

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE  
WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY  
Board Retreat  
Monday, May 23, 2011**

Mr. Mazzola called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. in Rooms 1016-1017, Valley Road Campus.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Adzima, Ms. DeMarco-Clisset, Mr. Gruel, Mr. Jackson, Ms. Mascolo, Mr. Mazzola, Ms. Niro, Mr. Pesce, Dr. Pruitt, Mr. Taylor, and President Waldron

ABSENT: Mr. Guarasci, Ms. Zolla

OTHERS PRESENT:

Provost and Senior Vice President Weil, VP Bolyai, VP Cohen, VP Deller, VP Martone, AVP Goldstein, Executive Director DeDeo, Chief of Staff Dr. Seal, Ms. Conway, Consultants – A. Knerr and J. Braunstein, administrators, faculty, and staff.

ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING ADEQUATE NOTICE OF MEETING:

In accordance with the “Open Public Meetings Act,” the Chairperson publicly announced and had entered into the minutes that “adequate notice” of this meeting was provided. In compliance with this Statute, this notice was posted on the University’s web page and also distributed to The North Jersey Herald and News, The Record, and The Star Ledger more than 48 hours prior to this meeting.

**AGENDA**

The sole item before the Board was a discussion of the Strategic Planning Process being undertaken by the University. The retreat followed the agenda below.

**1. Introductions and Goals for the Meeting, and Overview of the Strategic Planning Process**

Mr. Mazzola opened the meeting by discussing the agenda, meeting objectives, and the role of the Board in the Strategic Planning Process, quoting from the AGB publication *The Board’s Role in Strategic Planning* as context.

**2. Process with Q&A, and Current Status of the Process**

Anthony Knerr and John Braunstein outlined the Strategic Planning Process, including the purpose and role of the Strategic Planning Committee, the role of the Board, the role of the consultants, and the proposed timeline for the development of the Plan. The consultants contextualized the Board’s engagement and underscored the need for transparency in the process.

The consultants will deliver their work in four phases:

- In Phase I, they will review and analyze background documents, draft interview protocols, conduct individual and small group interviews with key individuals, and make a “first cut” analysis of key issues to be addressed in the planning process;

they will also meet with the planning committee to review, discuss, and obtain feedback (April-May 2011);

- In Phase II, they will review the results of the “Presidential Dinner Discussions” on Visibility, Resource Development, Academic Focus, and Enrollment Management, and prepare a discussion document that includes a preliminary framework for the strategic plan, with review, discussion, and feedback from the planning committee (May-July 2011);
- In Phase III, they will prepare two successive drafts of the Strategic Plan through an iterative process with the planning committee, and obtain feedback from key constituents including faculty, students, and the Board (July-October 2011); and
- In Phase IV, they will incorporate feedback into the final draft of the Strategic Plan (November-December 2011).

Mr. Pesce, who serves on the Strategic Planning Committee, provided feedback from the first two Committee meetings, and defined his role on the Committee. He urged fellow Trustees to remain engaged in the planning process and to be active participants in the ongoing dialog as the process – and issues – unfold. The consultants will also be available for one-on-one interviews with Trustees. President Waldron affirmed that she will regularly update the University community on the progress of the Strategic Plan on a monthly basis.

An implementation plan would follow sequentially after the adoption of the Strategic Plan, taking approximately six months to develop. It is assumed that various initiatives would be implemented as warranted before the full implementation plan is completed. There should be measurable outcomes as the initiatives are implemented, perhaps through a set of agreed-upon dashboard indicators.

The consultants summed up the discussion by suggesting that *the process should go where the analysis leads*.

### **3. The Mission of the University: Strategic Issues the Planning Process Should Address**

The consultants led the Trustees in a discussion around the University's Mission Statement and queried the Trustees on strategic issues that the planning process should address.

Mr. Taylor began the discussion of the current Mission Statement – its development and adoption by the Board in 1998. Mr. Taylor expressed some concern that the term “regional comprehensive” may be a relic of our history as a normal school and may not be an appropriate reference for William Paterson going forward.

This led to a parallel discussion of “selectivity” – its meaning, its value, and how the University translates selectivity into the composition of an incoming freshman class. The Trustees discussed the characteristics that were desirable in William Paterson students. Dr. Pruitt raised the concern of the number of our current students who require remediation, and whether our use of Accuplacer would serve as an effective Admissions tool. Mr. Adzima suggested that we should perhaps decrease the number of first and second-year students and increase the number of transfer students seeking admission, and that we should consider high-profile athletics as a means of enhancing our image. Ms. Niro commented that the new uses of technology transcend the former geographic boundaries of northern New Jersey and open the University to a greater service area. Mr.

Knerr indicated that the Mission Statement will be revisited throughout the development of the Plan through an iterative process.

The Trustees discussed at length the University's four and six-year graduation rates. There was agreement among the Trustees and the consultants that any new strategy must directly and measurably contribute to improving our graduation rates. Mr. Jackson urged the University to measure our retention and graduation rates against our peers, if we are competing for the same students. Mr. Pesce suggested that we need to put more rigor into defining peer groups and aspirational peers.

The consultants stated that selectivity and prestige are driven by internal and external perceptions of the University. It was suggested that there is a dearth in public perception of the University – not necessarily positive or negative – to which Mr. Gruel commented on our history as “anonymous donors to the public good.” President Waldron discussed how the University determines its best programs, and that perhaps we are overlooking other stellar programs. Mr. Pesce commented that the University has suffered from the inability to effectively publicize what we do well, and that we no longer have a margin of error in which to run perceived or actual poor-performing programs. The consultants confirmed that the strategic planning process will set criteria for best programs, and programs of excellence will be selected based on those criteria. They also agreed that the role of athletics will be discussed in the strategy development.

The Trustees also discussed the University's relationship with the City of Paterson. There was an opinion that a relationship would fall within the University's community outreach mission, and that there may be opportunities for mutually-beneficial cooperation. Concern was voiced, however, about the University's ability to tackle the range of problems in Paterson, and considering the limited resources available, the University should only be involved to the extent that it is of direct benefit. Mr. Mazzola suggested that the University should consider the connection as a potential strategy for the next 10 years.

Other topics not covered in this discussion included:

- Building a solid financial foundation for the University, considering the move away from state support
- Finding the right size for the University
- Revisiting programs of excellence and their sustainability
- The level and quality of student services and academic support
- Changing students' mindsets from a commuter mentality to a residential mentality

Non-Board members in attendance were given the opportunity to offer comments on the preceding discussion. Ms. Conway suggested that we focus on the University's potential impact on students, and urged the University to better position itself among our competitors. VP Deller stated that the University needs to define its strategic advantage, and Mr. Goldstein followed by linking the strategic advantage to marketing, advertising, and public relations. VP Cohen suggested that when we promote the University as the “best in the business,” there is a positive effect on students' persistence. From an enrollment management perspective, she feels the focus on undergraduate programs might be too restrictive, and that our graduate programs merit marketing to adult students. Provost Weil suggested the need to establish a culture of success, and to

focus on the value-added experiences that give students additional opportunities to find jobs and gain acceptance to graduate programs.

The discussion concluded with a brief recap of the next steps in the process. The consultants welcomed feedback from the Trustees on the outcomes of this retreat or any part of the strategic planning process going forward.

Mr. Mazzola adjourned the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Seal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "Seal" clearly distinguishable.

Dr. Robert Seal  
Chief of Staff to the President and  
Board of Trustees