

I (John Martin) attended the Board of Trustees Meeting on January 19, 2012 as the official UIS faculty observer. The meeting was webcast and is available online in two parts:

Part 1: <http://webcast2.uis.edu/multimedia1/Archive/2012/1BOT11912.html>

Part 2: <http://webcast2.uis.edu/multimedia1/Archive/2012/2BOT11912.html>

The UIS Office of Electronic Media has been contracted by the Board to provide video and webcasting for the rest of the meetings this year. In this report I will reference events by Part 1 or Part 2 and their timestamp in the video.

The report by Prof. Emeritus Don Chambers (Part 2, 73:00) is a must see. I encourage everyone to closely observe the Board's reaction at the end of that segment.

The highlights of the meeting were the Board's discussion about tuition increases (Part 1, 68:20) and comments by Trustees Oliver and Montgomery concerning diversity and the hiring of Urbana's new football coach (Part 2, 61:35).

I also personally found VP Garcia's presentation on the University Healthcare System very informative and inspirational (Part 2, 25:30).

The meeting was called to order at 8 am (Part 1: 0:00). I was the only faculty observer present for the official beginning of the meeting. Trustees Holmes, Montgomery, and Strobel were not present when roll was called. They arrived during the executive session that followed. The first executive session of the meeting was called after the roll and lasted two hours and ten minutes.

After the executive session the Board had planned to have the state song performed but the scheduled vocalist had to leave when the executive session had run long. The Chair asked for volunteers but there were no takers. The President introduced the observers and officers (Part 1, 6:00).

The next order of business (Part 1, 8:10) was to conduct elections to organize the leadership of the Board. In the election for Chair, Trustee Montgomery nominated Trustee Kennedy. The nomination was seconded by Trustee McMillan and passed by unanimous consent since there were no other nominees. The nominees for the Board Executive Committee were Trustee Strobel (nom by Tr. Hasara, 2nd by Tr. Koritz) and Trustee McMillan (nom student Trustee Thomas). Since there were two nominees and two slots the nominees were elected by unanimous consent. Trustee Stobel moved to nominate and elect all of the sitting University officers with the exception of Dr Kies to be Secretary to the Board. That passed unanimously. The same occurred with delegation of signing authority.

Trustee McMillan gave the report from the Budget, Audit, and Finance Committee (Part 1, 14:30). He introduced Dr Merriman to give a presentation on the economic outlook for Illinois (Part 1, 17:30):

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/January%2019,%202012/presentation-ABFF-1-Update%20on%20Illinois%20Economic%20and%20Fiscal%20Challenges%20and%20Responses.pdf>

Trustee Strobel asked how the state fiscal crisis is effecting public employment. Dr Merriman explained that the state needs to cut its budget but it is not clear how that will directly effect employment. He predicted that the state will face a state of “fiscal stress” for the remainder of the decade and he is concerned about the effect that the state’s declining bond rating will have.

There were several other questions from the Chair concerning details and data he would like to see in future presentations (Part 1: 31:00).

Next the President introduced Vice President Knorr to make a presentation on the financial state of the university (Part 1, 33:10):

http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/January%2019,%202012/presentation-ABFF-2_Review_of_Tuition_and_Financial_Aid.pdf

Before the start of that presentation the President took two minutes to make remarks summarizing the University’s budget position and need to raise tuition and fees. The presentation included several slides meant to give the trustees an idea of what kind of aid is available to students, who gets discounted tuition, and how much debt University students graduate with. The presentation concluded with a recommendation to raise tuition at a rate for incoming freshmen that would keep up with inflation over the four years they are guaranteed that rate.

The Board had many questions and conducted a wide-ranging discussion about tuition and fees (Part 1, 68:20). Most Trustees seemed sympathetic to student concerns about rising tuition but also realized that the University would fiscally face other consequences if there was no tuition increase. Trustee Koritz was the most vocal about finding other ways to reduce spending in order to keep tuition increases down.

Next VP Chancellor Allen-Meares gave a address welcoming the Board to the Chicago campus and highlighting some recent activity there (Part 1, 79:50):

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/January%2019,%202012/presentation-UIC%20Welcome.pdf>

After a short break Trustee Strobel gave a report from the Government, Personnel, and Ethics Committee. (Part 2, 1:05). That was followed by a report by Trustee Hassara from the Academic and Student Affairs Committee (Part 2, 5:10). After those report the Board broke for lunch.

The Board resumed the meeting after lunch with a vocal performance by Lillie Adams (Part 2, 13:00).

Following that Trustee Koritz gave a report from the University Healthcare System Committee (Part 2, 17:15). This included a very good report by Vice President Skip Garcia (Part 2, 25:30):

<http://www.uillinois.edu/trustees/agenda/January%2019,%202012/presentation-UH-Uof%20Hospital%20and%20Health%20Sciences%20System%20Thursday.pdf>

VP Garcia’s presentation was a very good primer on what the outlook is for the University Health Care System. It included a nicely produced video that had a very inspirational outlook and conveyed a real sense of pride and mission for University Hospital through a new motto,

“Changing medicine. For Good” (Part 2, 43:00). After that presentation VP Garcia took several questions concerning the future of the University Healthcare system (Part 2, 45:30).

Next the Board moved to the voice vote agenda (Part 2, 52:50). That agenda included items to formally recognize retiring Secretary Michelle Thompson for her service (Part 2, 53:27). It also included the hiring of the new football coach, which drew comments from Trustees Oliver and Montgomery (Part 2, 61:35). As reported in the press both Trustee Oliver and Montgomery were disappointed in the University’s diversity efforts when it comes to hiring high-profile coaches for athletics. The Chair acknowledged that this had been a subject of lengthy discussion in the executive session.

All the trustees voted in favor of the voice vote agenda with the exception of:

- All the student trustees voted “no” on the tuition increase in item #11.
- Trustees Oliver and Montgomery voted “no” on item #6 to hire the new football coach.

Next the Board took up the Roll Call Agenda (Part 2, 71:30). Those were all approved unanimously.

As the final part of the meeting Prof Emeritus Don Chambers (UIC) delivered a personal statement in the guise of a faculty report (Part 2, 73:00). The USC normally coordinates the faculty report but the membership had not been directly consulted about the subject of Prof Chambers’ report. At the outset he made it clear that he was representing the views of himself, Prof. Matt Wheeler (UIUC), Prof. Joyce Toliver (UIUC), Prof Philip Pastson (UIC), Prof Nick Burbules (UIUC). The address begins by classifying Lisa Troyer’s resignation as, “One of the worst scandals ever to confront this university” and seeks to implicate the President in a pattern of unethical behavior. I encourage everyone to carefully watch the reaction of the Board at the end of this report.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm. The President spent a good twenty minutes taking questions from the press after the meeting.