

THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON



LUIS M. PROENZA
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

October 4, 2013

Members of the University Community

I am pleased, Dear Colleagues . . .

. . . to forward for your information a summary of actions approved by The University of Akron's Board of Trustees at its regular meeting on August 7, 2013, and its special meeting on September 16, 2013. The sole action from the latter meeting, item 7 under Finance & Administration, is labeled accordingly.

Nominating Committee

1. Anthony J. Alexander

FirstEnergy Corp. President and Chief Executive Officer Anthony J. Alexander, who earned degrees in accounting and in law from The University of Akron was appointed as an Advisory Trustee for a three-year term, effective immediately.

Finance & Administration Committee

1. Personnel Actions

The personnel transactions approved by Trustees as amended are posted online at <http://www.uakron.edu/bot/docs/personnel-reports/Personnel-transactions-August2013.pdf>.

2. Purchases for More Than \$500,000

After an exhaustive review, the Office of the Vice President for Talent Development and Human Resources proposed an award to CVS CareMark via the Employer's Health Coalition for the University's prescription-benefit-management services, effective January 2014-December 2016.

Based on the bid responses, the University can expect to save 8 percent, or \$572,000, in year one and 8.9 percent, or \$2 million, over the three-year contract. The projected three-year cost of the contract is \$20.9 million. In addition to the financial savings, the University will be able to offer its employees the convenience of obtaining a 90-day supply of medication at CVS retail locations rather than using mail-order services.

3. Fee Changes

At its meeting on June 19, 2013, the Board approved proposed changes in course and miscellaneous fees for FY 2013. Two additional requests for miscellaneous fees were submitted since then. The Vice President for Strategic Engagement requested an increase in the undergraduate application fee, and the Department of Athletics requested a new fee to cover the cost of appearances by the Zippy mascot. The increase in the application fee of \$5 would help to support a comprehensive communication campaign and data mining for student recruitment. The requested appearance fee for the Zippy mascot would allow the Department of Athletics to pay students per outside event for their time and the expenses they incur. The fee also would support the care for and replacement of the mascot suits.

A proposal to add a fee in the College of Education, which was recommended by the Finance & Administration Committee at its July 29 meeting, was withdrawn by the administration for further study.

4. Cumulative Gift and Grant Income Report for July 2012- February 2013

For July 2012-June 2013, giving totaled \$45,328,715, 14 percent less than the \$52,804,561 received for July 2011-June 2012 and 1 percent more than the five-year average of \$45,079,090. The number of gifts increased from 21,907 for July 2011-June 2012 to 22,673 for Fiscal Year 2013.

5. Bierce Library Exterior Envelope Restoration/Roof Replacement Contract

Bids for the project were solicited in June 2013 and opened by the Purchasing Department on June 26. The project is state funded and is administered by the Department of Capital Planning and Facilities Management. The project consists of removing the existing roof layers, repairing concrete and steel roof decks as required, and installing a new reinforced roof and parapet coping. A construction contract for \$870,290 was recommended to be awarded to low-bidder Building Technicians Corp.

6. Buchtel Field Tennis Courts Construction Contracts

Bids for the project were solicited in June-July 2013 and were opened by the Purchasing Department on July 23. The locally funded project consists of constructing six tennis courts at Buchtel Field. Construction contracts were recommended to be awarded to the two low bidders. For general trades and site work, the successful bidder was Mr. Excavator, Inc. at \$630,000. R & M Electric, Inc. dba Summit Electric submitted the low bid for electrical work at \$129,500.

7. Approval of the Collective Bargaining Agreement Between The University of Akron and the Akron Chapter, American Association of University Professors (**APPROVED SEPT. 16, 2013**)

The proposed agreement would extend the existing Collective Bargaining Agreement through June 30, 2015 with several exceptions:

- Article 10 (Governance), Section 6, would be revised to allow regular full-time non-administrative faculty to participate in the selection process for a provost or president. The existing language only permits bargaining-unit faculty to participate.

