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges.
- (3) Executive Session, if so approved by the required number of Board members present, for the purpose of considering evaluation/assessment and other information relevant to the employment of Oklahoma A&M institutional presidents. (Oklahoma Open Meeting Act §307B.1.)
- (4) Consider or take any action with reference to the matters contained in the immediately preceding item.

* The Board will continue meeting over lunch in New Conference 304, Third Floor – Student Center, OSU-OKC.

BOARD OF REGENTS FOR THE OKLAHOMA
AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGES



Jay L. Helm, Chairman

ATTEST:



Jason Ramsey, Chief Executive Officer

Certified correct minutes subject to the approval of the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges on June 15, 2012.



Shari Brecht, Administrative Associate