

Minutes of November 15, 2001 Meeting of the Search Advisory Committee

The second meeting of the Search Advisory Committee for the University of West Florida presidential search was held on November 15, 2001 in the Conference Center of the University Commons.

1. Call to order.

Co-Chairs Dr. Linda Dye and Mr. Eric Nickelsen called the meeting to order at 10:00AM.

2. Calling of the Roll.

Thirty-two committee members were present. Absentees included Robert Booth, Jr., Fred Donovan, Don Gaetz, Michael Papantonio, John Mobley, and Joe Scarborough. Three members unable to attend the last meeting were introduced: Rick Harper- College of Business; Godfrey Franklin- College of Professional Studies; and Angela McCorvey- Student Success. Guests included: Trustees Collier Merrill, Eddie Phillips, Roy Smith, Angela Bowler, Keith Goldschmidt, corporate deputy secretary, Vicki Knaack, recorder, and Bill Funk, Korn/Ferry International.

3. Approval of minutes, October 16, 2001.

Dr. Linda Dye introduced minutes from the meeting held on October 16, 2001.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as read. Vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

4. Presentation/ Discussion of Search Procedures- Bill Funk- Korn/Ferry International

Mr. Eric Nickelsen expressed his gratitude to all in attendance. He also expressed appreciation to all sub-committees for their work. He informed the committee that Mr. Collier Merrill and the co-chairs of the SAC had met with the Pensacola News Journal editorial board and had a nice article printed regarding the presidential search. There is much interest.

He emphasized the importance the pool of candidates being as diverse as possible. All members were encouraged to bring forward any names they have in mind.

Mr. Nickelsen introduced Mr. Bill Funk, with Korn/Ferry, summing up his past successes. Each member received a copy of Mr. Funk's resume and list of credentials. Handouts of marketing brochures for other presidential searches used by Korn/ Ferry were also distributed.

Mr. Funk explained that in past years the process of searching for a university president position began with an advertisement in the *Chronicle for Higher Education*. A few applicants would be called for interviews and someone would be selected. The process now follows a much more sophisticated protocol. The best candidates will not respond to the advertisements in publications, they must be sought out. Mr. Funk will act as our agent in this regard. He will reach out to individuals who are happy where they are now. He will be sure to involve the committee in that activity.

The average tenure for a president is a short-four to six years. A constant turnover is not good for higher education. Strong, continuing leadership, like UWF has had the last 14 years is important.

Arizona State, the University of Texas, Texas A&M, the University of Vermont, the University of Massachusetts, the University of South Carolina, the University of Tennessee, and five or six other universities are currently searching for a president. The key is to be competitive. He suggested that "scenarios of attractability" should be put together so that UWF can fit into the competitive process. He informed the committee that he has met Dr. Marx and others around the table, has visited the downtown area and is still learning about UWF in order to know what this university can offer.

He asked the committee to be proactive in the search, suggesting each member use their professional networks and contact a couple of possible candidates. Mr. Funk has no pride of ownership and promised to follow up on any leads forwarded to him. He is dedicated to gathering a great pool from which to select.

The presidential search is an ideal opportunity to reestablish the bond with the UWF community and approach it as a new beginning, making sure the university community sees this as a good thing. It is important to pull in outside constituents with outreach through direct mailing of a "Friends of the University" letter to key supporters and distinguished alumni. The Board of Trustees and the Chairs of the Search Advisory Committee should sign it and solicit ideas and input in this process. Invite constituents to contact a Search Committee member or Mr. Funk with names and ideas. It is very important to include and build relationships with the donors. Mr. Funk can share such a letter with Advancement/Development.

Every university publication - alumni magazine, etc., should carry an article on the search. It should include the accomplishments under Dr. Marx's leadership and considerations of the pending change. Include a solicitation for nominations.

Mr. Funk also suggested the use of a web page with the ad copy in it. He recommended looking at the University of Tennessee's presidential search page as an example. It is interactive including web cast open forums etc., and resulted in over 25,000 hits in the first three weeks.

Mr. Funk discussed the use of brochures in the search process. Sixty to seventy percent are done in-house with the advice of the Search Advisory Committee. They are furnished to Mr. Funk for distribution to a proprietary mailing list around the country. He includes a letter about UWF, which he personally signs.

He will contact professional organizations to get the word out and ask for suggestions - it includes extensive phone networking.

One comment about advertisement/announcement - there is an inverse correlation between the length of the ad and the quality of the institution - long ads are too specific - this needs to be an information piece to get the word out. The concern is not in getting the best candidate from this piece, but to be informational, including some non-specific criteria and general idea about the position.

Mr. Funk opened the floor to questions:

Q. How will this search be special?

Mr. Funk began by stating he has not gotten all the information about the university and the area that he needs, but some factors so far are: 1. the demographic growth of the campus, 2. the demographic growth of the region, 3. the areas of excellence recognized regionally such as the Institute for Human and Machine Cognition, 4. UWF's size as a draw for students today - pleasant ambience.

His firm tries to balance the searches they are doing at any one time by type and mission of the institution and avoid conflicts of candidates. They are currently doing the University of Tennessee which is almost complete; a system chancellor search for University of Maryland, also almost complete; Southern Mississippi University which is a 15 to 16,000 student body and Divisional I athletics university; and the University of Mexico Highlands which is a minority/majority student enrollment - 50% Hispanic. Mr. Funk is comfortable with this mix and though he is intimately involved on the front end, his role is more facilitating on the back end of a search.

Q. How does Mr. Funk feel about late arrival candidates - having no close date in advertising.

Marketing piece should say "the search will begin immediately and continue until a new president is selected. To ensure optimal consideration, candidates should submit application by _____ date."

