

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM

Board of Trustees

December 15, 2008

University of Maine at Augusta

Trustee Affairs Committee Meeting

PRESENT: **Committee Members:** Victoria Murphy, Chair; Jean Flahive, Tamera Grieshaber, Paul Mitchell. **Staff:** John Diamond and John Lisnik.

ABSENT: Barry McCrum, Wayne Newell and Lyndel Wishcamper.

Trustee Murphy, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

Trustee Murphy led a review and discussion of the committee's FY09 work plan, which had been adopted at the committee's November 7, 2008 meeting.

Mr. John Lisnik, Assistant to the Chancellor for Governmental Relations, provided an update on the recently seated 124th Maine Legislature. He and Committee members discussed effective ways to communicate with policy makers. Committee members expressed an interest in assisting Mr. Lisnik through advocacy and engagement with policy makers, community leaders, and the general public. Trustee Grieshaber noted that USM President Botman had scheduled a gathering for community members and legislators from the Lewiston-Auburn area. Trustee Flahive emphasized the importance and value of a coordinated advocacy message.

Mr. Lisnik distributed brochures regarding the January 16, 2009 Higher Education Symposium, which is being jointly sponsored by UMS, the Maine Community College System, and Maine Maritime Academy. The symposium's primary audience will consist of state legislators, with trustees and others invited to attend.

Mr. Lisnik also distributed contact information about the 124th Legislature's leadership teams.

Committee members discussed possible changes to the Board's bylaws and operating practices. Trustee Mitchell suggested that the Committee review the Board's nominating process for selecting Board officers. The Committee agreed to discuss this issue at its January 2009 meeting.

Committee members discussed a list of advocacy activities that could be undertaken during the 2009 legislative session. Mr. John Diamond, Executive Director of External Affairs, noted that University Credit Union had expressed a willingness to host a reception for state legislators in Augusta, to which UMS officials and advocacy network members would be invited. The program could feature a short presentation or testimonials about the importance of the universities to Maine's educational and economic needs. Committee members expressed interest in such an event and asked Mr. Diamond to gather more specifics prior to the Committee's January meeting.

Trustee Grieshaber said she would like to see the advocacy network engaged in more activity to promote UMS and higher education. She noted that the Lewiston-Auburn area's College for ME

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program has many program participants and leaders who could be a resource for university advocacy purposes.

Trustee Murphy asked for updated talking points to help Board members prepare guest editorials, letters to the editor, and other opportunities for promoting the value of Maine's public universities.

Trustee Flahive suggested that UMS work with the Governor's office to create a "Maine Higher Education Week," which would offer opportunities to highlight the role and importance of higher education in Maine. The Committee also discussed initiating the establishment of a "National Higher Education Day," using UMS's connections with its political leaders and its national higher education organizations. It appears that no such national awareness day currently exists.

The Committee discussed a request by UMaine and UMPI for a waiver of the Board's policy requiring that honorary degree nominations be submitted one year prior to the university commencement in which it would be awarded. (UMS Policy Manual: Section 213—Administrative Procedures for Honorary Degree Policy). The Committee voted unanimously to approve the request. (Motion by Trustee Flahive; seconded by Trustee Grieshaber.)

The Committee discussed whether the Board should have a formal policy pertaining to employment opportunities within the University System that might attract interest from sitting or former Board members. No such policy currently exists. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend to the full Board the following amendment to the by-laws:

"A member of the Board of Trustees shall not be eligible for employment within the University of Maine System for one year following that individual's final day of membership on the Board. This policy shall not preclude a current or former Board member from serving as acting chancellor or interim chancellor so long as a search process for the chancellor's position is initiated as part of that appointment." (Motion by Trustee Grieshaber; seconded by Trustee Mitchell.)

The Committee agreed to schedule its next meeting as part of the Board's January 11-12, 2009, meeting at the University of Southern Maine.

The Committee adjourned at 3:50 p.m. (Motion by Trustee Mitchell; seconded by Trustee Grieshaber.)

Adjournment.

Submitted by John Diamond for

J. Kelley Wiltbank, Clerk of the Board