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Board of Regents, Murray State University

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**Minutes of the Board of Regents Ad Hoc Presidential Evaluation
Process Review Committee**

**Murray State University
October 29, 2020**

Call to Order

The Murray State University (MSU) Board of Regents (BOR) Ad Hoc Presidential Evaluation Process Review Committee met on Thursday, October 29, 2020, via ZOOM. Ad Hoc Committee Chair Eric Crigler called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. The following Committee members were present: Eric Crigler, Virginia Gray, Jerry Rhoads, Lisa Rudolph and Don Tharpe. Absent: none. Also present were Jill Hunt, Senior Executive Coordinator for the President, Coordinator for Board Relations and Secretary to the Board and Rob Miller, General Counsel. Members of the faculty, staff, students, news media and visitors were provided access to the meeting via a YouTube link (livestream).

AGENDA

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|----|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. | <u>Call to Order</u> | Chair Eric Crigler |
| 2. | <u>Review of Presidential Assessment and Evaluation Concepts and Association of Governing Boards' Best Practices</u> | General Counsel
Rob Miller |
| 3. | <u>Review of Compensation Process for Presidents of Public Universities in the Commonwealth of Kentucky</u> | General Counsel
Rob Miller |
| 4. | <u>Review of Current Murray State Operating Procedure for Presidential Evaluation</u> | Chair Eric Crigler |
| 5. | <u>Questions for Consideration by the Committee</u> | Chair Eric Crigler |
| 6. | <u>Diligent Evaluation Tool Software Update</u> | Chair Eric Crigler |
| 7. | <u>Adjournment</u> | Chair Eric Crigler |

Chair Crigler reported that a Mission Statement has been developed for the Ad Hoc Presidential Evaluation Process Review Committee as follows:

Assess the current Presidential Evaluation Procedure, both the annual and comprehensive quadrennial review. Evaluate and recommend to the Board of Regents any changes that would better reflect the goals of the procedures, which are to provide an informative and effective assessment of the performance of the President in the accomplishment of the mission of the University and to meet the requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

The Committee was also provided with SACSCOC documentation relative to expectations with regard to the presidential review process and the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) survey utilized for the last four-year review. Agreement was reached that the survey utilized for the annual review last year would also be provided to the Committee to review and determine if the same instrument should continue to be used or whether changes are needed.

Review of Presidential Assessment and Evaluation Concepts and Association of Governing Boards' Best Practices

Mr. Miller provided a summary and review of concepts relative to assessing and developing college and university Presidents, as well as relevant advice from AGB in regard to both annual and quadrennial evaluations of the President of the University.

Review of Evaluation Processes for Presidents of Public Universities in the Commonwealth of Kentucky

Mr. Miller presented relevant minutes regarding the review and evaluation processes for the Presidents of public universities in the Commonwealth of Kentucky to provide a comparison for the Committee in terms of what other state universities are doing in this regard. Mr. Miller highlighted the following:

- The book “Good to Great” was written a number of years ago primarily for businesses regarding a study of corporations that went from good to great and how they did so. The most important way to accomplish this is to get the right people on the bus. The author discussed hiring the Chief Executive Officer and helping that individual get the other right people on the bus to allow for adaptability and the ability to meet new challenges. Also important is what the entity is passionate about and for Murray State that is education, having tenured faculty in the classroom and student life. Once an organization identifies what it is passionate about, everything else flows up through those concepts. The Board remains focused on this passion and evaluates how the administration is meeting its goals. Moving this work forward requires assessment and evaluation.
- According to AGB relative to evaluation and assessment, the Board and the President and their team should engage in integrated leadership, addressing opportunities and moving strategic interests forward. This means the Board maintains its leadership position and works with the President with their own leadership focus to ensure they work together to produce great outcomes that will move the institution in the right direction. How this is accomplished is being discussed today. Both an annual and a quadrennial evaluation of leadership are conducted but serve different purposes. The annual evaluation helps keep the Board informed by the President providing a self-evaluation which represents an intimate review of what has occurred on campus over the past year. The Board as a whole should provide input because members have unique talents, perspectives, thoughts and opinions. The Chair has the challenging task each year to synthesize those thoughts from such a variety of perspectives so that the Board can speak together, if possible. Efforts being discussed today will determine how that synthesis can occur.
- At peer institutions, practice has been for a summary of comments received from Board members to be provided and discussed with the President. The President is provided with an opportunity to address any issues that may arise as part of this process. The final step is for the Chair to present the summary to the entire Board at the appropriate time. At Murray State and peer institutions, there typically is a discussion regarding the President’s contract and compensation. In the Commonwealth the Research 1 (R1) institutions are treated differently relative to the aspect of the presidential contract because the comprehensive universities are bound to a four-year contract term limit and the R1 institutions are not.
- Different techniques are utilized by the universities in Kentucky to conduct the annual and quadrennial evaluation processes and research to that effect was provided in the materials presented to the Committee.

In terms of the distinguishing differences, purposes and scope of input between the one-year versus the four-year evaluations, Mr. Miller reported the following:

- The annual evaluation is typically designed to help the President move forward on strategies, goals and challenges. Most universities through this process are trying to improve something, set new directions, revisit what the institution is passionate about or refocus and re-center, if needed. The annual review process at most universities is designed to be more streamlined. The Board may also collect information as part of this process if deemed necessary and desirable.
- The four-year evaluation process includes Board members providing their own unique perspectives in order for synthesis to occur but also collecting information from constituents – such as alumni, faculty, staff, legislators and local governmental leaders. This allows the Board to dive deeper to secure a good perception of what feelings are within the University’s service region and at the state level.
- It is at the discretion of the Board how the annual and four-year review processes are structured and carried out. What has been presented is how this typically occurs at peer institutions in the state.
- It was suggested that the President’s self-evaluation should be closely tied into this review process – more so than it has been in the past. It was also indicated that creating an Executive Committee associated with the Presidential Review Process could divide the Board and would not be desirable.
- In terms of other universities being able to go into Closed Session to discuss the presidential evaluation to allow for more dialogue, it was indicated that the trend among other comprehensive universities is toward not doing do this. Agreement was reached that it would be beneficial for Board members to know how their evaluation compares to that of other Regents and how this can be accomplished should be considered. It was suggested that individual Regent evaluation responses could be distributed to all Board members as long as those documents are considered to be preliminary in nature and not subject to disclosure under the Open Records law.