Q. How many do not ask for PhD - what percent of non-PhD applications do you get?

That part of searches is changing; it is not a static circumstance. Ten years ago 99.9% had PhD's, but lately there has been an increase in the number of Boards and Search Committees looking for candidates from other areas, the corporate world etc. His firm is getting more requests for casting a wide net. He advised not applying these types of personal criteria to the initial candidate pool. The trend today has the Provost's job as dealing with the day-to-day academic aspects of the university, where the president is the university spokesperson and is less involved with the academic aspects.

Q. What about circumstances where a candidate did a good job at a university and just retired.

When Mr. Funk talks to these individuals, the word gets out to him if they are "done." Some, however, have done all they could for that institution and step down after they've made their impact. They still have the energy and passion to be a great candidate.

Q. What challenges do we face, is this a good time to be searching?

Mr. Funk addressed the UF search, in which he was involved. That had fluid circumstances including the new bill for governance leaving candidates not sure who they'd be working for and other internal candidate issues. Today, however, is an opportune time to be looking. With the Board of Trustees issue established, candidates know who they will be working for and are more attracted to working directly with a board and not thru a system like it was. In addition, there is no controversy with Dr. Marx's leaving and everyone is on the same level with the funding issues. It will always be competitive, but this is a good time to look.

Q. How will UWF fair competitively in the salary aspect of the market?

Presidential candidates want to be assured salaries are comparable to other universities of the same size, complexity and mission. The Search Advisory Committee will not deal with this. The Board of Trustees is aware that in terms of salary UWF needs to be competitive and they plan to deal with that issue.

Q. In converting from a pool of 100 or so to a pool of 10-12, what will be the roles of Korn/Ferry and the Search Advisory Committee?

Since the process is under the Sunshine Law, it tends to be a more difficult search. For instance, there is fear in harming the relationship of a sitting president with his/her university's board if they get into our final pool. It can create a tough situation since all action is open to and known by the public. It can make recruitment difficult because the sitting presidents put their jobs at risk. These are the types of issues with which Korn/Ferry deals.

SAC needs to focus on the marketing end to build the pool. Mr. Funk will come in the middle of March with 10-12 candidates that best fit the criteria, including the Lexus/Nexus Reports for the last ten years and all the other pertinent information.

Q. What is the process?

Mr. Funk will bring 10-12 candidates to SAC. The committee will review their credentials, check references and backgrounds and decide who and how many to bring out to interview. The committee narrows the pool to a short list of three candidates to present to the Board.

Q. How short is "short" on the short list?

The short list would require calling references. At that point a candidate wants the best odds before he/she releases permission for reference checks, etc.

Q. From the start of the search to March 19th, what access will be allowed to the list of candidates? What does the Sunshine Law allow?

Mr. Funk will do all search activities in accordance with the law. If something is sent, then that becomes public knowledge. Only verbal responses are not public. Public and private lists will both be available for consideration.

Q. Would it be more helpful for UWF to contact the nominees first and then to be contacted by Mr. Funk?

It doesn't matter, either way is fine. If it is someone the university knows, then perhaps UWF should contact the nominee first and then Mr. Funk can contact them. If the nominee is someone unknown to the university thru a third party or the like, then Mr. Funk should be the first to contact that person.

Q. Should we prioritize?

Prioritizing and ranking should be avoided on the short list.

Dr. Dye thanked Mr. Funk and he concluded his presentation.

5. Report from the Selection Criteria Subcommittee- Chula King, chair.

Dr. King passed around handout from November 18th subcommittee meeting along with the Board's minimum criteria list.

She shared the subcommittee's four recommendations for the presidential candidate criteria:

1. Demonstrated leadership abilities essential to the continue advancement of the intellectual, technological, and academic agenda of the University of West Florida.

2. A comprehension of education issues and trends, and the ability to align the University of West Florida with other issues and trends where appropriate.

3. A passion for students and the higher education mission, and a demonstrated commitment to address the needs of students, faculty, staff and alumni.

4. Accomplishments that reflect a commitment to diversity in the sense of bringing different cultures, ethnicities and values to the University of West Florida.

6. Discussion/approval of selection criteria, full committee.

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the four criteria.

Dr. Dye called for discussion:

Discussion: Suggestions were made to reorder the criteria; change #3 to #1; eliminate the numbers; require the candidate have demonstrated excellence in leadership skills - add excellence to the requirement of leadership abilities; reword to reflect "continued" advancement.

A new criteria option was recommended for #1 and #2 and a final version read by Dr. Dye to the committee.

A motion was put forward to replace #1 and #2 with the new amendment. Vote was taken and motion passed.

Dr. Dye called for discussion on criteria number three and number four.

There was some discussion of a preamble with 6 total bullets and several comments to form.

NOTE: Mr. Funk advised that the requirements should be more general than specific. The wordsmithing would help with later interviews.

The motion was made to agree on the content and then send the criteria back to the subcommittee for editorial changes and wordsmithing. Motion was seconded. Vote was taken and motioned passed.

The subcommittee will bring back the criteria to the SAC in new format.

7. Update from Advertising/Marketing Subcommittee/Denis McKinnon, chair.

The subcommittee has not met yet, however subsequent to this SAC meeting, the subcommittee is prepared to meet and will do so right after today's meeting.

8. Update from Interview Subcommittee, Ed Ranelli, chair.

This subcommittee has not met yet. Their first meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 19th at 1 PM to discuss timeline, develop interviews, decide how to present the candidates to the committee and develop the feedback process.

9. Dr. Dye called for any other business.

The next SAC meeting is set for Thursday, November 29th at 3 PM at the Institute for Human and Machine Cognition (IHMC) at 40 South Alcaniz.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.