

University of Idaho
FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES

2002-2003 Meeting #22, Tuesday, May 6, 2003

Present: Bitterwolf (chair), Wagner (vice-chair), Bailey, Baillargeon, Chandler, Cloud, Fairchild, Guenther, Haggart (w/o vote), Hatch (w/o vote), Hong, Lillard, McCaffrey, McClure, McGuire, Nelson, Pikowsky, Rinker, Schekler, Stegner **Absent:** Daley Laursen, Reese **Observers:** 5

Call to Order. A quorum being present, Faculty Council Chair, Professor Thomas Bitterwolf, called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m. in the Brink Hall Faculty Lounge.

Minutes. The council accepted the minutes of the April 29, 2003 meeting as distributed.

Chair's Report. Chair Bitterwolf reported that the Blue Ribbon Task Force Education Committee formed by Governor Kempthorne during last year's election campaign to make recommendations for improvements in state government, may be recommending a new state-wide University of Idaho. That new structure would have a single "super-president" and other top administrators who would manage their academic and research programs state-wide, rather than on one campus. The full report has not been delivered to the SBOE/Regents and so Bitterwolf and Acting Provost Hatch deferred any comments until the report has been received on our campus.

Bitterwolf stated that since a quorum was lacking at the general faculty meeting, all agenda items were adopted and will be sent on to the acting president for action. He noted that Special Assistant Marty Peterson's presentation at the meeting concerning the just concluded Idaho legislative session highlighted how well higher education did in comparison to other state agencies. An increase of almost 2% in appropriations and the approval of bonding for university building construction and renovation were two major accomplishments. The old University Classroom Center will now be turned into a modern learning center. Construction should begin in the fall.

The Fiscal Emergency Committee (FEC) continues to work at making recommendations to the acting president on funding for FY04 and beyond. A sub-committee has been formed out of the FEC to work on some of the issues raised in the FEC, such as the disposition of physical assets and the future of intercollegiate athletics. Bitterwolf said that he and Professor Wagner had been very pro-active in these meetings. Unfortunately the final report of the FEC will probably be made after the end of the spring semester.

Bitterwolf said that the U of Idaho would most likely announce that it has engaged a new vendor for health insurance. Despite the prospective switch in providers, he noted that coverage currently enjoyed by employees will not be affected. In fact, he said that there very well could be some improvements and additions to the health coverage offered under a new plan.

In closing, Chair Bitterwolf thanked the council for facing the issues and challenges presented to them this year in "grand fashion." He said that it had been a "superb" effort and that they could be proud of their accomplishments. He went on to say that the reasons that he is at the U of Idaho are the students and his colleagues. Enthusiastic students and faculty who will "go the extra mile" are what keeps him coming to work and wanting to see the university overcome its current difficulties.

Acting Provost's Report. Acting Provost Chuck Hatch spent most of his report time responding to questions from members of the council. Professor Lillard wanted more information about the administration's stand on diversity in light of press coverage which has painted a picture of our diversity office being disbanded. Hatch responded by assuring the council that the diversity program will not be eliminated. He emphasized that what was being discussed was a separation of the compliance and advisory/training programs. He saw a conflict of interest in the current administrative structure in the diversity office and believes that this will be a positive move. There is no effort to put Raul Sanchez out of a job, but his duties may be changed.

Councilor Schekler urged the acting provost to find a way to clear the air concerning the business practices surrounding the University Place building in Boise. He said that an open and thorough review is needed and wanted to know what materials were available for people to review. Hatch said that a lot of information has been made available under the Freedom of Information Act. The initial request for the information came from the media, but it has been shared with others upon request. He said that there has been no broader sharing of this information and most U of Idaho administrators had not looked at the materials gathered for the media. It was felt that the material should be addressed by the SBOE/Regents hired investigators. Then that team would interview people involved and hopefully get responses that had not been colored by a review of all of the materials by the persons being interviewed. Hatch said that the U of Idaho Foundation is also looking at all of these issues from its own perspective. However, everyone must yield to the directives of the SBOE/Regents and let them conduct a thorough review. The target for completing the review process is three months.

Councilor Guenther asked about the progress of the process of finding a new Faculty Secretary. Hatch replied that the first candidate who was offered the job had turned it down. Getting that response consumed nearly two weeks, and he and the acting president are once again reviewing the remaining candidates on the list provided by the Faculty Council.

Councilor McClure returned the council's attention to funding issues surrounding the Boise building. Her concern was over the ability of the U of Idaho Foundation and the U of Idaho to recover development costs. Hatch said that how soon we could see recovery of any of that money was still unclear. The U of Idaho Foundation has until June 30th to come up with a plan. Therefore it remains unclear how all of this will affect the FY04 budget.

Councilor Chandler asked about the reported time-line of January 2004 for the hiring of a new U of Idaho president. He said that there is a real need for the university community to come together and discuss what is wanted and needed in a new president. Is it really that important to have someone hired by January 1st? Can we have the time and opportunity to discuss our needs in detail before the hiring process starts? Chair Bitterwolf agreed that this discussion would be helpful, but saw little chance of it happening before the start of the fall semester. Vice Chair Wagner added that we really needed closure on the presidency sooner rather than later. He argued that we need our new president in place before the university can make changes.

Councilor Nelson agreed with the need for some discussion, but said that all of the candidates will probably be well aware of the concerns of the faculty, staff, and students and address those concerns when they come to the campus for formal interviews and public discussions. They will be able to tell us what new directions we need to take and how our mission statements need to be edited. Councilor Hong strongly suggested that the minimum salary for a new university president be at least \$250,000 per annum.

Councilor Rinker noted that the search committee will be rather small, perhaps only having one faculty representative. It was pointed out by others that the small size of the search committee had precedent in the most recent presidential search conducted at Boise State University and also in past presidential searches at the U of Idaho. The search committee really acts as a screening committee for the SBOE/Regents. Others suggested that since the search was going to be put on a "fast track" that the thoughts and ideas of the faculty should also be on a similar "fast track." Councilor McCaffrey made particular note of the fact that representation on the search committee was needed from the off-campus faculty.

Acting Provost Hatch and Chair Bitterwolf thanked the council for presenting comments and suggestions on the presidential search. They will make sure that they are passed on to the SBOE/Regents and see what can be done about gathering more information on university community concerns in the fall.

Recognition of the Chair and the Faculty Secretary. Chair Bitterwolf took the opportunity of this last meeting of the 2002-2003 Faculty Council to recognize Faculty Secretary, Professor Emeritus Peter Haggart. Bitterwolf noted that this was to be Professor Haggart's third and final retirement from the U of Idaho. He thanked him for his contributions and accomplishments, not only during Bitterwolf's term of office, but over the last 4 years of Haggart's service to the council and the university as Secretary of the Faculty. Professor Haggart received a round of applause from the council and was presented with a card signed by the members of the council and a gift certificate to one of his favorite local eateries. Seizing the opportunity, Professor Haggart thanked the council and then presented Chair Bitterwolf with a card and gift certificate from the council in recognition of his service this year. Haggart said that he regarded Professor Bitterwolf as a strong leader who worked hard for the faculty both in public and behind the scenes. He said that the council leadership should be recognized and rewarded for their perseverance and diligence during this very difficult year. The council responded with a round of applause for Professors Bitterwolf and Wagner.

Adjournment. It was **moved and seconded** (McClure, Lillard) to adjourn. The motion was **adopted** by unanimous voice vote, and Chair Bitterwolf adjourned the meeting at 4:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter A. Haggart
Secretary of the Faculty Council