

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

October 3, 1978



On call of the president of the Board of Trustees, a special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois was held in the General Lounge, Illini Union, Urbana, Illinois, on Tuesday, October 3, 1978, beginning at 11:00 a.m.

President George W. Howard III called the meeting to order. The following members of the board were present: Mr. Ralph C. Hahn, Mr. George W. Howard III, Mr. Robert J. Lenz, Mr. Park Livingston, Mr. Earl Langdon Neal, Mrs. Jane Hayes Rader, Mrs. Nina T. Shepherd. The following members of the board were absent: Mr. William D. Forsyth, Jr., Governor James R. Thompson, and Mr. Arthur R. Velasquez. The following nonvoting student trustees were present: Miss Venus D. Kooper, Chicago Circle campus, and Mr. Charles S. Watson, Urbana-Champaign campus. Mr. Paul A. Sobotka, Medical Center campus, was absent.

Also present were President John E. Corbally; Dr. Peter E. Yankwich, vice president for academic affairs; Chancellor Donald H. Riddle, Chicago Circle campus; Mr. George H. Bargh, executive assistant to the president; Mr. David Landman, university director of public information; and the officers of the board, Mr. James J. Costello, university counsel; and Dr. Earl W. Porter, secretary.

The special meeting was called for the consideration and adoption of procedures to be followed in the selection of a president of the University.

President Howard called the meeting to order. He emphasized the importance of the meeting and its significance for the successful search for a successor to President John E. Corbally. He reported that he had consulted with the other trustees informally about procedures, noting that those employed in 1970 had been successful and therefore had been carefully reviewed. The documents prepared for discussion today were largely based upon the procedures of 1970, with necessary modifications in the light of the University organization as of today.

He also noted that Professor Victor Stone, chairman of the Consultative Committee in 1970-71, had been invited to the meeting to comment on the work of the committee during his tenure and that the members of the University Senates Conference also had been invited to attend. The latter had been sent copies of the recommended procedures in advance and had been invited to *comment* upon them at this meeting.

Professor Stone reviewed briefly the processes followed in 1970, expressing general satisfaction in them, but noting that in his opinion the board need not feel bound to the earlier procedures. He expressed the hope that not too tight a rein be kept on the committee's activities by the board, with particular reference to giving the committee the freedom to follow up its initiatives in making inquiries as to individuals without delay. He also suggested that the Board of Trustees might profit from additional participation by the Consultative Committee in the board's interviews with presidential candidates. (In the 1970-71 search, the chairman of the Consultative Committee was invited to participate for a portion of each of the interviews conducted by the board.)

President Howard asked Professor Robert Spitze, chairman of the University Senates Conference, to introduce the members of the conference and then asked for any comments or advice the members wished to give the trustees. Chairman Spitze presented the following statement:

The University Senates Conference welcomes the opportunity to discuss with our Board of Trustees this matter of utmost importance to our University, the selection of a president. We too were surprised — perhaps more accurately, shocked — at the resignation of President Corbally. Coming at this stage of his career, it stimulates each of us to reflect upon whether we have sufficient enthusiasm to continue in our own important work. Yet, we are encouraged by his expressed eagerness to re-enter the classroom. Conference members have appreciated our regular meetings and discussions with President Corbally on the variety of issues important to our joint mission. We enter into this selection process with avowed hope that, among the multitude of important qualifications desired in his successor, a principal one will be a strong disposition to continue this working relationship with the conference.

The selection of a president of our University is perhaps the most critical among decisions affecting the institution. It provides the occasion to recognize again the primacy of scholarship among the activities over which that office presides. The work of each employee of the University is important, but the heavy responsibility entrusted to the board and the faculty is for academic excellence, whether in the classroom, on the threshold of new knowledge through research, in professional service, or through continuing education without geographic limit.

To find a person capable and willing to lead our University in that quest for increasing academic excellence must be our unwavering commitment without dilution or attenuation.

Since first receiving notice of this meeting, conference members have reviewed the 1970 experience and by telephone and other means have shared our hopes for the process now being set in motion. Our seriousness is evidenced by the attendance on short notice here this morning of all eighteen members excepting only one. On behalf of the conference I present to the board some conclusions about which a strong consensus prevails.

