

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Minutes of the Retreat
July 7, 2011

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Illinois University convened at 8:30 A.M. at Horn Field Lodge, on the campus of Western Illinois University – Macomb. Trustee J. Michael Houston, Chair, presided.

The following trustees were present to answer roll call:

Trustee Jesse E. Andrews
Trustee Carolyn J. Ehlert Fuller
Trustee William L. Epperly
Trustee Donald W. “Bill” Griffin
Trustee J. Michael Houston
Trustee Steven L. Nelson

Also in attendance:

President Jack Thomas
Retreat Facilitator Jane Pierson
Administrative Assistant Kerry Lemaster
Interim Provost Kenneth Hawkinson
Vice President for Advancement and Public Services Brad Bainter
Vice President for Student Services Gary Biller
Interim Vice President for Administrative Services Julie DeWees
Vice President for Quad Cities, Planning and Technology Joe Rives

Opening Remarks

Chair Houston opened with remarks. This will be a new sort of day with a new president. We had come to get used to Al’s style and what he was doing, and effective July 1, we have a new president. It is really important that we give Jack the opportunity to show us what he can do and what he wants to do. It is a new day. We are not operating as we have for the last 10 years. We have new leadership. Our environment is different today than what we have been experiencing. Need to be very careful in terms of our approach, as does Jack. The Board needs to support what Jack is doing. This is an opportunity to reengage as a Board and make sure that progress continues. We will work very closely with him to make sure that happens.

President Thomas gave opening remarks. These are challenging times and we are ready to address key issues. I appreciate your confidence in me. I have worked with you before, but I am now working with you now in a new capacity. I am going to need your support. I believe in openness, fairness and consistency. I’ve come to love Western. I want to see this institution move to the next level. We will move forward. We will have to continue to implement new programs, new strategies, new initiatives. Who’s looking at where we want to go? At the end of the day, it is about looking at the big picture and how we want to move forward. I will bring some of those to you today. We will move forward. I believe in being open, and being fair, and practicing shared governance, as we’ve always done. Today is my seventh day as president. Thank you for being here and I look forward to the retreat.

Chair Houston added we need to keep in mind that Jack Thomas is the president. He was the provost, but we need to treat him differently now as president. Jack needs to focus on the big picture.

Trustee Ehlert Fuller commented on the article included (per request of Trustee Griffin) in the packets and how it relates to rankings and our mission.

Facilitator Jane Pierson talked about the agenda for the day.

Biggest Accomplishments in the last year (and to build on for next year):

- Hiring Jack Thomas - 50% change in Leadership Team
- Working through the selection process (kudos to Bill Epperly)
- Construction of Riverfront Campus, Groundbreaking of PAC, opening of Memorial Hall
- Student support for infrastructure changes
- Football team going to the playoffs
- Decommissioning of the Coal Plant
- 3rd River Conference in the Quad Cities in September (kudos to Bill Griffin)
- 1st engineering graduates
- Contract with engineering program and Materials Command at the Arsenal
- Hosted NACURH Conference (international participation)
- Got NCA Accreditation
- Moving of Quad Cities Graduate Center to the Moline Campus
- Assumption of WQPT
- Offering classes at Lake County (Chicago)

Transition

President Thomas has constructed a Presidential Initiatives plan. He said these are things I have to do as President in terms of the transition.

In first 100 days, I will be meeting with all the groups on campus. I will continue to work with all constituencies. I believe in shared governance. President Thomas talked about his practice of shared governance. Know what shared governance is, is key to being successful. I plan to invite each group to the house to have town hall meeting.

Dr. Thomas will continue to address enrollment. We are on pace to bring in the largest freshman class since 2007. From 2002 to 2011 we had a decline in enrollment and large graduating classes – it will take time to show overall enrollment increases. Accepted new students are up 17% and accepted transfers are up 8%. Housing contracts are up 11%. We are watching a drop in GPA and ACT scores. We need to put more in scholarships. We put small amounts in (ex. \$100), so what we're doing now is trying to give more funding for those high-ability students. The key is to recruit in the Honors College. We need to do more here. We need to do targeted enrollment. We need to increase that number at the top, which will increase ACT and GPA. Our goal is to increase those. There is a way to do that. We will work with Admissions, aggressive recruitment, through graduate studies (our enrollments are down). We need to do more recruitment with the graduate programs and honors college. We are working with Noel-Levitz. We need to be strategic and do all that is necessary. We need to look at the kind of students we are bringing in.

