



Thursday, April 12, 2007
4:30-6:30pm
Portland State University
Urban Center Building
5th floor conference room

Meeting Notes

The meeting was called to order at 4:40 p.m.

Board members present included: Kirby Dyess, Jim Francesconi, Henry Lorenzen, and Howard Sohn.

Others present included: Vice President Lindsay Desroches (PSU), Provost Roy Koch (PSU), Chancellor George Pernsteiner, Di Saunders, Marcia Stuart, and Charles Triplett.

Those participating by phone included: Bridget Burns, Margie Lowe (Governor's Office), Vice Chancellor Susan Weeks, and Provost David Woodall (OIT).

1. Creation of subcommittees or task groups for the four focus areas:

a. Increasing Oregon college participation for all areas and diverse populations

Chair Dyess advised the committee that she is recommending that Directors Dalton Miller-Jones and Gretchen Schuette be assigned to this subcommittee. She also noted that OSAC involvement would be advantageous. During the discussion, it was noted that this subcommittee would be addressing Strategic Priorities I.a and I.c (page 27 in the strategic plan).

b. Alternatives and a recommendation for how to efficiently and effectively govern OUS

Chair Dyess recommended that Director John von Schlegell chair the governance subcommittee. Susan Weeks noted that there is research with background context on this issue available. It was noted that the subcommittee would be addressing Strategic Priorities III.a, III.d, and III.e (page 28 in the strategic plan).

c. Finding the right long-term postsecondary solution for the Portland area

Chair Dyess recommended that Director Jim Francesconi chair the Portland-area subcommittee. During the ensuing discussion, Director Francesconi asked Dyess for advice on members. President Colin Diver, Reed College, was recommended as he has “a refreshing perspective on the Portland issue and from a private school viewpoint.” It was suggested that community colleges would play a key role in this topic and that the subcommittee would benefit from having a representative from OHSU. Dyess recommended that Keith Thompson, OHSU board chair, be included on the subcommittee and stated that she would personally contact him. This subcommittee would be addressing Strategic Priority III.b (page 28 in the strategic plan).

d. Developing the OUS portfolio to maximize our positive impact to the State and minimize overlap in spending

This subcommittee will be addressing guiding principle #1 (page 22 of the strategic plan). Chair Dyess recommended Director Howard Sohn as chair. However, Director Sohn advised he would be over-extended if he participated on more than one subcommittee and that he is currently involved in the Board’s outreach subcommittee. Director Francesconi opined that Sohn would be an effective leader for this subcommittee (developing the OUS portfolio) and the outreach topic; however, he recommended keeping the Committee focused on the four topics and then have a brainstorming session on promoting higher education during the summer after the legislative session has finished. He said that the key would be including corporate and business people in the process. Dyess agreed and stated that she has no issue with dedicating a meeting of the Strategic Initiatives Committee to discuss outreach approaches.

Director Sohn noted that a critical concern pertaining to the outreach context is that legislators need to believe that their constituency supports the higher education agenda. He then suggested that a future meeting of the subcommittee be dedicated to the topic. He opined that the book “The Tipping Point” provides good background on that subject matter for strategizing and “seeding an epidemic” in how people think about higher education. He also expressed his thought that the subcommittee will need guidance as to “where we want to go in the portfolio.” Chair Dyess advised that she will talk with Sohn concerning the portfolio and that the strategic plan is robust in its description of the portfolio; discuss suggestions for subcommittee membership; and look at other states and countries who have done a deliberate job in implementing a portfolio approach in their higher education system.

Chair Dyess noted that she expected that at the end of the year the Committee should have recommendations, not only to the Board, but at the point where the Board is executing on the recommendations. She noted that it is necessary to limit the scope of the Committee in order to accomplish the tasks on time. She added that if the Board continues “to let a Portland solution elude us, it will be dictated to us in a way we won’t want it to be.” She opined that OIT’s presentation to the Board provided the most information on the implementation of strategies. Provost Woodall acknowledged her comment and noted that this is the opportunity to see how OIT needs to adjust the process to draw that out more clearly.

