



RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF GOVERNORS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

A regular meeting of the Board of Governors for Higher Education was held on Monday, December 8, 2008 at the Community College of Rhode Island, Knight Campus, 400 East Avenue, Warwick, Rhode Island. Vice Chair Michael Ryan declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 5:13 p.m.

Present: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

Absent: Frank Caprio

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

On a motion duly made by Kenneth Aurecchia and seconded by Brandon Brown it was

VOTED: THAT the Board of Governors for Higher Education accept the agenda for the meeting of December 8, 2008.

Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS: 0

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion duly made by Solomon A. Solomon and seconded by Kathrin Belliveau it was

VOTED: THAT the Board of Governors for Higher Education approve the minutes of the September 29, 2008 meeting.

Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS: 0

3. COMMUNICATIONS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

a. 2009 Calendar of Board of Governors Meetings

Commissioner Warner noted a correction on the cover memo previously distributed with respect to the 2009 Board of Governors meeting dates. The memo incorrectly stated December 8th and should have read December 7th. The calendar as distributed is correct.

4. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Vice Chair Ryan thanked President Di Pasquale and the CCRI staff for hosting tonight's meeting.

The Vice Chair introduced President DiPasquale and turned the meeting over to him.

President DiPasquale welcomed everyone to CCRI. He spoke about a presentation on the Lifelong Learning division which is in the process of changing its name to the Center for Workforce and Community Education. The Center represents 5% of the budget and the presentation will express what the Center means to CCRI.

Prior to the presentation, President DiPasquale took a moment to introduce Karen Kortz, Associate Professor in the Physics Department, as the 2008 recipient of the Biggs Award for Excellence in Earth Science Teaching. Ms. Kortz is the 2nd recipient to come from a Community College.

Robin Smith, Dean of the former Lifelong Learning division was introduced by President DiPasquale. Ms. Smith gave a brief presentation of the Center for Workforce and Community Education. During the last fiscal year, the Center had over 36,289 registrations and contributed a total revenue of \$4,567,628 to the College.

The Center provides onsite degree programs, communications, computer training, leadership, business writing, public speaking, ESL programs and various other programs to a wide variety of corporate clients.

In addition to companies, the Center provides revenue to the College in a variety of different ways:

- In Westerly, with the addition of Allied Health and General Education courses, there has been a great expansion of registrations.
- The Electrical Apprenticeship program for related instruction allows for apprentices to gain hands-on training at their job site. While employed by electricians, they receive related instruction and upon completion of the program they become fully licensed electricians.
- The transportation programs offered by the Center include: all driver education programs for the State of Rhode Island, commercial driver's license, defensive driving, driver retraining, motorcycle and school bus. The transportation programs serve 16,000 individuals a year.

- The Center provides Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) programs, including classroom, laboratory and clinical. CCRI is the sole source for the CNA testing. The CNA program has produced over \$169,000 in net revenue for the College this year.
- A Kids College is offered over the summer and spring school vacations. Last year a total of 362 students were enrolled.
- Finally, CCRI offered Adult Education, both ESL and GED training. Last year, there were 2,728 registrations for GED testing activities. There were 841 English GED's and 32 Spanish GED certificates awarded.

Dean Smith concluded her presentation by acknowledging that all the partnerships with individuals, companies, and state agencies provide substantial resources for the College during very challenging times.

President DiPasquale thanked Dean Smith for her presentation. He added that the workforce development is a huge part of Rhode Island. CCRI is looking to grow the program and become the premier provider for off-campus site training and helping companies in our state become stronger.

5. OPEN FORUM

None.

6. REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER

Commissioner Warner congratulated Karen Kortz on her award and thanked President DiPasquale for his hospitality.

