

## **SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES MINUTES**

**December 13, 2013**

The regular meeting of the Council of Trustees of Slippery Rock University was held Friday, December 13, 2013 in room 321 of the Robert M. Smith Student Center. The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Mr. Robert S. Taylor, Esq., chairperson.

### **Recording of Attendance**

Trustees present: Mr. Thomas Breth, Mr. Matt Lautman, Dr. Robert Marcus, Commissioner William McCarrier, Dr. Dennis Murray, Ms. Laura Ordaz, Mr. Jeffrey Smith, Senator Mary Jo White, Mr. Robert Taylor.

Trustees absent: Mr. Matthew Shaner, Ms. Suzanne Vessella

### **Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Dr. Marcus moved, seconded by Dr. Murray, approval of the Friday, December 13, 2013 meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously. (Appendix A)

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. McCarrier moved, seconded by Mr. Lautman, approval of the Friday, September 27, 2013 meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously. (TAB 15)

### **Public Comments**

Chairman Taylor opened public comments with thanks and acknowledgment of Dr. Chris Cole, director of the RMS Student Center, and his staff for all of their good work in hosting Council at this beautiful facility. We appreciate your efforts, thank you.

Chairman Taylor asked Dr. Robert Watson, interim vice president for Student Affairs, to offer explanation as to why American flags are placed on the table today. Dr. Watson explained the flag and the accompanying certificate and photo are presented to each trustee member today in honor of our troops serving in Afghanistan. The flags were flown over the country of Afghanistan by Crusader Troop, 1<sup>st</sup> Squadron 6<sup>th</sup> Calvary Regiment in an OH-58D Kiowa Warrior, tail # 535 for 8.9 hours during a combat mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom on Nov. 7, 2013.

Dr. Watson explained this relates to Slippery Rock University as SRU has initiated an awe inspiring campus program, "Walking to and from Afghanistan," SRU students, faculty, staff, alumni, SR community, family and friends are walking in support of our troops and have provided items for care packages that have been sent to the women and men serving our country.

The certificate is signed by CPT Anthony Snipes, pilot-in-command, and 1LT Jordan Schumacher, co-pilot. CPT Snipes is Dr. Watson's son-in-law.

**Dr. Patrick Burkhart, president of SRU APSCUF, provided comments:**

Address to the SRU Council of Trustees  
 Patrick A. Burkhart, PhD  
 President, SRU APSCUF  
 13 December 2013

Dear Trustees, Guests, and Colleagues,

Our University has faced a very challenging term – we entered fall with grave concern for the implications of enrollment challenge, particularly retrenchment of faculty and broader dismissal of personnel. In accord with the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the faculty union agreed to meet weekly with administration in order to discuss our circumstances. As the green of summer blazed into autumn, onward now to the monochrome of winter, our discussions intensified, in frequency and gravity.

We interrogated the premise of change in finance, assisted by Cheryl's [President Norton] commitment to transparency, promulgated through Finance with the diligent efforts of Ms. Mercer. We recognized the impact of falling tuition revenue, in company with flat appropriations and marketplace inflation. In continuing accord with the CBA, our two sides tracked attrition and explored transfer, prior to invoking retrenchment.

None of this effort has been easy, nor painless, yet I stand here today proud of SRU and its model for labor practice in forging a path through challenging terrain. I thank Provost Way for plotting a vision to avoid a destructive Workforce Plan. Our chapter pledged diligence in working cooperatively to explore venues for revenue enhancement, while acknowledging the necessity to constrain expenses. We will continue working enthusiastically to bolster recruitment and retention. Of particular note, we avoided both temptation and encouragement to publicly disparage our institution and its leadership. Instead, we spoke with a tempered voice, to the end that cooperation won the day. Our SRU brand has remained strong in the public eye, particularly in the minds of families and potential recruits. The minutes of our meetings disclose the points of discussion, but only those of us at the table will know the full tension and expense of energy required.

APSCUF further recognizes that finances remain a concern. We will endeavor to influence policy in Harrisburg, as well as targeting the awareness of the citizenry. Every job lost here – faculty, coaches, staff, and administration – is an unfortunate outcome of a diminished commitment to adequately fund public education. Each unfortunate employee meeting is very painful. So, we learned lessons this fall. We intend to be more aware in the coming year of all that must be done to minimize further disruption of our cohort of fine personnel, within APSCUF and beyond.

