

**MANSFIELD UNIVERSITY**

**COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

Wednesday, March 21, 2018  
2:00 p.m.

North Hall 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Community Room

**Minutes**

**I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

Chairman Kilmer called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

**FOR THE RECORD:** in accordance with the Sunshine Law, this meeting was advertised in the *Wellsboro Gazette* on March 8, 2018.

**II. RECORDING OF ATTENDANCE**

The following Trustees attended:

Mr. Steven Crawford, Vice Chairman (via phone during committee meeting)  
Ms. Mackenzie Hafer, Member  
Mr. Patrick Henderson, Secretary  
Ms. Bobbi Kilmer, Chairperson  
Mr. Ralph H. Meyer, Member  
Ms. Karen J. Russell, Member  
Mr. Aaron K. Singer, Member  
Dr. Robert D. Strohecker, Member  
Mr. Bruce L. Vickery, Member

The following Trustees were not in attendance:

Mr. Max Gannon, Member

Members of the University staff who attended are as follows:

Mr. Scott Barton, Interim President  
Mr. Nick Andre, Chief Information Officer  
Ms. Pamela Boyce, Secretary to the Council of Trustees  
Ms. Judi Brayer, Special Assistant to the President – Enrollment Services, SCUPA Representative  
Mr. Frank Crofchick, Assistant Vice President and Dean of Students  
Mr. Terry Day, Director of Communications  
Mr. Edgard Domenech, via Skype, Mail Services Coordinator  
Dr. Jonathan Rothermel, University Senate President, Associate Professor  
Dr. Nancy Sidell, Interim Provost and Dean of Faculty  
Dr. John Ulrich, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

## Others in attendance:

Elizabeth Anderson, Student

Katelyn Blake, Student

Magda Callahan, Student

Rachel Clark, Student

Sara Clauto, Student

Dana DiCamillo, Student

Emily Elizabeth, Student

Marc Holman, Student

James Natali, Student

Wilson Preston, Student

Karinsa Russo, Student

Carra Stevens, Student

Nicole Weisser, Student

**III. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Good afternoon. My name is Pam Kathcart and I am here as an alumna of Mansfield University, as the parent of a current student, as a dedicated employee and as a concerned community member. Let me provide you with some background to why I am here today. I serve on the Alumni Association Board of Directors. At our fall meeting, one of my fellow board members asked the question, "How do we get President Barton appointed as the permanent president?" I did some research into the Board of Governors policies, and while doing this research I came upon the press release announcing that Cheyney University's interim president was appointed president upon the recommendation of Cheyney's COT after conferring with students, faculty and alumni. I shared the information with the rest of the board and suggested that if this is what we want, we start the conversation with our Council of Trustees. We wrote a letter to the COT in November, hoping to initiate dialogue between the COT and the university's constituents. I am still hoping to have that dialogue. If I can use my voice to speak up when something isn't right, and I have been known to do so, then I can also use my voice to speak up when something IS right. And I believe we are doing something right. So I am not here to use my voice in protest against your decision to move forward with a search, but rather I am here to use my voice in support of President Barton and our current administration.

In trying to gather my remarks for today's meeting, I debated on what to share. I don't think I need to reiterate the accomplishments of our current administration, as you receive those updates in your meetings and through press releases and other means. However, what can't be measured in a report or conveyed in a press release, is the change in the culture at MU since President Barton took the helm. If you review Board of Governors policy 2002-02: Duties and Responsibilities of Presidents, you can easily see that President Barton is successfully fulfilling every expected outcome. However, the outcome that I would like to draw attention to today is "establishment of a safe, supportive, nurturing campus environment, where each member of the university community is empowered to contribute fully to the success of the campus and benefit optimally by what the campus has to offer." For the first time in a long time, faculty and staff feel like we have a voice; we feel empowered. We are moving in a forward direction and we want to continue that momentum. The culture at the university has changed, we are optimistic, we believe

that we can turn our challenges around and start to thrive, we are breaking down the silos and starting to work collaboratively towards student success. A positive working environment is critical to attracting and retaining qualified faculty and staff, and having qualified faculty and staff is essential to attracting and retaining students.

But it's going to take more than 2 years to get back on solid ground. We need stability in leadership at the administrative level to continue on this track. We have had tremendous turnover in administration over the last 7 years or so and that needs to end. We have a solid administrative team right now, but until we have a permanent president, they will all remain as interim administrators.

One of the reasons Cheyney was granted the request for limited dispensation of Board of Governors Policy 1983-13-A: Process for Recommending Presidential Appointment, was “to ensure stable leadership while the university implements a multi-year financial plan.”, explaining among other things “how it will balance its budget in the future while meeting the educational needs of students.” I would argue that we need that same stability in leadership in order to bring us out of our budget deficit, to not only close the books in the black, but reestablish our reserves, and that will require a multi-year financial plan.

