Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Regents
Presidential Search Committee
Murray State University
September 4, 2013

The Murray State University (MSU) Board of Regents (BOR) Presidential Search Committee met in special session on Wednesday, September 4, 2013, in the Jesse Stuart Room of Pogue Library on the main campus of Murray State University.

The Search Committee Secretary reported that Chair Stephen Williams was unable to attend the meeting today due to an unexpected business matter which arose in Louisville, Kentucky. According to *Roberts' Rules of Order*, in the absence of the Chair it is her duty to call the meeting to order. The Secretary called the meeting to order at 3 p.m.

Roll Call

The roll was called and the following members were present: Kevin Binfield, Don Chamberlain, Susan Guess, Jeremiah Johnson, Martha Lewis, Jerry Sue Thornton, Harry Lee Waterfield II and Roslyn White. Absent: Stephen Williams.

Also present were Regents Renee Fister and Phil Schooley; Jill Hunt, Senior Executive Coordinator to the President, Coordinator for Board Relations and Secretary to the Board of Regents and the Presidential Search Committee; Tom Hoffacker, Director for Human Resources; John Rall, General Counsel and members of the faculty, staff, students and news media.

AGENDA

1.	**Call to Order/Roll Call**	**Mr. Williams**
2.	**Minutes of the Special Board of Regents Presidential Search Committee Meeting July 26, 2013**	
3.	**Discussion with Presidential Search Firm – Witt/Kieffer**	**Mr. Thornburgh/ Dr. Smith**
4.	**Other Business Related to the Presidential Search Committee**	**Mr. Williams**
5.	**Adjournment**	

Chair Pro-Tem, elected

The Secretary reported the first order of business will be election of a member of the Search Committee to serve as Chair Pro-Tem in Mr. Williams' absence. Once nominations for Chair Pro-Tem are declared in order each Committee member will be recognized for the purpose of making a nomination. Recognition of members shall be in the same order as roll call and nominations require no second. If a Committee member is nominated and wishes to withdraw their name from consideration they may do so immediately. After each Committee member has had a roll call opportunity to make a nomination if only one name has been placed in nomination for the office of Chair Pro-Tem that person will be declared elected by unanimous consent. If more than one name is placed in nomination for Chair Pro-Tem a vote shall be taken. Should this occur, General Counsel will provide additional information.

The roll was called as follows: Dr. Binfield, pass; Dr. Chamberlain, nominated Harry Lee Waterfield. All other Search Committee members passed. The Secretary announced there being only one nomination Harry Lee Waterfield is elected Chair Pro-Tem by unanimous consent.

Minutes of the July 26, 2013, Presidential Search Committee Meeting, approved

Mrs. Guess moved that the minutes of the Presidential Search Committee meeting held on July 26, 2013, be approved as submitted. Mr. Johnson seconded and the motion carried.

Presidential Search Firm Witt/Kieffer Presentation, received

Chair Pro-Tem Waterfield welcomed Presidential Search Firm consultants John Thornburgh and Bob Smith. Mr. Thornburgh indicated information would be provided in terms of what is expected from the Search Committee throughout the process, including rules and responsibilities of the Committee, so all are comfortable this will be a successful process with a spectacular result. Witt/Kieffer earlier distributed an agenda and accompanying timeline to provide structure in terms of the key elements of a higher education presidential search. It is most important for the Search Committee to know that the Search Firm serves on their behalf and will not move ahead of the Committee by dictating and directing a process with which the Committee is not comfortable. The consultants will serve as counselors and provide information on best practices. The process that is designed and the protocols applied will be those best suited for MSU.

Committee responsibilities include representing various constituency groups, the University and members of the Board.