Trustee Nelson asked what the minimum ACT for the 500 students in the OAS program. President Thomas replied the minimum ACT is 18, but we had sliding grid system wherein GPA and ACT scores were balanced – higher GPA could mean lower ACT, etc. Trustee Nelson asked about full year programs for teachers who are working on master's degrees but teach in full year schools. Dr. Thomas discussed possibilities of a wintermester or a 2 or 3 week class for this type of audience.

Trustee Houston asked about cohorts for teachers, police officers, etc. President Thomas replied that we do have cohort educational programs at WIU.

Trustee Epperly asked about taking graduate courses online. He is aware of some that didn't come to WIU because they couldn't get graduate programs online. President Thomas is working on this and said we need to have the same rigor in online classes as in-person classes.

Trustee Epperly asked about OAS admits. Can we handle in the increase in students we predict? Dr. Thomas indicated we are prepared to handle the workload. There was discussion of the numbers in the OAS program as well as the admissions process. The admissions process is much shorter now and we are getting more students.

Trustee Houston asked about the shift in geography of students. What are we doing differently there? Can we duplicate it in other areas? President Thomas discussed how the director of admissions can work with our counselors in various locations. Trustee Nelson added the director needs to make sure we have constant and consistent contact with high school counselors. President Thomas agreed and said we need to work more with our feeder schools.

Dr. Thomas said the Western Advantage Scholarships are for the local 10 counties around McDonough Counties and is a new program. WIU has a recruitment day for local students at the University Residence. We want to increase the number of scholarships that we give.

In terms of finances, the state owes us over \$25M for FY2011. We have a process in place to curb spending, including all items beyond \$500 must be approved at the VP level. We still have to purchase essential items – to provide students with a quality and well-rounded education. If something is needed for the classroom, we get it. That is very important. We are able to meet payroll. Tuition revenue in August will be used when received for payroll. We want to make sure there are no layoffs and now furloughs. We do not want to demoralize our faculty or demoralize our staff. Our payroll is around \$10M per month. Julie DeWees has done a wonderful job. We have brought in, on a part time basis, Matt Bierman. Julie will continue to oversee that area. Western has practiced good, sound fiscal management and I will continue to make sure we practice good, sound fiscal management. We still set priorities and try to achieve them. Our main priority is to meet payroll. We are not having to do as other are, losing programs and tenured faculty, etc.

Trustee Ehlert Fuller asked about hiring and the president's position on hiring. President Thomas has asked individuals to hold on positions if possible. We have continued to hire, if we feel that position is essential. We look to the VPs to tell us they can hold on and move forward on filling – needing a justification to hire. We will operate in the same manner. After recommendation from VP, President will work with budget person on making the final decision.

In terms of campus relationships, Dr. Thomas wants to continue to have a good working relationship with entities on and off campus.

In terms of curriculum, Dr. Thomas will make sure we continue to have strong programs. We will continue to have external program reviews, recommendations, and follow up. This year is NCATE accreditation for education programs. Also have an engineering accreditation. We want to still work on program accreditation. This is very important. Trustee Nelson asked about NCA Accreditation. VP Joe Rives will talk about this later in the day during the VP sessions. Dr. Thomas would like to pursue a program in pharmacy. We will seek a Ph.D. in environmental science. We have held the proposal for that program due to cost but we will soon be able to move forward. We will also seek the Ph.D. in Law

Enforcement and Justice Administration. Those are cutting edge programs. Once we do that, we need to work on quality.

Dr. Thomas wants to enhance graduate studies and the First Year Experience (FYE). We want the honors program on the forefront of the institution. The Honors College should be a signature of the institution.

President Thomas will work with Dave Steelman and spend some days in Springfield. The President and Trustees discussed meeting with legislators and making connections.

The Board is welcome to identify individuals in terms of fundraising. Dr. Thomas would like to build a new relationship as president and will be in touch with the Board. He is open to suggestions. He wants to make sure the institution moves forward and is successful.

Trustee Andrews talked about his discussions with VP Bainter in terms of enrollment and recruitment – billboards, ads in movie theatres.

President Thomas talked about changes in the leadership team – Gary Biller, Ken Hawkinson, Julie DeWees, Kathy Neumann in Provost's area.

The Board and President discussed the roles of various governance and labor groups.

