



Chancellor's Cabinet Meeting Minutes

April 2, 2024 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

In Attendance: Chancellor Stefani Hicswa, Paula Highlander, Kathleen Thatcher, Brandon Irby, Kathy Kotecki, Kim Hayworth, Mike Bazemore, Natalie Preston, and Leslie Weldon

Absent: Sep Eskandari, Krista Montague, Jennifer Lynn

Meeting began at 2:00 p.m.

Chancellor Hicswa led discussion on the reported threat to campus security that occurred earlier in the day. Information was clarified during the discussion. The events occurred in the following order:

- University Police received a report that a student had made threats online of committing a shooting.
- Both campuses went into lockdown and secured in place.
- A notification was sent which included an inadvertent pre-recorded “shots fired” voice message over university phones.
- A clarification was issued that shots had not been fired.
- The suspect was located and detained off campus by Billings Police. In their investigation the evidence showed that there was no threat.
- An all-clear was issued within 68 minutes.

Chancellor Hicswa expressed appreciation for the feedback she has received and thanked the Incident Response team.

FY 24 Budget

Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance Leslie Weldon provided an overview of the FY 24 budget. There is an expected \$350,000 shortfall which is why employees and faculty were asked to restrict travel for the remainder of the year.

FY 25 Budget

Vice Chancellor Weldon reported the work being done to determine the FY25 budget and expressed her appreciation for the hard work budget managers have done to reduce spending authority.

Facilities Updates

Vice Chancellor Weldon announced that Facilities Director Justin Rife will continue weekly updates on the progress being made on the many projects ongoing on campus. State A and E

are moving things forward but are behind the expected schedule. The Business Services Department, Mailroom, and storage spaces will be impacted by work planned for the administration building, so alternate space options are being explored.

Retention Summit

Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Sep Eskandari reported that everyone is making progress to the many initiatives of the Retention and Graduation Plan. Due to its many aspects, the team may decide to narrow its focus to certain aspects of the plan in the upcoming months.

First Day Complete

The feedback received from faculty about First Day Complete is appreciated. The implementation is planned for Fall 2025, but more input will be forthcoming from faculty who prefer that the implementation align with the Learning Management System change.

Cyber Security Training

Cybersecurity risks pose a constant and credible threat. MSU IT staff are still working through what happened last April. Remind staff that they must complete the annual required training.

Commencement

Commencement will be held on May 4 at the Metra. Discussion followed about options for celebrating December graduates.

Department Updates:

Kim Hayworth

ASMSUB elections are today. Darla, Jerry, and Kelsey from the counseling center in Student Health Services will be offering the “Unsilencing Grief and Loss” workshop next week for faculty, staff, and students.

MSUB achieved military designation gold status and military spouse friendly designation as well.

The Student Leadership Awards are on Wednesday to recognize students’ achievement in and out of the classroom.

Pow Wow will be held in the gym this Friday and Saturday.

Regarding the new FAFSA, Financial Aid started to download the ISRs but the government has discovered another error in tax info integration and also announced delay in Gainful Employment reporting.

Kathy Kotecki

Kathy reported that she is working on hiring a new associate dean of students, residence hall director, and that Darla Tyler-McSherry announced her retirement. The summer calendar is already full of events being hosted on campus.

Paula Highlander

The Human Resources office is preparing performance review cycle documents for supervisors. It is not too late for stay interviews to be conducted.

Kathleen Thatcher

Kathleen is working on the PRFR and thanked Cabinet members for submitting the resumes she requested. She reminded everyone that art accreditors will be on campus next Tuesday through Thursday.

Mike Bazemore

The Chi Alpha Sigma Induction ceremony was postponed to be incorporated into the Buzzies Awards on April 15.

The Softball series starts Thursday.

The Baseball team has a bye week, and track and field athletes are traveling.

He has hired a men's soccer coach and posted the men's basketball coaching position.

Stefani Hicswa

Chancellor Hicswa announced that she has selected the book *Deliberate Calm* for the Cabinet Retreat reading. It is geared toward CEOs but has material that will apply to all Cabinet members.

Meeting ended at 4:04 p.m.

Notes by Natalie Preston