The first step in a typical presidential search is organizing and preparing for the recruitment of candidates and this work will be accomplished over the next several days as the consultants participate in campus meetings. Before candidate recruitment begins the consultants must have a keen sense of what this campus expects from its next President, what the priorities will be for this leader and what this individual will be expected to accomplish. During this transition period reflection must take place in terms of where the University currently stands and where it desires to go. These agenda items will be different from those identified six years ago when the last transition occurred. Once the consultants have a sense of what these priorities are they will ask individuals to identify the particular experiences, skills, leadership style and personality traits that will best equip the next President to achieve not only the agenda items but do so within a culture unique to Murray State. The consultants will solicit assistance in identifying the University's "selling points" because individuals they will be talking with during the recruitment phase of the process may not necessarily be looking for a job and may not be aware of Murray State. Conversations with various campus groups have been successful to this point and will continue over the next couple of days to provide raw material which will enable the consultants to develop a leadership profile to be shared with potential candidates. The consultants also need to hear firsthand from those who mean the most to this University – the leadership, students, faculty, staff and the Board of Regents – to identify what these groups deem as being most important. Candidates will not only reference the leadership profile but will want to know the real story at MSU, including pertinent campus issues, and the consultants must be prepared to candidly respond to these questions. The leadership profile will represent an action item for the Search Committee, will be provided to as many individuals as possible and will be comprehensive in nature. The document will attempt to answer typical questions candidates ask about size, programs and complexities. This information will be included, along with effective selling points for MSU (rankings and reputation). The best leaders are those who want to make a difference and if pertinent issues they will be required to address during their first few years of residency are identified this will assist in potential candidates becoming excited about the opportunity at MSU. Cascading from the leadership profile is an identification of preferred attributes, including where should this person come from; what professional skills, abilities and talents they should possess and those personality traits that will mesh well with MSU. This work will result in a comprehensive "wish list" although one person will not be able to meet every single criteria and represents a framework, a constellation of strengths, so recruiting can be targeted toward individuals who have experience in line with what all expect to be accomplished at this University. A draft of this document will be provided electronically to the Committee to edit and approve at the end of September. Assistance will be solicited from MSU's marketing and communications experts to design a document which is graphically and visually compelling. Once the Committee adopts this document a companion advertisement will be prepared and recruitment of potential candidates can begin.

Recruiting nuances in higher education include the placement of advertisements – certainly in the Chronicle of Higher Education which is the "bible" for all University executive positions – but the majority of the most attractive and intriguing candidates come through personal outreach (direct calls from the consultants utilizing their networks and calls with colleagues in higher education who may not be interested in the position but can provide recommendations or nominations of individuals they believe are well suited for the position). Nominations from campus are also welcomed and Committee members were asked to begin thinking about

individuals in higher education they have had contact with who might be a great President for Murray State. All were also encouraged to solicit input from their colleagues. The consultants will contact any identified candidates to determine whether they are interested in pursuing the Murray State presidency.

The following questions were asked by Committee members (Mr. Thornburgh's response follows each question):

1) How substantial is the Witt/Kieffer network outside of academia and what is the firm's ability to identify individuals with experience in shared governance who might be suitable for this position? Health care is the second area of focus for Witt/Kieffer and the firm is aware of every leader in academic medicine and those who participate in a shared governance culture. The non-traditional candidate – meaning someone who has not developed professionally in higher education – will most often surface within what is called the "friends or family" network, which could come from an individual Board member or a previous Board member, to identify an individual who has an accomplished professional career and wants to give back. Alumni are often fertile sources of non-traditional candidates – people who have had their leadership skills validated in different settings and are at a stage in their life professionally and personally to find this position attractive. The best fit would be an individual who knows Murray State, understands and has a passion for this University but has also been tested and tried and experienced success in overseeing a major enterprise. The notion of maintaining a database of corporate executives to be plugged into any given setting – absent the mentioned connection – would be challenging.
2) What percentage of Presidents placed over the last several years are non-traditional educators? The percentage is low but is growing and traction is being found in major public systems or campuses that rely extensively on relationships with the public sector. These entities are seeking people who know this work well – former elected officials and administrators of public agencies – not for their partisan political knowledge but because of their "street smarts." What is also being seen is a diversification where candidates come from within higher education. Historically the classic path to becoming President was to serve as a department Chair, Dean, Provost and then President. The consultants are finding that the supply is dwindling and many Provosts do not want to be President – they want to remain the keepers of the academic mission and have no desire to handle external factors associated with a university. Success is being experienced with candidates who have spent the majority of their careers within a university but not in a core academic role, such as student affairs, advancement, development and enrollment. These individuals understand how to work and lead within a shared governance setting and more often than not have an advanced or terminal degree but also possess skills that will complement the work of the Provost or Chief Academic Officer. The consultants' goal is to provide diverse options in all respects – not just professionally – but in terms of demographics and gender.
3) What is the likelihood of an individual coming to Murray State from a large charitable organization to escape the economic decline and the downturn in charitable contributions or an individual having been a significant fundraiser at a private university? In both situations the likelihood is high if that person has a previous connection to this University or the region. Although a gloomy picture has been painted for the not-for-profit world, people from outside the University do not necessarily see higher education as a highly desirable environment. This represents one of the toughest jobs in America – not only the "day job" of trying to keep enrollments steady and revenues high – but managing expectations of multiple constituencies and the position is not for everyone. In terms of individuals who possess core fundraising skills, one must consider whether those skills are transferrable into Murray State's network and environment. What makes a successful President a successful fundraiser is the ability to present a passionate story about the institution in a way that excites the prospective donor about how he or she can make a difference.
4) There are currently a high number of presidential openings at other universities. How does MSU stand in terms of its timeline? The consultants are not worried about the timing of this search and believe the University will attract candidates on its own. If an individual has an interest in the position and feels they are qualified they will not preclude this opportunity for the sake of one or two months. Searches run parallel to one another and the first university out of the gate does not necessarily gain an appreciable advantage. This represents an extremely competitive environment – not just because of the number of openings – but due to the number of people who are cautious about entering an environment that will be taxing at a minimum. The consultants want to identify individuals who find this work enriching and

