



**Chancellor's Cabinet Meeting Minutes  
February 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, Joe McGeshick, Krista Montague, and Natalie Preston

**Guests:** Interim Police Chief Brandon Gatlin, COVID Incident Commander David Nordel

Meeting began at 2:00 pm.

**R.O.T.C. Training Exercise Request:**

Interim Police Chief Brandon Gatlin briefed the group on the request for R.O.T.C. to conduct training exercises on campus. Captain Cahle Clampitt requested that R.O.T.C. cadets be allowed on campus where they can take advantage of its even terrain. This will fulfill an accreditation requirement for cadets and could serve as a recruiting tool. Per Dr. Kim Hayworth and Interim Chief Gatlin, this will be allowed provided that Captain Clampitt agrees to the responsibilities of R.O.T.C. in writing, including boundary set-up, signage and communication. Interim Chief Gatlin will report the approval and requirements from the Cabinet to Captain Clampitt.

**Chancellor's Opening Remarks:**

Chancellor Hicswa asked the group to be thinking of their intentions for students.

Interim Provost Dr. Sue Balter-Reitz gave an example about one of her international students and concluded that her intentional thinking is for her students to learn to help themselves and use the resources available to them.

Maureen Brakke shared a story about overhearing a conversation between a prospective student and family member and her hopes that the student finds their home at MSUB.

Chancellor Hicswa concluded that the power of intention is real; what we think about often manifests.

**Announcements:**

Upcoming events:

2/22- 2/28 Yellowjacket Athletics Auction

Krista Montague shared that the link is live on the website, the auction closes Friday night, and please share with friends and family. Funds raised have reached \$5,000, the goal is \$10,000.

2/23 Faculty Excellence virtual ceremony

2/24- 2/25 Virtual Internship and Career Fair

Dr. Sue Balter-Reitz announced that more students than usual signed up for this year's Internship and Career Fair because of new virtual format, so this online format may be continued in the future.

2/24- 2/25 COVID-19 Survivor Lunch and Learn Series

2/25 Legislative Videoconference

2/25 COVID-19 Town Hall

2/26- 2/27 Women's Basketball vs. Northwest Nazarene University

3/4- Special Town Hall Meeting to address Budget Updates

### **COVID-19 Update:**

COVID-19 Incident Commander Dave Nordel spoke about the creation of the COVID-19 response team and that its initial goal was to keep students safely in class. As the situation evolved, new processes were created such as Athletics making a way for athletes to participate safely in competition. Other groups can use Athletics as an example of how to create and follow a COVID-safe activity plan. Mr. Nordel summarized the goal of the Incident Command Team as working to be 1) respectful, 2) empathetic, and 3) finding a way to say "yes" and do so safely. He attributed the successes of the team and campus to the changes everyone has made in their behavior.

Joe McGeshick proposed September 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> as the dates for the postponed annual Pow Wow. MSU Bozeman will be holding Pow Wow this spring, which may provide a model for a safe event.

Chancellor Hicswa announced that having a live Commencement ceremony is a priority, though details have yet to be determined and final decisions have not been made.

Dr. Hicswa also serves on a policy committee working on the "Back to Work" plan. She reminded the group that while a staff rotation plan has been in place, supervisors need to be sure that offices are appropriately staffed for customer service and taking care of students.

### **Board of Regents New Members:**

Chancellor Hicswa announced the newly confirmed members of the Board of Regents are MSUB alumnus Todd Buchanan, Loren Bough, and MSUB Senior Amy Sexton was appointed student regent through this year.

### **'Jacket Giving Day:**

MSUB Foundation President Bill Kennedy announced that 'Jacket Giving Day has raised over \$108,000 so far, and donations are still incoming. Last year's donation total was \$118,000, so we are hoping to surpass that amount. Women's Soccer collected the most donations so far, totaling over \$3000.00.

**Legislative Update:** Director of University Communications and Marketing Maureen Brakke provided the Legislative Update.

### **Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center:**

Tribal Liaison Joe McGeshick announced that the Billings Urban Indian Health and Wellness Center is offering free COVID-19 testing and vaccination which is available to anyone.

### **Finishing Trades Institute:**

Dr. Hicswa informed the group on the provision of public funding for a Finishing Trades Institute, which President Cruzado is also monitoring. This is a construction trade center that operates for profit and would affect MSUB trades programs as it may split public funding away from institutions like MSUB. Dr. Balter-Reitz found out that these companies offer dual credit but are unaccredited. MSUB opposes the provision of public funding strongly.

**Traffic Light Easement:**

Susan Simmers is working with Facilities on the traffic light easement for the corner of Rimrock Road and Virginia Lane. Her team is reviewing the lease and looking to map area where easement will be to be sure it does not encroach on MSUB property so much as to detriment future development. The easement needs to be approved by the Board of Regents, which is expected, and though MSUB must protect its property, the traffic light is necessary for safety.

**Processes Efficiencies:**

Chief Information Officer Brett Weisz spoke of the “paradox of technology” which is that while technology is great driver of efficiency, we are often very inefficient as we struggle to learn how to use it. On this note, he asked every department to make I.T. a strategic partner in achieving its goals. He offered to visit any department who requests it and discuss what systems and software they may need to make their department run more effectively.

**Enrollment Update:**

Dr. Hicswa explained that MSUB is working with Ruffalo Noel Levitz consultants on some of the factors expected to affect enrollment in future years. Examples include an increase in kindergarten class sizes, and seventh grade class sizes. However, she remarked that regional universities will be competing for the same students, and due to all universities honing their effectiveness at recruitment, retention, and marketing, larger classes do not mean we can plan for increased enrollment. Instead, we must plan strategically, which Vice Chancellor for Student Access and Success Dr. Kim Hayworth is doing in her enrollment planning.

Dr. Hayworth also spoke about MSUB’s partnership with “Become an Alum” job service of Billings which supports prospective students who want to return to college to finish their degrees. This spring MSUB enrolled five or six of these students and expect more to re-enroll in upcoming semesters.

Dr. Hicswa spoke of City College’s work to re-enroll or enroll transfer students. Dr. Richard Beer, Interim Dean of the College of Business has made progress in attracting transfer students from community colleges across the state of Wyoming. MSUB’s offering of online degrees and Hi-Flex makes us a good fit for many community college transfer students to complete four year degrees.

**Budget Update:**

Susan Simmers updated the group on the work of the Budget Office and Advisory Committee as they “reset” for FY22 and FY23 because of COVID-19 related budget cuts, and additional but COVID-specific funding of FY21. Based on progress made by the Budget Office and Advisory Committee, budget managers campus-wide will be more autonomous and accountable and better equipped to manage budgets going forward.

**Closing Discussion:**

Chancellor Hicswa asked the group to consider the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, and what changes were made during it that we may want to continue going forward. The consensus of the group was that COVID-19 increased our collective attention to well-being and self-care and opened up possibilities through technology such as teleworking which may open our hiring pool and increase how many students can be reached virtually.

Meeting concluded at 4:00 pm.

Minutes taken by Natalie Preston, Executive Assistant to the Chancellor