SUMMARY OF BOARD OF REGENTS RETREAT – OCT. 22-23, 2019

LAKESIDE LABORATORY REGENTS RESOURCE CENTER

MILFORD, IOWA

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22

Present: Mike Richards, Patty Cownie, Sherry Bates, Zack Leist, Jim Lindenmayer, Nancy Dunkel, Nancy Boettger, Milt Dakovich, David Barker, Mark Braun, Aimee Claeys, Rachel Boon, Laura Dickson, Josh Lehman.

The retreat began at 1:00 p.m. Mary Skopec, Executive Director of Iowa Lakeside Laboratory, welcomed everyone to the retreat on behalf of Lakeside Lab. She gave an overview on the facility and programs offered, along with information on how they are funded.

Board of Regents Executive Director Mark Braun introduced Sally Johnstone, President of the National Center for Higher Education Management (NCHEMS). Johnston gave a brief overview of NCHEMS.

Johnstone discussed population trends. Projections for high school graduates show a decline after the mid-2020s. The traditional population in particular is trending down, and colleges must be prepared for this. There was a discussion about the gap between jobs that require a college degree and adults with degree attainment. Johnstone emphasized this is an issue that must be paid attention to.

Johnstone provided examples of stories from states other than Iowa and what they are doing, with different approaches to system-wide higher education challenges in Pennsylvania, Georgia, Connecticut, Utah and Alaska. Among the topics discussed were shared services among universities, program duplication and accessibility.

Board of Regents Chief Academic Officer Rachel Boon discussed her experience working at the central office of Ivy Tech Community College in Indiana when they consolidated academic programs and other systems such as human resources, financial aid, payroll, and others.

Johnstone then led a discussion about what the goals would be relating to the state and potential learners, and how can you continue to lead in a time of likely flat or declining enrollments.

Braun led a discussion about what constituencies would need to be included during any discussion of trying to boost collaboration in higher education. Many publics were mentioned, including representatives from the public universities, private colleges, community colleges, economic development personnel, the legislature, and the governor's office. Johnstone recommended when talking about long-term plans, to keep them to 5-10 years maximum because of how dynamics can change quickly.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23

The retreat resumed at 9:00 a.m. Boon started with an overview of the process for the next Board of Regents Strategic Plan, which expires in 2021. The intent is to have Board Office staff write the plan and manage the process. Braun said there would be conversations and surveys with key stakeholders, including legislators, to get their feedback on what everyone needs and wants out of the plan. There will also be strategic plan updates from the institutions at the November Board meeting. Likely early next year there will be an update on the BOR strategic plan which will help with evaluation of the current plan.

Braun introduced Tom Meredith, Senior Fellow of AGB Consulting, for his presentation on how to have a highly effective governing board.

Meredith stressed that a Board is only as good as the chair and its membership. A discussion was held on why Iowa Board of Regents members accepted their appointments to the Board and what their backgrounds are.

A discussion was held on the purpose of the Iowa Board of Regents. Items mentioned included providing collaboration between our universities, providing high quality education to our students, fiduciary responsibility, providing leadership, planning and oversight to the universities and special schools, and holding university leadership accountable. This led to a discussion of what each individual Board member felt like they brought to the Iowa Board of Regents.

Meredith then led a discussion on challenges in higher education, what good Boards do, what committed Regents do, and on the Board's relationship with the Executive Director, which he said is especially critical.

Regents had submitted topics that they wanted to discuss, and they were addressed. Among the items brought forward were athletics oversight, audits, and whether or not college is worth it.

There was then a small-group breakout session with a topic of things that could be done to improve Iowa Board of Regents meetings. There was also a discussion about key questions that Board members get, as well as the legacy of what each Board has accomplished.