invigorating but must also recognize the talent pool of "traditional" candidates is dwindling. This competitive reality must be addressed but an effort will also be made to remove as many barriers to success as possible.

The consultants earlier stated the draft leadership profile would be provided to the Search Committee via email for review. Chair Pro-Tem Waterfield asked Committee members to bear in mind that another videoconference meeting may be necessary for this purpose. Confirmation was provided that the document presented will be candid and is not intended to be controversial but must accurately reflect the opportunities and challenges for leadership in a positive manner. This document will be shared with the Search Committee in advance of the videoconference meeting so all members will have an opportunity to make suggestions for revisions.

Once the profile has been developed the consultants will begin making phone calls to develop interest in the position. They will begin probing and assessing and pulling together the critical mass of candidates they believe are suitable for consideration. The consultants are more interested in quality than quantity but typically for a presidential search there will be 40 to 50 applicants. Many will be over the transit representing people who feel they are well qualified but do not emerge through the consultant's network. Search Committee members will be given electronic access to all applications through a secure and confidential website maintained by Witt/Kieffer. The consultants will then provide the benefit of their wisdom through interviews and the screening process to provide guidance in terms of those 12 to 15 candidates (assuming 40 applicants) they believe deserve the Committee's priority review. Following this work the Committee will discuss candidates who have applied and this work is currently scheduled to occur in early December. The Committee will be provided with an opportunity to discuss any additional candidates who does not fall within the 12 to 15 identified by the consultants. The primary purpose of engaging a Search Firm is for the consultants to provide the Committee with wisdom and knowledge about potential candidates. Through discussions and review the candidate field will be narrowed to a group that intrigues the Committee enough to want to meet those individuals. Candidate credentials will be reviewed and a determination made about the characteristics of each individual and whether they meet characteristics identified as important to MSU. This will result in the identification of candidates selected to interview with the Search Committee (likely at a hotel close to the airport in Nashville, Tennessee).

Committee members were cautioned that two days of grueling interviews will be held but the consultants will assist by providing an outline of topics and questions to be asked of each candidate to ensure consistency while allowing latitude for the Committee to ask additional questions. It is not desirable to ask each candidate a different set of questions because doing so would not provide a frame of reference. The number of candidates selected to be interviewed will be a reflection of the Search Committee's view of the depth of the pool. During the interviews the Committee will listen to the substance of the candidate responses but will also have an opportunity to evaluate interpersonal style, communication and platform skills and the ability to convey confidence and vision. Following these interviews the Committee will be asked to reflect on what it has observed and decide which individuals to advance. All should bear in mind the Committee may be unsure about some candidates but can glean additional insights through referencing – with the consultants and/or Committee members making phone calls discretely – to obtain additional information before making a final decision on whether to advance a particular candidate. Clarification was provided that at this stage the candidates could be asked to identify references other than those originally provided and the consultants must ensure any questions which arise are resolved before advancing further.

