



**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WOU BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING NO. 36 –DECEMBER 8, 2020
4:30-6:00 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

I. CALL-TO-MEETING / ROLL CALL

Chair Betty Komp called the Board meeting to order at 4:30 PM and asked Secretary Ryan Hagemann to take roll. The following trustees were present:

Zellee Allen (joined meeting after roll call)
Jerry Ambris
Jaime Arredondo (joined meeting after roll call)
Jim Baumgartner
Danielle Campbell
Susan Castillo
David Foster
Rex Fuller
Betty Komp
Cec Koontz (joined meeting after roll call)
Malissa Larson
Leah Mitchell
Doug Morse

The following trustees were absent:

Gayle Evans
Linda Herrera

II. CHAIR'S WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

Komp welcomed the Board and the virtual audience to the special board meeting to hear from stakeholder concerns and asked Hagemann to describe the process. He shared each group would be provided fifteen minutes to address the Board. Komp stated that the purpose of the meeting was to hear from the faculty union (WOUFT), staff union (SEIU), and the University shared governance groups (Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and ASWOU) regarding concerns about the University and its management of the budget deficit, enrollment, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Komp shared that she and Vice Chair Arredondo met with WOUFT and SEIU prior to the special Board meeting. Because the Board was also considering the ORS 352.105 delegation, she asked ASWOU President NJ Johnson to start with the ASWOU presentation.

III. PRESENTATIONS

1) ASWOU | Presenters: NJ Johnson, Liz Marquez-Gutierrez, Makana Waikiki

Johnson thanked the Board for the opportunity to share comments and read a prepared statement regarding the winter 2021 incidental fee recommendation. Johnson stated that the events have led ASWOU to reflect on how the administration's action have impacted the educational journey of students. He stressed that students were the heart and soul of the University. Johnson posited that the University used COVID-19 as an excuse to make difficult budget decisions. He outlined ASWOU's concern about leadership and the leadership necessary to restore the community.

After his statement, he asked ASWOU Senate President Liz Marquez-Gutierrez and IFC Chair Makana Waikiki to share information about the winter 2021 incidental fee allocation. Marquez-Gutierrez reminded the Board of the November 2020 presentation about the incidental fee process. She offered the COVID-19 and the lack of in-person instruction led to a dramatic reduction of incidental fees and the special efforts ASWOU took to remedy the situation. She asked IFC Chair Waikiki to offer further explanation.

Waikiki described ASWOU and IFC's proposal to implement a \$150 fee for the winter 2021 term on all students, regardless of modality. She reviewed the budget and allocations with the Board and the importance of the jobs that the incidental fee funds. Waikiki asked for the Board's consideration of the action item because, in part, there was a short timeline to consider a change to the winter 2021 incidental fee. After the presentation, Baumgartner asked for clarification because the information was substantially similar to the presentation at the November 2020 board meeting. Hagemann described that there was an action item on the agenda to delegate this process to President Fuller. Baumgartner inquired about the technology fee reserves held to backfill the incidental fee and where that would go. Fuller stressed that the \$2M reserve to assist IFC was one solution, but, ASWOU and IFC were presenting a different solution to the Board. Hagemann observed that the docket contained the proposal to delegate this authority to the president so Fuller and ASWOU could meet and reach decision on the proposal to collect a \$150 incidental fee on all students regardless of modality for winter 2021. Foster moved approval and Baumgartner seconded the motion. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion:

Jerry Ambris
Jim Baumgartner
Danielle Campbell
Susan Castillo
David Foster
Betty Komp
Malissa Larson
Leah Mitchell
Doug Morse

No trustees voted against the motion.

There were no abstentions.

Fuller is non-voting.

The motion passed.

2) SEIU | Presenter: Jackson Stalley

Komp returned to the SEIU presentation by Jackson Stalley and Brian Palmer after technical difficulties were resolved. Palmer shared his personal background and acknowledged the important gesture the Board was taking by calling the special meeting. He lamented that the University was not the place he joined. Stalley observed that the no confidence vote described in the WOUFT presentation was not a first step; but, rather, it was a last resort. Stalley reiterated campus climate concerns and declining staff satisfaction. Stalley described SEIU concerns with lack of information and replies to the stressful layoff processes. Stalley expressed dismay when SEIU met with staff instead of the president.

Palmer continued the SEIU presentation. He described the lack of recognition of the COVID-19 pandemic and how staff were frightened. He stated that, at the outset of the pandemic, the personal protective equipment, training, or information was lacking. He reiterated SEIU's concern with the layoff process. Palmer described SEIU's difficulty in creating a hardship fund for SEIU members. The Board asked about next steps to create a positive campus climate and Palmer offered the president should mandate necessary training, ensure 360-degree performance evaluations, allow unions to meet regularly with the board, and strengthen communication.

3) WOUFT | Presenters: Dr. Bryan Dutton, Dr. Emily Plec

Komp recognized WOUFT for its presentation after Jackson Stalley of SEIU experienced temporary technical difficulty. Dr. Emily Plec started WOUFT's presentation. She noted that WOUFT was committed to restoring the work that was WOU. Plec observed that declining enrollment was a persistent problem and that WOUFT was concerned about the university's climate and leadership. She asked WOUFT President Dr. Bryan Dutton to continue the presentation.

