

**OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF VISITORS  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
Monday, 17 May 1999**

**MINUTES**

The Executive Committee of the Board of Visitors of Old Dominion University met on Monday, 17 May 1999, at 3:00 PM in the Board Room of Webb University Center. Present from the Committee were:

Edward L. Hamm, Jr, Rector  
William M. Lechler  
Patricia W. Perry

Also present from the Board of Visitors were:

J. Jack W. Hilgers  
Ronald J. A. Villanueva  
Lois S. Williams

Also present were:

James V. Koch, President  
Lillian Benson  
John R. Broderick  
Dana D. Burnett  
Nancy P. Coberly  
Jo Ann M. Gora  
David F. Harnage  
Donna W. Meeks  
C. Jay Robbins

**CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Rector called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM and asked for approval of the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of 22 February 1999. Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes were approved as distributed.

**RECTOR'S REPORT**

The Rector thanked the various board members who have participated in discussions during the past month, and noted that Ms. Gifford observed a misleading statement in the press regarding the University's audit, who brought it to the Rector's attention and was asked to discuss it with the reporter.

Mr. Hamm indicated that several members attended the workshop sponsored by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia in Richmond. Although he was unable to attend due to scheduling

conflicts, Dr. Williams attended as his representative. He heard positive reports about the meeting and asked those who attended to comment. Mr. Lechler stated that he has been impressed with these meetings, because they provide an opportunity for board members from the various institutions to share ideas and viewpoints. Dr. Hilgers echoed Mr. Lechler's comments and added that he is impressed with the issues endorsed by the Governor and the organization of the workshop. Dr. William stated she had no other comments to add other than it was a good meeting. The Rector noted that several members of the University's administration also attended.

Mr. Lechler suggested that a report on this and other meetings like this be done at the regular board meetings. Mr. Hamm responded that meetings of the Executive Committee allow for these kinds of issues to be discussed in more detail.

Finally, the Rector commented that he has held some valuable discussions on various board related issues with Mr. Villanueva and Reverend Paige since the last board meeting.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Koch announced that the Capital Campaign anticipates reaching its \$48.7 million goal in June, at which time a campuswide celebration will be held. During the last month three notable gifts were received by the University. The University took delivery of a supercomputer worth \$750,000 acquired through a grant from Sun Microsystems. The University also received a software gift from IBM worth \$500,000. Finally, the University received \$500,000 from the City of Virginia Beach to support the purchase of technology for the electronic classrooms at the new Virginia Beach Higher Education Center.

President Koch distributed an article entitled "Hit the Bridges and the Books" from *Business Week* magazine related to sending MBA courses to aircraft carriers involved in combat in the Mediterranean Sea.

The President reported that the Investment Committee of the Educational Foundation is interviewing four investment consultant candidates over the next two days. Messrs. Lechler and Hilgers have been very active in this process as board representatives to the Foundation's Investment Committee. Mr. Lechler commented that although he was not impressed with the first candidate, he lauded the process and the leadership provided by Chairman Doug Perry, member Anne Shumadine, and faculty representative Bruce Rubin.

President Koch indicated that board members will receive in next week's mail a draft copy of the Strategic Plan which has been reviewed and discussed by the Academic Affairs Committee. He anticipates that the Board will be asked to adopt the plan at its meeting in June.

### **PRESENTATION BY MS. LILLIAN BENSON**

The Rector introduced Ms. Lillian Benson, who had formally requested the opportunity to address the Committee regarding her concerns with the University's plans to build the Convocation Center

on the site of Norfolk Fire Station #10. Mr. Hamm reiterated to Ms. Benson that this forum was her opportunity to address her concerns to the Board, but that the Board had no plans to enter into a debate or to make any decision today based on her presentation.

Ms. Benson thanked Mr. Hamm for allowing her to speak, and referred to the information packets provided by her to each member of the Committee. She said that her purpose today was to make two or three brief statements to the Board in support of her position.

Mr. Benson indicated that she submitted an application last year to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources requesting that the fire station property be reevaluated for designation as an historic landmark. Unfortunately, because the building lacks certain architectural embellishments, that designation was denied. As a part-time student at the University for several years, she felt compelled to share her thoughts and concerns about this matter. The Norfolk Fire Department was established in 1871, making it the third in the nation after Cincinnati and New York, and the firehouse was constructed in the early 1920s. The current plans for the University's Convocation Center provide for this building to be demolished, which she considers a sacrilege in the interest of the community. She urged the Board and the University administration to reconsider its plans and to leave the building intact to serve perhaps as a museum or a small bistro.

Ms. Benson distributed a copy of an article about the firehouse which appeared in *The Ledger Star* in 1974, and then read a poem she wrote at the time as a tribute to the fireman and paramedics of Fire Station #10.