The Commissioner began his report by commenting on a newspaper article that had appeared in the previous day's paper. The article brought to light payouts to state retirees. The Commissioner confirmed that last year the system paid out roughly \$5.3 million in various payouts to retirees. Of that amount, the largest single category of payouts was in accrued vacation. Of the \$5.3 million, \$2.1 was paid out in accrued vacation time. The Commissioner stated that state employees do not participate in any long term disability plan, therefore accrued sick time is given to employees. The payout for accrued sick leave was \$695,000. Deferred compensation from days deferred from the budget crisis in the early 1990's totaling just over \$1 million was paid out as well. An additional \$1.4 million was paid out for the various retirement incentives which were at 40% of pay at the Community College of Rhode Island and Rhode Island College and a flat \$20,000 at the University of Rhode Island.

The \$5.3 million payout yielded about 193 positions that are currently vacant in the system. Currently at URI there are 121 vacant positions, 44 at Rhode Island College and 28 at the Community College of Rhode Island. The value of the 193 vacant positions is \$17.4 million in savings due to those retirements. An investment of \$5.3 million was made in order to affect \$17.4 million in personnel savings for this year. The full cost of salary plus benefits was included for those positions.

The Commissioner spoke of the Board's strategic plan, running from 2005 to 2008. In the process of updating the plan, the Commissioner is holding a series of three listening sessions to which a wide variety of stakeholders have been invited to attend. The purpose of

the gatherings is to invite commentary. All the participants have been provided a copy of the Board's last strategic plan and have been asked to volunteer their thoughts on what they feel the plans for the Board's next strategic plan should look like. The Commissioner will gather the commentary he receives and will come before the Board with a recommendation.

7. NEW BUSINESS

a. *Acceptance of the Audited Financial Statements for URI, RIC and CCRI for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2008.*

Dr. Susan LaPanne reported that all the Audited Financial Statements as required by the state have been completed for URI, RIC and CCRI for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2008. As of fiscal year 2006, all state entities are required to submit audited financial statements by September 30th. During this particular audit cycle however, there were some significant reporting challenges. GASB 45, which came into being this year, requires the establishment of the liability and the reporting for the post retirement health benefit. The controllers' offices and our external auditor, KPMG, have been working closely and cooperatively with the state controller's office to try to orchestrate and determine the best way to report these liabilities and to quantify them. Dr. LaPanne noted that all three institutions received an unqualified opinion from KPMG, demonstrating that our financial statements are adequate representations. Also significant to this year's audit are the second year's inclusion of the statement of "audit standards number 112" which Mr. Caron previously explained how devastating those particular audit disclosures would be. Dr. LaPanne explained that in our particular case, we are pleased to report that we have not had the increased level of reporting conditions and risks that many other entities have. In addition, KPMG is currently completing the A133 audits which are required by the federal government, and those will be presented to the Finance Committee and to the Board at a later date. Dr. LaPanne thanked the controllers and their teams at each of the institutions for their enormous efforts to make sure that these audits were completed in a timely way with the excellent results that have been achieved.

Dr. LaPanne welcomed Stephen Caron, our partner from KPMG. Mr. Caron is responsible for the Rhode Island system of public education audit.

Mr. Caron stated that in looking over a summary of the financial results in each of the three schools, this year he is struck by several points. Each of the entities ended up in the black. Each of them had an increase in net assets that was greater than the change in liability over the years. Mr. Caron commented that as of June 30th, the financial structure showed improvement. GASB 45 requires the institutions to put on their books the future cost of paying for post-retirement healthcare benefits that the individual schools have promised to current employees and to current retirees. In total, for all three institutions, it is about \$64 million for the Board of Governor's plan that is to be approved over time, with interest. All of the institutions received an unqualified opinion from KPMG, including an unqualified report on the system of internal control over financial reporting. Mr. Caron reported that each of the schools had received two significant deficiencies last year in financial reporting. He was pleased to report that during the current year's audit, KPMG was satisfied that all of the institutions have remedied the causes of the deficiencies. There were no significant deficiencies reported this year.

On a motion made by Brandon Brown and seconded by Joseph Hagan it was:

VOTED:

(Item 7a) That the Board of Governors for Higher Education accept the Audited Financial Statements for the University of Rhode Island, Rhode Island College, and the Community College of Rhode Island for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008.

Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS: 0

b. Approval of Expanded Providence Metropolitan Area Proposal for Rhode Island College.

Commissioner Warner recommended the approval of the Expanded Providence Metropolitan Area Proposal for Rhode Island College. This proposal is a way for Rhode Island College to expand its enrollment and the number of individuals it can serve. The plan would allow for the potential to keep residence halls full, keep a variety of students from other areas and improve the quality of education for students.

President Carriuolo added that not only would the proposal bring in more students, it would also help to retain the students that are already attending Rhode Island College.

On a motion made by Pierre LaPerriere and seconded by Solomon A. Solomon it was:

VOTED:

(Item 7b) That the Board of Governors for Higher Education approve the Expanded Providence Metropolitan Area tuition rate proposal for Rhode Island College.

Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS: 0

c. Approval of a Proposed Ground Lease Amendment and Tripartite Agreement Regarding the Institute for International Sport at URI

General Counsel Ronald Cavallaro indicated that the University of Rhode Island has maintained a relationship with the Institute for International Sports for some time now. In 1997, the Board entered into a ground lease with the Institute which allowed the Institute to build a building on University/Board property. The building is located near the University's athletic complex. At a point in time after the initial execution of the ground lease, the Institute requested that the Board agree to amend the terms of the original ground lease to reflect the requirements of the Institution's lender. The Institute again requested that the Board, on behalf of the University, authorize a further extension of the ground lease and execute a tripartite agreement among the Board, the Institute and the Institute's bank to refinance their existing construction loan and to finance the construction of the Hassenfeld-Hoss Center for Sports Leadership at the site location. Mr. Cavallaro stated that both he and the University's counsel have reviewed these documents and that the tripartite agreement that is proposed, parallels that which the Board agreed to execute for the Independent Square project and its lender last year. Both agreements will have to be approved by the State Properties Committee.

On a motion made by Brenda Dann-Messier and seconded by Kenneth Aurecchia it was:

VOTED:

(Item 7c)

That

the Board of Governors for Higher Education approves the Ground Lease Amendment subject to final approval of the Board's General Counsel and which will also be subject to the approval of the State Properties Committee;

and further,

That the Board of Governors approves the tripartite agreement among the Board of Governors, the Institute for International Sports, and the Bank of America subject to final approval of the Board's General Counsel and which will also be subject to the approval of the State Properties Committee.

Vote:

11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS:

Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS:

0

d. Approval of Board Response to Rhode Island's Fiscal Emergency

Vice Chair Ryan enumerated that following:

- The State of Rhode Island is in the middle of a severe budget crisis.
- The budget deficit for the current fiscal year is somewhere between \$350-370 million and another \$400+ million deficit is projected for next year.
- Public higher education in Rhode Island has absorbed a nearly \$30 million reduction in General Revenue cuts in Fiscal Year 2009 compared with Fiscal Year 2008.
- We may experience further reductions this year.
- Our institutions have been hard-pressed by these circumstances but have been dedicated in their efforts to cut costs, improve efficiency, while accommodating record numbers of students. Our institutions, however, may need the Board's help to maintain their academic quality during these stressful times. We know that Rhode Island needs an even more highly educated population to compete successfully in the modern global economy.
- We continue to believe that we can improve the education level of our citizenry by continuing to enroll more students and by ensuring that those students have the highest possible quality educational experience at our public institutions.
- We also know that we have to operate ever more efficiently while graduating more students.
- Our institutions will be highly challenged to respond to the immediate crisis in the current fiscal year. At the same time, we need to continuously search for ways to improve our efficiency and effectiveness in the longer term.
- For these reasons, I am urging the Board of Governors to ask the Commissioner to spearhead a broad and comprehensive analysis of system-wide opportunities for achieving program consolidation, cost containment, further revenue enhancement, and system re-engineering.
- This effort will call upon the Commissioner to work closely with the presidents of our three public higher education institutions to implement the following motions:

