

Minutes of the  
Northern Illinois University  
**PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
February 1, 2013

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order By Chair Robert Boey at approximately 12:17 p.m. in Room 315, Altgeld Hall. A roll call of the committee conducted by Recording Secretary Sharon Banks-Wilkins was as follows:

**Present**

Robert Boey  
John Bruce  
James Ciesla  
Jeff Compher  
Mark Cordes  
Michael Duffy  
Lisa Freeman  
Janice Hamlet  
Millivoje Kostic  
Todd Latham  
Delonte LeFlore  
Amy Levin  
Rosita Lopez

Michael Malone  
William McCoy  
Kathy McFadden  
Barbara Posadas  
Deborah Robertson  
Jennifer Rosato  
Alan Rosenbaum  
Lee Shumow  
Andy Small  
Pamela Smith  
Michael Theodore  
Gregory Waas

**Not Present**

Dennis Barsema

Present by Teleconference: Committee members: Anthony Iosco and Francine Pepitone; Parker Executive Search: Laurie Wilder and Porsha Williams

Also present were General Counsel Jerry Blakemore, Deputy General Counsel Gregory Brady and Assistant Recording Secretary Patricia Erickson.

**APPROVAL OF PROPOSED AGENDA**

Chair Boey asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Michael Malone made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Rosita Lopez. The motion was approved.

**PARKER EXECUTIVE SEARCH UPDATE**

Since Laurie and Porsha have to catch a flight shortly, Chair Boey said, I am going to move them up on the agenda. Ms. Wilder thanked the Chair and said they appreciated his being considerate of their time. I just wanted to give you a brief update on the candidate pool and talk a little bit about interviews. I want to emphasize to this committee that the Candidate Status Log remains confidential. To date, you can see on the Log that we have 20-plus nominations and 18 individuals who have formally submitted their materials. But, we are constantly in contact with new candidates and that log will continue to change and change a great deal as we move closer to the next date in this process. As we have talked about many times, many candidates are very concerned about confidentiality and, typically, will not commit and submit their material until the very last moment. They are aware that this committee is going to start reviewing candidates on February 22, and that you will be meeting on the first to select the candidates for interviews on March 7 and 8. There are a number of very good potential candidates on the log, but, ultimately, the candidates you will be considering will be developed as this process unfolds. Porsha and I have had three or four conversations just this morning with some very good candidates that have indicated a real level of interest, but are not yet fully committed, not ready to be put down on

paper, but are considering it. Again, I feel good about where we are and what people are saying about the university.

On the Candidate Status Log, originally there was a candidate on the log that indicated it was a nomination by Chair Boey, but it was not. It was from someone who submitted by a community member to us via Chair Boey, so, that name has been changed on the Log.

We are learning a lot about candidates, their interests in this position. They are saying some very positive things about the opportunity. I feel comfortable that towards the end of February, we will be in a very strong position to recommend eight, more or less, candidates for your consideration. The number of candidates in the process will continue to rise as well. Our goal is always to present you with the strongest most diverse pool of candidates from both gender and ethnic minority, as well as experience. We have spoken with a number of provosts, a number of deans at very large significant institutions. We have looked at presidents of universities that may have an interest in making a move. We hope that when we make our final recommendation, you will see a very diverse pool of candidates.

I would like to talk very briefly about next steps, Ms. Wilder said, and make sure everyone is on point on where we go from here. On February 22, we will send you a notice after we have placed all of the candidate materials on the secure website. Also, at that point, you will receive some information related to an evaluation tool that you will see on the website. What that evaluation tool lets you as an individual, as you are doing your due diligence on the candidates, is divide it into three categories: "I'd really like to interview this person." "I need to discuss this in more detail." "No interest in interviewing this person."