Director Francesconi noted that the toughest item is the development of the OUS portfolio and maximizing a positive impact on the state. Chair Dyess added that she would love to work on this item because when she worked on the AEED Working Group, she saw first hand how the campuses were working to develop strategic impacts on their communities. Director Francesconi thought that President Mary Cullinan would be a good member for the subcommittee; Dyess and Sohn agreed. And Dyess added that President Ed Ray was excellent on the AEED because of his perspective. She said that not all of the Board sees the synergies. “The portfolio approach was to deliver the most toward the goals that the Board had put forth in the strategic plan. It’s not about duplication; it’s about how to maximize the indicators of success.”

Chair Dyess said that a meeting following the legislative session (August or September) will be dedicated to outreach. (Director Sohn has charged the Committee to read “The Tipping Point” prior to that meeting.) As the subcommittees carry on their work, that work will then be debated in the full Committee before going to the Board. Subcommittees will be charged to produce something that identifies clear options. Director Sohn expressed his concern about staffing these subcommittees. Dyess advised that Susan Weeks will staff the portfolio item. Given the focus of “increasing Oregon college participation for all areas and diverse populations,” Di Saunders would be asked to staff that subcommittee.

It was advised that Chancellor Pernsteiner has asked senior staff to make recommendations pertaining to staffing issues, especially in light of Mr. Rawlins’ imminent departure and two limited duration staff returning to their respective campuses. Director Sohn asked if campus staff could be tasked with staffing the subcommittees instead of Chancellor’s Office staff but Chancellor Pernsteiner advised that it would still be an issue of funding as the Chancellor’s Office would have to pay for their participation if they are staffing a committee.

Continuing the discussion of subcommittee participation, Chair Dyess asked that the Committee look at what type of membership would be needed (strengths, skills, experience) to fulfill the needed tasks. It was recommended that by the next meeting, the subcommittees should have been formed.

Director Francesconi said that each subcommittee should then focus on the charge and the proposed work plan. He requested to see the prior studies about the Portland areas and advice from Directors Dyess and Lorenzen and the Chancellor on the focus of the subcommittee. Chair Dyess asked that the past studies be reviewed in order to see why they weren’t implemented.

Chancellor Pernsteiner advised that accomplishing the goals set forth could be done in a couple ways besides the Committee: 1) charge one of the councils to address the issue proactively or 2) creating another committee to address the issue. He noted that the latest graduation rates will soon be released and that the rates are up. However, these rates will begin to decline if the problem of retention is not solved now. He noted that, if not done through this Committee, it will have to be addressed by another committee. Director Sohn questioned, “Isn’t a significant part of this issue covered in the Participation subcommittee?” Chair Dyess opined that the Participation subcommittee may need to be changed to include retention and completion. She asked whether or not the Provosts’ Council should be charged with this topic. Chancellor Pernsteiner replied that the Provosts’ Council was charged previously but was not successful; he opined that the

Student Affairs Council or jointly with Provosts' Council should address the issue because it is a shared responsibility. He added that direct expectations should be put forth to the Councils and that the Board Committee should prescribe those expectations in order to receive a more effective outcome. He also noted that, due to the differences among campuses, the Board should require the campuses to set goals and then the Board must follow through on reviewing those goals to see if they were achieved. It has been some time since goals and metrics have been reviewed for results. However, the Chancellor advised that although new goals and metrics can be set, the campuses must work with the knowledge that no new funding will be provided to assist in reaching the goals.

Chair Dyess noted that the recent OSA study contains good information pertaining to the issue of retention, adding that having OSA represented at some level is an excellent idea. Chancellor Pernsteiner agreed and added that the study shows that students pay attention to more than just the tuition issue.

2. Recommendation of the Strategic Initiatives Committee charter for full Board approval

Discussion took place concerning the charter. Chair Dyess advised that the current draft charter contains too much of what is in the long-range plan. She recommended paring the charter back to simply stating that the Committee would be bringing to the Board recommendations for implementation of the strategic plan, priorities, and guiding principles.

3. Issues arising from the first set of campus portfolio discussions

Chair Dyess noted that the portfolio presentations to the Board so far have been pretty broad and need to be more focused. Dave Woodall suggested that an adjustment in the process might be needed.

4. Adjournment

Chair Dyess provided tentative meeting dates for the Council to review for availability.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

*Prepared by:
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Associate Board Secretary*