THAT the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education amends the program review policy to increase the threshold for triggering reviews of academic programs at the three institutions that have been under-enrolled over the past three years and to review and recommend to the Board their possible consolidation or elimination. This action should be completed no later than the end of April 2009; and

THAT the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education directs the Commissioner to review program duplication among the three institutions, including departments, programs, and other academic structures, and recommend potential consolidation of unnecessarily duplicated programs within and among the three institutions. Recommendations should be forthcoming no later than May 2009; and

THAT the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education charges the Commissioner to work with the three institutions to contain standard credit requirements for degree attainment to 120 credits for the bachelor's degree and 60 credits for the associate degree, wherever possible, while still ensuring student attainment of specified learning outcomes and accreditation standards. Plans should be forthcoming no later than June 2009; and

THAT the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education directs the Commissioner to take actions to intensify the ongoing reengineering of the administrative, fiscal, and other operating functions, as well as the exploration of public/private partnerships, with the goal of producing greater efficiencies, eliminating undesirable redundancies, and recommending possible consolidations of functions, departments, divisions, systems, and other units. While the scope of these reviews will require varying timetables and responses, the board requests an accelerated pace to achieve the goal of instituting greater efficiencies at the beginning of the new fiscal year; and

THAT the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education directs the Commissioner to undertake immediate review of the programmatic operations of all traditional and nontraditional academic units of the institutions. These are to include but are not limited to all units such as departments, divisions, schools, and colleges as well as centers, agencies, institutes and outreach centers. The Commissioner is to recommend to the board possible consolidation, elimination, or partnerships of these units with other public or private entities. Recommendations for actions should come before the board no later than June 2009.

Vice Chair Ryan encouraged Board members to comment and ask questions to clarify any element of these motions.

Comments/Questions:

Brenda Dann-Messier: Asked whether under the degree attainment provision, we are going to be informed as to the applicable assessment work that has already been done?

Commissioner Warner: Replied, yes. The Commissioner credited the institutions and their faculty for taking a look at their programs, thinking deeply about what we want students to know and be able to do, and specify those learning outcomes. Starting with the learning outcomes and backing into how many credits it takes, we have found that there are a number of programs that require more than the 60 credits for an associate degree and quite a few programs requiring more than 120 credits for a bachelor degree. We are asking that a review be done to find out whether we can contain the student learning outcomes that are desired into 60 or 120 credits.

Brenda Dann-Messier: With respect to the possibility of consolidating some of the operations and partnerships, some of which have grant driven requirements, would we be terminating contracts? What happens to the contractual arrangements that have already been funded in those instances?

Commissioner Warner: We will take a look at the entire fiscal condition of whatever center is being looked at and ask whether the center can support itself or does it require institutional support. For any entity that cannot support itself, we will need to ask whether the entity, as framed, needs to exist in its current form or whether those grants could be transferred to another area. The question will be what the fiscal picture of an entity is and can we afford entities that cannot float on their own.

Tom Rockett: Stated he hopes the key to elimination be quality, and would like to see any program making a difference be kept.

Karin Belliveau: Stated elimination of duplicative courses at different institutions could be damaging to students.

Commissioner Warner explained that only unnecessarily duplicated courses would be eliminated. A clear distinction will be made between what is necessary to duplicate and what is not.

Pierre LaPerriere: Raised the question of possible consolidation of staff services.

Commissioner Warner: Used the IT Department as an example and stated that cuts at all three institutions have already been made by downsizing. A further look will have to be made as to whether the management of the IT functions can be consolidated while still deliver services.

Robert Weygand, Vice President of Administration at URI: Would like to see public/private partnerships be made to allow increases in revenue other than tuition increases.

Commissioner Warner: Stated he believes there are markets, particularly adult continuing education markets, that we could be much better positioned in. We will be looking at how to reposition our current assets.