Following Ms. Benson's remarks, Mr. Hamm asked if there were any other historical fire stations located in the city. Ms. Benson replied that there were not. The Rector thanked Ms. Benson for sharing her obviously sincere thoughts with the Board. He then asked Vice President Harnage to identify the fire station's location relative to the Convocation Center site. Vice President Harnage showed a graphic of the Convocation Center which identified the site of the fire station. Mr. Hamm requested Mr. Lechler to make a recommendation to the Board after he has had the opportunity to discuss the issue with Vice President Harnage in greater detail.

Mr. Lechler thanked Ms. Benson for her presentation and indicated that he wished to correct a misrepresentation contained in her letter to Senator Miller. In her letter, Ms. Benson stated that funds for the Convocation Center were being diverted from other academic pursuits. Mr. Lechler assured Ms. Benson that that is not true. Each and every board member has been granted fiduciary responsibility for the University's funds by the Governor and the Board is very pleased with how the University accounts for its money. President Koch explained that the University began collecting student fees in the early 1990s which were specifically earmarked to fund the majority of this project, by decision of the Board of Visitors. Those fees have been segregated in an account which now has a balance of approximately \$12 million. Additional sources of funds include gifts such as the \$5 million contribution by Mr. Ted Constant, and revenue from advertising contracts, shoe contracts, and the like. But the majority of the revenue is generated by student fees and absolutely no state tax dollars have or will be spent on the project.

## **REPORT ON DEPLOYMENT AND USE OF INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

Vice President Harnage provided a brief report which summarized the University's efforts in terms of technology infrastructure, instructional technology, research technology, information systems, funding strategies and future challenges.

Mr. Harnage indicated that the University has spent the last three years upgrading its internal communications network, or intranet. Currently all buildings, offices, classrooms and laboratories on campus are networked. The Peninsula has 50 connections and the new Virginia Beach Higher Education Center will have an additional 1,153. Residence halls are currently being wired and will provide an additional 2,377 connections. Remote sites contribute approximately 120 connections.

The University is connected to the outside world through the internet. Old Dominion is one of the principal institutions involved in the development of Internet 2, the project to advance the national network to its next level. Old Dominion is also participating in the Abilene project, along with UVA and Virginia Tech, which deals with advance network capabilities and service. Finally, the University is one of 13 U.S. institutions participating on the VBNS high speed network, primarily through the work of Professors Glen Wheless and Cathy Lascara in modeling and simulation.

In the area of instructional technology, Vice President Harnage indicated that the University's policy is to upgrade its general purpose laboratories every three years with standardized hardware and software configurations. In addition, departmental and specialized laboratories have designated software depending on the disciplines they support.

A high priority for the institution is to continue upgrading classrooms to support advanced technology. He and the Provost have worked together to prioritize classroom upgrades, and so far 24 classrooms have been upgraded, with an additional five classrooms to be upgraded within the next year. The completion of the Gornto TELETECHNET Building was a milestone for the University, as it is truly a state-of-the-art facility for the use of technology.

The University continues its push to enhance research technology through the recent acquisition of the supercomputer, silicon graphics computer, the CAVE and the Immersadesk. The supercomputer supports 22 billion operations per second and allows faculty members to compete more effectively for funded research. The silicon graphics machine is a class of a supercomputer in itself. It was brought to the campus through a funded grant from the National Science Foundation, primarily to support the work of Professors Wheless and Lascara in emergent technologies. The CAVE, a virtual environment machine, will be installed this summer and will be used for modeling and simulation types of research. The Immersadesk also supports modeling and simulation research.

The University's information systems include the Banner administrative system, the Debit Card system and the Library Automation System. The implementation of Banner addresses the Y2K issue and provides enhanced services to the University. It was purchased through a competitive bid process and funded through reallocations and specific allocations from the Commonwealth for Y2K remediation. The system was completely installed in fourteen months, is 100 percent operational, and the University is now preparing for the certification process. Banner makes it possible, for the first time in the University's history, for students to register for classes 24 hours a day. The Debit

Card System is the universal card system for students, providing access control to the residence halls, meal plans and identification. The Library automation system supports all digital library activities at the University, providing 24-hour real time access to the card catalog. The University's partnership with the Virtual Library of Virginia provides for the sharing of information among the Commonwealth's institutions.

The funding strategies used to support technology at the University have played a role in the administration's decision not to implement the technology fee approved by the General Assembly over the last two years. Old Dominion has been very fortunate to have received support from the Commonwealth over the last three years which has allowed the University to support technology. The University has also been the recipient of many grants and contracts bringing technology to the institution. The caliber of the faculty at the institution is instrumental in this success. Finally, over the last several years, funds have been specifically reallocated to support technology. For example, housing fund balances will be used to support the wiring project for the residence halls.