- Article 16 (Compensation) would be revised to provide bargaining-unit members employed as of July 1, 2013 who were also employed by UA in fall semester of 2012 and whose performance review was satisfactory with a 1.5-percent increase to base salary upon ratification of the tentative agreement by UA and the AAUP. The same eligibility requirements and terms would apply to a merit-increase pool of 0.5 percent.
- Article 29 (Reappointment and Promotion of College Lecturers and Instructors) would be modified to incorporate the Memorandum of Understanding previously agreed upon between UA and the AAUP, reflecting current practice.
- Article 33 (Duration and Negotiation Procedure) would be modified so that the new contract would be retroactive for compensation purposes to July 1, 2013 and continue in full force and effect through June 30, 2015. In addition, negotiations for a successor agreement could begin no earlier than January 1, 2015, and mid-term increases/modifications for the 2014-15 academic year may be considered.

Academic Issues & Student Success Committee

1. Proposed Curricular Changes

Four curricular changes were recommended by the Faculty Senate, the Office of Academic Affairs and President Proenza—

- a new undergraduate minor in Ethics in Buchtel College of Arts and Sciences,
- a new graduate certificate in Nuclear Engineering in the College of Engineering, and
- both a new undergraduate certificate and a new associate-degree program in Simulation Technology in Healthcare in Summit College.

2. Summer 2013 Graduation

A tentative list of candidates was recommended for approval to be eligible to participate in summer 2013 commencement ceremonies. The tentative total of 1,278 degrees to be conferred included 69 doctoral, 418 master's, 540 baccalaureate and 251 associate degrees. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate had recommended approval of the list of graduates on July 31.

New Business

1. Performance Contracting/Energy Saving Proposal Authority
2. Performance Contracting Funding

The Performance Contracting/Energy Saving Proposal will reduce University energy consumption by more than 30 percent per year, resulting in average annual savings of approximately \$5.28 million and exceeding the energy reduction required by HB 251. The project is self-sustaining, with the savings generated throughout the 15-year financing period being sufficient to cover the cost of financing. The University's financing cost will be approximately 2 percent because part of the financing will be subsidized by a federal program run through the Ohio Air Quality Development Authority. The total project should cost \$60-64 million. OAQDA will issue the bonds.

3. Second Addendum to President's Contract

Details of the addendum and the presidential transition are available online at <http://www.uakron.edu/president/transition.dot>.

Notes

1. President's Report

I began my report by welcoming Mr. Alexander. I said it has been a privilege for me to work with him over these last many years, and this appointment provides some additional opportunity for Mr. Alexander to get reacquainted with his university. I pointed out that not only is Mr. Alexander twice an alumnus and many of his family members are alumni, but he is one of the University's most ardent supporters in the community, and he has become the leading corporate citizen in our community.

I said that, in the context of the Chairman's discussion of graduation rates, it is appropriate to remember that student success is the University's first priority, but it is not its only one. I gave Trustees a copy of an article from the July 27 the Atlantic magazine that posed an interesting question, "Could a Private University Have Made a Difference in Detroit?" I said that title could be broadened and is important to review because the author makes several strong points that are applicable to public universities as well as private universities. I noted one particular point—universities "do more for a city than graduate and employ educated workers. They also generate a kind of trade surplus..." (Pope, J. 2013 July 27. Could a private university have made a difference in Detroit.)

I said that universities are not merely graduation factories; they are engines of economic development. Throughout my years at The University of Akron and elsewhere, with the support of the Board, I have tirelessly promoted that message to potential partners in the private and public sectors. The efforts now are recognized by initiatives like the Timken laboratories, the National Center for Education and Research in Corrosion and Materials Performance, the University of Akron Research Foundation, the Akron Model and many other examples that could be cited. I said that the University must continue to catalyze innovation and collaborative partnerships while also providing more students with pathways to graduation. Student success and economic success go hand in hand, I said, and so must efforts to advance both.

I summarized by noting that it is ironic that many of leading business organizations tend to think that, when a company spends \$10 million, that is somehow better than when a university spends \$10 million or, in our case, many more millions of dollars. Because of that, I have argued with my colleagues in business and dared them to compare the economic impact of any corporate entities to that of the University in the last ten years. Certainly, many of these organizations are far larger, but their impact in most of those cases is distributed over many states, if not around the world, and the University's is highly focused here.

