



**Chancellor's Cabinet Meeting Minutes
August 31, 2021**

Present: Maureen Brakke, Chancellor Stefani Hicswa, Susan Simmers, Kathy Kotecki, Joann Stryker, Michael Bazemore, Dr. Jennifer Lynn, Dr. Kim Hayworth, Brett Weisz, and Natalie Preston

Absent: Provost Sep Eskandari (due to OCHE meeting conflict)

Meeting (held in person) began at 2:00 pm.

Cabinet Retreat Debrief:

Chancellor Hicswa asked for thoughts following the August 16th and 17th Cabinet Retreat. The consensus from the group was that the retreat increased the sense of teamwork, unity, and positive changes going forward. Cabinet members also expressed appreciation to Dr. Hicswa for confronting difficult issues in both the retreat and State of the University Address (August 26th).

MSU Nursing Announcement:

A donor gave \$101 million to MSU Nursing. Although the donation is not specifically for MSUB, we may benefit through our partnership with MSU Nursing.

Budget:

Vice Chancellor Susan Simmers announced that for the second year of the biennium (FY23), we need to cut about 10% from the university budget. We can no longer hold current expenditures and continue to draw from reserves. The Budget Office will involve budget managers campus wide, create a rubric for making cuts, and involve the Budget Committee and 'Jacket Leadership Team. For FY 23, COVID relief money is not expected, nor is an increase in enrollment. Instead, we will reset our spending for our size and focus on retention and graduation.

100th Anniversary:

Dr. Jennifer Lynn is working with the history department to write a history of MSUB scheduled to be completed by the university's 100th anniversary in 2027. Maureen Brakke's team in University Communications and Marketing will research celebrations held for the 50th and 75th Anniversaries and plan events.

COVID Update:

The next COVID Town Hall will be this Thursday, September 2nd at 3:00 pm. The focus will be to give the campus community time to ask questions after the brief agenda of statistical updates

and campus strategies. A campus-wide mask mandate is complicated and would require support at multiple levels, including the county. Dr. Jennifer Lynn announced that the Faculty are collectively in favor of a mask mandate on campus. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is available and can be requested via the link on the COVID Central Page on the MSUB website, or through the Qualtrics form provided via email by Morgan Prevost, the COVID Task Force Staff Representative.

Update on HB257 (mask mandates) and HB702 (vaccination status):

House Bill 257 strips the power of local government entities to mandate mask wearing, and House Bill 702 prohibits discrimination based on vaccination status and protects individuals from being compelled to prove vaccination status.

Update on HB102 (allowance of firearms on campus):

Since the Board of Regents challenged the constitutionality of HB102, the current policy that firearms are not allowed on campus remains in place. MSUB sent a notice regarding the current status of HB102 in relation to campus to parents.

Calendar of Events:

- New Yellowstone Science & Health building ribbon cutting Ceremony is at 4pm-7pm on **September 7**. All are invited to attend.
- New student BBQ is at 5:30pm on **September 7**.
- First day of fall semester is **September 8**.
- 20th Anniversary of Sept. 11 Remembrance Ceremony will be at City College outside at the 9/11 memorial. Saturday, **Sept. 11 at 8:46am**.
- MSUB's Powwow is **September 17** on Cisel Field.

So far, no fall events have been canceled. There is a COVID mitigation plan in place for the September 25th Wine and Food Festival at the Metra Park.

Departmental Reports:

Brett Weisz: CIO Brett Weisz reported that this is a record year for new faculty and staff, and equipment purchases have more costly because of shortages and price increases due to COVID.

Michael Bazemore: Athletic Director Michael Bazemore is navigating legislation related to COVID vaccinations as it applies to athletes, and alcohol sales at games and tailgating.

Joann Stryker: Director of Institutional Research Joann Stryker announced that there are a few reporting cycles upcoming from which she will obtain valuable metrics. E-learning will be reporting at the Board of Regents meeting in September, and OCHE has adjusted the metrics by which they define online vs. hybrid classes which will affect some on-campus statistics.

Dr. Jennifer Lynn: Faculty Senate Chair Dr. Jennifer Lynn thanked the Chancellor and Provost on behalf of the faculty for attending the Academic Senate meeting and for being an engaged participant. The Center for Teaching and Learning hosted New Faculty Orientation, at which Dr. Lynn observed a sense of camaraderie.

Susan Simmers: In the office of the Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance, Leslie Weldon began as Project Manager of the Administration Division. She is working to organize all campus policies and procedures into one centralized document that is organized in a format similar to that of MSU Bozeman and is easily accessible. This project will be presented at the next meeting of the 'Jacket Leadership Team. V.C. Simmers' office is also working to improve the flow of contract approval and create boilerplate language to avoid the need for frequent contract review by legal counsel. There is more mulching, weeding, and rock removal underway on university campus and at City College. Thanks to federal COVID relief funds, \$889,000.00 was forgiven from students' overdue accounts!

Dr. Kim Hayworth: Vice Chancellor Hayworth thanked the presenters from last week's "Know the Nest" event, which was very successful. She announced that New Student Services is working hard on fall enrollment, holding "pop up" registration events, and a group advising session on Friday. Educational Talent Search received their grant funding for 5 years (\$1.6 million) and is working to hire a middle school advisor. As of Monday's enrollment report, MSUB's overall headcount is 3.1 % higher than the same number of days until census in 2020.

Kathy Kotecki: Dean of Students Kathy Kotecki reported that as of Monday there were 368 students registered to reside on campus, which exceeds the number of residents needed to meet Sodexo's budget requirement. The number is expected to increase before classes begin. MSUB has partnered with local childcare center, Cradles to Crayons, to benefit from the Department of Education's Child Care Access Means Parents in School Grant (CCAMPIS). The grant provides financial assistance for childcare to low-income students. Ms. Kotecki also announced that students will be moving into the residence halls on Sunday September 5th. Campus and community partners can sign up to help with the "Movers and Shakers" event, and there are more Welcome Week activities through the weekend and until classes begin September 8th.

Maureen Brakke: University Communications and Marketing Director Maureen Brakke announced that her office is receiving an increased number of press release requests, signaling that there are many activities and accomplishments on campus to celebrate and publicize. Q2 News recently spotlighted MSUB's International Studies program, and the Billings Gazette will feature a Yellowstone Science and Health Building insert starting September 12th. UCAM rolled out the new branding guide, 2021-22 Viewbooks for University Campus and City College, and the "Be U @ MSUB" campaign components. The weekly @The Hive newsletter will feature an "In the News" section highlighting MSUB press coverage.

Meeting adjourned at 3:08 pm.

Minutes taken by Natalie Preston.