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October 10, 2020 Board of Trustees Meeting Report

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Board of Trustees Meeting Report
October 10, 2020

Chair's Report

Board Chair **Mark Thresher** welcomed the Board of Trustees to its fall meeting. Chair Thresher began by welcoming Trustees Emeriti **Bill Evans, John Magaw** and **Jane Oman** to the meeting. Chair Thresher expressed his thanks to the Board for the productive committee work and thorough reports shared on Friday morning.

Chair Thresher shared that he met with the Faculty Assembly Executive Committee (FAEC) on Thursday, October 8. Discussion centered around the Program Discontinuance and Modification Process.

President's Report

President Comerford expressed his appreciation to everyone on campus for their remarkable work and commitment over the past several months. Each department has reviewed their budget and provided adjustments for budget relief. President Comerford reminded the Board that employee compensation allocations and retirement contributions were suspended this year. He stated the Program Discontinuance and Modification Process was a huge endeavor which affected most faculty, staff and students. President Comerford shared countless hours and tough decisions were made and he appreciated the extended collaborative effort. He acknowledged that divisions have provided creative virtual ways to perform responsibilities during COVID-19. President Comerford and Otterbein University Student Government President, Frandie Francique, walked the campus this week. He shared students are doing well and understood the campus was doing its best under the circumstances.

President Comerford presented a recommendation to award emeritus status to three (3) faculty members and four (4) staff members who are retiring this year or who have recently retired with a combined service of **179** years. Their individual years of service are as follows:

Faculty

Dr. Susan Fagan, Department of Art and Art History/Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs (16)

Professor Nicholas Hill, Department of Art and Art History (23)

Dr. Shirine Mafi, Department of Business, Accounting, and Economics (33)

Staff

Robin Arthur, Enrollment Management (23)

Annette Boose, Administrative Assistant, Department of Health and Sport Sciences (21)

Phillipa Smith, Enrollment Management (27)

Ed Syguda, Institutional Advancement (36)

President Comerford made a motion to approve the following **Resolution to Award Emeritus Status**:

Whereas, these educators and staff have demonstrated a conscientious and strong commitment to the University; and

Whereas, they have shown outstanding dedication and loyalty in service to students of Otterbein University.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Trustees of Otterbein University, on behalf of the entire University community, express deepest appreciation to these dedicated educators and staff for their many contributions to the life of Otterbein University and do hereby confer upon them Emeritus status.

The motion was seconded by Trustee **Pete Bible** and unanimously approved.

Action

The following action was taken by the Board of Trustees:

- **Resolution to Amend the Otterbein University Code of Regulations**

The Board of Trustees approved a resolution to amend Article IX, Section 2 to remove the words ‘at least ten (10) days in advance’ for written notice of a special meeting. The Board of Trustees approved a resolution to eliminate Article XII, Section 7e: Selling or disposing of real estate, and to increase the purchase of real estate to \$1,000,000 from \$500,000 in Article XII, Section 7f.

- **Resolution to Approve Program Discontinuances**

The Board of Trustees approved a resolution to approve proposed changes of the voluntary discontinuance of twelve (12) academic programs and the discontinuance of the five (5) academic program as outlined in President Comerford’s recommendation letter of October 2, 2020 to the Student Success Committee, the Board of Trustees and the campus.

Committee Reports

Audit & Risk Management

- The Audit & Risk Management Committee received a white paper summary of Otterbein’s COVID planning and reviewed the COVID-19 Dashboard and website. The 403B (retirement plan) audit was completed without significant findings. The Board was eager to see the return of the retirement contributions.

Enrollment and Advancement

- The Enrollment and Advancement Committee reviewed opportunities and challenges for both areas. The fall enrollment is down 7% from 2019 and Fall 2021 first year undergraduate applications are up 34% compared to last year. The projected tuition revenue is up because of strong summer enrollment. The projected student discount is down because of the enrollment mix. The projected net tuition revenue is up which will help offset losses in housing and board plans.

Institutional Advancement has had successful engagement of alumni and donors around the world through a virtual homecoming, numerous educational videos, virtual engagement meetings and innovation fundraising. The committee presented to the Board an effort to raise money from alumni and friends to support Otterbein and its students through this time period.

Financial Resources

- The Financial Resources Committee reviewed and discussed the FY20 and FY21 budgets. The FY21 budget did not need to be revised due to being within \$11,000 of the budget approved last May. We ended up being close to the (reduced) headcount we planned for in May, lost significant revenue from room and board (phased opening and more students electing to live at home), gained about \$1.3 million in federal and state relief, and reduced the discount rate as much of it was attached to on-campus residence.

Governance Committee

- The Governance Committee discussed potential Board recruitment, trustee self-evaluation survey, emeriti recommendations for non-academic staff and policy updates in the Code of Regulation.

Student Success

- The Student Success Committee met twice prior to the Board Meeting. They reviewed the committee charter, faculty accomplishments, fall housing report, The Point report, and COVID planning. Most of the committee's time was taken up with a full review and discussion of the program discontinuation and modification process. The committee acknowledged the difficulty and emotionally taxing process of the program discontinuance and modification process. The full Board also discussed the proposals during the all-committee meeting.

There were 12 programs in the early phases of the process which were voluntarily discontinued by departments. The recommendation letter from the President of October 2, 2020 to the committee was the program discontinuance of five (5) additional programs and the continuance with adjustments of twelve (12) programs.

The committee was provided access to the ePortfolio to review all data materials. Each program was reviewed, including feedback from each stage in the process. The committee spent additional time on programs where the president's recommendation did not align with that of the Senate and other groups. The recommendation of the President was endorsed by the Student Success Committee. Chair Thresher noted the work and importance of the process and the hope that it would become a more normal process in the future.

The committee recommended emeriti status for three faculty Dr. Susan Fagan, Professor Nicholas Hill and Dr. Shirine Mafi.

Future Board of Trustees Meeting Dates

December 11, 2020, 11 a.m. via Zoom

February 5 - 6, 2021

Friday, April 30 – Saturday, May 1, 2021

May 1 – 2, 2021 (Commencement Weekend)