Chair Lewis Bear, Jr. called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. with the following trustees attending: Lewis Bear, Jr., Mort O’Sullivan, Suzanne Lewis, Jay Patel, Ethan Friedland, Richard Hough, Susan O’Connor, Dave Cleveland, Pam Dana, and Garrett Walton.

Others in attendance: BOG Chair, Mori Hossini, BOG Vice Chair, Tom Kuntz, Chancellor Marshall Criser, Dr. Judy Bense, Dr. Martha Saunders, Dr. Brendan Kelly, Dr. Kim Brown, Dr. Kevin Bailey, Dr. Susan Stephenson, Ms. Janice Gilley, Ms. Pat Lott, Mr. Andrew Romer, Mr. Carlos Santos, Ms. Rebecca Sandberg, and Ms. Becky Luntsford.

Chair Lewis Bear welcomed everyone and explained that when this meeting was announced a number of our trustees stated their interest in attending and so today’s attendance represents those beyond our executive committee. He went on to explain that since he has had the opportunity to talk with BOG Chair Hosseini regarding the Performance Funding Metrics, he wanted to give the trustees present the opportunity to share their concerns and ask questions at today’s meeting.

BOG Chair Hosseini thanked Chair Bear, President Bense, and all those present for hosting he, Vice Chair Kuntz, and Chancellor Criser. Chair Hosseini expressed his personal regard for President Judy Bense.

Chair Hosseini explained that once the legislative session was over it proved to be a very successful session. One common theme was the legislators put their trust in the Board of Governors to protect taxpayer dollars.

He reported we needed $321 million for Public Education Capital Outlay (PECO) funding. We originally received $50 million and ended up with $260 million.

In regards to Performance Funding, Chair Hosseini stated the Governor agreed to everything BOG wanted with very little changes and believed BOG is going in the right direction.

He went on to say, in Florida, we need skilled workers who can get good jobs when they graduate. BOG’s goal is to help all twelve of our state universities to create synergy within the whole SUS system. We look at all the universities the same, knowing they all have different agendas.

Three universities did not make their Performance Funding Metric scores. We are here today with good news. He said when UWF provides BOG with a remediation plan and delivers results, the BOG will give UWF money back. He stated that Chancellor Criser’s committee looks at the remediation plan to ensure it is measurable. Then six months later the plan will be readdressed. Whenever UWF delivers the required results, BOG will give a percentage of the funding back. At
the end of the year, if UWF delivers all that was promised, all the money will come back to UWF.

Chair Hosseini stated that said he, Vice Chair Kuntz and Chancellor Criser are here to help UWF get our goals. To help us get our system to the next level.

He thanked everyone present for their good work and he said BOG sees us as their partners. Chair Hosseini explained that the BOG holds trustees accountable, as well as the president. One half of the Board of Trustees is appointed by the BOG and we want the board members to be involved and actively working with President Bense to take UWF to the next level. He said at the end of the day, it is beneficial to our kids.

In summary, BOG Chair Hosseini said their visit today is to accomplish three things:
1. To share what happened in the Legislative Session
2. To explain the Performance Funding Metrics Plan
3. To let UWF know they are here to help

BOG Vice Chair Tom Kuntz provided a historical look at university funding. He explained that a couple years ago he suggested metrics should be put into place. He said he believed the legislature’s option to give money back is a good one. Those universities that scored the lowest will devise plans. Those plans will be looked at next week and then again in January 2015 and later in 2015. There will be opportunities along the way to get money back.

He explained his goals are:
1. To have all universities improve
2. Have the state legislature give the SUS more and more money
Vice Chair Kuntz said the BOG is not trying to compare universities to each other. Each university has its own mission. New money will come into the base budget at each university. His hope is to help legislators believe in Florida universities and their improvement plans and outcomes. Vice Chair Kuntz explained that university plans need to be more specific and measureable. He used Florida Atlantic University's plan as a good example.

Chancellor Marshall Criser thanked Chair Bear, President Bense and the Trustees and leadership for the informative conversations they have had. He said the BOG is continuing to be open to changes along the way. He expressed that words like “develop” and “success” are difficult to measure and terms provided in university plans should be more specific and measureable and the BOG needs to see implementation in specific timeframes. Chancellor Criser explained that making changes along the way and having conversations with universities is desirable. He said this plan is a living process and conversation. All those involved should be thoughtful as we move forward.

