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September 30, 2022 Board of Trustees Meeting Report

Board of Trustees

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Otterbein University
Board of Trustees Meeting Report
September 30, 2022

Chair's Report

Board Chair Cheryl Herbert welcomed the Board of Trustees and Emeriti Trustees to the annual fall meeting on Friday, September 30. Chair Herbert met with the Faculty Assembly Executive Committee (FAEC) and felt the discussion was very positive. She noted the discussion revolved around the partnership, resiliency of faculty and staff, and post-pandemic student mental and social needs. Chair Herbert mentioned faculty are not only teaching but taking care of students and their families.

Chair Herbert shared that trustees, during the executive session of the Board, authorized the president to enter into a MOU, regarding our partnership with Antioch and in keeping with the outline provided in the executive summary.

President's Report

President Comerford thanked the faculty who presented their sabbatical presentation earlier in the day. He highlighted the accomplishments from the FY22 strategic plan: hiring a chief diversity officer, equity raises, implementation of the *Every Student Will* program, and the first phase of the Campus Center renovations. President Comerford expressed appreciation to Bob Gatti, interim vice president for student affairs, and updated the trustees on the VPSA search. He also thanked Chancellor Bill Groves and Provost Chet Haskell, along with other Antioch University colleagues, for their collaboration in the system discussions. He announced that Mark R. Thresher '78 P'05 and Deborah Scott Thresher '77 P'05, and the Otterbein "O" Club Foundation are the recipients of the Mary B. Thomas Commitment to Otterbein Award in honor of their longtime service and generous financial commitment to the University. They will be recognized at the alumni award ceremony on Saturday, October 1 in Cowan Hall.

Board Committee Reports

Audit and Risk Management Committee

Trustee and Committee Chair Kaiser reported the committee discussed the 403-B pension. Clark Schaefer Hackett has been selected as new auditors and presented the audit report with no findings. Trustee Kaiser expressed appreciation to the Business Office for their efforts to conduct the audit. Human Resources annual reports have been sent to employees. Dennis Gendron, CIO with Ellucian, provided an IT security update. Beth Kidwell shared a risk management update noting the annual review of division and university goals.

Enrollment and Advancement Committee

On behalf of Chair Hinson, Trustee Nevil shared the committee met two times this week. Enrollment is still impacted by the pandemic and economic factors. The areas of impact were the loss of male students, low income students, nursing and health sport science, and students living on campus. Otterbein will increase enrollment by providing need-based aid enhancements within the Opportunity Scholarship, targeting Ohio College Opportunity Grant recipients. We will also increase discount in underperforming areas for on-campus students. Other initiatives include enhanced academic content and messaging, new partnership with Red Cedar Global Engagement to increase international undergraduate enrollment, re-engage with Shanghai Publishing and Printing College 'post pandemic' to drive transfer enrollment, and build undergraduate to graduate school pathways with Antioch programs.

Trustee Nevil announced that Dana Madden Viglietta '95 is serving as the interim director of alumni and family engagement. There is a robust plan for fundraising to support the Otterbein Fund, Every Student Will/Otterbein READY, the Innovation Fund, and renovation to the Campus Center. The crowdfunding campaign, 1847 Minutes, yielded 627 donors and raised over \$150,000, significant increase over last year. The Campus Center phase 1 renovations are nearing completion with anticipation for the next phase underway. The Committee also gave feedback on new strategic plans for government and community relations, coordinated out of Advancement. An advancement consultant will be selected soon to provide an opportunity assessment for the

department. The committee met Jeff King, chief diversity officer, and Frank Dobson, director of social justice and activism, to learn of their goals and interest to expand diversity. In addition, colleagues from Antioch University discussed opportunities related to recruitment of new students and working with alumni and external stakeholders. The meeting concluded with a panel of students that work with the Enrollment Management and Advancement teams.

Financial Resources Committee

Trustee and Committee Chair Bible reported the committee met several times over the summer. The investment pool is at \$129M from its highest of \$150M. He thanked Vice President Bolt for the bond refinancing to save costs. Otterbein sold three real estate properties. Trustee Bible invited ideas on ways to create incremental income to offset the operating budget. Trustee Bible and Vice President Bolt will provide zoom sessions for trustees to explain the University financials. Trustee Nevil inquired about other property sales. Vice President Bolt said there are three properties that are not strategic assets – 194 W. Main Street (OPD), 5 S. West and 111 W. Park Street (Hancock House).

Governance Committee

Trustee Currin provided the Governance Committee report for Chair Fisher. The committee has met twice in the last several weeks. Highlights of the meetings included setting committee priorities, discussing a succession plan for Board officers, and reviewing trustee self-assessments. Members will reach out to trustees for additional feedback and to discuss ways to lend support. The committee is continuing the process of identifying prospective trustees and welcomes any recommendations. The committee, as well as other Board committees, reviewed their charter and look forward to receiving feedback. An orientation program, including trustee mentors, has been provided for the new trustees.

Student Success Committee

Chair Francis shared the committee reviewed their charter and have identified minor changes. There were four new faculty hired in computer science, nursing, theater and political science. There were nine one-year professors hired. The committee reviewed the housing report with 73% new students living on campus with the desire to return to 84%. Jeff King, chief diversity officer, and Frank Dobson, director of social justice and activism, shared department goals and their enthusiasm. Vice Chancellor/Provost Chet Haskell of Antioch University shared partnership efforts focused on the graduate academic program. Chair Francis noted the faculty achievements provided in the Board packet and encouraged trustees to review the report. Chair Herbert also noted the faculty achievements in the Board packet and stated they were very impressive.