President Thomas discussed his plans in terms of facilities. The Board discussed parking fees and parking lots. There was further discussion about the entrance to campus and the work on the heating plant and a possible combined Beu Health and nursing center.

WIU has increased scholarship support by \$250,000 overall. There is also a look at increasing international students and agreements with international entities. We also will look toward increasing marketing for WIU overall and telling the WIU story.

Dr. Thomas will appoint a committee to look at the Strategic Plan. It may need to be updated or extended. He will also appoint a committee to look at the Master Plan. A Right Size committee will also be created. WIU already has a financial advisory team, headed by Julie DeWees and Dana Biernbaum and others. When things need to be funded, they look at how we find money for those things, as well as looking closely at the budget to make sure we can meet payroll and accommodate needs. This committee will continue.

Trustee Ehlert Fuller asked about issues related to growth and development of the Quad Cities Campus. There was discussion about how to move forward. She also asked about the committee on Strategic Plan. Dr. Thomas clarified that this will be to refine the plan.

Trustee Andrews asked about investing in things in which we can bring dollars back to campus. Maybe buy property and lease to business that would bring money back into WIU by way of rent, etc. The Board discussed the issues that an idea like this would bring up – zoning, business competition, etc. that are specific to Macomb.

The Board discussed the relationship between the Macomb and Quad Cities campuses.

Board and Presidential Expectations

What do we need from each other? – Expectations

What does the Board need from the President? (from the Board's perspective)

- Don't always have to contact me, but feel free to ask if I can be of help
- Will talk to President before making any moves in terms of partnerships, etc.
- Policy decisions (ex. Change of direction) – would appreciate being made aware
- Openness, Access to Answers
- Both working together
- Appreciate a degree of frankness
- Heads up on items that could be landmines
- Leadership – primary function
- Articulate a vision
- Act as the C.E.O.
- Good communication with both the Board and the campus (two-way street)
- Honest evaluation of what situations are
- Opportunity to get answers to Board questions (related to meetings, etc.)
- Steady communication
- Consistency
- Advocacy
- Be yourself
- Paint a vision for the University, what are the plans to get it done? (cost, timeline)
- Understanding the challenges specific to the job of President
- Incorporate your vision and initiatives in public presentations
- Showing what has been done on the vision and initiatives
- President needs to continue to meet with Board members in their communities during the summer

What does the President need from the Board?

- Support from the Board
- Advice and input
- Serve as a sounding board
- Available for discussion
- Keep President informed as Trustees hear things
- Open and honest
- Wants Board to continue to be able to ask questions
- Even if don't know the right questions, call and have dialog with President
- Feel free to contact President
- Many are similar to what Board expects from President

The Board discussed its contacts on and off campus and protocol for doing so.

What's going well on the Board?

- Board Members are prepared for meetings
- Diversity and background of Trustees
- Good camaraderie
- Take the time to listen to each other
- Good relationship between administration and Board
- Respect each other and respect the President and VPs (and their viewpoints, even if disagree)

What are some challenges?

- Working with new President (adapt to his style and personality, as with all changes)

- New leadership team
- New Board members (Trustee Griffin volunteered to assist)
- Review orientation processes
- Being away during the meetings (ex. wintering away)
- Relationship between the two campuses

Suggestion that President Thomas write out a literal plan regarding growth in the Quad Cities and how it relates to Two Campuses – One University.

Updates from Vice Presidents

Ken Hawkinson, Interim Provost:

Administration's Efforts to Raise Standards for Faculty

- Consistent Standards and Criteria – Reasonable Minimum Levels of Teaching and Research
- Faculty have met the standards
- 221 Faculty submitted applications last year for retention/tenure/promotion – no negative decisions
- Changes to the PAA Program – 171 Faculty earned last year

Summer Session:

- Was in decline. Jack Thomas pulled together a task force.
- Started marketing campaign to enhance the program, etc.
- Up 13% last year in SCH production, up 6% this year

Future of Academic Affairs (handout provided)

Questions:

- Trustee Ehlert Fuller asked about our niche programs. Are we maintaining those? Provost Hawkinson and President Thomas talked about some of the programs.

Gary Biller, Vice President for Student Services:

Welcome and hello. "Has been a great 5 days so far."

