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SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

January 10, 2001

MINUTES

Present: William Janssen, William Kearns, Suresh Khator, Sara Mandell, Gregory Paveza, Alan Sear, Jenifer Schneider, Melvyn Tockman, Nancy Tyson, James Vastine

Provost's Office: Phil Smith, David Stamps

President's Office: Josue Cruz

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m. The Minutes from the meeting of November 29, 2000, were approved as corrected.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS (Nancy Tyson)

President Tyson spent the most of the first two days of the week attending meetings of the Education Governance Reorganization Transition Task Force (EGRTTF) which took place in the Marshall Center Ballroom. At this time, she took the opportunity to tell members of the Senate Executive Committee (SEC) about the meetings, especially in addition to what has been reported in the newspapers. The meetings are also available on the USF Netcast web site.

President Genshaft welcomed the EGRTTF warmly at the beginning of the session. The first item of any interest was the hour and one-half session by Senator Bob Graham, including questions and answers. Senator Graham raised some legal objections to what the EGRTTF is doing. Basically, he is saying that there is a constitutional error in that the amendment under which the EGRTTF is operating does not apply to the universities. The wording of the amendment refers to free, public education which would be K-12 since the university education is not free. Therefore, the EGRTTF is conducting an illegal process. Senator Graham wants to get a petition to have another amendment that would protect the Board of Regents (BOR) and he needs 480,000 signatures in order to do that. He said quite strongly that if we can get a constitutional amendment for a high speed rail system, then we ought to be able to get one for Florida's universities.

On the first day of the meeting, the Council of Presidents did, for the most part, eventually get their way with regard to placement of the hiring and firing of presidents which will go to
the local board of trustees except that the Board of Education, according to their recommendation, is to have veto power. Also to go to the local boards according to the recommendations of the EGRTTF are collective bargaining, tuition rates, and approval of new degree programs. It is also proposed to take the presidential selection process out of the Sunshine Law. President Tyson then read the following quote from the St. Petersburg Times: "Under the new scenario, names of candidates would become public only after the local boards settled on up to three finalists. The board could name only one finalist, eliminating public scrutiny."

Research Chair Melvyn Tockman brought up the issue of a lump sum budget which was mentioned by Senator Graham on the first day of the meetings. Chair Tockman indicated that the EGRTTF took issue with that because they wanted legislative control over how those funds would be allocated to the individual universities. He was not at the meeting on the second day and asked what the decision was on this issue. Provost Stamps recalled that the EGRTTF rejected lump sum funding because that would mean that the legislature would abdicate its responsibilities.

President Tyson continued that the next interesting part was the public hearing section where a lot of different kinds of people spoke negatively against the EGRTTF. Dr. Terrell Sessums brought up the view that the original committee that had decided to look at this whole issue had not intended to include universities. One refrain that the BOR heard from a number of attendees was that the faculty voice has not been attended to in this process at all and that there are 11,500 faculty in this state university system who have dedicated their lives to higher education who are committed, concerned, intelligent, educated people who know the field of higher education and who should have an input in this process who are not being listened to, whose opinions are, in fact, being tossed aside. EGRTTF Chair Phil Handy's response to this refrain the next day was that the EGRTTF head a lot about the faculty yesterday, but did not hear anything about students. President Tyson pointed out that this kind of political posturing is why the universities need to be protected from politics. She also expressed disappointment in the amount and kind of official publicity given to the Task Force sessions and the overall lack of support given to the interests of faculty by the Office of the President and the Office of Governmental Relations in the face of the Reorganization effort.

President Tyson had a couple of things she wanted to ask the SEC and Faculty Senate to do. One thing is to get a trans-university action going by getting all the Faculty Senates involved and the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates (ACFS), as a body, to do it. She announced that she is taking a leadership role in this along with some of the other ACFS members.

President Tyson feels that the faculty should make stronger ties between the student government and the faculty, to get student support. Parliamentarian Mandell was concerned that it is the faculty who should affect what the university lives with. There is an idea in the outside world that the student voice should be equal to that of the faculty, but, in fact, they may not have to live with the consequences. President Tyson does not really think that is the issue. She thinks the EGRTTF was saying that the faculty were not thinking about the welfare of the students.