The two major challenges facing the University in terms of technology are support personnel and university vs. student owned computers. The market for qualified technical support personnel, both nationally and locally, is enormously competitive. The Hampton Roads area pays an average of \$40,000 to \$50,000 for the same technical support positions that would otherwise earn \$80,000 in Northern Virginia. In addition, the State's personnel regulations do not currently allow the flexibility needed to hire these kinds of personnel. However, a joint task force comprised of representatives from the Department of Personnel and Training and several universities has been formed to investigate personnel practices and examine variables in the marketplace. The goal is to develop options – such as signing bonuses and enhanced salaries – which will assist in hiring and retaining these type of personnel.

Although several universities in the Commonwealth require their students to purchase their own computers, Old Dominion University does not. The administration believes that such a mandate would have a negative impact on enrollment given the demographics of our student body. The technology fee could be implemented and used to build more computer labs, but keeping up with obsolescence makes this option less desirable. Instead, the University has implemented programs to encourage students to own or lease their own PC, and is currently working with vendors to devise such a program. The program would be advertised to faculty and staff as well as students to purchase or lease current state-of-the-art technology at competitive prices. Staff are also working with the colleges and departments to identify a set of specific computer applications students will need so that competitive prices can be negotiated for those as well. If these initiatives are successful, over time students will voluntarily migrate to PC ownership rather than it being mandated by the University. President Koch commented that since Old Dominion has so many part-time students, requiring all students to own a PC would not work. The University must therefore make it possible for students to lease computers on a short-term basis. Vice President Harnage indicated that negotiations include three standard configurations with a lease/purchase agreement averaging \$30 to \$35 per month.

Vice President Harnage concluded his remarks by commenting that, given the large amounts of money the University is spending on technology, and given that the institution has been dealt with generously by the General Assembly, the administrative felt that it is not necessary at this time to

implement the technology fee. Further, given the University's intent to keep tuition and fees as low as possible, the administration feels that this is the right thing to do.

Mr. Villanueva asked if the University's Computer Center has adequate support staff. Mr. Harnage commented that, on average, there are usually 13 vacant technology positions in the Computer Center at any given time. A lot is expected of the dedicated OCCS staff and the University strives to pay them a fair wage under the constraints of the current system.

Mr. Villanueva asked if Webb Center is wired to the network. Mr. Harnage said that all campus buildings are wired and the next phase will be a wireless network which will allow students to be connected to the network from any location on campus, even outside.

At the conclusion of Vice President Harnage's report, several of the board members commented that the lease/purchase option was the best approach, given the University's part-time student enrollment.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

The Rector asked if there was any new business to come before the Committee. Mr. Lechler suggested that the Board might want to consider investigating the use of ritalin by Old Dominion students, especially in light of the tragedy at Littleton, Colorado. President Koch deferred to Vice President Burnett, who commented that Attention Deficit Disorder, and the resulting use of ritalin, are becoming more prevalent by college age students. Several of these students visit the University's Office of Disability Services. In response to a question by the Rector, Vice President Burnett stated that, to his knowledge, there have been no safety-related incidents involving ritalin at the University. The Rector suggested that he discuss this issue with the President to determine whether this is something that the Board may want to address at a future meeting.

Mr. Villanueva suggested that a presentation be done on the Career Management Center at a future meeting. Provost Gora indicated that she will plan a presentation for the September Academic Affairs Committee meeting, noting that the Center's web site is highly developed and well accessed.

The Rector announced that at least 3 of the 4 board members whose terms expire in June have been notified by the Governor that they will not be reappointed. He commented that this will result in the majority of board members with a year or less experience on the Board, and he stressed the importance of the Board working together to ensure continuity and support of the administration. Among the Board's priorities are to elect a new Vice Rector and for the Rector to appoint new committees.

President Koch announced that Dr. Allen from the State Council of Higher Education will be on campus June 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the Virginia Plan. All board members are welcome to attend, and information regarding the meeting will be faxed to each board member.

The Rector distributed to each board member a copy of the evaluation form used during the last presidential evaluation and indicated that he will shortly be asking for their input into the process. The weights ascribed to each performance issue were determined by last year's presidential

evaluation committee (consisting of Mr. Rotert, Ms. Gifford, Dr. Williams and himself). This year's committee is comprised of Ms. Atkinson, Ms. Gifford, Dr. Hilgers, and the Rector.

Finally, the Rector suggested that when individuals write to members of the Board, the best course of action is to contact the Board's attorney to respond on their behalf rather than responding personally.

With no further business to be discussed, the meeting adjourned at 4:35 PM.