Review of Current Murray State Operating Procedures for Presidential Evaluation

A redlined version of the current Murray State Presidential Evaluation Operating Procedures was also provided which contained potential changes to be made based on input from Committee members. Changes relate to the inclusion of the Vice Chair of the Board in the process to allow for consistency of operations and changes in Board leadership. A timeline for the presidential review process has also been added. Utilizing an electronic means of surveying the Board and other constituency bodies was also added for anonymity purposes relative to the annual review. There are software packages designed for this purpose and could provide the President with some intermediate feedback. Changes have also been suggested relative to information flow in an effort to add transparency. What should be contained in the final report, such as areas of effectiveness and where improvements are needed and goals and strategic initiatives the Board expects from the President, should also be added as part of the procedure.

Consensus was reached that the work of the Committee should be focused on determining the best presidential review and evaluation process to be utilized and the best way to communicate those results to the President moving forward as it will likely be in place for some time.

Questions for Consideration by the Committee

Chair Crigler reported that a list of nine questions for consideration by the Committee was provided. The Committee reached consensus on the following items:

- A timeline should be set for the annual and quadrennial reviews to allow for greater transparency for the Board and suggestions in this regard were included in the redlined Operating Procedures presented.
- The Chair and Vice Chair should both be involved in the review process for greater accountability, consistency and redundancy.
- The aggregated results of all constituency and Board evaluation surveys should be distributed to the full Board as part of the evaluation process – but not individual responses received from respondents to maintain anonymity.
- The policy should mandate sections of evaluations including, as examples, areas of effectiveness, areas for improvement and relevant progress toward goals or strategic initiatives for the President to consider. The Board needs to instruct the President in terms of those areas of reporting they consider to be the most vital as components of the evaluation process. This will provide the President with an opportunity to address any identified areas of improvement in subsequent evaluations.
- Secondary education leadership (such as Superintendents and Principals) and governmental leaders (such as legislators and the Council on Postsecondary Education leadership) should be designated in policy as constituencies to offer input as part of the four-year presidential evaluation process.

Whether the faculty, staff and student constituency bodies have an annual review process already in place relative to the President should be investigated and a determination made as to whether those results could be included as part of the annual review process conducted by the Board. All should be mindful that the annual review process should not become as extensive as the one conducted every four years.

Discussion included that the entire faculty, staff and student body was not surveyed as part of the last four-year evaluation process but such feedback was handled individually by the Faculty Senate/Faculty Regent, Staff Congress/Staff Regent and the Student Government Association/Student Regent. In terms of surveying the Deans and other outside constituency bodies, responsibilities for contacting these entities was delegated to individual Board members, phone calls or in-person visits were made in this regard and individual surveys were not employed. Mr. Miller reported that based on minutes provided from some of the other state universities, it appears as though the four-year evaluation process is more extensive and includes feedback from the various constituency bodies more so than the annual review.

Committee members were provided with a copy of the survey instrument utilized for the four-year review and Secretary Hunt will also distribute the survey instrument utilized in the last annual review process.

It was indicated that some of the survey questions are difficult to understand and measure. Committee members will review both survey instruments – the one utilized during the last annual evaluation process and the AGB survey utilized during the last four-year review – and submit suggested changes and updates to the survey instruments to Secretary Hunt to aggregate

and submit to Chair Crigler and Mr. Miller for further review. It was suggested that a more concise survey should be utilized as part of the evaluation processes. Survey instrument options/questionnaires and other potential tools to be utilized for presidential evaluation will be presented at the next Committee meeting. Mr. Miller agreed to reach out to the other state universities to secure a copy of their evaluation tools for Committee review. Agreement was also reached that research would be provided on the appropriate survey mechanism and the associated Likert Scale to be utilized. Secretary Hunt will reach out to Associate Provost Bob Pervine, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning Renee Fister and others in this regard.

Agreement was reached that it is of utmost importance for survey responses to be completely anonymous. Diligent offers a software update that includes an evaluation tool but it has an annual subscription fee which is relatively expensive. Agreement was reached that less expensive survey options – such as Survey Monkey – will be investigated. Any survey options should facilitate anonymous responses by the Board and/or other constituencies as this will help produce more forthright responses. The recommendation to be made to the full Board at the December meeting will focus on approval of the presidential evaluation process. The specific survey instrument which will be utilized does not necessarily need to be identified at that time. Chair Crigler reported that consensus items relative to the presidential evaluation process and policy will be submitted to the Committee for approval as part of the Consent Agenda at the next meeting which has been scheduled for Friday, November 20, 2020, beginning at 10:30 a.m. via ZOOM.

Adjournment

Chair Crigler solicited a motion for the Board of Regents Ad Hoc Presidential Evaluation Process Review Committee to adjourn. Dr. Tharpe so moved, seconded by Mrs. Gray, and the motion carried. Adjournment was at 11 a.m.



Eric Crigler, Chair
Chair – Ad Hoc Presidential Evaluation

Process Review Committee



Jill Hunt, Secretary
Board of Regents

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