Research Council Chair Tockman stated that EGRTTF Chair Phil Handy did hear from the students through the voice of Student Government Vice President Tara Klimek who represents the 30,000 students of the University of South Florida (USF). In fact, she echoed exactly many of the concerns of the faculty. It is unfortunate that this was not recalled to Chair Handy when he said that he did not hear from the students. Chair Tockman agreed with President Tyson's sentiments, but he also recommended that she be "kind" to the
concerns about USF's president and the administration because they are going to have to live with the consequences of this board. He stated that a dialogue needs to be established and Provost Stamps would be the best person to do that. President Tyson did agree that the Provost would be an excellent person to create the dialogue.

Through an e-mail to the ACFS, President Tyson proposed that they and all of the Faculty Senates send a letter of support to Senator Graham for his actions, and she reported that that proposal had been enthusiastically received among the other ACFS representatives. She indicated that it would be of great use to Senator Graham to say that he has received these letters of support. President Tyson thinks the best thing to do rather than send a letter from the SEC would be to send it from the whole Senate. Therefore, she wanted the SEC's reaction to find out if she would have its approval to bring it up as an agenda item at the next Faculty Senate meeting. Research Council Chair Tockman recommended that the students be contacted as allies in this venture. President Tyson agreed and stated that the faculty could benefit from forming some connections with the students especially if faculty are going to be accused of not caring about students. She will communicate this to the ACFS members.

EGRRTTF Chair Phil Handy has invited faculty to participate in a candid discussion about issues central to transition to a new K-20 education governance model on Thursday, January 18, 2001, from 9:00-11:00 a.m. at the USF, Gus Stavros Center. Research Council Tockman indicated that this would be an opportunity for President Tyson to specifically state any fears and concerns with the proposed governance. Rather than general free floating anger and anxiety, specific points could be raised about concerns that have not been addressed. The point is to make a focused response. That is, the faculty in collaboration with the students raised the following objectives: none of the objections were addressed by this board, none of the concerns were heard, none of the concerns were part of the legislation, and none of the faculty were invited to the table when concerns were discussed. President Tyson asked for a list of SEC members who could attend this meeting. Then she will need to know how and when to put together a list of what issues the faculty would like to see resolved at this meeting.

Parliamentarian Mandell expressed concern that if this meeting is with only Chair Handy then the whole thing may be an exercise in futility in so far as he can then say that the faculty has had its voice, we have heard them, we have discussed it with them. It may be that in something like this, we are better off not participating but at some point getting our objections into writing and into a record. However, Vice President Khator pointed out, by not participating Chair Handy would say that the faculty had an opportunity to voice their concerns and did not take advantage of it. Graduate Chair Alan Sear stated that even if it is written into the State constitution that the state must have a BOR, unless the details are stated of how it is to be structured and that the legislators cannot meddle with it, then it will not make much difference which form of governance is created. President Tyson feels that what is needed is a panel of academics between the faculty and the politicians. SEC members agreed with Senator-at-Large Gregory Paveza that the current system which is being proposed is worse than the system that was in place in the sense that it leaves us without some delineated board of higher education that is concerned only about the state university system (SUS).

In response to Mr. Handy's invitation, Senator-at-Large Paveza recommended to propose a solution which is a preference for a BOR, but also to propose alternatives. If the proposed system is imposed, what are some of the things that the faculty need to see in place? One item would be that the terms of office for the local board of trustees need to be longer than any term of any single governor. President Tyson stated that these kinds of issues will need to be worked out by a subcommittee. The following SEC members indicated they could
attend a pre-planning meeting with the Senate President: Suresh Khator, William Kearns, Jenifer Schneider, William Janssen, Gregory Pavez.

President Tyson announced that she will be getting the Government Relations Committee back on its feet this semester.

President Tyson announced that Parking and Transportation Director Gregory Sylvester has scheduled a meeting of all the constituents of leadership to talk about the Master Plan as it pertains to parking and transportation on the USF campus. This meeting will be January 22, 2001, from 4:00-5:30 p.m. In addition, there will be a Parking and Transportation Master Plan Forum on Tuesday, January 23, 2001, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. (location to be announced at the Januray Faculty Senate meeting). This forum will address such issues as how the USF Master Plan relates to campus mobility, how the USF transportation system really works, and how parking and transportation dollars are spent now and what the future might hold.