President Judy Bense agreed that we all want our system to get better and she stated that she continues to be concerned about some of the metrics. She stressed UWF’s focus is quality. President Bense said this is what we have to do as institutions and we must learn to adapt to new systems, however, her hope is there will be some flexibility demonstrated on the BOG’s part to provide assistance to the universities that want to take in students who have lower
scores and lift them up, knowing these students, and the programs that assist in their success, are more costly.

BOG Chair Hosseini replied, for us, kids getting jobs is quality. He added perhaps the kids should attend college instead of university. 2+2 is a very good idea to him. He reiterated these metrics are absolutely not written in stone and ten years from now they will look completely different, but we have to start from somewhere.

Trustee Mort O’Sullivan said he admires what BOG is trying to do, however, he asked that the BOG be hypersensitive to the law of unintended consequences and be quick to react. He asked they be quick with their knife in carving out legitimate adjustments as we go. Trustee O’Sullivan added this part of our state has great potential in the future, but great need today.

Trustee Garrett Walton commended the performance metric concept. He asked that the BOG envision the state of Florida geographically and consider refinements to the plan accordingly. This part of the state geographically impacts our quality of jobs available. He asked they consider a qualification refinement process and for the good of UWF, look at the impact of geography.

Trustee Richard Hough agreed the metrics are incredibly important. He was glad to hear that as we move forward, BOG will be willing to make changes as needed. He stated the UWF faculty reaction has not been a condemnation of the process. UWF faculty members choose to be at UWF and are supportive of the metrics but want to be measured on UWF’s own merits, not compared to others.

Provost Martha Saunders said all UWF deans and department chairs and faculty have been involved in the metrics process.

Trustee Suzanne Lewis said “What gets measured, gets done.” She explained that we know best how to work when we understand the race we are running. She added that using a weight factor is a good way to look at the criteria. Trustee Lewis made the suggestion that the message “within six months there is opportunity to get half the money back – in good faith of the plan and the results to date, even though the metrics number may not move” needs to be communicated for the next legislative session to show that UWF is on the right course and coming back. She stated she is encouraged to hear the goal is a state university system-wide improvement. But she cautioned that language is very important. Language like “preeminent universities” is subvisive.

Trustee Dave Cleveland said this effort is going to make us better and we look forward to presenting our plan. He went on to explain that some of the metrics are conflictive and favor the larger universities. He added when UWF is trying to adhere to small class size, the metrics hurt us. He added, on the access metric, all universities will score high, so when you are trying to get out of the bottom three, this scale is skewed.

Trustee Susan O’Connor said the fact that BOG is willing to listen, to make changes and adjust is encouraging. She went on to explain that we are one of the poorest counties in the state. Our students are coming from that background. They are not as educated as they should be. When
you look at our county and area and the matrix, how do you come back and say “Let me help you”? How do you help us? We do not have any BOG representation from our area.

Vice Chair Kuntz said they should be advocating for representation for our area on the BOG.

Trustee Pam Dana thanked the BOG leaders for coming to meet with us. She commended President Bense and her staff for communicating with the trustees and putting a great team together. She said UWF will step up to this challenge.

Trustee Jay Patel said in regards to the geography of our portion of the state, he always felt as though Pensacola and our region are perceived as the step child. In past year, no one came to see us and it is wonderful for you to come here. We always want to feel we have a champion to go to bat for us and your willingness to work with us on this model has changed my perception. He said we are ready to stand up and face the problem and now with your help we will get back in the game. He thanked Chair Hosseini, Vice Chair Kuntz and Chancellor Criser for recognizing UWF, its leadership and its president. He thanked them for coming and asked that they keep coming. He said it is important for the BOG to understand what a great team UWF has.

Trustee Ethan Friedland stated he appreciated the BOG’s willingness to work with UWF on this issue. He asked that UWF be gazed on its own merits and not compared to other schools. He also added that looking at other universities’ plans will be very helpful.

Meeting adjourned at 2:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Luntsford, recording secretary