Then, on March 1, Porsha and I will be with you in person for the conversation and discussion of the candidates you would like to interview. That is typically about a two-hour meeting. At that time, we will present the findings from the committee's individual evaluations. We will move forward to interview the candidates who have a consensus. Then, as a committee, we will talk about the candidates that you want to discuss. We can share more with you on the candidates verbally than we can in writing. Once the committee makes decisions on who you would like to interview, we will begin to schedule them for the March 7 and 8, and we will work through all of the preparation for those first visits. There has been discussion, and we have received some questions already. A list of sample questions will be posted on our secure website this afternoon for review by committee members. The questions received from the committee members will be compiled and submitted back to the committee to vet and make your decisions. In an hour and a half interview, you can ask somewhere between 16 and 18 questions, which also allows the candidate an opportunity to ask you questions.

Chair Boey stated a concern felt by several committee members that they would not have enough time between February 22 and March 1 to review all of the resumes. In view of that, Ms. Wilder stated that the information could go up on February 15 instead of February 22 to give the committee ample time to review all of the posted information. The posting of the Parker Executive Search recommendations will remain on February 22.

In reply to a question from one of the committee members, Ms. Wilder stated that four candidates can be seen comfortably in a day, five is really pushing it. We recommend four, five at the most, she said, and it depends on how many candidates you would like to interview. We usually suggest you select eight, more or less, candidates to interview. On the morning of March 7, we will begin at 7:30 a.m. with an orientation and begin the first interview at 8:30 a.m. We are allowing an hour and a half for each interview. You will assign questions for committee members to ask beginning and ending with one of the co-chairs. For Human Resource purposes, you need to ask the same questions of all candidates, but you also will need to ask follow-up questions if you do not receive a clear enough response. After each interview, you will have a 15-minute break. It will be a full day from approximately 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. At the end of day one, the committee will discuss the candidates. On March 8, we will maintain the same schedule. At the end of the day March 8, there will be a discussion of all candidates and this committee will make a decision of who the finalists should be.

## **OPENING REMARKS**

First of all, Chair Boey said, thank you so much for the great Orange Bowl. My wife, Doris, and I were there, and a stadium that sat over 70,000 was full. There was great pride that NIU colors filled more than half the stadium. Jeff, thank you for a great job. As a part of this search committee, you should know how we feel. It was great, too, to see all the previous coaches. It was truly a university effort, Mr. Compher commented, through the Alumni Association, Student Affairs and University Relations all working together and it is something that I will always look back on and be very thankful for. Hopefully, we can continue to capitalize on this momentum and continue to do great things this year and in future years.

## **VERIFICATION OF APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**

Typically my verification of a meeting is a nonissue, Mr. Blakemore said, but in the interest of full disclosure, we are in technical compliance with the Open Meetings Act. We are there because we actually provide notice at the end of the previous meetings about when the next meeting will occur. The actual agenda and items went out 26 hours before this meeting. It is my opinion that we are in compliance because we have provided previous notice.

A question was raised at the University Council meeting with respect to our meeting schedule, Mr. Blakemore commented. This committee voted on the schedule at its first meeting. That schedule has not changed with the exception of the one meeting. The schedule is posted on the website, so the public will be made aware of when you are holding meetings. Going forward, your meetings will be a public session for a very short period of time, and then you will be in closed session. Participation of the general public, as well as the number of staff persons, will be limited in the closed sessions.

## **OPENING REMARKS – CO-CHAIR ALAN ROSENBAUM**

One of the things I wanted to mention is in regard to the February 22 meeting, Co-Chair Rosenbaum stated. At one point, we thought we would not have to get together. We subsequently decided to change that because some people expressed concern that perhaps we did not have enough time to talk about the candidate questions. Clearly, working on what information we want from each of these candidates is one of the major activities we have to perform in order to make informed decisions. We have to find the president we want, and we have to do it the way we think best. The search firm may recommend candidates that we may disagree with, so we should not restrict ourselves to looking at only the people they recommend. So, you should all think about what we have to do. How much time do we need to make our decision? What information do we need in order to make the best choice? The ultimate decision is our responsibility. We have to be comfortable, when we give our recommendations to the Board of Trustees. If any of you feel like we need to meet at other times, bring it up and we will talk about it, why we need to meet, what we want to do in that meeting.