We will continue working hard across the Commonwealth to instill a greater respect for the value of Slippery Rock University and all the astute public education PASSHE provides. We will continue to refine programs, curricula, advising and instruction to ensure a commanding student experience. We will remain the accomplished, caring professionals, whom you can rely upon.

As I told Jacob [Geist] before departing for our afternoon field trip when he asked, Dr. Burkhart "Will you get me home on time, I am to meet President Norton in an hour." I replied to the Cadet, "You will greet her on time. Until then, take good notes and learn." Turns out, the little things we do often make the biggest difference. We touch the future. We teach! We do it well.

I love Slippery Rock University. Happy Holidays to all of you!

Following Dr. Burkhardt's comments:

Chairman Taylor: Are there any questions for Dr. Burkhardt from the trustees?

Trustee Breth: Chairman Taylor, I would request if Dr. Burkhardt would be so kind, that his comments today be placed in the official minutes of this meeting. Chairman Taylor: So done.

Chairman Taylor: We appreciate your comments, Dr. Burkhardt, and are actually encouraged to hear them. We have been advised by this administration over the last year, Dr. Norton, Dr. Way, Ms. Mercer, that they have been collaborating and working with you. Let me ask, during this time period, have you ever felt in any way that they [administration] have not provided you with the types of information you were seeking, that you were not kept informed, or at any time was the information accurate or not accurate?

Dr. Burkhardt: Well I would say that we started out in a circumstance, and I conveyed this, that the University employs professional accountants, and I am a geologist, so I plead open ignorance. I had to learn to understand. I think clearly the answer to your question is, I felt no deception, it was rather overcoming ignorance, and I am very grateful, that again, and again, and again, additional data were provided and explained and discourse was allowed to query those data. I have been concerned all along, and particularly, in the context of the wave that went across PASSHE this year about the financial circumstances. I believe that it is important for the union to have an opportunity to test the presentations, and that it is to me, part of the checks and balances that should occur in a democratic society... to have access to common data.

One of the epiphanies I've had throughout this year is how two sides can read similar text and hold two different opinions. The bottom line, Bob, is that I honestly do not feel a failure to diligently disclose. The bottom line is I remain concerned, I think we are all concerned about the finances.

Chairman Taylor: Thank you, Dr. Burkhardt, for your honesty, and more importantly, I wish you and your family a happy holiday season. The year 2013 was a challenge financially, we will continue to have challenges, and we will face these future challenges in a collaborative approach.

Dr. Burkhardt: Yes, we all want a win-win.

Chairman Taylor: Absolutely.

Dr. Burkhardt: Thank you, trustees, for your time.

**Mr. Roger (Buddy) Clements, president of the Student Government Association, provided comments.**

Good afternoon trustees and thank you for providing me the opportunity to speak with you today. It is great to have you here at the student center, on "the student side of campus." It's a bit quiet today since it is the end of the semester. Students are wrapping up their finals and traveling home to enjoy the break with family and friends.

SGA has worked very hard this semester and will continue to work very hard in the future to assist our students and the school in any capacity we can.

On behalf of SGA, thank you for your continued support of our students. We look forward to seeing you next semester. Happy Holidays!

## PRESENTATIONS

### **“The Adapted Physical Activity Program: Addressing the Quality of Life of Pennsylvanians with Disabilities.”**

Robert Arnhold, Ph.D., director of the Adapted Physical Activity Program and graduate coordinator  
 Pamela Arnhold, M.S.  
 Wendy Fagan, M.S.  
 Dallas Jackson, Ph.D.  
 Kelly Sheehan, M.S.  
 Adam Gazda, graduate student  
 Lauren Impey, graduate student  
 Leona Mostowski, graduate student  
 Rebecca Searight, undergraduate student

## REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Cheryl J. Norton provided remarks (**Appendix B**)

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### **Governance Committee (Agenda, Appendix C)**

Mr. Tom Breth, chair, provided the following report:

Yesterday the committee met and addressed several business items of interest:

