

STATE BOARD OF REGENTS
DIXIE STATE UNIVERSITY, ST GEORGE, UTAH
HOLLAND CENTENNIAL COMMONS
NOVEMBER 15, 2018

Contents of Minutes

Attendance 1

Oath of Office 2

Discussion – Legislative Audits 2018-11 and ILF 2018-D 2

Amendment to 2018-19 Board of Regents Meeting Schedule..... 2

Adjournment 5

STATE BOARD OF REGENTS
DIXIE STATE UNIVERSITY
HOLLAND CENTENNIAL COMMONS & GARDNER CENTER
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2018

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
MINUTES

Regents Present

Harris Simmons, Chair
Nina R. Barnes, Vice Chair
Jesselie B. Anderson
Wilford W. Clyde
Sanchaiti Datta
Marlin K. Jensen
Ron Jibson
Patricia Jones
JaKell Larson
Steve Lund
Robert S. Marquardt
Robert W. Prince
Mark Stoddard
Teresa L. Theurer
Thomas E. Wright

Regents Absent

Daniel W. Campbell
Cristina Ortega

Office of the Commissioner

David L. Buhler, Commissioner of Higher Education
Blair Carruth for Elizabeth Hitch, Associate Commissioner of Academic Affairs
Kimberly Henrie, Associate Commissioner for Planning, Finance and Facilities

Institutional Presidents Present

Ruth Watkins, University of Utah
Noelle Cockett, Utah State University
Scott L Wyatt, Southern Utah University
Astrid S. Tuminez, Utah Valley University
Richard B. Williams, Dixie State University
Deneece G. Huftalin, Salt Lake Community College
Norm Tarbox, Weber State University

Other Commissioner's Office and institutional personnel were also present. The signed role is on file in the Commissioner's Office.

Chair Simmons called the meeting to order at 4:35 p.m.

Oath of Office

Having been appointed to the Board of Regents, Sanchaita Datta took the Oath of Office, administered by Chair Simmons.

Discussion – Legislative Audits 2018-11 and ILF 2018-D

Charis Simmons opened the discussion by saying we want to talk about the recent audits and what has been done since the release of the audit information.

Commissioner Buhler said he would be focusing on the audit titled Performance Audit of the Board of Regents. It included ten recommendations; we agree with all ten recommendations and are in the process of implementing them; three have already been implemented (recommendation 3, 8, and 9). Five recommendations will be addressed by the regents in tomorrow's meeting and three will be fully implemented by March 2019, one in January, and the final recommendation will be implemented in the near future.

Commissioner Buhler said he was present for a meeting with the Legislative Audit Committee and the Legislative Auditors. Questions to the auditors dealt with the system and institutional metrics, which we have been working on for months. Proposed metrics will be presented tomorrow. He said he was disappointed in the auditor's response to questions regarding the metrics; they stated nothing is happening in this area. Commissioner Buhler was able to respond and correct the auditors, stating the Regents have been working on this for months and will be adopting metrics in the November Board meeting. He also said he heard back from the Executive Appropriations Committee and they appreciated his clarification that regents are actively working on this issue.

Regent Wright began by saying what bothered him about the audit was when they addressed the public hearings regarding tuition. How do we improve the public part of the process? It seems students should have a bigger say than what they have. This is about students and their ability to obtain an education and pay for it. How can we improve on this process?

Commissioner Buhler responded this is part of the reason we are moving to the two-day Board meeting in March. He also stated the institutions go through a process before requesting tier-two tuition increases, and there has always been a truth in tuition hearing.

President Cockett noted USU has a two-step process. They meet first with student government and talk about what the tuition will be used for, what will happen with tier 1 and what do we want to do with tier 2. They ask for ideas and recommendations from student government, they vote on the recommendations and then it is brought to President Cockett. After the legislature ends they hold a public hearing and invite students; they provide a history of tuition increases to students as well as a comparison to other similar institutions. Students have already expressed their thoughts and concerns before it goes to the regents. She said students are engaged and she's not sure how to engage more students.

President Watkins said the same type of process happens at the U. In order to gain more student participation, they have gone to a two-hour open house. They talk about what has been done with tuition in the past, how are we investing the dollars, and how will we invest. Nothing in the audit is troubling; we are

already doing this. What is troubling is that the auditors didn't get this information. We cannot make students participate. The fact is student participation is light, but not for the lack of effort.