First, in the 1970 documents we find a set of criteria for evaluating candidates and a Consultative Committee structure, a process for its selection, and a charge to that committee which are generally appropriate. We believe current needs will be best served by recognizing the 1970 experience as highly commendable, both as to guidelines and as to its outcome. We favor building on this foundation with minimal change.

Second, the structure of the 1970 committee is viewed as acceptable but distressingly large. Should the board please to reduce it, we would be gratified. Efforts to represent all possible constituencies are futile. If the board feels a compelling need to augment the Consultative Committee to recognize any unrepresented group, we strongly urge limitation to one additional person. The faculty believes intensely that the selection of a president is predominantly academic and that any substantial expansion should entail increased faculty membership. Any increase, however, would tend to diminish the committee's effectiveness.

Third, the conference urges the board to review the 1970 procedures as they relate to the ability of the committee to fulfill its part in achieving the "clear objective that the board and the committee will seek consensus in the final selection." We hope the board will consider means by which the committee, once established, can discuss its procedures with the board, especially those concerning the committee's part in interviewing prospective candidates. Further, we hope the board will arrange visits by such nominees to all three campuses of the University to facilitate their adequate comprehension of the breadth and strength of this institution.

Our concerns in these matters are offered most respectfully and with complete awareness of the statutory obligation of the board to make the final decision. Again, the conference appreciates this opportunity and is prepared to enter into such discussion as will be useful to the board.

(The trustees also had before them a letter of advice and comment from H. George Friedman, Jr., chairman of the Urbana-Champaign Senate Council, and a statement submitted by Kenneth E. Andersen, president of the Urbana Chapter of the American Association of University Professors.)

The trustees then discussed among themselves and with the Senates Conference the comments received and their own impressions based on review of the procedures recommended. The possibility of greater involvement at the interview stage by the Consultative Committee was discussed. The difficulties of a large interview setting were pointed out, as were the advantages of having large numbers of people present and in a position to observe. In this instance, as with the question of other aspects of the board relationship to the committee, it was made clear that these matters need not be determined definitively at this time.

There were general expressions of regret that the committee was so large but no specific suggestions for reduction. Some trustees emphasized

that it was imperative that the integrity of the committee be insured by provision for representation from the major elements and constituencies within the University, not excluding some attention to those outside the institution. As to the latter, it was also pointed out that it is the trustees themselves who will provide the major "lay" involvement in the selection.

At length, on motion of Mr. Lenz, the trustees approved unanimously the following recommendations:

PROCEDURES — SELECTION OF A PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

The president of the Board of Trustees, following informal consultation with the trustees and others, presents the following recommended procedures to be followed in the selection of a president of the University to succeed President John E. Corbally, effective September 1, 1979:

Establishment of a Consultative Committee to Assist in the Selection of a President

By state statute, the Board of Trustees is directed to "elect a regent (president) who shall be charged with the general supervision of the educational facilities and interests of the University. Said regent shall be known as president of the University and his term of office shall be at the pleasure of the board of trustees." This is perhaps the most important single action expected of the governing body of the University.

In fulfilling this responsibility the trustees will wish to have advice from the constituent elements of the University. Accordingly, a Consultative Committee to Assist in the Selection of a President is hereby established as follows:

1. Six faculty members, two from each campus, to be selected by the respective senates.
2. Three students, one from each campus — to be selected by students in such manner as each chancellor may recommend.
3. One faculty member-at-large, who shall chair the committee,¹ such faculty member to be selected by the University Senates Conference from among the entire faculty of the University.
4. Three members of the nonacademic staff, one from each campus — to be selected by the University Nonacademic Employees Advisory Committee.
5. Four administrative officers of the University, one from each campus and one from the general administration. The campus officers would be selected by the vice chancellors and deans at each campus in such manner as the chancellor may recommend. The general officer would be selected by the general officers.
6. Three members of the "academic/professional" staff (as defined by Art. III, Sec. 1(n) of the *General Rules of the University*) — one from each campus, to be selected by the Professional Advisory Committee at each campus.
7. Two others — the president of the Alumni Association and the president of the University of Illinois Foundation.

The board does not contemplate that there will be alternates or deputies for the members of the Consultative Committee; rather, that those who cannot serve will be replaced through the selection procedures specified.

(Obviously, the board expects that all groups making nominations will select individuals with the widest possible acquaintance, professional and personal, in American higher education.)

¹ The committee will select its own secretary from its membership.