Just to echo what Alan said, Chair Boey remarked, we pay for advice, and Parker is our consultant, but it is still our responsibility to manage and take it to the Board of Trustees. I have no concern about anything that we may come up with that might be different from what Parker might have suggested. We have a committee here to be sure that we do the thing we think is correct for NIU. On the other hand, we are all reasonable people and, given the amount of time we have, we have to concentrate fully on getting the job done. So, the bottom line is, let's get the job done right.

Pam Smith asked whether discussion of the interview questions would be considered a personnel matter, necessitating the committee going into closed session. Mr. Blakemore stated that the discussion of possible interview questions would not be considered a personnel matter because it does not include specific, personal information about any candidate. I will caution the committee to never, in public session, identify particular names, because the public session is for the purpose of policy process, not particular candidates.

Worrying about the questions being public is not probably the major challenge with having an open discussion about the questions, Lisa Freeman said. When you are a top level candidate working with a search firm, it is the search firm's job to tell the candidate what the concerns of the university are, and any dean or provost interviewing for a presidency previously has come across many of the types of questions and concerns we have had. What concerns me is that the context in which we discuss choosing one question or another will be available to media, and sometimes their ability to project and read in exceeds what may have been intended by someone who raised a point in the discussion. So, it is very important that we remain cognizant that the discussion is open, and there are things we should be concerned about as we have those discussions in an open forum that trump whether or not the questions are public.

A concern was raised by Andy Small regarding the fact that this is a large group and it appeared that several people were not in attendance. I can see where a person may not attend these meetings, he said, and then suddenly show up at the end and not be as informed as we had hoped they would be. Mr. Rosenbaum stated that situation was covered in the Confidentiality Policy that everyone signed in the first committee meeting. Certain meetings require physical presence, and those are coming up shortly. Up until now, we have allowed people two opportunities to phone when they could not be physically present. But anyone who is not present for the mandatory meetings on March 1, March 7 and March 8 will not be able to vote on the candidates.

Millivoje Kostic said he had missed the e-mail with the link to the secure website. The recording secretary stated that she would resend the link to him.

If we actually choose to exercise a pool of 8 to 10 for our interviews, Lisa Freeman stated, two days of interviewing four to five candidates a day will be grueling, but we may want to interview that number of candidates. Choosing a president is extremely important, and if we are fortunate enough to come out of March 1 thinking we have 8 qualified candidates with very diverse backgrounds and different strengths and weaknesses, the committee should exercise their right to see as many candidates as we can physically squeeze in. Asking us at the end of the day on the second day to choose acceptable versus unacceptable seems like we are setting ourselves up for an unreasonably difficult challenge that is probably not necessary, so we may want to start thinking about a contingency date if we are unable to arrive at a limited pool of acceptable candidates on March 8.

That is reasonable, Chair Boey said, but we also had two days last time, and as the first day went by, the committee members began to feel more comfortable. On the second day, we very quickly came together in agreement on the four final candidates.

Because time is of the essence, Jennifer Rosato commented, at the end of the first day, we should work in some debriefing time and maybe have a working dinner the second day to see where we are, and then we can have the contingency.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No members of the public had registered a written request to address the committee in accordance with state law and the Board of Trustees *Bylaws*.

#### **OTHER MATTERS**

Mr. Blakemore handed out questions taken from the Human Resources website. They are just examples, he said, and not tailored for this committee. Laurie Wilder indicated that she will have Parker Executive Search's sample questions added to the secure website.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting of the Presidential Search Advisory Committee is scheduled for Friday, February 22, in Altgeld Hall 315.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Boey at approximately 1:37 p.m. without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon M. Banks-Wilkins  
Recording Secretary

*In compliance with Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/1, et seq, a verbatim record of all Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees meetings is maintained by the Board Recording Secretary and is available for review upon request. The minutes contained herein represent a true and accurate summary of the Board proceedings.*