WMU Board of Trustees Special Meeting May 26, 2020

WMU Board of Trustees

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Western Michigan University
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING

Tuesday, May 26, 2020
Virtual Platform Amidst a Global Pandemic

Formal Session – 2PM
Please view the live stream at https://wmich.edu/trustees

Individuals wishing to address the Board of Trustees during the Public Comment section must notify Dr. Kahler Schuemann at kahler.schuemann@wmich.edu by 5PM Monday, May 25th.

1. Acceptance of the Agenda – Bolger

2. Remarks by the Chair – Bolger

3. Remarks by the President – Montgomery

4. Public Comments Regarding Action Items – Schuemann

Action Items – Bolger

5. Ratification of Western Michigan University Chapter of The Association of American University Professors (WMU-AAUP) Contract – Bott

6. General Public Comments – Schuemann

Supplemental and supporting agenda materials can be viewed at: http://www.wmich.edu/trustees
Proposed Meeting Minutes

May 26, 2020 – SPECIAL MEETING

The Board of Trustees (BOT) Formal Session was called to order by Chair Bolger at 2PM on Tuesday, May 26, 2020. The meeting was held on Zoom, a virtual platform, amidst the global pandemic. The meeting was streamed live through the BOT website. Prior marketing encouraged the public to engage and those interested in providing comment were asked to notify Secretary Schuemann by 5PM Monday, May 25th. Presiding were Chair Bolger, Vice Chair Chen-Zhang, and Trustees Behen, Edgerton, Johnston, Kitchens, Penn, and Rinvelt.

A motion to accept the May 26, 2020 BOT agenda was made by Trustee Johnston, with a second from Trustee Kitchens. The motion passed unanimously.

Remarks were provided by Chair Bolger – Attachment A followed by remarks from President Montgomery – Attachment B.

There was no indicated public interest in providing commentary regarding any Action Item.

As Action Items, Provost J. Bott presented on the Ratification of Western Michigan University Chapter of the Association of American University Professors (WMU-AAUP) Contract. A motion to accept the Ratification of Western Michigan University Chapter of the Association of American University Professors (WMU-AAUP) Contract was made by Trustee Johnston with a second by Trustee Behen. The motion passed unanimously.

During General Public Comments Dr. C. Weideman provided commentary on behalf of WMU AAUP.

The BOT meeting ended at 2:14PM following a motion to adjourn by Trustee Penn, a second by Trustee Kitchens, and unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Kahler B. Schuemann
Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Western Michigan University
Good afternoon and thank you for joining us for this special meeting of our Western Michigan University Board of Trustees.

We will approve our April 23 meeting minutes at our next scheduled Board meeting.

We are here today for the sole purpose of accepting the University's contract with the Western Michigan University Chapter of the Association of American University Professors. On behalf of the entire Board, I want to personally thank President Carol Weideman and the entire leadership team for their efforts in bringing this contract to a vote, and to their membership who ratified this contract. We know that this was not an easy decision nor task, and for everyone who took part, your collaboration, generosity and understanding during these challenging times is greatly appreciated.

Your Board is extremely grateful to all our employees and their willingness to step up to the challenges that we are all facing. As I mentioned at our April meeting there are no simple fixes to the long-term issues that are confronting our educational institutions. However, it is in times like this, when we come together to tackle these challenges that we once again demonstrate that we are united in support for our wonderful University and what it offers to our students, the community and the world. We are all Broncos together. Thank you.
ATTACHMENT B

WMU Board of Trustees Meeting
President's Remarks May 26, 2020

It's good to be with everyone today for this special meeting. I would like to echo our chair's appreciation for everyone who was involved in developing, negotiating and voting on this contract with our WMU-AAUP chapter.

The updated financial terms of the agreement faculty voted in favor of last week come as the University faces significant COVID-19-induced fiscal difficulties. I greatly appreciate that our faculty are working with us and joining other employee groups in sacrificing to help WMU address the unprecedented challenges of this health crisis and the financial toll it has wreaked.

We often talk about how the faculty members are the lifeblood of our University. They put in long hours fulfilling their teaching and research responsibilities, contributing to their departments and their disciplines—and that was before a global pandemic changed the way we are all working. When we asked them to transition to distance education they adapted quickly and effectively and continued doing the same outstanding work that they did before the COVID-19 pandemic. For all of their efforts on behalf of Western Michigan University, I thank them.

It's a testament to the dedication of our excellent faculty, our talented staff, and the rest of our University community that when a crisis descends on our campus that we can all come together to each do our part in ways that enable us to continue meeting our educational mission. It's not easy, but it exemplifies our shared spirit of cooperation and the commitment that we all have for this institution.

Thank you again for everything that you do for WMU.
PROPOSAL: Ratification of Western Michigan University Chapter of The Association of American University Professors (WMU-AAUP) Contract

Background

On May 17th, a tentative agreement was reached with the leadership of WMU-AAUP. As a result, membership of the union ratified the proposal on May 21st. The agreement is for a one-year extension and it is effective from September 6, 2020 through 12:01 AM of September 6, 2021. The key provisions of the extended agreement are as follows:

1. All economic compensation amounts remain as stated in the 2017 through 2020 Agreement except that effective July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021, the base salaries of bargaining unit faculty members employed in a Board-appointed faculty position by April 1, 2020, shall be reduced by 2.25%. This is a temporary salary adjustment that ends June 30, 2021, at which time it shall revert to the previous level in effect prior to the adjustment. It was also agreed that the promotion increments from the 2017-2020 agreement shall remain in effect at the start of 2020-21 and the 2021-22 fiscal/academic year.

2. All health care plan benefits and the employee percentage contributions towards premiums remain the same for calendar years 2020 and 2021.

3. A retirement incentive plan (“the Plan”) is offered to designated faculty members and academic administrators at Western Michigan University if the individual (1) holds academic tenure and is actively employed by the University; and (2) is at least age 55; and (3) has at least ten (10) years of regular full-time service at the University. Those working under reduced workload retirement agreements with the University, who are on approved leaves of absence or on sabbaticals and otherwise meet the applicable eligibility criteria above are eligible to participate in the Plan. Faculty members and academic administrators who have served notice on the University prior to May 15, 2020, of their desire to retire or terminate are not eligible for the Plan.
The Plan provides a full year of base salary (based on what was earned in 2019-2020), distributed in two equal payments. Each payment is subject to required state and federal withholdings. The first payment will be made in September 2020. The second payment will be made in September 2021. Those who retire under the Plan are guaranteed the normal retirement benefits provided under the WMU-AAUP agreement.

4. Necessary date changes were made in Article 17 (Tenure), Article 18 (Promotion) to permit the effective application of these articles. Dates were also revised for Article 12 (Grievance Procedure) and the process to appoint members to a mediation panel defined. Appendix D (University Calendar) was also added for the 2021-20 academic year.

The University administration is supportive of entering into this one-year agreement with the WMU-AAUP.

Recommended Action

Therefore, it is recommended by the University administration the Board of Trustees ratify the agreement with WMU-AAUP that begins on September 6, 2020 and ends at 12:01 AM on September 6, 2021, specifically including ratification of the retirement incentive plan (the Plan).