It is expected that the Consultative Committee will provide advice as to the general qualities expected of a president as well as suggestions concerning specific candidates. In all likelihood, the committee will be asked to supply a panel of names of acceptable candidates or to react to suggestions received by the board from other sources. It is the trustees' intent that the committee will be an important element in the selection process. The board recognizes, however, that it cannot delegate its statutory obligation, that it must make the final decision, and it is prepared to exercise that authority.

The constituencies identified above will be asked to make their selections of committee members by the scheduled October 20, 1978, meeting of the board.

The board designates the secretary of the board as its agent in the procedural and liaison tasks involved in the selection of a president of the University. The secretary of the board is directed to prepare an estimate of anticipated expenses to be incurred by the board and the committee and to present a request for a special appropriation at the October 20 meeting.

Charge to the Consultative Committee to Assist in the Selection of a President

In addition to establishing the Consultative Committee it is necessary for the trustees to specify the charge of the committee and the general procedures within which it will operate:¹

Although the several broad constituencies of the University are reflected in the structure of the committee, in no sense does the board regard the members as "representatives" or "delegates" of any single interest group. Rather, each member is expected to serve as an individual, exercising his or her own best judgment in the interest of the University of Illinois as a whole.

The committee's first task will be to recommend criteria to be used as the basis of judging the qualifications of candidates for the office of president of the University; and, second, to assemble a list of names of individuals judged to be suitable for the position. (In this regard, the trustees urge the committee to give careful consideration to the "guidelines" developed by the Consultative Committee of 1970-71 and approved by the board on July 22, 1970.) The several constituencies of the University should be invited to suggest suitable possible candidates, and suggestions might be sought from other appropriate sources, including other institutions of higher learning. The trustees will of course maintain a continuing interest in the identification of outstanding candidates and may wish to suggest names.

Soon after the committee has been organized, the trustees will arrange a meeting with it, to discuss and fix criteria to be used in judging candidates and procedures to be followed in later stages of the search. The trustees will follow, and expect the committee to follow, all of the regular University affirmative action policies in the conduct of the search and the appointment of a president of the University.

After a list of possible candidates has been assembled, the committee should conduct a preliminary screening designed to identify a number of individuals judged to be the most promising on the list. Detailed information should then be secured concerning these individuals, initially from public records such as professional directories and bibliographic sources.

At this point, care should be taken neither to approach prospective candidates nor to solicit formal evaluations of candidates by non-University persons, inasmuch as such inquiries may prove to be embarrassing to the candidates or to the University. Informal inquiries may be made by the committee, but only with clearance from the president of the Board of Trustees, and it should be made clear that the

¹ The committee is expected to develop its own rules and internal procedures, within the limits of this charge and after consultation with the Board of Trustees.

search is in a preliminary stage and that no approach has yet been made to any candidate.

In this connection, the trustees emphasize the importance of careful coordination and channeling of all committee communications concerning candidates through the chairman of the committee, who is charged with the responsibility of keeping the board fully informed — and who, in turn, will be kept informed by the board. It is anticipated that the board will receive progress reports, at least on a monthly basis, from the chairman of the committee in person. (The board will wish to have the benefit of the views of all members of the committee, including “minority” views, if any. However, all communications should be transmitted to the board as a whole and through the committee chairman.)

After a review of the credentials of the reduced list of candidates, the committee should provide the trustees with a panel of names of individuals who appear to be most promising. A meeting will then be arranged by the Board of Trustees to discuss candidates and the procedures to be followed in approaching them.

The trustees assume as a clear objective that the board and the committee will seek consensus in the final selection. As indicated in Part I of this document, the trustees have the responsibility of making the final decision. Although it will be the responsibility of the board to approach final candidates and to conduct all negotiations, the board will seek such assistance from the committee in these matters as the board may feel necessary.

It is axiomatic that discretion and confidentiality are required of all committee members. The committee’s usefulness to the board is dependent upon this general requirement, and acceptance of it is a condition of membership on the committee. The trustees also require that all communications with the press be channeled through the secretary of the board, who will act at the direction of the president of the board.

On motion of Mr. Lenz, the procedures and the charge were unanimously adopted.

President Howard expressed the thanks of the board for the assistance of the Senates Conference and of Professor Stone and asked for the whole-hearted support of the entire University community in the presidential search.

There being no further business, the board adjourned.

EARL W. PORTER
Secretary

GEORGE W. HOWARD III
President