Regent Larson said she met with the Utah Student Association Presidency, as well as the committee as a whole. They like the communication they have with presidents and their institution. What scares them is what the system is doing as a whole and decisions are made on a state level without dialogue. There is a lack of trust; they would like to know what the regents are asking for and why.

Commissioner Buhler said we talked about having the Student Regent help make sure students are aware of the public hearing for tuition increases.

Regent Clyde asked about having a more formal hearing at each institution and have regents attend them; regents then report back at the formal hearing with the Board. Regent Marquardt said it seems better to not create more meetings, but have regents attend the existing hearings already held at the institutions.

Regent Wright added if we are making the final decisions on tuition as regents, then regents need to interact more with students.

Regent Jones said it would be helpful to educate students on how funding works.

President Carlston said Snow has been holding hearings each year. They have a student fee committee and they make a recommendation. It is an educational process and he would like to have more student participation. We also welcome regents to join the meetings and believe it would be very beneficial.

Regent Theurer said it is very important for students to be involved, but sometimes we get beat up by parents. We should also invite parents as they don't understand how tuition works and they need to be educated as well.

President Williams said often times students want the increases to provide the services they want. Having the Resource and Review team, along with trustees attend the truth in tuition meetings could be helpful.

Regent Prince thought utilizing the Resource and Review visit by visiting with students regarding tuition would be a could use of time. This would mean some advance preparation.

President Tuminez ask if there is a tuition crisis in Utah. UVU has a formal process as well and sometimes students are willing to pay fees for the services they want. If the audit says the process is not robust enough, then we should address that, but she does not want to create a crisis when there is not one.

Chair Simmons thinks we could do a better job as part of the onboarding to educate new regents so they understand what the sources and uses of funds are in the system. He doesn't believe we have a crisis with tuition, but a bit of one with legislators and how they perceive regents are doing their job. We shouldn't get complacent because we haven't had a real crisis with tuition, but we should not be focusing on tuition as much as we should cost and quality. We should give continued thought and work with presidents to have good data on the cost of degrees. If we focus on cost and quality, that gives us license to go to the legislature and say we are doing a good job and ask them to do a good job by keeping it affordable. He

believes the legislature is asking us to be responsible. If we focus on costs and quality the rest becomes easier. We focus too much on what tuition looks like.

President Watkins agreed and said we are here to raise educational attainment, not necessarily reduce tuition.

Regent Clyde said the legislators are frustrated because we ask for money, but they don't know how the money is being used. We need to figure out how to measure results; we need to get more involved with legislators; they don't know all the good things happening.

Regent Jones said we have a communication problem. Institutions do a good job of articulating what their value is; regents need to do a better job communicating what that value is.

Regent Lund said we are doing a better job managing tuition than we get credit for. We need to touch every student and provide them with an opportunity to act.

President Tarbox said he doesn't know of a more proactive group of regents. This disconnect is not because of lack of effort. The issues are primarily communication and messaging.

President Barnes said this is an opportunity to communicate and lead.

Regent Wright said it comes down to what are the students thinking. He feels the audit is calling into question the need for the Board to exist. We need the data to make informed decisions. What matters at the end of the day is how much the students value the degree. Utah has always lead the way in higher education and this is our opportunity to step up again by redefining what it means to get a college degree.

There was some discussion about online education: what is offered, the cost of online courses, the low rate of completion, and the value of face to face education.

There was some discussion on what are we really trying to accomplish in higher education. What are today's employer's looking for? What are we trying to teach students? President Tuminez said this is an opportunity for regents to say "These are not degrees to nowhere, they are degrees to anywhere."

Regent Marquardt said the audit frustrates him because, yes we can improve in a lot of areas, but in the 11 years he has been on the Board there has been a dramatic improvement. USHE is a phenomenal success story and one of the most sufficient systems in the country.

President Watkins said the real problem we have is not enough people are earning the degree they came for and in a timely manner. This should be the number one thing we are working on. The action of keeping tuition costs the lowest is bad, the core issue is getting students the credentials they came for.

Regent Marquardt said he is impressed on how far we've come and we are headed in the right direction.

Regent Barnes said it was interesting to hear at the audit hearing three questions: (1) Where is the money going, (2) What are we investing in, and (3) What is the Board of Regents doing? She wants to make sure we are leading out and tonight's conversation was a great start.

Commissioner Buhler added the office has been working for a while on a way to stream the committee meetings and starting with tomorrow's meetings, the committee meetings will be streamed and posted. This is a step forward in transparency.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Loreen Olney, Executive Secretary

Date Approved: January 25, 2019