

*Board of Regents
Office of the Executive Director
and Corporate Secretary*

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August 15, 2014

TO: Members of the Regent Candidate Advisory Council Selection Criteria Committee

FROM: Brian R. Steeves, Executive Director & Corporate Secretary



RE: *Thoughts on Regent Selection Criteria*

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input as you develop criteria for selecting candidates to serve on the Board of Regents. Your work is important and the time you devote to this process is greatly appreciated.

This is a pivotal time in higher education. Funding constraints coupled with a strong desire to maintain affordability have led universities to place greater emphasis on efficiency – despite increasing cost pressures associated with attracting and retaining talented students, faculty, and staff while also providing needed facilities, technology, and support services. Add to this demographic and technology trends that challenge traditional enrollment models, dramatic health care changes that impact health sciences education, increasing competition for scarce research funding, and the national dialogue about the future of intercollegiate athletics – and it becomes clear why some governing boards have struggled in recent years.

Fortunately, the University of Minnesota Board of Regents has avoided the pitfalls experienced by some governing boards in other parts of the country. It has worked hard to develop and sustain a strong culture of engagement, transparency, and effective governance.

Over the next year a new strategic plan for the Twin Cities campus will begin to be implemented, the University will continue to strengthen the health sciences, and the Board and administration will further their commitment to operational excellence. All of these initiatives will require careful consideration and strong leadership.

To ensure success, higher education governing boards benefit from having individuals who:

- Understand and embrace the role and collaborative culture of a governing board.
- Tend the mission and guiding principles of the college or university, while also defining a direction for the future.
- Strategically analyze choices presented to the governing board – both their short-term impact as well as the long-term implications they may have.
- Grasp the dual role of a higher education board, which is to strengthen and sustain the president, while also serving as an engaged, probing and critical eye.
- Are willing to work in the best interest of an entire university system, leaving parochial interests behind.

August 15, 2014

Page 2

- Bring constructive passion and energy with the ability to commit the time necessary to be effective in their role.
- Recognize and adhere to the highest ethical standards, free from conflicts of interest that would impair their ability to be effective.

Regent Linda Cohen and I look forward to addressing you at the Regent Candidate Advisory Council meeting on Thursday, September 4. The Office of the Board of Regents welcomes the opportunity to provide any information or assistance you require in the months ahead. Please do not hesitate to contact my staff or me.

Attachments:

Board of Regents Policy: *Responsibilities of the Board and Individual Regents*

Board of Regents Policy: *Code of Ethics for Members of the Board of Regents*

c. Members of the Board of Regents