In reviewing the BOG policy for recommending presidential appointment, I was curious to see what the rationale was behind the January 26, 2017 amendment that prohibits acting or interim presidents from being eligible for the position. I went back to the BOG agenda for that date and the reason given for the amendment was “In general, searches for presidents at colleges and universities preclude acting and interim presidents from being considered in the search process.” “In general” is vague and gives no real rationale for the amendment, and as such, you will have a hard time coming up with a compelling argument as to why you would be unwilling to request an exception to the policy when we have a qualified candidate that the university constituents wish to retain.

Conducting a national search is a costly endeavor. At a time when budgets are lean not only at MU, but across PASSHE and the commonwealth, it seems an unnecessary expense to undergo a national search. I am asking that the COT, in accordance with your bylaws and following consultation with students, faculty and alumni as provided in the letters sent to you and by the signatures and comments on the petition, recommend the appointment of Scott Barton as president of Mansfield University in order to provide stability in leadership and to forego a national search in order to provide a cost-saving measure to the university and PASSHE. If you feel you need to conduct a national search, then I am requesting that the search committee request an exception to the Policy 1983-13-A and allow Scott Barton to be a candidate for the position.

Chairperson Kilmer thanked Ms. Kathcart for her comments and asked that she provide a copy of her comments to the Trustees.

Mr. Tyler Walters, SGA President gave the following remarks:

It is the opinion of both myself, and the student body, that the Interim-President Scott Barton should be allowed the opportunity to be considered as an applicant of our full term presidential position. In regards to the possibility for an exception as described by Pamela Kathcart, the

students ask that the council to do what is within their means to ask for a waiver to be granted that would remove the interim title from President Scott Barton.

Recently, our students have been subject to an administration that has seen a large turnover in positions. This turnover has resulted in deteriorated trust amongst the students in their administration. Before President Barton was in office, students were promised visionary ideas that left them disappointed when they were unable to be fulfilled. This results in a lack of confidence that contributes to a much larger issue that this campus faces in terms of enrollment, retention, and student apathy. Under President Barton's leadership, the students have begun to reform their opinions of the administration and the campus and are showing increased levels of satisfaction with their University. Retaining President Barton would allow for him to further fulfill the successful initiatives he has created thus far, and allow the students a firm sense of continuity in their administration.

President Barton's leadership is based on the idea of following through on the promises. To the student, this embodies continued gradual improvement. As students, we understand that dramatic change is not always an option, but instead look into the future for progress. In the years to come, the students have voiced that President Scott Barton is the best fit for the position, and the most crucial aspect to our continued growth.

Chairperson Kilmer thanked Mr. Walters and was glad to hear the student voice. Chairperson Kilmer asked that Mr. Tyler submit his comments to the Trustees.

I am Adrienne McEvoy and I come to you today as a community member – a Boro Council member, philosophy professor since 2001, and a student with three degrees from Mansfield University. I have seen 6 presidents, seen fantastic ideas and bad ideas come and go. I support what Pam and Tyler have said.

I would like to present you with a petition started by my colleague, Adam Brennan. This petition has over 500 signatures supporting and requesting that Scott be retained as president. I won't waste your time reiterating what Pam and Tyler have said.

Chairperson Kilmer thanked all for attending and for sharing their comments with the trustees. Chairperson Kilmer shared that the Trustees have enjoyed our time with Scott and that he has done an excellent job.

Trustee Mackenzie Hafer introduced Chelsea Thomas. Ms. Hafer shared that Ms. Thomas was selected as the next Student Trustee through a competitive process and search. Ms. Thomas shared that she is a sophomore student majoring in business marketing. She feels this is a great opportunity is now glad to be a part of the Council of Trustees.

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A motion was made by Mr. Singer, seconded by Mr. Meyer, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of November 8, 2017 as identified in Exhibit A.**

## V. EDUCATIONAL FEATURE

### Community Service Trip to Puerto Rico

Mr. Edgard “Gardy” Domenech and thirteen students spent a week of their winter break in Puerto Rico assisting citizens recover from Hurricane Maria. Most of the group did not know each other before this trip.

Their goal was to install water filters, help the community members, and to clean up some of the destruction after the hurricane. They learned about and experienced another culture. One of the highlights of the trip including helping the Marines distribute gifts to the children for the holidays.

They learned not to take things for granted, the importance of serving communities in need and that “Dreams are the seeds of reality” – Carlos Méndez Martínez

They ended their presentation by singing a song written by one of the students for Gardy.

## VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

### A. Academic Affairs Report (Dr. Ulrich)

Dr. Ulrich noted the following topics discussed in the Academic Affairs Report:

- Dual Enrollment
- Potential New or Revised MU Academic Programs Designed to meet Regional Needs

### B. Finance and Administration Report (Mr. Barton)

In the absence of Ms. Felondis, Mr. Barton noted the topics discussed in the Finance and Administration Report:

- Review of Purchases over \$5,000
- Capital Projects
- Student Fees

### Approval of Purchase Orders of \$5,000 or more

Upon the recommendation of the Interim Vice President for Finance and Administration and the Interim President, **a motion was made by Mr. Vickery, seconded by Mr. Singer and unanimously carried to approve purchase orders of \$5,000 or more for the period of October 16, 2017 through February 15, 2018 for a total of \$872,320.22**, as identified in Exhibit B.

### Approval of the Capital Projects Spending Plan

Upon the recommendation of the Interim Vice President for Finance and Administration and the Interim President, **a motion was made by Ms. Hafer seconded by Ms. Russell and unanimously carried to approve the Capital Projects Spending Plan**, as identified in Exhibit C 1.1

Approval of the Student Fees

Upon the recommendation of the Interim Vice President for Finance and Administration and the Interim President, **a motion was made by Mr. Meyer, seconded by Mr. Singer and unanimously carried to approve the Student Fees** as identified in Exhibit D.

C. Student Life and Living (Mr. Crofchick)

Mr. Crofchick noted the following topics discussed in the Student Life and Living Report:

- Suicide Prevention Plan
- 101<sup>st</sup> Leadership Adventure Program
- Specialized Housing for 18-19 Academic Year
- Campus Activities Board working together for best programs

D. Admissions (Ms. Brayer)

Ms. Brayer noted the following topics discussed in the Student Life and Living Report:

- Office Initiatives which included personal changes, Bloomsburg visit recap, Activities
- Enrollment Numbers

**VII. OLD BUSINESS**

**No old business**

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

Chairperson Kilmer announced that Ms. Russell has been appointed chair of the presidential search committee. Ms. Russell will complete her committee following the PASSHE guidelines and will be asking another Trustee to serve on the committee with her and Ms. Kilmer.

**IX. INFORMATION ITEMS – NO ACTION REQUIRED**

**X. REPORTS**

Interim President Scott Barton

Interim President Barton provided the following report:

- President Barton shared that he and Dr. Ulrich have been meeting and with various community groups to gather information to address their needs.
- President Barton has been attending the Fireside Chats with students. He said these are going well, he is getting great feedback from the students, and he will continue to participate.
- President Barton had the opportunity to meet with Cpl. Seth Kelly, our alum who was shot in the line of duty. A certificate honoring him was presented.
- The new Police Academy and Regional Training Center has opened. The first class is full with a waiting list. President Barton thanked all the team members who worked to make the facility a reality. An open house was held on March 5. The feedback was very positive

from those in attendance. While we only had 45 RSVP for the event, there were over a 100 attendees.

- President Barton and Chairperson Kilmer spent Advocacy Day with a group of students.
- President Barton shared the students performed West Side Story. Their performance was phenomenal.
- University committees (Marketing, Budget, Mission and Vision) have been formed and the committees are meeting and moving forward.
- The University signed three new agreements with Chinese university's in an effort to increase international student enrollment.

### PACT

Ms. Russell shared the PACT is April 12 and 13 in Harrisburg. The topic is 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education. Ms. Russell encouraged the Trustees to attend if they are able.

### Student Government Association (T. Walters)

Mr. Walters shared the following report:

- SGA is exploring bigger programming ideas. For example, they are looking at hosting an Annual Rodeo.
- SGA is working to increase student involvement and engagement. They are streamlining ways to sign up for events.
- A Seneca Lake boat cruise will be held again this year. This will be open only to seniors.
- SGA is looking at ways to increase athletic event participation.
- Mr. Walters shared they are working with admissions counselors to assist with recruiting students.
- SGA will host a conference to train executive board members of organizations.
- Our clubs have alot of great initiatives this semester. SGA is working on setting up an awards banquet to recognize their efforts.

## **XI. OTHER BUSINESS**

On behalf of the Council of Trustees, Chairperson Kilmer presented Mackenzie with a gift of appreciation for her service. This is Mackenzie's last official meeting before graduation in May.

## **XII. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting of the Mansfield University Council of Trustees is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 30, 2018, 2:00 p.m. in the North Hall 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Community Room.**

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Pam Boyce*

Pam Boyce