

**West Virginia State University
Presidential Search Advisory Committee
Erickson Alumni Center, Grand Hall
January 22, 2016
Minutes**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. Lipscomb called the meeting of the West Virginia State University Board of Governors Presidential Search Advisory Committee to order at 10:00 a.m.

Present: Dr. Eya, Mr. Jones, Mr. Kelley, Mr. Konstanty, Mr. Lipscomb, Mr. Patton, Ms. Pitchford, Dr. Ruhnke, Dr. Saffore, Dr. Smith, Mrs. Squirts, Ms. Strong-Treister, Dr. Thralls, Mr. Williams, and Chancellor Hill. **Absent:** Dr. Ford-Ahmed and Mr. Payton.

2. Verification of Appropriate Notice of Public Meeting

Ms. Pitchford announced the verification of appropriate notice of public meeting.

3. Review and Approval of Meeting Agenda

Dr. Thralls motioned for approval of the agenda as presented, and Mr. Kelley seconded the motion. The motion carried.

4. Review of BOG and HEPC Approved Search Procedure

At the request of Co-Chairs Lipscomb and Pitchford, Chief of Staff and Special Assistant to the President Ashley Schumaker provided a detailed overview of the Search Procedure as approved by the West Virginia State University Board of Governors on January 4, 2016 and the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission on January 14, 2016. She noted that the approved Search Procedure was provided in the agenda on pages 3 through 6.

Ms. Schumaker provided an overview of the established timeline. Based on Committee discussion, Ms. Schumaker advised that following the process is important; however, the dates can be shifted based on the Committee's work. Chancellor Hill agreed that the important component in the process is following the Search Procedure and flexibility will be provided, if needed, as it relates to the established timeline for the process as a whole and the individual activities.

Ms. Schumaker provided a breakdown of the Presidential Search Advisory Committee membership. Dr. Ann Brothers Smith, Board of Governors Chair, advised that Ms. Schumaker will serve as administrative staff for the search.

Ms. Schumaker discussed the Confidentiality Oath section of the approved Search Procedure and read the Confidentiality Statement, which was developed by staff and approved by the Co-Chairs following a review by HEPC General Counsel Bruce Walker. Ms. Schumaker advised that all Committee members must sign the document as part of today's meeting. Co-Chair Pitchford requested that Ms. Schumaker forward the document electronically to those who joined the meeting by conference call. Co-Chairs

Lipscomb and Pitchford discussed the importance of signing and adhering to this document during the active search process and indefinitely. Co-Chair Pitchford advised that, if someone has yet to sign the form prior to the next Committee meeting, they will be asked to do so before continuing with their service on the Committee, including participation in the January 27, 2016 meeting and subsequent activities.

Ms. Schumaker discussed the “Public Information” section and the role of Co-Chairs Lipscomb and Pitchford and Board of Governors Chair Smith as it relates to making public statements regarding the search.

Ms. Schumaker also reviewed the remaining sections of the Search Procedure, specifically related to the search firm, the statement of characteristics and qualities – position announcement, screening process, and budget. Ms. Schumaker noted that a full budget will be developed and presented to the Committee as part of the January 27, 2016 meeting.

5. Search Firm

Vice President for Business and Finance Melvin Jones provided an overview of the Request for Proposal process, including approval of the Board of Governors on January 4, 2016 and subsequent issuance by staff. Mr. Jones advised that a total of six vendors responded to the RFP and submitted formal bids. He advised that the bids were reviewed and scored by an internal group, which he led.

Mr. Jones provided an overview of the vendors and their responses, including experience with HBCUs, diversity placements, presentation of proposal, incomplete searches, other current presidential searches, and guarantee if candidate leaves office. Mr. Jones also followed up with each vendor with a few additional questions regarding the process and their availability for January 27, 2016 to conduct the forums/conversations with students, faculty, staff, alumni, etc, and to meet with the Committee.

Mr. Jones noted that Greenwood Asher’s proposal was received after the formal deadline; however, purchasing guidelines allow for their consideration.

Mr. Williams noted concern with the aggressive timeline and the need for formal Board of Governors approval. He advised that the schedule is tight based on the need to have a new President in place by July 1, 2016; however, it is important to maintain a quality and thorough process. Mr. Jones advised that the vendors responded positively to the timeline and their ability to deliver within the specific period.