The Committee will then identify a subset of candidates to advance. The traditional method of advancing candidates would be for them to be announced publicly and participate in open campus forums to meet with various constituency groups. The Committee should be aware practices have changed drastically in higher education and will need to decide whether candidate names are announced publicly before an official appointment is made. If this is the process selected many individuals may not engage in the search process because they do not want to risk their professional or personal reputation and this holds true even when a candidate is among one of the remaining five. Research has indicated that virtually every major search firm is currently operating under a different scenario unless public announcement of candidates is required by law (not applicable in Kentucky). The University of Kentucky and the top Association of American University (AAU) institutions maintained candidate confidentiality. Consultants have found that what works well as a surrogate for releasing names but still allows the candidates to meet other

individuals on campus is when the Committee has narrowed the list to the three to four best qualified candidates a broader group of constituents is then introduced into the process. Under a commitment of confidentiality, these larger constituency groups will have an opportunity to interact with the candidates. This also helps candidates by providing an opportunity to meet with individuals beyond the Committee membership. Feedback from extant constituency groups is then provided to the Committee to be used as an additional data point in its evaluation before making a recommendation to the Board. Witt/Kieffer heartedly recommends proceeding in this fashion and maintaining confidentiality throughout the process. Institutions similar to Murray State across the country are operating in this manner and it has been shown to identify the strongest candidates. If confidentiality is not offered this information must be provided to candidates upfront, resulting in a dramatically different candidate pool. Although attractive candidates will apply for the position they will represent individuals who can afford exposure and will likely include those who are two to three levels down from a presidency (representing an aspirational move). If a sitting President is a candidate they likely will not be a President of distinction but one who is running away from a campus and can afford public release of their name.

Clarification was provided if this is how the Committee desires to proceed the expanded constituency groups would meet with the candidates in a location to be determined, not necessarily off campus. Proceeding in this fashion falls short of distributing an announcement and although the likelihood remains that a candidate's name could be released it can be handled in a controlled fashion and not in a manner that would expose the candidate. This decision does not have to be made today and there will likely be substantial continued discussion on the issue. Chair Pro-Tem Waterfield reported that Chair Williams has indicated proceeding in this fashion would be a "hard sell" to the campus but agrees the process should be as confidential as possible. The Board will meet in Retreat tomorrow, has a Quarterly Meeting on Friday and the presidential search is on both agendas. It might be possible for the Board to provide direction to the Search Committee so it can then make a decision on how the process is undertaken. All want to attract the best possible candidates but a balance must be determined so the process is not totally closed but protects potential candidates. Perhaps this process could be structured in a way so the various constituency groups would be satisfied there is adequate representation throughout the process. Agreement was reached that this issue would be discussed at the Board Retreat to give the full Board an opportunity to provide direction to the Search Committee when making its final decision on how to handle the issue. Mr. Thornburgh added that every university in California, every AAU institution and other top institutions in the country now operate in a confidential fashion.

Comments from Committee members included:

- The trend is moving away from town hall meetings and this Committee member was recently involved in a search where two candidates dropped out of the process because their names were going to be made public.
- It is important to remember the process undertaken at Murray State will be almost as important as the result.
- A candidate who would pull out of the search process due to their name being made public may not be the type of candidate MSU is seeking and removing themselves from the process for this reason reveals a great deal about their character.

Mr. Thornburgh clarified the issue being discussed is whether the names of candidates will be released publicly to the entire campus (and beyond) and meetings and open forums scheduled with various constituency groups. He suggests an alternative approach of representative groups of the various constituencies (including the senior leadership team), faculty and staff leadership and the Board of Regents, meeting with the candidates in a controlled and confidential setting with no public release of names. The dialogue which occurs during such meetings is valuable to the candidate and at the conclusion of the process feedback would be solicited from individual participants and would be provided to the Search Committee. The concern remains that some candidates would not even enter their name into a search without assurance of complete confidentiality. Experience has shown public comprehensive universities the size and complexity of Murray State that have allowed searches to be undertaken with the level of confidentiality being suggested had 39 sitting presidents apply – one of which was appointed. In searches undertaken without this level of confidentiality, only four sitting presidents applied. Confidentiality directly impacts the quality of the applicant pool. Candidates want to know up front whether their name will be released and if they will be required to appear in a public forum. Assurance was provided that candidates want to meet individuals beyond the Search Committee.

Chair Pro-Tem Waterfield understands the comments which have been voiced and an effort will be made to devise a system that will satisfy all involved. The process will obviously not be totally closed but if it can be conducted in a controlled manner to attract the most qualified individuals that should certainly be an objective of this Committee.

Agreement was reached that the Search Committee will make a determination of how this process will be handled so the Search Firm can inform candidates about the process in advance of individuals applying for the position. This issue will be discussed with the full Board and information will then be conveyed to the Search Committee on how the Board would suggest the process be undertaken. It is desirable for the process to have constituency groups well represented in meetings with candidates to provide as much transparency as possible. The Search Committee's mode of operation from the beginning has been to undertake any initiatives which will generate the highest quality applicants and that is part of the reason why the decision was made to utilize a search firm. All were cautioned that if a blended model is constructed the consultants must be provided with a very clear indication of what that involves because it is not just a matter of releasing names to the press. Every person chosen to be part of this process will be asked to agree to complete confidentiality and must adhere to that agreement or the integrity of the search will be compromised.