Admissions Process:

- Working with Noel-Levitz
- Up 16% in applications for new freshman and up 17.4% in accepts
- 873 new students have registered for classes
- Up 10.6% in Housing contracts over last year
- Up 8% in applications for transfers and up 8% in accepts
- Should be able to meet and exceed goals for enrollment/admissions
- Up in OAS as well
- Expanding our territory in admissions. Probably have contact with 180 more school systems than in the past. Counselors will go out and tell the WIU story at these new locations
- Hope to bring in 24,000 high school and 50,000 at transfer level prospects
- Need to spend more time recruiting locally
- Admissions cycle will begin August 1 instead of September 15. Early admission is critical for today's student. They (and we) want the commitment and to build a relationship.
- Anxious to work with academic area on FYE
- Focus on student services – what we do and how we do it
- Right Size Committee (as per President's Request)

Questions:

- Trustee Nelson asked about focusing on high school counselors. VP Biller indicated hopes to improve in that area as a part of the new territory.

Joe Rives, Vice President for Quad Cities, Planning and Technology

Good News for WIU:

- Dual-enrollment program will get national exposure via media
- We are considered a benchmark institutions from our colleagues

Quad Cities (handout provided)

University Planning:

- Great time to review Mission and Strategic Plan

University Technology:

- Technology deferred maintenance - \$3.2M needing addressed
- In two parts: phone system (\$1.4M estimated for Macomb) and locally-owned mainframe
- Data warehousing

Overall:

- The area has made great strides.
- The challenge is the NCA work. Approximately 80 new components that the institution needs to provide data. Annual reporting on those, the onsite team recommendations, plus 4- and 10-year reviews.

Questions:

- Trustee Epperly asked more questions about the mainframe replacement and other options. VP Rives and DeWees will meet with the appropriate individuals to get information and then the University will contact the Board. President Thomas has indicated this is a concern but we need more information to make the right decision

Brad Bainter, Vice President for Advancement and Public Services

Campaign Report:

- 74% to goal
- Going very well
- Specific guidelines we follow in counting gifts, etc.
- Looking at phonathon facilities

Preserving our History:

- Sherman 3rd Floor Auditorium (pictures provided)

Foundation:

- Explaining what they do on and for campus
- \$35M in assets
- Willing to make no-interest loan to WIU to help in difficult financial times
- Allowed VP to work with campus beautifications projects
- Mobile Marketing – Alumni, Admissions, Athletics, Annual Fund (soon)
- Think Purple Campaign (flyer provided)
- Restoring of a mural saved from original Grote Hall

Scholarship:

- Big Challenge – Undocumented Students

University Relations:

- Great job – variety of materials for publications, posters, etc.

Marketing:

- Promote ourselves to alumni, non-alumni, etc. (beyond just admissions)
- Have a static budget of \$100,000 plus some Foundation and/or VPSS support – not enough to do what we would like to do
- Doing billboards
- Banners are all around town
- 30 second promos about WIU shown in various state movie theatres

- President Thomas indicated marketing is an area he hopes to enhance

Questions:

- Carolyn Ehlert Fuller asked about QC marketing efforts. There was a discussion about our billboard presence. VP Rives talked about the budget for QC marketing in terms of billboards. Due to cash flow, there was mid-year money this past year. VP Rives has requested permanent funding. VP Rives has asked QC Leadership Team (Foundation) about funding for more bulletin boards. WQPT has been instructed to highlight being a part of Western Illinois University.
- VP Bainter talked about his dream of having an alumni center or meeting place, similar to what other institutions are now doing.

Julie DeWees, Interim Vice President for Administrative Services

Everything around the table today is money.

Deferred Maintenance:

- Chapin Rose Resolution – how to address
- Esco – Energy Savings Contract
- Looking for different ways to pay for things

VP DeWees will be supportive of staff. She expects her staff to come to her regarding cash and budget.

Technology:

- Financial Accounting System
- Mainframe
- Computer replacement for employees beyond the policy for the faculty – something to consider

Questions:

- Trustee Nelson asked that Trustees be informed. VP DeWees said this will definitely be the case.
- Trustee Epperly asked about non-academic areas (ex. VPC, computer store, DPS). Are they stand-alone? Does WIU support? They should become more entrepreneurial. President Thomas mentioned that VP DeWees has been working with him on these exact questions. Trustee Epperly asked that the results be shared.
- VP Rives added that a challenge in his area is that it might not make sense for the QC campus to emulate the set up of the Macomb campus. What offices might be needed at both places? What is the need at the QC campus in terms of making sure there is enough staff to be agile and meet the needs of students.

