

West Virginia State University Board of Governors
Erickson Alumni Center, Grand Hall
January 24, 2018
Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. Williams called the meeting of the West Virginia State University Board of Governors to order at 4:04 p.m.

Present: Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Jones, Mr. Konstanty, Mr. Roberts, Dr. Smith, Mr. Swingle, Dr. Vaughan, and Mr. Williams. Several members of the administration, students, faculty, and staff were also present.

2. Verification of Appropriate Notice of Public Meeting

Mr. Williams verified the appropriate notice of public meeting.

3. Review and Approval of Meeting Agenda

Mr. Swingle motioned for approval of the agenda as presented, and Mr. Konstanty seconded the motion. The motion carried.

4. Roundtable Discussions

Mr. Williams said the meeting was being held in accordance with West Virginia Code to provide an opportunity for campus constituent groups to share their thoughts and ideas about the University. Each group was allotted time on the agenda to participate in a roundtable discussion.

- Item 4.a: Mr. Williams recognized Mr. Buchanan for his service on the Board as the classified staff representative. Mr. Buchanan introduced Classified Staff Council officers Robin Tabor and Mark Akers. Mr. Williams welcomed everyone in attendance and opened the floor for discussion. Ms. Tabor said there was not a formal report, as there is technically no longer a classified staff due to legislation passed last year. She said the staff did have questions about whether seniority would be considered if there were a layoff or furlough, although the bumping rights are no longer in code. Mr. Williams said the Policy Review Special Committee has been meeting on proposed policies, and there would be more information after the Committee reports to the full Board the following day. A question was also raised about whether R&D employees would be impacted by the furlough policy. Mr. Konstanty responded that there was some miscommunication regarding the proposed furlough policy when it first came to the Committee, and tomorrow would be the first time the group will be discussing it in detail. President Jenkins said R&D employees would not be included in the furlough policy. He further stated that, in a time of financial challenges, the University needs to have policies and procedures in place that are in the best interest of the institution if there is a time when staff would have to be furloughed. Mr. Swingle noted that the furlough policy is a temporary layoff and not permanent. Dr. McMeans commented that R&D employees were at risk of being furloughed when the federal government shut down, as they are paid from federal funds. Mr. Swingle said the University has

experienced a continuing battle year after year with budget cuts and financial challenges. He said when the Board sets policies, the intention is always to be fair and keep the University operating effectively and efficiently. Samantha Baisden asked if there is an opportunity for employees to comment when policies are being drafted. Mr. Williams said the Board representatives for each group is involved in the discussions. In addition, proposed policies are distributed campus-wide for a 30-day comment period. Dr. Smith noted that the Board meetings are open to the public and anyone can attend to hear discussions as policies are being developed. Mr. Konstanty provided an overview of the process for creating new policies or making policy revisions, as outlined in BOG Policy #1. President Jenkins said he and his Cabinet have been working to improve communication across campus so employees do not feel caught off guard when there are changes, such as new policies being drafted. Dr. Smith applauded the staff for their election of Mr. Buchanan; she said he is an asset to the Board and doing a great job. Mr. Williams thanked everyone for attending and participating in the discussion.

Item 4.b: Mr. Williams welcomed the faculty members in attendance. He acknowledged Dr. Vaughan for his service as the faculty representative on the Board. The floor was opened for discussion. Faculty Senate Chair Dr. Richard Ford thanked the Board for the opportunity of discussion. He also congratulated the Board for addressing the issue of post tenure review. He felt the majority of the faculty agree and appreciate the work being done to make the policy most effective. President Jenkins expressed appreciation for Dr. Vaughan for leading the charge to work with other faculty on redrafting the policy. An in-depth discussion was held on the evaluation instrument and process for tenured faculty. Dr. Tim Ruhnke expressed his concerns about the evaluation tool being used and the lack of data, to date. Several faculty proposed a multi-year review process. Dr. Barbara Ladner commented that the policy should focus on the evaluation of the faculty. She said she is supportive of the year-to-year evaluation. She also thinks the policy should include an oversight function of the evaluation tool on a periodic basis. Mr. Konstanty said when the policy was discussed before there were comments made about the tool needing revised, and his response was that if there needs to be improvements the faculty should work with Provost Jayasuriya to modify the tool; however, the evaluation tool does not affect the intent of the actual policy. Dr. Ladner agreed that the policy should be the backstop and the focus should be on improving the evaluation tool. Dr. Sonya Armstrong felt the one-year process is not a good representation of work by faculty members, as there is too much subjectivity in the evaluation tool. Mr. Williams noted that the President is evaluated by the Board every year. He went on to say that he appreciates the view of the faculty and reiterated that the goal of the Policy Review Special Committee and Board is to create policies and procedures that benefit the overall University.

Dr. Tom Guetzloff said he understands that President Jenkins is working to address budget deficits. However, he is still concerned about the control of expenditures. Mr. Williams said this is a continuing concern of the Board and administration. President Jenkins said the Budget Efficiency Task Force completed its work and has put forth good recommendations, many of which he will be implementing. He said the

University would be looking at organization, utilization of Title III funds, etc. He further stated that the budget has been challenging the last several years partly because of the state funding cuts, but also because of the reduced retention rate, need to grow enrollment, etc. There are many parts to the budget and it takes everyone working together to address the issue. Mr. Williams thanked the faculty for attending. He said the faculty have been great to work with, and he appreciates the collegiality.

