



## Montana Board of Regents

Conference Call Meeting  
August 26, 2010

**Thursday, August 26, 2010**

The Board convened at 2:30 PM.

Roll call indicated a quorum present.

**Regents Present:**, Clayton Christian, Chair, Janine Pease, Vice Chair, Lynn Hamilton, Steve Barrett, Todd Buchanan, Angela McLean, and Commissioner of Higher Education Sheila Stearns all by phone. Student Regent Teresa Borrenpohl was excused. Governor Brian Schweitzer, *ex officio*, was represented by Dan Villa by phone, and Superintendent Denise Juneau, *ex officio*, was represented by Joyce Silverthorne.

Sites represented by phone were: Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE), UM-Missoula, UM-Western, MT Tech, MSU-Bozeman, MSU-Billings, MSU-Northern, MSU-Great Falls COT, Dawson Community College, Flathead Valley Community College, Miles Community College, and the Office of the Governor.

Regent Steve Barrett moved approval of the July 20, 2010 Board of Regents meeting minutes. Motion approved 6-0.

### CONSENT

- a. Helena COT Faculty Labor Agreement; OCHE  
ITEM 148-101-C0810
- b. MSU International Union of Operating Engineers Labor Agreement; MSU-Bozeman  
ITEM 148-102-C0810
- c. Family Education Savings Program Equity Fund Transfer; OCHE  
ITEM 148-103-C0810
- d. Staff Item; MSU-Ag Experiment Stations  
ITEM 148-2300-C0810
- e. Staff Item; MSU-Extension Services  
ITEM 148-2400-C0810

Chairman Clayton Christian explained the staff items were for awarding tenure. Regent Barrett moved approval of the consent agenda items a-e. Motion passed 6-0.

### INFORMATION

- a. Montana Digital Academy and Dual Enrollment, *M. Moe and S. Stearns*

Deputy Commissioner Mary Moe explained a dual enrollment pilot program for the Montana Digital Academy (MTDA) in which the MTDA will work with UM-Missoula College of Technology and the MSU-Great Falls College of Technology beginning the



fall 2010 semester with a limited number of online courses and broadened course options and campus involvement for spring semester 2011.

Commissioner Sheila Stearns said the Montana Digital Academy has made impressive progress with learning management systems and is student friendly.

b. Search Updates

- UM President, *C. Christian*

Chairman Christian reported that off-site interviews were held in Salt Lake City and that several well-qualified applicants have been invited to the campus for interviews with the campus and public. He said additional announcements are forthcoming.

- MSU executive Searches, *W. Cruzado*

President Waded Cruzado reported on three executive searches in the MSU system:

- The MSU-Bozeman Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs search is in the final stages.
- The MSU-Billings Chancellor search is in process with Dr. Rolf Groseth serving in an interim capacity.
- The MSU-Great Falls COT Dean search will begin in October. Dean Joe Schaffer is currently serving on a two-year interim appointment.

c. Communication and Advocacy

- **Interim Legislative Committees August 17-19**, *S. Stearns and M. Robinson*

Commissioner Stearns reported on the recent meetings of the Education and Local Government Committee and the Legislative Finance Committee at which the committees got an overview of the major budgets of the Montana University System, and gathered information on the potential impacts of budget reductions in general funds designated to the university system.

Deputy Commissioner Mick Robinson stated the committees asked general questions about quality education and tuition and that the committees were reminded that the Board of Regents' decision on tuition will not be made until May 2011. The committees reviewed work of the regents over the past year, the \$18 million (Stimulus Act) funding "cliff," enrollment, the impact on the quality of education if there are budget reductions, and the work done by the Regents' Reform Workgroup. The legislative committees provided positive feedback on work being done in the MUS.

- **MFHE Update** (Montanans for Higher Education), *C. Christian*

Chairman Christian said the MFHE is a corporation created to continue the efforts of the Six Mill Levy campaign committee and extend those efforts to the ongoing support of higher education. He said the steering committee includes himself, Commissioner Stearns, Larry Simpkins, Don Lane and Doug Mitchell. He said this may be the vehicle to advocate for higher education on a continuing basis.



Commissioner Stearns noted that MFHE will work on writing a mission statement that is broad enough to provide advocacy over a long period of time. Residual funds from the 2008 Six Mill Levy campaign will be transferred to MFHE.

- **Listening Tours**, *S. Stearns*

Commissioner Stearns reported that the office is scheduling listening sessions for the Regents throughout Montana in September and October that will focus primarily on College NOW. Ideally at least one regent can participate at each of the sites. Commissioner Stearns will attend all sessions, and Deputy Commissioner Mary Moe will attend most of them. The goal is for legislative, policy development, higher education, and business leaders to work together, to strengthen the ability for Montanans' to access to affordable post secondary education in their region, promote the investment value of the Montana University System, and to discuss efforts at cost control and efficiency.

- d. Task Force Updates

- **Recruitment and Retention**, *K. McRae*

Kevin McRae, Director of Labor Relations and Personnel, OCHE, said the Recruitment and Retention Task Force relates to compensation planning in 2012. A six-member workgroup, including Chairman Christian and Mr. McRae, has been assembled to identify compensation needs within the MUS and to generate data to produce analyses to be used in decision making.

Deputy Commissioner Robinson told the regents about performance-based budget work being developed. Dennis Jones, of the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), will be working with campus fiscal officers and will attend the November board meeting, providing expertise as well as information on other states' approaches. Mr. Jones will also be working with an internal OCHE staff workgroup on topics including fixed variable formulas, outcome measurements, mission review, program review, and work of the Reform Workgroup, with the intent of formulating the final funding formula and determining how best to use that funding formula to incentivize campuses for alignment with BOR priorities and goals.

- **Sidney Public Schools Task Force**, *T. Gibson, R. Groseth, and M. Moe*

Deputy Commissioner Moe reported on a conference call meeting with the task force. Topics of the conference call included how Sidney and Dawson Community College might proceed with dual enrollment; background on the educational opportunities for Central Montana, specifically the Lewistown center; and the desire in the area for continuing educational opportunities for the local teachers. Dr. Moe and President Cargill concurred that the meeting was cordial and productive.

Commissioner Stearns noted the importance of the College!Now initiative in forming regions across the state with general responsibility for post-secondary service. Her office is reviewing the regions used by the Department of Commerce and those used by



## MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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the Office of Public Instruction. She said the message needs to be clear that the MUS will work with communities throughout the state to serve those communities. She noted that may not necessarily mean the college or university in that area will be the sole provider, but that they may be the main coordinator. Commissioner Stearns said she may have a draft of the regional hubs as soon as the September board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.

**Posted on**

**Approved by the Board of Regents on**

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Date

Date

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Sheila M. Stearns  
Commissioner of Higher Education  
and Secretary to the Board of Regents

Clayton Christian  
Chair, Board of Regents