- 1) **Establish a town/gown committee** – there was discussion among council members as to the need for a structured committee to serve as an outreach opportunity to the SR community, municipalities and other groups. Current relationships are positive, however, it may be helpful to have trustees involved in the work of building community relations. There will be additional discussion moving forward with this item.
- 2) **COT Committee Structure/Logistics**  
 Committee members were in agreement that the Thursday/Friday structure works well for quarterly meetings. We appreciate moving around on campus and certainly having our meetings held in the student center. To stay connected between quarterly meetings, Council will establish a monthly conference call, the second Friday of every month, beginning at 9 a.m. The first call is scheduled Friday, Jan. 10, 9 a.m. The format is 9 a.m.- 9:45 a.m./general call with all members; 9:45 a.m.- 10:15 a.m./committee discussion, if needed. Chairs, please inform Dr. Norton of agenda items prior to the call. This will provide Dr. Norton’s staff opportunity to prepare information. An agenda will be provided to trustees in advance of the call.
- 3) **President’s Evaluation – first year, informal**  
 Trustee Breth reported the evaluation process is to be completed by Feb. 1, however due to new appointments on Council we are a bit behind the curve. Trustee Breth met with President Norton and provided her with three primary goals and three subset categories. The primary goals relate to financial stability, enrollment management, and resource development. President Norton was asked to prepare a narrative summary based on the established goals and submit to trustees by Jan. 10. Trustee Breth will circulate to trustees and request feedback by Jan. 17. Please keep in mind that we will be hiring an outside consultant to conduct the formal evaluation in 2014. As you review goals for 2013, think about goals to be prepared for the next year.

## **Old Business**

The nominating committee of the Governance Committee brings forth names for election to fill vacant officer positions on Council. The group nominated Trustee Thomas Breth to serve as secretary for 2013-2014. Trustee Breth accepted the nomination. The vote will take place during the "Items for Council Action" portion of this meeting.

## **Academic Affairs Committee (Agenda, Appendix D)**

Dr. Dennis Murray, chair, provided the following report:

The committee met yesterday with a number of informational items to be presented. The Academic Affairs Committee had no action items to bring forward for trustee review and approval.

Dr. Way provided an update to our enrollment standings. For spring, we are experiencing about a 2% drop in enrollment. We have initiatives in place to combat these enrollment challenges, including:

### **Curriculum planning**

- MBA program is showing positive progress and increasing graduate enrollment
- Physician Assistant's program is garnering much interest and shows great promise

### **Marketing Development Strategies**

- Promoting to international markets, including China and Vietnam

### **Guest presentations:**

- Ms. Carrie Birckbichler presented an overview of the performance indicators for Slippery Rock University. As you are aware, SRU ranked #1 in terms of performance for 2012-13.
- Chief Michael Simmons provided an overview of campus safety.

### **Active Searches:**

- Dr. Way provided an update to the search for a Chief Information Officer to oversee Information and Administrative Technology Services.

## **Finance and Audit Committee (Agenda, Appendix E)**

Senator Mary Jo White shared the committee report on behalf of Ms. Suzanne Vessella, chair of the Finance and Audit Committee. Senator White stated this is her first committee meeting and how pleased she is to be a member of Council and this committee.

The committee met this morning with an opening presentation by auditors, CliftonLarsenAllen. Council was informed by the external auditors that we have an unqualified report with no material weaknesses and no criticisms. All internal controls are in place and Council was assured information shared is complete and accurate.

Council was informed of the APSCUF Commissioned Report by Boyer & Ritter. It is important to remember this is a report, not an audit. It is the opinion of the committee that the report reflects rather selective information.

The following items were presented for Council review (action and information):

**ACTION: Committee recommended approval of the following items:**

- MOU's Affiliated Agreements – Certificates of Compliance
  - SRU Foundation, Inc.
  - SRU Alumni Association, Inc.
- Contracts
- Fixed Assets
- Service and Supply Purchase Orders

**INFORMATION: Committee discussed the following items:**

- Personnel Items
- MOU/Affiliation Agreement – Student Government Association
- Facilities and Planning Active Project List
- Budget Update

**Student Affairs Committee (Agenda, Appendix F)**

Mr. Matt Lautman chairs the Student Affairs Committee. Mr. Lautman stated for the record that he is very excited to chair this committee. He began his odyssey by spending considerable time on campus last month with Dr. Watson. Chairman Lautman toured the student center, met with student leaders, divisional directors and staff to learn about the services offered to our students. Chairman Lautman extended special thanks to Dr. Robert Watson for taking his time and sharing his knowledge with him.