On a motion made by Brenda Dann-Messier and seconded by Pierre LaPerriere it was:

VOTED:

(Item 7d)

That the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education amends the program review policy to increase the threshold for triggering reviews of academic programs at the three institutions that have been under-enrolled over the past three years and to review and recommend to the board their possible consolidation or elimination. This action should be completed no later than the end of April 2009; and

- That the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education directs the Commissioner to review program duplication among the three institutions, including departments, programs, and other academic structures, and recommend potential consolidation of unnecessarily duplicated programs within and among the three institutions. Recommendations should be forthcoming no later than May 2009; and
- That the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education charges the Commissioner to work with the three institutions to contain standard credit requirements for degree attainment to 120 credits for the bachelor's degree and 60 credits for the associate degree, wherever possible, while still ensuring student attainment of specified learning outcomes and accreditation standards. Plans should be forthcoming no later than June 2009; and
- That the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education directs the Commissioner to take actions to intensify the ongoing reengineering of the administrative, fiscal, and other operating functions, as well as the exploration of public/private partnerships, with the goal of producing greater efficiencies, eliminating undesirable redundancies, and recommending possible consolidations of functions, departments, divisions, systems, and other units. While the scope of these reviews will require varying timetables and responses, the board requests an accelerated pace to achieve the goal of instituting greater efficiencies at the beginning of the new fiscal year; and
- That the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education directs the Commissioner to undertake immediate review of the programmatic operations of all traditional and nontraditional academic units of the institutions. These are to include but are not limited to all units such as departments, divisions, schools, and colleges as well as centers, agencies, institutes and outreach centers. The Commissioner is to recommend to the Board possible consolidation, elimination, or partnerships of these units with other public or private entities. Recommendations for actions should come before the board no later than June 2009.
- Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:
- YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS: 0

e. Approval of Revision to Board Policy on Academic Program Productivity Review

Commissioner Warner explained that this revision makes more specific the first of the general motions which formally ends a policy that has been on the books for several years, triggering programs that graduate fewer than 6 individuals per year for three consecutive years. Those programs have been triggered to undergo a review. In the past we have tended to be rather lenient in terms of letting programs go forward, encouraged them to bolster enrollments, devised a new strategy for them and worked to enhance their quality whenever possible. Even so, we have eliminated or consolidated 43 programs since 2003. The review this time will be focused on eliminating or possibly consolidating the programs. This will raise the trigger from fewer than 6 to fewer than 11. This revision will amend the policy to be more specific so that this year's reviews will be based on the new criteria.

On a motion made by Kenneth Aurechia and seconded by Kathrin Belliveau it was:

VOTED:

(Item 7e) That the Board of Governors for Higher Education approves the amendment to the program review policy which changes the threshold for triggered reviews of programs from fewer than 6 to fewer than 11 graduates for the preceding three consecutive years. This amendment applies to undergraduate programs only.

Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS: 0

f. Approval of Establishment of Task Force to Develop a Long-Term Vision for Rhode Island's Public Higher Education System

Vice Chair Ryan spoke of the following:

- The current crisis calls upon the Board to craft a longer-term vision for how the public higher education system in Rhode Island will function in the future.
- Governor LaPerriere has raised an important strategic question about how the Board can best facilitate the development of a relevant long-range vision that helps us chart a future less dependent upon the state's diminishing fortunes.

- Charting such a course is timely, since we are also in the process of updating the Board's three-year strategic plan.
- It is clear that the system of the future will likely have to be less reliant on state operational support.
- So the key strategic questions are:
 - Can we remain accessible and affordable while maintaining high academic quality in the face of continued disinvestment from the state?
 - Given the state's disinvestment, can we operate more independently from state regulation?
 - If so, how does our higher education system operate under these future assumptions?

Vice Chair Ryan asked Governor LaPerriere to offer his comments on the proposed motion and encouraged Board members to offer commentary or questions.