I concluded with a few notable achievements that had taken place since the Board's last meeting:

- The William Keck Foundation has awarded a \$1 million grant, the maximum permitted under its rules, to three of our researchers to study the properties of glassy materials. Dr. David Simmons, Dr. Alamgir Karim and Dr. Kevin Cavicchi are the first Ohio research team in more than five years to receive a Keck Foundation grant. The Foundation specifically supports projects that

have the potential to break open new territory in their fields. Past recipients of the Keck Foundation grants include institutions such as Stanford, Yale, Caltech, Princeton and Columbia. I said that, while I was at another very prestigious institution, we tried time and time again to get a grant from the Keck Foundation. It is truly a tribute to those three investigators that the Keck Foundation came forward with this award. I commend and congratulate them.

- The Higher Learning Commission informed the University that its accredited status now continues for another ten years. It will come up again in 2022. The University will have a focused visit on two existing issues that that need continued attention and work. I thanked Rex Ramsier, in particular, and all of the faculty, leadership and others who worked tirelessly on that reaccreditation. I said that the University was one of the very first to have its accreditation review under a new framework, which made it a little bit difficult because even the reviewers were not accustomed to the new process.
- A survey conducted by Affordable Colleges Online determined that The University of Akron offers the best return on investment for students of any public university in Northeast Ohio.
- An editorial praising the Innovation Generation scholarships appeared in the August 7 Beacon Journal. A copy was shared with Trustees.

2. Provost's Report

Dr. Sherman said that one might ask how much more could be said about Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation. He answered saying that it certainly is a signal of the excellence of this institution, and it certainly affirms the stature of this institution in higher education.

He said that, as one can imagine and as the University admitted, there is always room for improvement. He said the University self-identified that governance and learning outcomes assessment as areas to be pursued with a sense of urgency and a steadfast focus. Those areas for improvement were not only confirmed by the visiting team, but also by the HLC governing body, he said. With those two items in mind, Dr. Sherman said, the Board can be assured that the administration will work very, very closely with the Faculty Senate to implement a comprehensive assessment of student learning that will be a true indication of the value proposition of a University of Akron degree. To assure that is accomplished, he said, Executive Dean Chand Midha will lead that initiative.

Dr. Sherman said the University's focus on governance must include all constituency groups working together to develop a consultative planning and decision-making process that will come about by the evolution of the University Council. He said that Rex Ramsier, vice provost in the Office of Academic Affairs, will play a lead role in that area and that both he and Dr. Midha will work closely with the Provost to assure that the focused visit in 2015 is successful.

Dr. Sherman said that every year he has reported to the Board about activities during the summer to set the stage for the success of this institution during the next academic year. He said that he does not refer to those gatherings as some others might—retreats—because “we’re not retreating from anything. In fact, we call them ‘advances’ because we are advancing on our goals and objectives; we’re advancing on the future and the success of The University of Akron.”

He said that this year the vice presidents and deans were joined by school directors and department chairs, so the entirety of academic leadership of the institution participated. He said they focused on

schemes and strategies and action steps that will affirm and confirm and demonstrate commitment to the Pathways for Student Academic Success strategy, which is really an accountability strategy to ourselves, to the state and, most important, to the student. He said that strategy will contribute to the completion agenda for the state of Ohio. He said his office would be working with Mr. Tressel and others to bring to the Board by the appropriate time a completion and retention strategy that will have to be endorsed by the Board of Trustees by May 2014 before it is transmitted to the Chancellor of the University System of Ohio.

Dr. Sherman said that he advocated to that leadership that placement is likely to become the next gold standard in higher education. He said that the University's 80 percent placement objective within six months of graduation in a relevant career is likely to become, as well as completion, the next standard, even perhaps for the distribution of resources. He said that the leadership team is going to get ahead of that curve.

He said that the group discussed strategies that will assure student success because with student success comes budget stability. He said, "We are working across the institution to assure that everybody is firmly committed to student success, not only by their commitment, but by their actions because we know student success will be the success of The University of Akron."

3. Next Regular Meeting

The Board's next regularly scheduled meeting is Wednesday, October 16, 2013 in the Student Union, Board Room 339, with an executive session to begin at 8 a.m. and the public session to begin no earlier than 9 a.m. Committee meetings will be held on Monday, October 7.

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