**PROVOST'S REPORT**

Provost Stamps announced that a major concern of the administration is salaries, not only faculty salaries, but salaries of USPS and A&P employees. To that end, the administration has been looking at and has carefully analyzed faculty salaries. No matter how faculty salaries are looked at whether by rank, by time and rank, by level of productivity, by discipline, etc., they come up short. One of the biggest problems that USF faces is losing faculty as they come up either for tenure and promotion or after they gain tenure and promotion. Or, when they are coming up for tenure and promotion to full professor. At these points in time, such faculty are extremely marketable and very often leave the university for higher salaries.

There is a plan in progress but details cannot not be revealed until it has been approved by the United Faculty of Florida (UFF). The Provost did indicate that the administration is trying to work out an objective, equitable mechanism. This will have to be a long-term effort in order to cover up-coming professors. His point was that faculty salaries, and salaries, in general, for USF are a major concern for the administration. After the UFF has been consulted, an announcement will be made in terms of an effort to address the whole issue of faculty salaries. This will be one step in a series of steps that will attempt to address salaries throughout the university, not only faculty, but also USPS and A&P salaries. The Provost stated that a system needs to be in place that can begin and be expanded until it can be addressed in a meaningful fashion.

**REPORTS BY OFFICERS AND COUNCIL CHAIRS**

**Senate Elections** (James Vastine)

Secretary James Vastine presented the Election Schedule, Voting Units, Apportionment and Vacancies for 2001-2002 Academic Year. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Apportionment for the up-coming academic year. The motion was unanimously passed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

1. **Exit Questionnaire - Revision to Minutes of November 2, 2000**

   Corrections to the previously approved SEC Minutes of November 1, 2000, were submitted by President Tyson (see attached). A motion was made and seconded that the Minutes be corrected and that the revised section be included in the Minutes of the November 1, 2000 meeting. The motion was unanimously passed.
2. Faculty Evaluation and Standards Committee

Due to time limitations at today's meeting, discussion of this topic was postponed until the February SEC meeting.

3. USF Exit Survey for Faculty (Revisions)

President Tyson recapped that the reason for the faculty exit survey is to present a vehicle that will induce a response from departing faculty. Therefore, the SEC is being asked to recommend ways of revising and presenting the current USF Exit Survey in such a way that faculty will accept the invitation to respond. Parliamentarian Mandell stated it would be more useful if it was sent to people who were leaving the university for reasons other than tenure denial. Otherwise, it will be skewed. If termination is not by the choice of the faculty member, it should not be sent.

Discussion was held as to whether or not the survey should be on the internet. Parliamentarian Mandell suggested that the Provost Office invite terminating employees, individually, to a personal ten to fifteen minute exit interview. Although it will not be anonymous, a more accurate discussion could take place as to why the individual is leaving better than anything that could be put down on paper. Senator-at-Large Paveza echoed Parliamentarian Mandell's suggestion of having a personal interview with terminating individuals. Some faculty will turn down the invitation, but there will probably be a higher percentage of faculty who will be prepared to sit down for fifteen minutes and will probably be more frank as to why they are leaving the university. He added that the interview could be done at either the department or administration level. Graduate Council Chair Alan Sear recommended that the personal interview be kept at the Provost Office level. Someone in the Provost Office could be assigned or maybe a volunteer faculty member assigned to do the interview out of the Provost Office who might even go to the office of the individual that is leaving rather than ask them to go to the Provost Office. During the personal interview, the interviewer could have a form with general questions to get at the main issue of why the individual left USF. There was considerable feeling among the group that the personal interview would be a desirable means of accomplishing the intended purpose in a manner respectful of the employee.

With regard to detailed revisions, on the Web interview form, President Tyson suggested that the question preceding the demographic section which requests, "position title and the department in which you worked" should be deleted, since the survey can hardly be considered anonymous if the respondent answers this question. Due to time limitations, further discussion of the USF Exit Survey issue was tabled until the February meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.