

MINUTES
Board of Trustees Illinois State University
Presidential Search Committee Meeting
November 28, 2023

Committee members present: Danielle Beasley, Dr. Kathryn Bohn, Angela Bonnell, Janice Bonneville, Leanna Bordner, Dr. Vijay Devabhaktuni, Dr. Heather Dillaway, Ash Ebikhumi, Tim Griffin, Dr. Martha Horst, Scott Jenkins, Julie Jones, Dan Kelley, Justin Lawson, Joe McDonald, Dr. Erin Mikulec, Dr. Danielle Miller-Schuster, Eduardo Monk, Jr., Dr. Nancy Novotny, Dr. Derek O'Connell, Dr. Klaus Schmidt, Archana Shekara, Darren Tillis, Dr. Julie Webber, Jill Wilberg, Dr. Ani Yazedjian

Committee members present virtually: Dr. Robert Navarro

Committee members absent: Taylor Flinn, Dr. Bahae Samhan

Staff present: Jean Ann Dargatz, Katy Killian, Ryan Kraft, Meghan Lugo, Lisa Mason and Carrie Haas, Counsel.

Chair Kathryn Bohn called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Chair Bohn noted for the record that notice of the meeting had been posted in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act. She also noted that anyone participating virtually in the meeting must state their reason for not being physically present. Accepted reasons are personal illness or disability; employment purposes or the business of the public body; a family or other emergency or unexpected childcare obligations.

Trustee Jones took roll call. After confirming there was an in-person quorum, she took roll for those attending virtually. Trustee Navarro requested to attend the meeting by virtual participation for the accepted reasons.

A motion to allow Trustee Navarro to participate virtually was made by Trustee Ebikhumi and seconded by Danielle Miller Schuster. Vote in favor by all. The motion was approved and Dr. Navarro was allowed to participate by video conference.

Chair Bohn asked for a motion and second to approve the agenda. The motion to approve the agenda was made by Dan Kelley and seconded by Trustee Ebikhumi. Vote in favor by all. The agenda was approved.

Chair Bohn next asked for a motion and second to approve the minutes of the October 31, 2023 Presidential Search Committee meeting. A motion was made by Trustee Ebikhumi and seconded by Leanna Bordner. No discussion. Vote in favor by all.

Trustee Bohn called for public comments of which there were none.

Trustee Bohn welcomed the search committee, introduced Parker Executive Search and invited them to update the committee on several items.

Representatives from Parker Executive Search, Laurie Wilder, Porsha Williams and Jack McGrew, led discussion regarding the Advertising Overview for the position. The job description was finalized November 9th and advertising began. Ads were placed in the Chronicle of Higher Education, the Parker website and other publications. The deadline for submission of applications is 1/10/24.

Parker Executive Search discussed Candidate Identification and Recruitment Nominations. They described their multi-prong approach to recruiting candidates. Ms. Wilder stated that this is the aggressive recruitment time in the search. Parker will reach out to hundreds of individuals including those from aspirational and benchmark institutions. They will talk to a number of thought leaders including current presidents, board members, deans, academic leaders and will seek their recommendations. Some of these may be presidents today at smaller institutions, someone at a provost position and other vice presidents such as economic development/research experts at large, complex college or universities. Parker has many calls scheduled for the next few weeks and will be

conducting lots of outreach and seeking nominations. To date, two applications have been submitted, 3 individuals have been recommended for the position, and 10 individuals have expressed a level of interest. Ms. Wilder reminded the Committee that the numbers will continue to rise and the best candidates usually are not developed until the end of the deadline.

Parker Executive next discussed feedback in the marketplace and indicated that the early feedback has been very positive. Positive feedback has been received regarding ISU's size and scope, from an academic standpoint, and the university's forward trajectory. Ms. Wilder indicated that there are no massive concerns, but questions around faculty morale, unionization and fiscal issues were discussed as having been mentioned by candidates. Ms. Wilder emphasized that any negatives are really about where the individual is in the world as opposed to the university. Applicants have asked whether there is an internal candidate.

Trustee Tillis asked how outreach is prioritized. Ms. Wilder responded that they take a A to Z approach, go through each step and that they will build a list unique to ISU including identifying some candidates they know and some that are new contacts.

Parker discussed Next Steps and Timeline. They will be calling and engaging in the process of recruitment. Ms. Wilder assured the Committee that while things may be quiet on their end, they are frantic on Parker's end in terms of recruitment. For the meeting on 12/11, Parker will be in a position to provide more details to the Committee about recruitment efforts and how the pool is developing. They will lead a discussion at the 12/11 meeting about how to evaluate candidates; have conversation with the Committee about interview questions and overall best practices on candidate evaluation. Ms. Wilder told the Committee that a robust process is necessary to focus on those candidates the Committee cares about and to build consensus around strong candidates.

Ms. Wilder reminded the Committee that access to candidates will be provided via a secure website on 1/15/24 and that on 1/25/24, the Committee will meet to select 10-12 individuals to interview. February 6 and 7 are dates on which the Committee will conduct initial interviews. Parker is sharing these dates with potential candidates. Parker reminded the Committee that many candidates wait until the end of the application process to submit materials in order to limit the potential public exposure should confidentiality not be maintained.

Janice Bonneville asked Parker whether the Committee can be given access to the candidate materials on 1/12 since 1/15 is Martin Luther King Jr.'s Day. Ms. Wilder stated that was not possible as the time will be needed by Parker to upload applicant materials with a 1/10 deadline.

Dan Kelley asked if 2 hours will be enough time for the 1/25 meeting. Ms. Wilder indicated that in 99% of cases, 2 hours is sufficient time and that the Committee will be able to get through the candidates so long as everyone does their homework. Ms. Wilder also described the evaluation tools Parker will provide for candidate assessment.

Chair Bohn asked what tool would be used for evaluation and Parker stated it will be a rubric built from the job description. Chair Bohn reminded the Committee that there is time allocated to public comments at each meeting for the purpose of whether 2 hours is sufficient time. Parker stated that we should probably allow 2.5 hours for the meeting due to this.

Dr. Devabhaktuni asked how many candidates the Committee will need to review for the 1/25 meeting. Ms. Wilder indicated that the Committee will be tasked with reviewing 40+ candidates, but usually only need to spend time conducting a deep review of 10-15.

Dan Kelley asked how hard and fast the requirement to bring 5 candidates to campus was as contained in the charge. Parker stated their "magic number" is 4, as it is hard to get 5 candidates on campus. Chair Bohn indicated that the number 5 may be difficult to reach, but the goal is certainly to bring 4-5 to campus.

Dr. Martha Horst asked how many universities comparable in size to ISU are conducting presidential searches. Ms. Wilder estimated there are 20+ at any given time.

Ms. Wilder stressed to the Committee the importance of receiving nominations from the Committee; talking to constituents; and engaging with faculty, staff and the student body during this process. She reminded the Committee of the value of faculty, staff and student engagement in the nomination process.

Ms. Williams indicated that a link could be added to the website for feedback and nominations.

Chair Bohn thanked the committee and Parker Executive Search for their work. She stated the next meeting date is December 11th at 2 p.m. in the Circus Room of the Bone Student Center.

Chair Bohn asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Ebikhumi made a motion which was seconded; all voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 1:46 p.m.