



**Chancellor's Cabinet Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2021**

Attendance

Present: Dr. Stefani Hicswa, Susan Simmers, Dr. Susan Balter-Reitz, Dr. Kim Hayworth, Bill Kennedy, Maureen Brakke, Dr. Jim Barron, Brett Weisz, Dr. Jennifer Lynn, Krista Montague, and Natalie Preston

Guests: COVID Incident Commander David Nordel

Meeting began at 2:00 pm.

COVID-19 Update:

COVID Incident Commander Dave Nordel reported that there are fewer positive cases on campus and in Yellowstone County. Restrictions continue to be lessened. Yellowstone County has excess doses of COVID-19 vaccines, so appointments should be promptly made. The Riverstone Health Officer John Felton authorized international students to receive vaccines as well. He has heard discussion about reducing the social distancing rule from six feet to three, but the six-foot rule should still be used.

COVID Relief Funding and Budget Update: Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration Susan Simmers discussed the three main sources of COVID relief funding that have been received by MSUB. These were the CARES Act, CRRSAA, and American Rescue Plan (ARP). CARES gave specific direction of how funds could be used, the ARP and CRRSAA allow for institutions to recover payroll expenses and revenue lost due to COVID, reducing the drawing of funds from reserves. The Budget Office is meeting with departments for budget workbook help; workbooks are due by April 16th and must be on time due to state deadlines. Additionally, tuition and fee increase proposals will be presented to the ASMSUB at their meeting today, March 23, 2021.

Board of Regents Update:

Interim Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dr. Balter-Reitz announced that a program in digital medical sonography was presented at the March Board of Regents meeting which would begin fall semester of 2022. The Board of Regents approved the planning for the Center for Neurodiversity which received funding from the Murdoch Grant with the help of the MSUB Foundation. The center will be hiring a medical director and proposing further details to Board of Regents at their July meeting. Chancellor Hicswa also reported that the Regents meeting provided legislative updates and how COVID relief funding has been used.

Resignation Announcement:

Tribal Liaison Joe McGeshick resigned his position effective Wednesday, March 24th. MSUB does not seek to fill the vacancy to that position at this time.

Rocky Vista University:

Chancellor Hicswa recently met with Dr. Clint Adams of Rocky Vista University (RVU), Steve Arveschoug of Big Sky Economic Development and MSU President Waded Cruzado. RVU purchased property in Billings' West End, and shared building plans for facilities.

Finishing Trades Institute:

The Finishing Trades Institute is included to receive funding from the appropriations bill. Governor Gianforte was instrumental in moving this forward.

Center for Teaching and Learning:

Dr. Balter-Reitz announced structural changes to eLearning which will shift its function and focus to being a resource for professional development to promote faculty success. Student D2L support will still be provided in partnership with the Academic Success Center.

Framework for Poverty/ Bridges Out of Poverty:

Vice Chancellor of Student Access and Success Dr. Hayworth is working with certified trainer Sara Whittle to provide "Framework for Poverty" training workshops for faculty, staff, and resident assistants this summer and fall. Workshops can be hybrid, online and in person.

Legislative Update:

Director of University Communications and Marketing Maureen Brakke provided the Legislative update. She announced that no bills have been introduced that would result in a reduction of funding for the university. HB102 to allow firearms on campus at certain events is moving forward but as Dr. Jennifer Lynn announced, the Board of Regents heard MUSFAR'S concerns and agreed to challenge the bill's constitutionality.

Policy Creation and Shared Governance:

The group discussed the best avenue for shared governance for policy approvals on campus. Shared governance groups to consider are Academic Senate, FACC (for any change that would impact the Collective Bargaining Agreement) Staff Senate, MTFCA and MSUFAR. It was agreed that Cabinet should function as a policy-making body which could report to the UEC. Dr. Hayworth pointed out the importance of input from subject-specific parties, the Cabinet, and a campus leadership group.

Provost Search Committee Update:

Maureen Brakke reported that the search committee has identified finalists for the provost position and search Chair Dr. Cheri Johannes is in the process of contacting them and inviting them to campus. Additionally, an interim dean for the College of Business (COB) has been selected and will be announced if approved by the COB Faculty.

Meeting concluded at 4:00 pm.

Notes by Natalie Preston, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor