

## **Minutes for UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association Board of Directors Meeting with UNL Chancellor Ronnie Green**

April 29, 2022

Submitted by Kim Hachiya, secretary

(Approved by ERA BOD, 09,08.2022)

The UNL Emeriti and Retirees Association Board of Directors met with UNL Chancellor Ronnie Green at 1:30 p.m. April 29, 2022, in the conference room, 201 Canfield hall

Attendance: UNL ERA board members Lloyd Ambrosius, Pat Crews, Kim Hachiya, Earl Hawkey, Alice Henneman, Julie Johnson, Linda Major, Alfred Stark, Don Weeks; Ronnie Green, chancellor, Mike Zeleny, chancellor's chief of staff.

Ronnie chatted with the group about a variety of issues. Some highlights:

1. At that time, the campus was operating “normally” with no pandemic risk mitigation protocols in force. But, he cautioned that there is “watchful waiting” and protocols could be implemented should conditions change.
2. Commencement numbers were expected to be high.
3. Enrollments for fall are looking positive due to an increase in non-resident students and grad students but fall enrollment is dependent on keeping retention numbers up. International enrollments again were soft.
4. Research activity has rebounded. UNL did not shut down research operations although there was a decline in research expenditures. Proposal and grant submissions are up. Physics recently was awarded the largest grant in the history of the university.
5. Legislature:
  - University received some American Rescue Plan Funding
  - Some \$60M went to UNMC and UNK to establish programs in Kearney
  - UNL got \$25M from the state to match private sources for the proposed USDA lab at Nebraska Innovation Campus
  - A one-time allocation to all of higher education in Nebraska is aimed at internship opportunities
6. Personnel
  - Kathy Ankersen was named Executive Vice Chancellor
  - Searches are under way or hires have been made for deans in Nebraska Extension; IANR Ag Research Division, Architecture, and Fine and Performing Arts
7. Innovation Campus
  - USDA facility is actively planned and construction will begin in 2023 or 2024. Expected to attract 50 USDA scientists (similar to the size of the Meat Animal Research Center in Clay County). A unique facility focused on digital/precision agriculture research and development. Unique stand up of a tech transfer operation.
  - Scarlet Hotel soft opening occurred and went well. It's the home of the Hospitality, Restaurant, Tourism Management program in the College of Education and Human Sciences
8. Facilities updates:

Carolyn Pope Edwards Hall (new build on the site of former Mabel Lee Hall) will open in fall 2022. Mabel Lee's name is now appended to the adjacent recreation fields.

\$78M renovation at Scott Engineering Center

\$115M new build of Kiewit Engineering Center

Barkley Center Expansion expected to complete in 2022

Renovation of Law Library

Athletics facility to open in June 2023

Military and Naval Sciences renovation and Veterans recognition tribute (\$14M)

LB384 extends deferred maintenance funding to 2064. Because 70% of the buildings in the NU System are part of UNL we get the lion's share.

\$75M for a replacement building for Westbrook/Music

Renovation of Bessey Hall

Renovation Kimball Hall

Expand Lied Center Lobby; add an education wing (\$26M)

Architecture Hall renovation and redesign the link with Former Law

Morrill Hall renovation

#### 9. Fundraising

The NU Foundation is winding up the "quiet" phase of the next big campaign, which started in 2018 and will conclude in 2027.

The goal for UNL alone is currently confidential. Goals focus on student and faculty support rather than bricks and mortar

#### 10. Celebrating 25th anniversary of the founding of the International Quilt Study Center program

#### 11. Athletics

Rapidly changing landscape in athletics, changes in NCAA could be an existential crisis for the organization. Distribution of revenues with students is a literal game changer and also an unknown but we will be paying student athletes. BIG position is that we support the concept of "amateur athletics."

#### Questions from ERA:

1. Pat Crews asked about the status of email account access for spouses/family members of deceased faculty.

Mike Zeleny said that it had been decided that UNL had gone too far in the direction of security lockdowns. There will be a new general policy that ERA will promote to members that if a survivor notifies the university within 30 days of a member's death, UNL IT will preserve that person's email contents for up to 90 days so that contents can be transferred. There will be some "best practices" developed to facilitate this shift.

Board members thanked Mike for pursuing this change.

2. Pat noted that because there was no pre-retirement seminar this year (and the status of these continuing is uncertain), we need a way to contact potential retirees. She asked if there was a way to get access to email addresses. MZ said Bruce Currin

bumped this to University Legal who think it's OK to share that info with us. HR will provide retirees names to us.

3. Pat Crews noted that the September luncheons, previously hosted by NU Foundation, UNL Alumni and the Chancellor's office, were suspended since 2020. We wondered about the future status; we will continue to pursue restarting these this fall.

4. We asked about the status of Stadium Improvements and the survey results. Ronnie said a task force has been established to look at seating parity in regard to seat donation/license fees and renovations to the North and South Stadiums and perhaps installing chairbacks in the East and West Stadiums. There are possibilities of reconfiguring the N and S stadiums, or tearing down and replacing at least the South Stadium but where do those who currently have seats there go during the construction? Don Weeks suggested that at the very least, safety handrails be installed on the stairs/steps.

Ronnie mentioned that alcohol sales are coming to both PBA and Baseball. Memorial Stadium is not equipped to handle alcohol sales in terms of sales areas and point of sale internet access to handle transactions. He said there is a belief that alcohol sales will improve the game day experience and possibly reduce in-stadium drunkenness as folks will not be able to leave, imbibe and return.

Pat said the well of expertise within the association is deep and that the university should reach out for volunteers, etc.

Linda Major said that the group has debated when we should step into the public conversation about various controversies.

Ronnie said that tenure is under attack elsewhere and he expects those attacks to eventually come to UNL.

We thanked Ronnie for his time with us and for his service as chancellor.

The meeting adjourned.