Dutton acknowledged the establishment of various committees on campus, but noted that they were advisory. He noted that the strategic planning committee in 2016 and 2017 was an example of successful shared governance. He stated that the campus climate surveys commissioned earlier demonstrate a barrier to effective communication. Dutton shared with the Board that, without prior communication, many faculty members were surprised about the Article 15 process. Dutton described the no confidence process organized by both unions. Dutton observed that the lack of confidence on the part of the union members that participated demonstrates the need for employee evaluations and a return to shared governance as exemplified by the strategic planning process.

Plec noted, despite the concerns, there was reason for optimism. She stated that a new president could bring new perspectives on emerging challenges. Plec concluded her presentation by outlining WOUFT requests, including a halt to curtailing departments core to a liberal arts university, endorsement of other reduction plans outside of Article 15, and vetting of data matrices for sustainability work. The Board asked how to make curriculum cuts without impacting other programs. Plec shared that involving faculty members to understand the intersections would be welcome.

4) Staff Senate | Presenter: Colin Haines

After the SEIU presentation, Komp recognized Staff Senate President Colin Haines for his presentation. Haines thanked the Board for the opportunity to share concerns. He observed that he would be echoing much of what had been offered to the Board in earlier presentations. Haines described the fear of the unknown on the part of the staff and its impact on campus climate and morale. Haines offered that employees funded by incidental fees felt particularly vulnerable. He observed that many staff do not have a sense of what is happening or why the University is taking certain actions when it should feel like we are working together. Haines shared that, while several advisory committees were created to address certain topics, there is no staff to help implement the work of the committees and those that participate feel like they have a second job. Haines echoed previous concerns about the layoff processes and the notice provided to staff.

Haines turned to the importance of the presidential search and the timeline to move forward. Haines summarized that the Staff Senate was seeking leadership and guidance and they were looking to the Board to help. Haines ended his presentation with a call for accountability.

5) Faculty Senate | Presenters: Dr. Leigh Graziano, David Janoviak, Dr. Kristin Latham-Scott

Komp recognized the Faculty Senate presenters to conclude the special Board meeting. Dr. Leigh Graziano, Faculty Senate President, noted that she was joined by past Faculty Senate President Dr. Kristin Latham-Scott and Dr. Ethan McMahon, member of the Faculty Sustainability Task Force. She observed Faculty Senate would share how the Article 15 process could be used to illuminate how the University could improve. She stressed that many faculty members would like the work to slow down so a new president could offer insight and perspective. Graziano stated, though, there was an alternate faculty member view that the University could not afford to slow the process down. She offered the commonality of the faculty's perspective was deep investment in the success of the University. McMahon stated that while the faculty are engaged in significant assessment-related activities, those activities did not translate into the Article 15 work. He offered that many divisions and departments were surprised to see their programs in the draft Article 15 plan. He stressed that accurate program data and metrics going forward would be a huge improvement to help faculty understand the health of their divisions and departments. McMahon shared faculty concerns that they were not provided with adequate time to review and correct inefficiencies. He stated that the University would benefit from established, mutually understood and agreed-upon processes for program evaluation and program management. Latham-Scott

continued the Faculty Senate presentation noted that the Article 15 process revealed the importance of retention on campus. She shared that a high-priority committee on retention was warranted, as well as clear, cross-campus communication to highlight transparency of decision-making. Latham-Scott also noted that Faculty Senate is looking forward to the search for a new president. She stressed the need for clear representation from all stakeholders in the process. Graziano concluded the presentation and the Board inquired if the Faculty Senate was recommending program reduction. Graziano turned the Board's attention to two reports from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, one endorsing the ten percent planning cuts from the Deans and another offering commentary on creative alternatives to other program cuts. Graziano expressed Faculty Senate's frustration at the speed of the process. The Board asked about the speed with which Faculty Senate thought the University should move because budget projections illustrated exhaustion of the University's fund balance without action. Latham-Scott offered that Faculty Senate have heard a variety of faculty voices on the topic and many want to slow the process down, but some faculty do not want the process slowed in these critical times and believe it unfair to leave to a new president.

IV. ACTION ITEM

- 1) ORS 352.105 Delegation

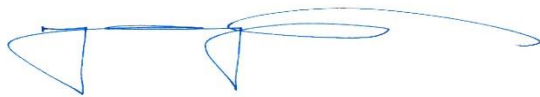
Board action described above under the ASWOU presentation.

V. FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Komp thanked everyone for their participation the special meeting and stressed the need to work together. She asked Board members to reflect on the presentation to extend any comments to her. Morse offered that it was valuable to hear the voices and that it is good practice, but he had grave concerns about the University's fiscal conditions. Morse stated he believed a sense of urgency was required.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Komp adjourned the meeting at 6:02 PM with a quorum.



Ryan James Hagemann
Secretary to the Board of Trustees