Governor LaPerriere expressed that we find ourselves time and again, meeting after meeting, challenged with identifying either other opportunities to raise revenue or reduce our cost, and slowly find ourselves being forced with a vision that we are not prepared for, being totally dependent on tuition. Given the last occasion where tuition was raised, Governor LaPerriere stated he felt personally challenged that the Board needed to provide some proactive leadership in this area, to come up with a business plan that can support the academic mission. That business plan may be one that says let us not plan that in the future we are going to have state funding to rely on at all. Let us come up with a vision of what that may look like, so that in the worst case scenario, we will be prepared for what may lay ahead and if it doesn't happen, we would have been prepared for the worst case scenario.

President Carothers added that we should think about the possibility that the University will become privatized, no longer being a state institution but becoming an independent institution. President Carothers commented on an analysis he had previously done looking at state support over the next several years, and he believes that it is very reasonable to say that state support will be at zero by about 2013.

Governor Flanders shared that he recently chaired a commission that looked at this issue from the standpoint of the URI situation and some recommendations were made. One of the recommendations was more independence for URI from state constraints and substantial investment by the State, a \$100 million bond issue to invest in quality faculty to enhance the research capability of the University. Although the study was limited to URI, Governor Flanders suggests the task force look at the study which calls for increased state investment going to the people, giving them a chance to support our state institutions.

On a motion made by Pierre LaPerriere and seconded by Brenda Dann-Messier it was:

VOTED:

(Item 7f) That the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education establishes immediately a task force to develop, refine and recommend a long-term vision for the public higher education system which addresses the system's financial challenges and seeks solutions to those challenges while supporting the academic mission of the system; and

- That this task force be comprised of those members of the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education who have both the time and interest to contribute to such an endeavor, and that their numbers be buttressed by individuals both from within and outside the system to be selected by the Board Chair in consultation with the Commissioner of Higher Education; and
- That this task force be charged with completing its efforts and issuing progress reports as well as a report with decisive recommendations to this Board in April 2009 for presentation at the Board's May 2009 meeting.
- Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:
- YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan
- NAYS: 0

8. BOG COMMITTEE REPORTS and RELATED CONSENT AGENDA

Governor Brenda Dann-Messier presented the report of The Academic and Student Affairs Committee. The Committee had previously met on both October 15 and November 14, 2008.

At the October 15th meeting, following approval of the ASAC minutes for July 25, 2008, Assistant Deputy Commissioner Deborah Grossman-Garber discussed the committee's proposed agenda for the upcoming year. Proposed topics relate to issues of access, affordability, fiscal austerity and institutional quality. The committee will be examining institutional tenure procedures, particularly as these relate to the mentoring of young faculty members. The committee will also continue to review progress in outcomes assessment and will look toward finding ways to benefit from the information collected. Also on the agenda is a review of campus centers and institutes to examine how each relates to the mission of the institutions and their service to students and the state. The committee will also continue to support the recommendations brought forward by the Task Force on Groups Underrepresented in Higher Education, particularly the Adult Learner Forum group. Ms. Grossman-Garber also mentioned that there will be a focus on accelerating the program review process as a means of making prudent cost containment decisions.

Next, the committee approved CCRI's proposal to offer the Associate in Applied Science in Opticianry (consent item 8a1 on today's agenda), and URI's proposal to establish the Center of Excellence in Undersea Technology (consent item 8a2).

Finally, Donna Konicki, retired director of institutional research at RIC who now serves as a consultant to the Office of Institutional Research, presented retention data on first-time, full-time freshmen at RIC. At RIC, first-year retention rates (75.4%) and graduation rates (44.9%), while down slightly, still compare favorably to data from previous years at Rhode Island College and to national norms as well as with peer institutions. The presentation included data by residency, ethnicity, and gender.

At the November 14th meeting, the minutes from the October 15th meeting were approved, followed by approval of actions to be taken regarding systemwide outcomes assessment. These actions appear as consent item 8a3. John Stevenson, psychology professor and chair of URI's Subcommittee on Assessment of General Education (SAGE), gave an excellent showcase presentation on the difficult yet rewarding task of assessing URI's general education program.