- Item 4.c: Mr. Williams welcomed the students and acknowledged Mr. Roberts for his service as the student representative on the Board. He provided an overview of the role of the Board and asked for introductions of the Board, students and President's Cabinet. Mr. Jones said it is great to be a part of the discussion and he looks forward to hearing from the students. President Jenkins thanked the students for being part of this shared governance opportunity. He reminded everyone that we are all here for one reason and that is our students. He said the different backgrounds of our students are what makes State so special. No matter where you come from you have a story and your story has value and adds to the value of the university. He encouraged the students to be candid in this evening's discussion.

Student Government Association (SGA) President Taylor Conaway said she understands that tuition revenue is broken out to different department and asked about the impact on students when the University does not meet enrollment projections. Mr. Williams said adjustments are made to the budgets as needed. President Jenkins said the enrollment is the lifeline of the University. When the enrollment target is missed adjustments are made because that number affects all budgets and services. For example, the SGA budget depends on tuition revenue. If the enrollment number shrinks, the SGA budget shrinks and they have to adjust their budget and plans for programs. He stressed this is why it is important for everyone to do their part to grow the University. Enrollment Management and Student Affairs and Business and Finance work together to look at enrollment, budget adjustments, etc. He said retention also plays a critical role in the budget. President Jenkins went on to say the University always considers the impact to students and seeks ways to meet budget shortfalls without lessening students' experience and service. Dr. Smith commended the students for raising a question about budget. She said understanding the importance of budgets and seeing the process here at the University is a great experience that will stay with them after graduation.

Emily Robinson said she is the president of an organization on campus that advocates for students with disabilities, which makes up about 10 percent of the student body. She has had numerous conversations about disability and accessibility issues. She said many of the students feel the faculty disregard the needs of these students even though accommodations have been approved. President Jenkins said if the Office of Disability Services grants an accommodation, no faculty member will disregard or trump federal law. Dr. Vaughan suggested that the students share the comments expressed this evening with students in other organizations. Ms. Robinson said when students express concerns to her, she asks them to go see the President or Provost, although there is a chain of command, because there is a sense of urgency. Mr. Roberts acknowledged

Ms. Robinson and thanked her for bringing this issue forward to the Board. He encouraged her to attend the Board meetings to hear more discussion, especially the Policy Review Special Committee. Rachel Fortune, an education major, said if a student is not receiving their accommodations in class, they are losing time to do their work that they are missing. She said there should be an accelerated process for the disability issue because of the impacts on the students. Alex Bennett said the University needs a process that is more effective because students are busy with school, work, and families and do not always have time to go through multiple levels to have an issue addressed. President Jenkins said we have to continue working together to make sure our community is as strong as it is can be. He said he wants to make sure there are multiple people on campus who can help students and are empowered to handle a situation. He also reminded students that they have to do their part, as well. Students cannot fall short in what they are supposed to be doing and then make demands on the University. Mr. Bennett asked how the University is conveying to the students what the processes are and it is frustrating for students. Further discussion was held on accessibility concerns, including lack of responses by some faculty. Mr. Bennett proposed an idea for a complaint process where SGA could help monitor issues and concerns. Ms. Conaway said students would also like to have input in faculty evaluations. President Jenkins noted that the accrediting bodies of institutions are requiring schools to have a student complaint process on their website and University staff are in the process of creating a link. The process will also allow for tracking feedback. Provost Jayasuriya said there is a process for evaluating faculty that must be followed. Ms. Conaway felt advising, compliance with disability accommodations, communication with students, etc. should be part of the evaluation of faculty. In addition, she asked if she could be made aware when the student complaint link is active so she can communicate it to the student body. Victoria Ramey suggested having a way to address when a complaint is filed with the wrong area that the process does not have to restart from the beginning. President Jenkins said the new complaint process would help eliminate some of that issue. Mr. Bennett suggested including information about the complaint process in the freshman experience course. President Jenkins agreed and said Provost Jayasuriya and faculty are working on revamping the class. President Jenkins reminded students that FRPA cannot be violated, and allowing SGA to monitor detailed information about a complaint could lead to a violation.

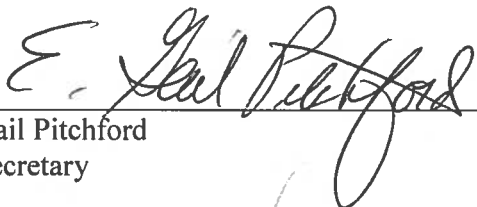
Tosin Akinsipe said she is a graduate student from Nigeria, and when she first came to State it felt like there was no place for the graduate students and like they were not part of the student body. She is glad to see that it has changed and the graduate students are being included more in the system. She said there have been issues with graduate students filing complaints and not seeing a resolution. She thanked the Board for including them and allowing the opportunity for them to be at the table. President Jenkins said he would be holding town hall meetings with students, faculty, and staff. Details for each meeting will be emailed to the campus community. He asked the students to attend and encourage other students to participate. Group discussion was also held on closing and treating the campus during inclement weather. President Jenkins stressed that safety comes first. He said it helps to hear from the campus community about conditions in their areas from where they are traveling to get to

campus, as that could assist in decision making regarding closing campus due to weather. He said when campus is open, stairs, and walkways should be clear of snow and ice and the University will do better in that area. Mr. Williams thanked the students for attending. He said the information they shared helps the development and work of the Board.

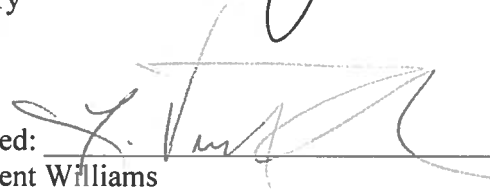
5. Next Meeting Date
January 25, 2018

6. Adjournment
With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Gail Pitchford
Secretary

Approved: 

L. Vincent Williams
Chair