Once this process yields a recommendation from the Search Committee to the Board of Regents, the full Board will interview recommended candidates because ultimately it is the Board's responsibility to choose the next President of Murray State University, work out the terms and conditions of the contract and make the final appointment and announcement. Chair Pro-Tem Waterfield indicated the Board will select meeting dates on Friday and an earlier directive was issued to plan these meetings in accordance with the schedule of the Search Committee and candidate visits to campus. The consultants indicated a February meeting date could be too aggressive and a date in March would be more realistic. It was agreed this information will be conveyed to the Board of Regents.

Presidential Search Committee Acknowledgement Form, discussed

A Presidential Search Committee Acknowledgement Form was provided and represents a confidentiality agreement that outlines each member's responsibilities and obligations throughout the process. Dr. Binfield moved that the Search Committee adopt the Presidential Search Committee Acknowledgement Form. Mr. Johnson seconded and discussion followed.

Amendment to Presidential Search Committee Acknowledgement Form, discussed and withdrawn

Dr. Binfield proposed an amendment to the acknowledgement form specifically related to Item #3 – Only the Chair of the Search Committee is authorized to speak to the news media or any other publication or media outlet on behalf of the Search Committee. He believes this could have the unintended effect of prohibiting Committee members from speaking to their respective constituency groups even for general search updates. The Student Government Association, Staff Congress and Faculty Senate are constituted by the Board of Regents and a body constituted by the Board must operate under the Kentucky Open Meetings Act. A body that operates under the Kentucky Open Meetings Act, except under the narrow personnel exemption, must be open to the public and media. He proposed adding a sentence at the end of Item #3 as follows: "This does not preclude campus constituency representatives on the Search Committee from speaking to their constituencies in accordance with the Kentucky Open Meetings Act regarding the status of the search, timelines and their general level of satisfaction with the search process while adhering to all of the points of acknowledgment contained in this document."

Chair Pro-Tem Waterfield indicated the Board currently has an understanding that the Chair speaks on behalf of the Board but constituency Regents are allowed to report to their respective constituencies. Mr. Thornburgh has provided general counsel to the members of the Board as well as the constituency representatives serving on this Committee in terms of when comments are made, either internally or externally, those should be as general as possible and members should not offer editorials about the search. It is best to indicate the search is on target, all are pleased with the progress being made and the Committee has undertaken its work with great diligence and looks forward to the next step. Editorializing can create expectations which are

difficult to manage. The intent of this requirement is for the Search Committee Chair to speak to the media on behalf of the Committee, contain within the Committee any discussion about the search process and for those discussions not to be shared with the media, the Board or other constituencies in terms of the specific status of the search. Chair Pro-Tem Waterfield indicated he believes Mr. Williams would be limited in his comments about the work of the Search Committee. It is possible the Committee could indicate to the constituency representatives serving on this Committee when it is time to report to the Faculty Senate, for instance, and the intent is not to cut off all communication but provide some organizational structure. It was further clarified if constituency members are asked by their various constituents how the search process is going they do not have to defer to the Chair of the Committee but should limit their comments to those that are general in nature. If members of the news media are present at constituency meetings their attendance is unavoidable. On that basis, Dr. Binfield withdrew the amendment.

Presidential Search Committee Acknowledgement Form, adopted

Chair Pro-Tem Waterfield indicated there is a motion and a second to adopt the Presidential Search Committee Acknowledgement Form. The motion carried.

Committee members were reminded to sign the Presidential Search Committee Acknowledgement Form and return to the Secretary if they have not already done so.

Mr. Thornburgh indicated the Search Committee represents the University as a whole and, although members may bring insight from the various constituency groups, they represent the entire University. Chair Pro-Tem Waterfield indicated it is his desire for this Search Committee to work together as well as the Board of Regents. There is a good Board in place to work with the next President of Murray State University. All on this Committee want to identify the best presidential candidate and if a way to encourage all good candidates to apply can be determined that is certainly how this Committee should proceed. No member of the Board of Regents serving on this Committee has their own agenda.

Adjournment

The Special Meeting of the Board of Regents Presidential Search Committee adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Stephen Williams, Chair
Presidential Search Committee

Jill Hunt, Secretary
Presidential Search Committee

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