The committee next heard an annual update on the status of the Joint Admission Agreement (JAA) by JAA Coordinator Phyllis Harnick. The JAA program has experienced a 20% increase in attendance over fall 2007. The first JAA student graduated in May 2008 with a double major in political science and justices studies, and a 4.0 GPA.

URI's Senior Information Technologist Gary Boden reported on retention at URI. At URI, first-year retention rates (81%) are steady, while six-year graduation rates are up two percent over the last five years (57.5%). URI's averages compare favorably to peer institutions and the presentation included data by residency, ethnicity, and gender.

On a motion made by Solomon A. Solomon and seconded by Brandon Brown it was:

VOTED:

(Item 8a) That the Board of Governors for Higher Education approves Items 8a1, 8a2 and 8a3.

Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS: 0

a. Finance and Facilities Committees

Vice Chair Ryan presented the report of the Finance and Facilities Committees. He stated the Facilities and Finance and Management Committees met on Wednesday, November 19, 2008. There is one item on tonight's agenda that the Facilities Committee is recommending for approval of the Board and one that the Finance & Management Committee is recommending for approval.

1. Permission to negotiate a sale of the University's West Kingston well site to the Kingston Water District

There is an approved project at the University that involves the transfer of the well that the Board and University own in West Kingston to the local water provider, the Kingston Water District, to provide a new supplemental source of water to the Kingston area.

While the original transfer mechanism considered was a long term lease, the University has reconsidered the investments that the Water District will need to bring to the well site in order to achieve the objectives of the University's Natural Resource Damages Project as well as its goal of bringing the well site into its water system.

Because of the value that this well will bring to the Kingston Water District System, the University agrees that a sale of the property is more practical and justifiable particularly with the required financing to implement the project work.

Therefore, the University is seeking permission to negotiate the sale of the West Kingston well site to the Kingston water district.

2. Approval of amendments to the Board of Governors' Defined Contribution Plan and approval of the supplemental plan for President Carriuolo

In 1967, the Board adopted a defined contribution plan (a 403(b) plan). Last year, the Board made amendments to various sections of this plan in accordance with the requirements of the Pension Protection Act of 2006.

On November 19, 2008, the Facilities and Finance & Management Committees reviewed these additional amendments which resulted from requests from the benefits administrators from each of the three institutions. Tax counsel at Partridge, Snow & Hahn LLP, working together with General Counsel, Anne Marie Coleman, and the above group have reviewed the proposed changes and adapted them to the current substantive provisions of the Board's 403(b) plan. These changes do not alter the rate of contribution for either the employer (the Board and its institutions) or the employee.

Also, under consideration at that meeting with the Facilities and Finance & Management Committees was a proposed supplemental plan (a 401(a) Plan) for the President of Rhode Island College. The proposed plan, which is in draft form pending approval and modification by TIAA-CREF, parallels the plan that is in effect for President Di Pasquale.

On a motion made by Kenneth Aurecchia and seconded by Kathrin Belliveau it was:

VOTED:

(Item 8b) That the Board of Governors for Higher Education approve Items 8b1 and 8b2.

Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS: 0

9. ADDITIONAL CONSENT AGENDA

Vice Chair Ryan introduced three consent items on the agenda:

9a – Awarding of Degrees at the University of Rhode Island

9b – Awarding of Degrees at Rhode Island College

9c – Awarding of Degrees at the Community College of Rhode Island

On a motion made by Solomon A. Solomon and seconded by Brenda Dann-Messier, it was:

VOTED:

(Item 9a) That the Board of Governors for Higher Education approves the awarding of undergraduate and graduate degrees to those students who have completed their requirements at the conclusion of the Spring 2008 semester and who will be approved by the faculty of the University of Rhode Island.

(Item 9b) That the Board of Governors for Higher Education approves the awarding of undergraduate and graduate degrees to those students who have satisfactorily complied with the prerequisites as determined by the president of Rhode Island College.

