

**BOARD OF REGENTS RETREAT SUMMARY – OCTOBER 1-2, 2024**  
**UNIVERSITY CAPITOL CENTRE – UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**  
**IOWA CITY, IOWA**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1**

Present: Sherry Bates, Greta Rouse, Nancy Dunkel, Jim Lindenmayer, David Barker, JC Risewick, Robert Cramer, Christine Hensley (virtual), Mark Braun, Rachel Boon, Aimee Claeys, Kristin Bauer Davis, Stephanie Griffin, Josh Lehman.

The retreat began at 1:00 p.m. Board of Regents Executive Director Mark Braun welcomed everyone to the retreat, and then introduced Terry MacTaggart, from the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB).

MacTaggart started with asking “What makes a good board?” He pointed to five key areas that Board members should be sensitive to: insight, oversight, foresight, loyalty and courage. In-depth discussion of each of those areas followed and the importance of each to being an effective Board member. It was mentioned that a key piece connecting all five of those areas was high quality communication. Another key was support of Board members, to help educate and inform them as to issues happening on our campuses.

MacTaggart then led a discussion on current key topics in higher education. He listed three: a loss in faith in higher education, academic culture vs. popular culture, and being a university president. It was discussed that Board members must continue to be strong supporters and advocates of higher education, while also acknowledging challenges such as cost increases and student debt. It was mentioned that our university tuition rates are relatively low compared to our peers which is a positive.

The discussion then moved to meetings with legislators, which our Regents do and will continue to do, in coordination with the Board’s state relations officers. It was mentioned that it is important to meet with legislators year-round, not only during session, and in particular in their home districts.

MacTaggart mentioned that being a university president is a very tough job and tenures have been getting shorter. He said that our universities are bucking the national trend of having presidents that have all served for a good length of time. There was a discussion about presidents being forced out of their jobs due to things they have said or done.

There was a discussion about various topics: open records requests, posting on social media, the role of media, and presidential searches.

Lynette Marshall, Sheila Baldwin and Colin Hennessey from the University of Iowa Center for Advancement led a discussion on fundraising, engagement and philanthropy. Marshall described the overall mission and role of the UICA, and mentioned their current campaign, “Together Hawkeyes” is underway and has a goal of \$3 billion.

Hennessey led a discussion on engagement, or how to meaningfully connect people with the university by measuring behavior that supports the mission and goals of the university. There were four main areas of engagement that were discussed in detail: communication, experiential, philanthropic and volunteer.

Baldwin discussed development. She described the organization of her development team, and the role of a development officer. She then led a discussion on the development process, which has five main areas: identification, qualification, cultivation, solicitation and stewardship.

The retreat ended at 5:00 p.m.

## **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2**

Angela Studemann and Jeff Peterzalek from the Office of the Iowa Attorney General were introduced. Peterzalek discussed the structure and makeup of the AG's office and what each division does. He reinforced that their office would represent state agencies, including the Board and the universities, in lawsuits.

Studemann led a discussion on what the Board of Regents is legally authorized to do, which is contained in Iowa Code Chapter 262. There was a discussion about the difference between legislation and administrative rules, and how administrative rules are established and implemented.

The discussion then turned to the Iowa Open Meetings Law (Chapter 21). As a public board, there are requirements of what constitutes a quorum of the Board. All votes must occur in open session, and there must be a vote to enter closed session. All meetings must have minutes taken.

A discussion was then had on the Iowa Open Records Law (Chapter 22), and best practices for handling public records. Studemann emphasized that any communications relating to Board business are potentially public records, and it does not matter if it is a personal account or cell phone. The subject matter is the determining factor. Discussion was had on how public records requests can be made, cost to fulfill a request, exceptions, and how to handle records.

Haley Hanson from Husch Blackwell was introduced. She explained what Husch Blackwell does, and that she would primarily be discussing federal legislation that applies to higher education. There was a robust discussion on campus safety including emergency response preparedness, campus policies, litigation risks, and the Clery Act.

The discussion turned to student issues on campuses, which includes mental health, increasing suicides, alcohol and drug issues, and accommodation requests. There was a robust discussion on reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities, and the process that should be followed to put those in place. There was also a discussion on religious accommodations for sincerely held religious beliefs and what that entails.

Hanson then led a discussion on Title IX. There are proposed new regulations but they have currently been stopped in many states including Iowa due to a pending lawsuit. So the previous regulations are still in effect.

Hanson led a discussion on Title IV regulations for Financial Value Transparency and Gainful Employment. This involves reporting on annual debt to earnings rate in programs, based on a formula. The deadline for reporting information has been pushed back.

Other topics that were discussed included the coming higher education “enrollment cliff”, faculty and tenure issues, artificial intelligence, mergers and acquisitions of colleges and universities, and various Supreme Court decisions.

The retreat ended at Noon.