

September 20-21, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Special Committee on the Nomination of a
President:

John O. Wynne, Chair	Gordon F. Rainey, Jr.
Daniel R. Abramson	Warren M. Thompson
A. Macdonald Caputo	Robert Fatton
Susan Y. Dorsey	James N. Galloway
Helen E. Dragas	Ann B. Hamric
Thomas F. Farrell, II	John C. Jeffries, Jr.
W. Heywood Fralin	Deborah E. McDowell
Austin Ligon	John Nelson
Vincent J. Mastracco, Jr.	Peyton T. Taylor, M.D.
Jenifer Warner	

and

The Remaining Members of the Board:

The Hon. Alan A. Diamonstein	The Hon. Lewis F. Payne
Robert D. Hardie	Don R. Pippin
Ms. Glynn D. Key	E. Darracott Vaughan, Jr., M.D.
Randal J. Kirk	Rahul Gorawara

FROM: Susan G. Harris

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Special Committee on the Nomination of
a President on September 20 and 21, 2009

The Special Committee on the Nomination of a President of the Board of Visitors of the University of Virginia met, in Open Session, at 2:00 p.m., on Sunday, September 20, 2009, in the Board Room of the Pavilion at the Boar's Head Inn; John O. Wynne, Chair, presided.

The entire Committee was present for the meeting save Warren Thompson on the first day. Mr. Thompson attended the second day of the meeting.

Also present were Leonard W. Sandridge, R. William Funk, Ronald C. Forehand, Ms. Carol S. Wood, Ms. Susan A. Carkeek, Justin B. Thompson, Ms. Debra Rinker, and Ms. Susan G. Harris.

Opening Remarks

The Chair began the meeting by commenting on the necessity of moving "in synch" with the full Board of Visitors. He said the two days would be spent on coming to consensus on the challenges and opportunities facing the University, and the important attributes of a president. At the next meeting the Committee will finalize the presidential profile.

Challenges and Opportunities Reports

The Chair called on Mr. Sandridge to summarize the staff report on challenges and opportunities facing the University.

Mr. Sandridge listed priorities of the staff, which included continuing to follow the current path, being active in the community, working to improve diversity, and being a "team player". The staff paper noted the six characteristics of a leader that had been developed by Mr. Casteen and used in the leadership development program.

The staff also expressed concerns about upholding the Jeffersonian traditions, recruiting and retaining employees, developing and expanding on-line learning opportunities, and efficiently utilizing resources. They said they thought a president must be aware of the unique differences and challenges of a public institution versus private institutions. Finally, they said they were grateful for the opportunity to provide input.

The Chair called on Mr. Nelson and Ms. Warner to present the student report.

Mr. Nelson said there were five qualities the students thought were critical for a president. He and Ms. Warner took turns explaining each quality with Mr. Nelson presenting the first one. The qualities are:

1. A leader who understands and is passionate about the University's core values and student experience
2. An innovative thinker who can critically assess plans for the University's future taking into account the work of the Commission on the Future of the University. This would include determining the right balance between a focus on the Commonwealth and the global community
3. An individual who is able and willing to engage students and be more visible on Grounds

4. Someone who is open-minded with a strong record on diversity. This includes continuing AccessUVA and making extracurricular opportunities more affordable for students
5. An individual who is able to effectively raise private funds to support the University

The Chair said he was very impressed with the student report and thanked Mr. Nelson and Ms. Warner for their work. He asked Ms. Hamric to present the faculty report.

Ms. Hamric said that the bulk of the faculty consulting group consisted of the executive committee of the Faculty Senate. They reached out to all Senators for input. The consulting group tried to cluster comments into themes, which include bringing in outstanding junior faculty; internationalizing the curriculum; increasing the focus on interdisciplinary opportunities; increasing faculty engagement in governance; a forceful, imaginative communicator; "dynamic tension": someone engaged by tensions who is able to see how exciting the opportunities can be; commitment to educational breadth and the ability to see the need to innovate while sustaining the University's finest traditions.

Challenges and Opportunities Received from E-mail, On-line, and Forum Feedback

The Chair asked Mr. Sandridge to discuss the feedback received from other sources.

Mr. Sandridge said approximately 200 people attended the forums, and the search office has received hundreds of pages of input from a variety of constituents. There are some common themes as well as insightful single comments about challenges and opportunities. Some comments directly contradict others. There is much praise for the University, but some thoughtful criticism as well. Many expressed appreciation for the opportunity to provide input.

Mr. Sandridge saw 14 common themes:

1. Sound management of fiscal resources
2. More autonomy from the state legislature
3. Challenge of maintaining University traditions
4. International ethos
5. Elevate University's academic standing through attracting and retaining highly skilled faculty and top graduate students

6. Diversity as a challenge and opportunity, including a strong out-of-state component of the student body
7. Sustainability—environmental challenges
8. Town/gown relationships. Because the town is dependent on the University, there is a significant responsibility on the part of the University
9. Managing competing purposes including growing enrollment while shrinking the faculty/student ratio and balancing commitments to arts, humanities, and sciences
10. Articulating goals and making them known: bold vision and risk-taking as well as accountability and transparency
11. Attracting the very best graduate students and competing in the global knowledge-based economy
12. Importance of place; the region is beautiful and historic
13. Managing technology
14. Managing tension among cost, quality, and access

There were also some important individual comments, including concern about understanding the issues inherent in a teaching hospital; recognizing the opportunity to raise private money through a strong annual giving program; realizing the opportunities to expand because of the availability of land; and understanding the benefits of increasing undergraduate enrollment.

Mr. Sandridge said many comments were directed at the University's connections with the Commonwealth and the local community, and there was generally widespread support for preserving the current in-state/out-of-state balance in the student body.