The committee met yesterday to discuss a number of information items. The first item discussed, which took considerable time, was the draft MOU Affiliated Agreement with the Student Government Association. Ms. Suzanne Williamson, PASSHE legal counsel, was present to answer questions and explain the purpose of the document. The committee was informed the document will be in final format soon for review and approval by Council.

Another important item discussed was continuing to nurture and promote dialog with off-campus landlords. Dr. Watson has expended considerable time reaching out to these constituencies to share information and promote a positive living/learning environment for our students off-campus as well as on-campus.

Other items for information included: a review of Board of Governor's Fees, including the Academic Enhancement Fee and a review of institutional fees: cost and purpose. We will continue to discuss these items at our next scheduled conference call.

**University Advancement Committee (Agenda, Appendix G)**

Mr. Matt Shaner chairs the University Advancement Committee. The committee met yesterday with Trustee Shaner leading the meeting via conference call.

We were pleased to have Mr. Doug McMullen, chair and Mr. Bill Sonntag, secretary of the SRU Foundation, Inc., as our guests for the meeting. Dr. Edward Bucha, executive director, shared an overview of the structure, mission, and function of the organization. In addition, Dr. Bucha explained investment strategies and institutional support.

Ms. Barbara Ender, vice-president for University Advancement and Ms. Samantha Swift, director of Development, provided an update to the 125<sup>th</sup> celebration friendraising and fundraising activities being planned.

Gift income specific to the 125<sup>th</sup> scholarship challenge equals \$196,000 and outstanding pledges total nearly \$1 million. Proposals under consideration by donors for the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Scholarship Challenge total \$448,800. As of November 13, overall gift income reached \$795,816 (a 5.6% increase over the same period last year.)

More than 360 guests (a record number) attended the October 12 Sunset Serenade event and supported the Storm Harbor Equestrian Center through their donations, sponsorships and auction purchases. Two generous donors matched gifts that were made during a reverse auction. The event netted more than \$170,000 in financial support for the Equestrian Center and the services provided through the center.

Gifts received for Fiscal Year 2013-2014 as of September 30, 2013 totaled \$409,507, reflecting an 11.54% increase compared to the previous year same time period. The value of the endowment is \$20,790,870, which presents the combined totals of the Slippery Rock University Foundation, Inc. and Slippery Rock University Alumni Association endowments.

The Distinguished Alumni Awards Banquet, hosted by the Slippery Rock University Alumni Association, was held at the Russell Wright Alumni House and Conference Center on October 18. The following alumni were honored at the event: Ms. Donna Couillard-Getreuer '74, Dr. Wayne Miller '71, Dr. Dennis Murray '63, Charles Sander '86. A feature article appears in the Fall 2013 ROCK Magazine.

The annual Celebration of Giving reception and dinner is planned for tomorrow evening, affording the opportunity to provide stewardship for more than 175 donors and friends of the University. The event will include performances by talented students from SRU's dance and music departments. New Lifetime Giving Society members will also be recognized. However, weather reports are ominous so we are remaining hopeful the event can continue as planned.

### **Executive Session (Agenda, Appendix H)**

Council met this morning in executive session with President Norton.

## **ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION**

COT Resolution – Annual Certificate of Compliance: BOG Policy 1985-04-A: University External Financial Support. SRU Foundation, Inc.; SRU Alumni Association (TAB 7)

Dr. White moved, seconded by Mr. Smith approval of COT Resolution- Annual Certification of Compliance: BOG Policy 1985-04-A: *University External Financial Support*. Certificate of Compliance SRU Foundation, Inc. and SRU Alumni Association as submitted. Motion carried unanimously. (Appendix I)

### **Contracts (TAB 8)**

Mr. Lautman moved, seconded by Commissioner McCarrier approval of Contracts as submitted. Mr. Taylor abstained from voting on this item. Motion carried. (Appendix J)

### **Fixed Assets (TAB 9)**

Mr. Breth moved, seconded by Senator White approval of Fixed Assets. Motion carried unanimously. (Appendix K)

Service and Supply Purchase Orders (TAB 10)

Dr. Murray moved, seconded by Mr. Lautman approval of the Service and Supply Purchase Orders. Motion carried unanimously. (Appendix L)

COT Resolution – Order of Succession: BOG Policy 1983-14-A *Appointing Interim and Acting Chief Executive Officers* (TAB 11 )

Mr. Breth moved, seconded by Commissioner McCarrier approval of COT Resolution – Order of Succession. Motion carried unanimously. (Appendix M)

Election of Officers: COT Secretary

Mr. Taylor moved, seconded by Dr. Murray the nomination of Mr. Thomas Breth as secretary of Council. Motion carried unanimously.