Constituency Reports

Alumni Trustee Report

Trustee Stephens shared ways the Alumni Council continues to support and engage in the University. Maggie Ellison '10 MBA '19 was elected alumni council chair. The Council, made up of individuals from around the country, plans to focus on four main areas: career development, diversity, equity, and inclusion, bridging the gap between all Otterbein's alumni networks, and meaningful engagement and giving. The Alumni Council will continue to offer creative and robust programming – virtually and in-person, locally, regionally, and nationally. The Council welcomed Dana Madden Viglietta '95, interim executive director of alumni & family engagement. Homecoming and Family Weekend welcomes more than 1,000 alumni and families to campus. The annual giving appeal, including the successful 1847 Minutes campaign, featured a call to support the Otterbein Fund, Every Student Will/Otterbein READY, the Innovation Fund, and renovation to the Campus Center. Donors had an opportunity to provide gifts in honor or memory of faculty and staff who influenced their experience at Otterbein with an average of \$250 per donor. The Alumni Council anticipates 100% giving participation this year.

Faculty Trustee Report

Trustee Tansey noted Otterbein ranked seventh in the Best Undergraduate Teaching category in the US News and World Report ranking. This is not just a recognition of our faculty but also for the support and priority the

administration gives to teaching and to faculty as educators. Otterbein will honor teaching award winners for the best new teacher, best teacher and best adjunct faculty, in both general studies and in a discipline, at the upcoming fall semester teaching awards ceremony.

Student attendance is at near record levels at on-campus events hosted by the center for community engagement, IS program, and campus life. Faculty are seeing some additional academic social and emotional challenges as a toll from the pandemic. The Coordinator Liaisons (CLs), faculty members from different disciplines that coordinate between admissions and development, have been working hard with faculty to ensure consistent recruitment messaging to prospective students and families. Faculty are still contributing to the *Every Student Will*/Otterbein READY program. Trustee Tansey expressed gratitude for the support and resources the Board and the administration has given to the faculty, especially the raises received earlier this year.

Trustee Millsap shared how the last three years have influenced the shared governance system. There is a growing concern that staff are overworked due to reduction in numbers which also applies to faculty. Due to the reduction in overall number of faculty, Faculty Assembly is having difficulty filling seats on committees. The faculty understand the need for all the reductions but there is a concern that the increased turnover due to this increase in workload will start to hurt the quality of what we offer to students. Student and faculty support services, including counseling and other forms of mental health assistance, need to take priority in terms of accessibility. The last Faculty Assembly meeting addressed the issue of disengagement for students and faculty.

Student Trustee Report

Trustees Nelson, Khafagy and Sturgeon shared student reactions to the Otterbein-Antioch partnership were neutral to positive. Health Center/COVID-19 accessibility, safety and Otterbein Police Department, dining changes in the OtterDen and Campus Center renovations were topics of student concern this year. The student health care provider is Mount Carmel Hospital, located in various locations in the area and through telehealth visits. Accessibility to the nearest health care provider is a concern for students. Further communication is desired on addressing Covid protocol on who to contact, report and reach with concerns. Uptown Pharmacy agreed to provide reduced costs for prescriptions. Otterbein Police Department has met with the student government to address concerns on jurisdiction, transporting students for medical reasons, and staff availability. Student government has regular conversations with the dining service provider, Parkhurst, who continues to work with accommodating changes. Munch Money has been positive for commuter students. Dining service on Friday and Saturday has been moved to the Otter Den due to decreased number of students being served. Students are excited about the Campus Center renovations. There are 21 new student senators who are taking advantage of leadership experiences.

Board Presentations

Faculty sabbatical presentations were provided by Dr. Steffanie Burk, Equine Science; Professor Jonathan Johnson, Art & Art History; Dr. Diane Ross, Education; and Dr. Michael Yonchak, Music.

The All-Committee Meeting of the Board provided presentations on the overview of the system partnership noting the process, timeline and governance. Trustees Gifford and Casperson have agreed to serve on the System Board. President Comerford shared other universities have reached out for information on the Independent University System. He identified frequently asked questions and provided answers.

Vice President Blackburn-Smith reviewed the fall 2022 enrollment census. The data indicated we are still experiencing impact from the pandemic. The students who were most impacted are the first-year students of Fall 2019. Applications and admits were up over 2021 and 2020. There was a decline in yield of 2.3% from 2021 and 5.7% from 2020. The areas of impact were the loss of male students, low income students, nursing and health sport science, and students living on campus. Vice President Blackburn-Smith provided strategies to increase enrollment.

Vice President Bolt provided the unaudited results and operating budget update for FY22. The fall FY23 operating revenue budget has a variance with a revenue shortfall of \$1,530,000 as of September 16, 2022.

The Fall FY23 operating expense budget variance currently stands at \$665,000. Plans are to update the multi-year budget and continue modeling projections. Vice President Bolt noted there is a smaller group of students on the meal plan than projected. Adjustments have been made with the dining service for cost savings and efficiencies.

Chancellor Bill Groves reviewed Antioch University transition up to this period of time. He identified the complimentary nature of Otterbein and Antioch's mission and heritage. Antioch's student growth has increased 5 – 10% over the past three years. The central notion for the partnership is growth of graduate and undergraduate programs. Chancellor Groves noted Otterbein can provide strategic partnerships in the central Ohio area. Provost Chet Haskell shared the importance of mission is a major facilitator for faculty, staff and students noting this is all about the people. Chancellor Groves and Provost Haskell answered questions from the trustees.

Board Action

The following action was taken by the Board of Trustees:

The Board of Trustees approved a motion to authorize the president to enter into an MOU regarding our partnership with Antioch University in keeping with the outline provided in the executive summary.

Future Board of Trustees Meeting Dates

December 2, 2022 - virtual

February 3, 2023 - virtual

April 28-30, 2023 - in-person meeting and Commencement Weekend