BOT/BOV Engagement Recommendations

The Ad Hoc Committee on BOT/BOV engagement met November 6th. The Committee members are: Dana Saucier (UMFK BOV), Tony Payne (USM BOV), Miles Theeman (UM BOV), Trustee Norm Fournier, Trustee Victoria Murphy, President Cindy Huggins, Chancellor James Page.

Under statute (Maine P&S laws 1997 Ch 35), the purposes of BOVs are:
- To advocate for the university
- To raise private funds for the university
- To advise the president of the university on community and regional needs
- To review for final recommendation to the Board of Trustees tuition increases, new academic programs and the 5-year plan of the university.
- To submit an annual report of its activities to the Board of Trustees

The Committee members strongly agree that with over 140 committed business and community leaders, BOVs add substantial value as presidential advisors and community/university advocates to their respective campuses. There is also agreement, however, that an engaged BOT/BOV partnership could accomplish much more for UMS, its students, and the state. Committee member Tony Payne sums up the potential very well: “I believe the BOVs can serve or are serving as powerful liaisons between the university campuses and the vast resources within the community in terms of employment, enrichment and engagement. If tasked to specific and measurable objectives (e.g. hiring, internships, fundraising, research, legislation, enrollments, etc.) the collective influence of the BOT and BOVs could be transforming”.

The Committee makes the following recommendations:

1. BOT Minutes and communications of specific interest to BOVs should be distributed to BOVs following every BOT meeting. Likewise, BOV Minutes and communications of specific interest to the BOT should be sent to the BOT Clerk following every BOV meeting for appropriate distribution.

2. The BOT sponsor an annual retreat with representatives of each BOV. The agenda should include both: (1) intra-BOV opportunities for mentoring, shared learnings and best practices (reflecting that different BOVs have different experiences and are in different stages of their developments); and (2) BOT/BOV have interactions to discuss comment and advocate for both existing and proposed strategic and statewide UMS priorities.

3. The BOT should communicate strategic priorities and actions to all BOVs no less than annually.

4. BOT meetings on a campus should include a scheduled meeting with the BOT and local BOV to discuss items of importance including strategies and initiatives. Social interactions with BOV members at, e.g., trustee dinners should continue.

5. Annual BOV reports should be delivered by BOV representatives and discussed as part of the regular BOT agenda, as opposed to being included for information purposes only.

6. The Chancellor’s office will continue to invite and encourage BOV participation at important community and legislative occasions.

Staffing responsibilities for these and related actions will lie with the recently reconfigured BOT Clerk’s office.

JHP 11/14/2013