Executive Session

At 3:20 p.m. Mr. Abramson made a motion to convene in Executive Session, which was adopted by the Committee:

That the Special Committee on the Nomination of a President go into Closed Session to discuss, as part of the presidential search process, the evaluation of officers, employees and nominees, and the evaluation of the performance of departments or schools where such evaluation will necessarily involve discussion of the performance of individuals, as provided for in Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia.

The Committee resumed its meeting in open session at 5:15 p.m. and adopted the following resolution certifying that its discussions in Executive Session had been conducted in accordance with the exemptions permitted by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act:

That we vote on and record our certification that, to the best of each Committee member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and which were identified in the motion authorizing the closed session, were heard, discussed or considered in closed session.

The Chair recessed the meeting until 8:30 a.m. Monday, September 21.

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At 8:30 a.m. on September 21, the Chair commenced the day's meeting by introducing Hunter R. Rawlings III, who spoke to the Committee by telephone.

Mr. Rawlings has served two appointments as visiting University Professor in Classics and he remains a professor of classics and history and president emeritus at Cornell University. Mr. Rawlings was Cornell's president from 1995 through 2003 and interim president in 2005 and 2006. He was also president of the University of Iowa from 1988 through 1995. Mr. Rawlings was asked to provide his perspective on the presidential search and on the qualities and qualifications that he sees as important in the University's next president.

Mr. Rawlings told the Committee that the University is known for its undergraduate program and professional schools. It is not known as strong in the sciences and science research.

He said the University needs a distinguished academic, whether in humanities, science, or the social sciences, to propel the University to the top ranks of higher education. He or she must know where to invest in the sciences; someone who understands science and can help lead strategic choices. Although it would be good to recruit a great scientist it is not a *sine qua non*.

The style of the individual selected as president is important -- whether he or she is an "inside" president or an "outside" president. An "inside" president leads the process of academic priority-setting and investing, meets regularly with the faculty, and develops a relationship with the students. Some presidents also do teaching.

He spoke briefly about the importance of confidentiality. The best candidates will not stay in the process if confidentiality cannot be assured.

Mr. Rawlings said the hospital and the athletics programs are the number 1 and number 2 areas of difficulty at a university, and not necessarily in that order. Large sums of money are involved and often large egos. Good judgment is what we must be looking for more than anything else.

Mr. Rawlings talked about how difficult the job of president is; it requires giving up a private life. To be successful an individual must have a passion for the job and be totally dedicated and committed. He suggested visiting a candidate's campus to do full due diligence. However, the contacts must be done at the end of the process, very rapidly and by several people. Without this step one cannot learn potentially hidden information about a candidate, but it is a delicate process.

In answer to a question from Warren Thompson, Mr. Rawlings indicated that it was important for the president to have a working knowledge of business matters. The risks are very high and the president must appreciate those risks.

In response to a question from Ms. Dorsey, Mr. Rawlings said he thought the University's blind spot might be its location. Many candidates will not be aware of the political conditions in Virginia and the historic context of the University's founding and development.

Mr. Rawlings said that experience is important. The candidate must be familiar with a research university, but he or she does not have to be a sitting president. Also, crisis management experience is necessary. The ability to build a team across broad functions is crucial. This requires working with and supporting the team members, including personal attention to their needs and wants. The team must feel a sense of loyalty to the president.

Mr. Rawlings responded to a question about the importance of transparency in decision making by saying that although transparency is important, maintaining confidentiality in the decision making process is also important.

He said taking heat, and sometimes a lot of heat, is part of the job. The president should be willing to make tough decisions in the best interests of the university and be able to focus on the long term.

If the University wants to go one step higher in the public's estimation, it needs a president at the top of his or her field. Academic credentials and faculty respect are very important.

Diversity must be one of the president's highest values, and it should be demonstrated in decision making on administrative, faculty, and student recruiting.

The selection of a non-conventional president was doable, with a strong provost in place. However, a president with fine academic credentials was an additional positive message to the world.

Mr. Rawlings' comments on the fundraising component of the president's job focused on the need to convey that donors will not set the priorities for the institution. The president must convey the values and priorities of the institution to the donors which is difficult and delicate.

Qualities and Qualifications from E-mail, On-line and Forum Feedback

Following the conversation with Mr. Rawlings, Mr. Sandridge provided some comments about the messages received on presidential qualities and qualifications. He said there were a number of comments about maintaining the principles of the founder, understanding the culture, and maintaining the Honor System and other traditions.

Other comments focused on academic leadership; financial strengths; political acumen; good communicator and motivator who is trustworthy and respected; and warnings about hiring a "change agent". Some expressed concern about athletics and maintaining competitive programs while treating athletes as students first. Several thought the president should be an ambassador for the University to the local community.

At 9:40 a.m. upon adoption of the following motion by Mr. Abramson, the Committee continued its work in closed session.

That the Special Committee on the Nomination of a President go into Closed Session to discuss, as part of the presidential search process, the evaluation of officers, employees and nominees, and the evaluation of the performance of departments or schools where such evaluation will necessarily involve discussion of the performance of individuals, as provided for in Section 2.2-3711 (A) (1) of the Code of Virginia.

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Nomination of a President

At 12:05 p.m., upon approval of the following motion, the Committee resumed the meeting in open session:

That we vote on and record our certification that, to the best of each Committee Member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements and which were identified in the motion(s) authorizing the closed session, were heard, discussed or considered in closed session.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

SGH:lah

These minutes have been posted to the University of Virginia's Board of Visitors website.

<http://www.virginia.edu/bov/specialcommminutes.html>