## INFORMATION ITEMS

Next Meeting Dates

March 27 & 28, 2014

June 5 & 6, 2014

Facilities and Planning Active Project List (Cabinet Report) TAB 12 (Appendix N)

Monthly Financial Report (TAB 13) (Appendix O)

Personnel Items (TAB 14) (Appendix P)

MOU/Affiliated Agreement – Student Government Association (TAB 4) (Appendix Q)

Divisional Reports (TAB 16)

## FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Tom Breth – I would like to express my pleasure with Dr. Burkhart's comments today. It is pleasing to witness the positive relationship of our administration and faculty and the importance of continuing to nurture that relationship. As we all understand, some things are not within our control, but working together, we can continue to move forward through challenges.

Laura Ordaz – Thank you to the group of students who presented today, it is interesting to learn about other majors and hear how excited students are in preparing for their future careers.

Matt Lautman – I would like to recognize and congratulate the University Program Board students who collected over 380 lbs. of non-perishable items for community neighbors in need. It was great tagging along with Dr. Watson and the students as we filled up the truck and dropped off the much-needed supplies to the food pantry. Congratulations UPB Students!

President Norton: If I may, I would like to take this opportunity to publicly acknowledge and thank Chairman Taylor for his support of the 10,000 step challenge. Chairman Taylor "walked the walk" by



walking many, many steps as well as running many more. We appreciate his time, talent, and treasure in supporting the system, the institution and this important initiative honoring and remembering our troops. *President Norton presented Chairman Taylor with a special framed flag that was carried in a helicopter that flew over Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom as a token of gratitude for his efforts.*

Dennis Murray – I would like to congratulate Dr. Norton on her leadership and the spirit of collaboration that is evident among our group. We are working together for the betterment of SRU. I wish you all a happy, healthy, joyous holiday.

Bob Marcus – I am impressed with the committee meetings and productive discussions that have taken place here today. It is always a pleasure to be back on campus. Go ROCK!

Jeffrey Smith – As I walked around campus at Homecoming, I had the opportunity to stop and chat with numerous people – students, alums, staff, and community members. What was amazing to me is people always responded how much they love this place. It was never a remark, “oh, it’s ok.” It was instead a profound statement....I Love It Here! That is a true testament to how special this place really is.

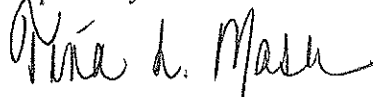
Commissioner Bill McCarrier – The more I have the opportunity to come to meetings and events here, the more I’ve come to fall in love with this place. I did not graduate from SRU, but have family members who are alums. It is so refreshing to see the energy and excitement of the students. This is a wonderful campus and it is the people that make SRU the great institution it is. We are fortunate to have an impressive group of administrators, faculty and staff.

Senator Mary Jo White – This is my first Council meeting, and like Dr. Murray, I am very impressed by the congeniality among our group and throughout the campus community. Having been involved in attending appropriation meetings, it is somewhat discouraging to hear the challenges ahead for us as a state and for higher education. What is so positive, is witnessing the campus community accepting these challenges and trying to be creative through program opportunities and innovate thinking. It is also quite evident that we value the importance of meeting the needs of our students.

Bob Taylor – Thank you, to my colleagues. We are a Council who is active and engaged on campus. Thank you to the committee chairs – your diligence in leading the committees, in being prepared and focused on what we are doing, is essential to our success. Thanks to Dr. Norton and Tina Moser for their good work in preparing for our meetings. Happy Holidays!

With no further business, the Friday, December 13, 2013 Council of Trustees meeting at Slippery Rock University adjourned at 3:20 p.m. Dr. Marcus moved, seconded by Dr. Murray, a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted:




---

Tina L. Moser, Administrative Liaison to the SRU Council of Trustees