Dr. Ruhnke advised that, based on the information provided by Mr. Jones, Greenwood Asher received the best score and has the best price. He asked if anyone in the room had a bad experience with them in the past. At the request of Mr. Konstanty, Committee discussion was held regarding Greenwood Asher, past experiences with the firm, and their direct knowledge of the University. It was noted by several individuals that the University has had a great deal of positive interaction with Greenwood Asher, including the prior presidential search and other senior-level leadership positions at the University. President Hemphill noted that the University is unique in regard to its status as both an

HBCU and land-grant institution. He noted that Greenwood Asher's prior experience with and vast knowledge of the institution would serve the Committee and the Board of Governors well.

Dr. Saffore echoed the sentiments of fellow Committee members. He expressed his confidence in the process and utilizing the services of Greenwood Asher to assist the Committee. Mr. Konstanty motioned to accept Greenwood Asher's proposal despite the lateness of their submission, and Dr. Saffore seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Dr. Thralls stated that the Committee should do what results in the selection of the best president for the University, not one that is in place by July 1, 2016. He commented that the Committee will be faced with the need to move forward at multiple times during the process. He advised against adhering to the timeline if additional time is needed to make sound decisions. Dr. Thralls requested an opportunity to interview the top vendors before making a decision. There was Committee discussion regarding the format of the interviews and the impact on the established timeline, specifically the January 27, 2016 forums/conversations and Committee meeting.

Mr. Konstanty advised that he values Dr. Thralls' feedback regarding the important of selecting the right firm to assist with this important search. He stated his belief that Greenwood Asher is a quality firm with positive experiences, and the price is very appealing to the University. Dr. Thralls responded that having a good rapport with the firm is important and not something that can be determined based on the submission of a printed proposal. Dr. Thralls encouraged the Committee to opt for in-person interviews before selecting a firm. Co-Chair Pitchford advised that her experience with presidential searches is very limited; however, she has interviewed many investment firms. She advised that the sales team normally participates in the interviews rather than the individuals she worked with on specific projects. Mr. Jones indicated that, as part of the submissions, the firms had to identify the specific individuals who will work with the Committee.

Dr. Smith inquired if there was a recommendation and/or motion from the Committee regarding the hiring of a search firm. Based on additional Committee discussion, Dr. Thralls advised that he would be comfortable with the Committee's approval of a selected firm as part of today's meeting if the Co-Chairs have a personal conversation with the specific individuals who will work with the Committee prior to finalizing any contracts and/or other documentation.

Mr. Kelley stated that, based on his service on the Committee for the prior presidential search, flexibility with the timeline may be needed. He indicated a level of comfort in moving forward with the selection of Greenwood Asher following a discussion with the Co-Chairs. Co-Chair Lipscomb expressed that no firm can guarantee a candidate will be selected, but he has a high level of confidence in Greenwood Asher based on the outcome of the prior search. Mr. Konstanty motioned, in accordance with BOG Policy #61 and the BOG and HEPC approved Search Process, to move forward with the selection of a search firm and that search firm be Greenwood Asher, contingent upon a satisfactory conference call with the Co-Chairs. Dr. Thralls seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

6. **Possible Executive Session under the Authority of West Virginia Code §6-9A-4 to Discuss Personnel Matters – Presidential Search Process**
No discussion or action occurred as part of this item.
7. **Additional Action and Comment**
No other matters were brought before the Committee for discussion.
8. **Next Meeting**
January 27, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.
9. **Adjournment**
With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:09 a.m.

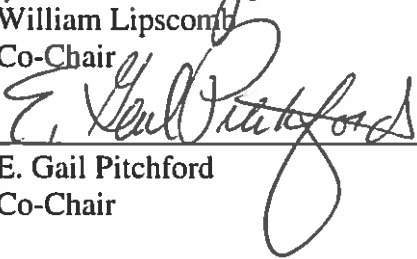
Respectfully submitted,

Ashley L. Schumaker
Chief of Staff and Special Assistant to the President

Approved:



William Lipscomb
Co-Chair



E. Gail Pitchford
Co-Chair