Financial Check-in – VP Julie DeWees

Fiscal Condition:

- Cash balance \$9M now
- State owes \$25M now (from FY11)
- \$10M spent each month
- Towing the line on expenditures
- Money for FY11 from State is due December 31, 2011
- Trustee Houston indicated this is an issue of cash flow and will continue
- Making decisions as to how to pay for things in a way in which we will not be cut off from goods and services
- President Thomas stressed those things that affect the quality of education are essential priorities
- President Thomas reminded that we have a process for approval of expenditures at the VP and Presidential level
- Provost Hawkinson discussed how budget and cash flow affect the hiring process – what positions can be replaced, when can searches be held (without negatively affecting the potential pool of applicants by waiting too long)

- President Thomas stressed that the new Leadership Team is expected to continue being very careful about approved expenditures
- VP DeWees updated on Income Fund Carry-Over
- Trustee Epperly asked about moving with QC Riverfront Campus Phase I and new building to maintain and hiring new faculty, etc. How do we fund that? VP Rives talked about how the state has been asked for some support. There has been money set aside for very basic positions some time ago. VP Rives also talked about the need for increases in the fee base as new services are added. In Phase II, position dollars have also been requested.
- VP DeWees discussed how WIU budgets based on level enrollment, not on projected enrollment, until 10th day when enrollments are solidified.
- VP DeWees talked about upcoming budget priorities, including salaries, scholarships and Quad Cities campus operations (utilities, cleaning, etc.)

Strategic Planning – Values, Vision, Mission

President Thomas will appoint a committee in the fall to look at the Strategic Plan. The committee will review the plan, particularly in light of our NCA Accreditation visit and resulting recommendations.

- There is no need to abandon the plan. What we want to do is review it with the new leadership and see what we need to add and maybe even delete.
- This is critical in terms of the new NCA standards.

VP Rives elaborated on the new processes:

- Last time – worked well. Went to governance groups on both campuses and asked for volunteers to serve on the committee (including a BOT rep). There was a group of about 30. There were drafts and redrafts between the groups. The goal was to bring a report to the Board that had been approved by all the governance groups. This took 12 months in the past, but will very possibly take longer this time around.
- New NCA requirements. Each year, required reports on about 80 different areas. VP Rives suggested building those items, as well as Presidential and Board Initiatives, into the Strategic Plan as we move forward. This would bring everything together.
- VP Rives concludes the Mission is embodied by the campus. People might not be able to say it specifically but it is embodied. He discussed the issues related to shortening the statement.
- Trustee Epperly expressed concern that people can't say the mission statement. VP Rives discussed what other universities have done in the past. President Thomas noted that many people know the core values and can recite those easily.
- Trustee Griffin expressed concern about the mission statement. VP Rives said we could call it our Mission and Values?
- President Thomas asked if instead we are talking about a different slogan instead of a mission? Trustee Epperly agreed that might be the case. This may be more an issue of branding.
- VP Rives summarized his understanding of the discussion and his understanding of his charge to move forward.

Trustee Andrews suggested educating students better about our values, especially in orientations and other programs. He plans to do his part to educate students on campus.

Review of Board Assessments

How did we do? What do we need to work on?

Outline plans – Jack's vision:

- Time frames
- Priorities for Strategic Plan and Master Plans (Macomb and QC)
- Plans with steps in them – using President's 1-page priority summaries and putting details (steps within the items) and a timeline for each

Soft Spots:

- Fundraising – Trustee Nelson is the Trustee representative for the Foundation. He discussed his role at meetings. Trustee Houston indicated the Board has not been used in terms of approaching prospects, etc., in a formalized manner. Trustee Ehlert Fuller said the Board was involved in terms of introducing former President Goldfarb to area leaders. Trustee Houston would like to be more involved.
- Maybe invite groups to socials?

Closing Remarks

Jane thanked the Board for a good day.

Closing Words – Trustee Houston –

I think this was one of our best retreats because we have a new president with new challenges and new issues.

Closing Words – President Thomas –

This has been a great retreat. This has been invaluable experience and exchange. This has helped me to understand how I should proceed to work with the Board and how the Board will work with me.

Trustee Nelson – was also good to have the VPs at the table for the luncheon and presentations.

The meeting adjourned at 3:41 p.m.

J. Michael Houston, Chair

Kerry L. Lemaster, Administrative Assistant to the Board