

questions and recommendations about WVSU Research and Development Corporation / Land Grant

April 25, 2018

questions:

What is the administrative structure of the R+D Corporation? What rules govern its Board of Directors?

How were salaries of Land Grant administrators set and approved? Do these decisions square with R+D Corporation rules? How much of this information is public?

When were multi-year contracts through R+D Corporation approved? Where is the documentation that the R+D BOD approved them?

Are R+D employees (Land Grant, Title III, USDA positions) employees of the university (state money) or of R+D (federal money)? How does this impact a 5% pay raise for state employees?

What, if any, changes are being made to the R+D Corporation's rules, Board of Directors membership and function? What changes are being made to Land Grant's administrative organization?

We recommend that:

the R+D Corporation Board of Directors post on its web site all public documents, including agenda and minutes of meetings, membership and officers of the R+D Board (not just in the IRS 990 forms), and rules by which the Corporation is governed.

the R+D Board of Directors have a chair who is not also the highest-paid employee of Land Grant, as the Board is supposed to oversee Land Grant. The Board is "top heavy" with Land Grant administrators and light on representation from individuals who can represent the interests of Land Grant researchers and extension workers.

R+D Corporation financial operations be merged with those of the University, in the interests of cost efficiency and transparency. The Vice President for Finances should oversee all monies at WVSU.

the position of Vice President for Research and Public Service be re-positioned as an Associate Vice President for Research and Public Service, which reports to the Provost.

the administrative organization of Land Grant be streamlined with an eye to cost efficiency. For example, under an Associate VP for Research and Public Service might be an assistant to oversee research activities, and an assistant to oversee extension activities.

monies freed up by streamlining the administration of Land Grant be used to grow mission-related research across campus, especially in areas that have seen scant participation in the past. We envision joint appointments (50% teaching, 50% research) in areas such as social work, public policy, and nutrition, to name a few.