(Item 9c) That the Board of Governors for Higher Education approves the awarding of appropriate degrees, diplomas and certificates at the Community College of Rhode Island, subject to satisfactory compliance with the prerequisites as determined by the president of the Community College of Rhode Island.

Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS: 0

10. PRESIDENT'S REPORTS

a. Rhode Island College

President Carriuolo thanked Chair Caprio, Vice Chair Ryan and Commissioner Warner for their participation in her inaugural on November 14th. She likewise thanked Governor Brenda Dann-Messier and Bill Hurry of the Rhode Island College Foundation who co-chaired the inaugural fundraising committee. The committee raised approximately \$35,000 in gifts and donations to support the event.

President Carriuolo informed the Board that the College would be hosting a live webcast town meeting at her office. The purpose of the webcast is to provide RI College students, prospective students and friends the opportunity to ask questions, learn about her presidential agenda and to become updated on important issues at the college.

With respect to enrollment at the college, President Carriuolo confirmed that 85% of the students at the college are Rhode Islanders. President Carriuolo stated that although this is a week earlier than it is customary to report enrollment figures, the numbers are being watched carefully and at the present moment, the numbers are higher than last year.

President Carriuolo invited everyone to the President's open house and tree lighting on Tuesday, December 16th.

b. Community College of Rhode Island

President DePasquale thanked the members of the board and the Commissioner.

He added that the motions that were made earlier this evening is a proactive approach to helping all of us begin to address the serious problems that we are all about to face. We have had meetings and have come up with over 90 ideas on cost cutting. We need to formulate a plan in order to begin to move forward. President DiPasquale commented that although some of the items he would be discussing, although positive, echo some of the dilemmas that we are going to face.

First, the spring enrollment is reported up by over 470 students. In the fall, the enrollment was up over 900 students. All of this being positive news, the question is how we are going to find enough courses. Although it is good news, it has become somewhat of a dilemma, particularly if a mid-year reduction comes.

Secondly, the number of students enrolled in the JAA program is now 721, 321 in transition to Rhode Island College and 400 transferring to the University of Rhode Island. The program is working and the numbers continue to grow.

President DiPasquale reported that the College has undertaken a \$5.5 million capital campaign. The Champlin Foundation has awarded the Community College of Rhode Island \$250,000 to refurbish the campus library. In addition, the van Beuren Charitable Foundation has granted the Newport Campus of the Community College of Rhode Island \$276,000 to help with the infrastructure with computers.

President DiPasquale informed the Board the their five year report to NEASC is due within one month. All of the concerns that were addressed a few years ago have been addressed. Along with it, is their strategic plan. The plan will be brought before the board in February for their approval.

c. University of Rhode Island

President Carothers informed the Board of two ribbon cutting ceremonies in January. On January 12th, there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony on the new independent square facility, and on January 26th, there will be a ribbon cutting for the Center for Biology and Life Sciences.

With respect to the research front, last year the University did \$63 million dollars in funded research, and at the end of the first five months of this year, they are at \$42 million.

Finally, President Carothers welcomed everyone to the holiday party on December 14th at the President's home.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

12. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Governors did not enter into executive session.

13. NEXT MEETINGS

Monday, January 26, 2009, 5:00 p.m. at Rhode Island College, Student Union 307, Providence, Rhode Island.

Monday, March 23, 2009, 5:00 p.m. at the University of Rhode Island, URI Foundation, Kingston, Rhode Island.

14. ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion duly made by Brandon Brown and seconded by Joseph Hagan it was

VOTED: THAT the Board of Governors for Higher Education adjourn.

Vote: 11 members voted in the affirmative, and 0 members voted in the negative as follows:

YEAS: Michael Ryan, Kenneth Aurecchia, Brandon Brown, Brenda Dann-Messier, Robert Flanders, Jr., Pierre LaPerriere, Thomas Rockett, Daniel Ryan, Solomon A. Solomon, Kathrin Belliveau and Joseph Hagan

NAYS: 0

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth Aurecchia, Secretary