

Minutes of the Called Session of the Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky on Friday, May 31, 1963, at 11:00 a. m., Eastern Standard Time.

The Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky met in a called session in the President's Office on the campus of the University at 11:00 a. m. on Friday, May 31, 1963, with the following members present: Governor Bert T. Combs, Chairman, Dr. Ralph Angelucci, Vice Chairman, Mr. Robert Hillenmeyer, Mr. Sam Ezelle, Mr. Gilbert Kingsbury, Mr. Floyd Wright, Dr. H. B. Murray, Dr. R. W. Bushart, Mr. Clifford E. Smith, Mr. Wendell P. Butler, Dr. Harry Denham, Judge J. A. Sutherland, Secretary, and Dr. Aubrey Brown and Dr. Lewis Cochran, non-voting faculty members. Members absent were Mr. Smith Broadbent, Mr. W. F. Foster, and Mr. Emerson Beauchamp. Dr. Frank G. Dickey, president of the University, was also present.

A. Report of Presidential Screening Committee Heard.

Governor Combs opened the meeting with the statement that this special session of the Board of Trustees had been called for the purpose of considering the selection of a president of the University of Kentucky to succeed President Dickey whose resignation becomes effective July 1, 1963. He indicated that the Screening Committee had completed its work and asked Dr. Angelucci, chairman of the committee, to present its report.

Dr. Angelucci read the following report:

REPORT ON SCREENING COMMITTEE WORK

"Perhaps, the scope of the Committee's work since last fall can best be described by pointing out that its nine members have traveled more than 50,000 miles in seeking a new president for the University.

"Those travels have taken the members from points as far east as New York, New Jersey and Washington to points as far west as Oklahoma, Nebraska and Colorado.

"In addition, we have conferred by 'phone with persons in California and Alabama. We also have done much work in Kentucky, looking into prospects in many parts of the commonwealth, including our own campus.

"It has been gratifying to receive the advice and counsel of literally hundreds of citizens, in and out of the state, who have a deep and dedicated interest in the progress and growth of the University.

"Nominations have come from men who themselves have been under consideration, another development indicating admiration and respect for the work of the University and a desire to see its program continued and expanded.

"Our work began when the Committee received approximately 150 names, each of which received consideration. In addition, in order to guide us the Committee drafted and sent to you a brief resume on the type of man we sought to conduct the affairs of our school during the next decade. After considering the names submitted, we called into conference several persons from outside the University family and sought their advice. Some visited us, others conferred by phone. In addition, our members went to other schools and conferred with other University presidents and executives.

"The work was both arduous and interesting. At times it was discouraging. For example, we would come upon a nominee who seemed to fit the outline we had drafted. We would then find that the nominee was engrossed in a satisfying program of research and had no desire to abandon his career for administrative problems.

"On one occasion we visited a high ranking federal official in Washington. He expressed an interest in the presidency but had pledged to stay with President Kennedy until certain pressing problems were solved.

"On another occasion we contacted members of the White House staff and they, too, expressed regret. Several expressed a wish to be considered should the vacancy not be filled within a year.

"One excellent nominee was involved in a development program within his own school and could not consider a change until those obligations had been discharged.

"Still another nominee expected shortly to be promoted to the presidency of his own institution and, therefore, suggested that he not be considered further.

"In this connection it is interesting -- and pleasant -- to note the loyalty of the alumni of the state colleges in Kentucky. Those presidents had been nominated and in a great number of cases, alumni of those schools voiced an appreciation of their president and expressed the hope that he would remain at this present post to continue his work. Kentuckians, we firmly believe, are becoming increasingly aware of the need for progress on all levels in the field of higher education in the commonwealth.

"In each interview -- and there were many -- we outlined the problems of the University in detail, the need, perhaps, of reorganization, the salary problem, the growing student body, the emphasis on graduate study, the problem of research and the many other matters certain to face the new president.

"It was interesting to learn that the problems of the University of Kentucky differed only in detail from the problems of other schools and colleges. Those with whom we talked appeared familiar with what we might have thought to be University of Kentucky problems only.

"We also sought advice on the relative merits of a president with a small college background as opposed to one coming from an executive position within a larger university. We find merits on both sides.

"While a dean from a college within a university might have an awareness of university administration, the president of a small college had to provide the ultimate answer. To put it bluntly, the small college president could not pass the buck.

"After these discussions, the Committee concluded that it was the man and not his most immediate experience that counted. During many of these sessions with advisors and nominees, it was evident that the progress of the University had attracted wide attention in academic circles.

"The more stringent admission requirements were mentioned by several. The higher standards demanded to maintain residency were also lauded. The strengthening of the graduate program had also attracted wide comment. The growth of the physical plant brought other comments. The employment of a master planner and competent architectural and engineering firms was another factor praised by visitors.

"One visitor, not a nominee, expressed the belief that the University of Kentucky would soon lead all southern schools in academic excellence. He placed Kentucky in the same category with schools now considered to be great and those about to enter that company.

"The work of University graduates in the academic world and the professional world was mentioned by several and the University received just credit for the undergraduate or graduate training and inspiration.

"To get back to list of nominees. They came from all the academic disciplines and from all sections of the nation. We received the listings of those who had been considered for the presidency of other institutions and, for one reason or another, had not been invited or had refused the invitation.

"Those selected elsewhere were invited because they had a particular talent needed in that special situation. Without attempting to sit in judgment on other Screening Committees, we felt that, perhaps, their choice had not been the best and the man we had under consideration would have been the better. All the above discussion took many months. The Committee met at least once a week and, in more recent days, at least several times a week. While the majority of the sessions were held in Lexington, we did gather elsewhere to meet with candidates. We traveled by private plane, commercial airlines, automobile, train and even bus. During the stormy days of the past winter, some of our members had numerous delays and a few hazards.

"Some may have felt that the processes have been unduly long. However, Indiana required two years before it finally selected a University of Kentucky graduate. Other colleges and universities required a longer time. We have found in checking the experiences of others, that the situation at the University of Kentucky is average. The selection of a University president is not something to be accomplished within a week or two if the duties are to be properly discharged.

"As you know, the Screening Committee was composed of members of the Board of Trustees and the faculty. For both groups it was an enjoyable experience and we came to know and admire one another. Each member made a contribution and our differences, though slight, were discussed in an atmosphere of good will guided only by dedication to the future of the University of Kentucky and the commonwealth. Each member felt that he would have no greater responsibility in his lifetime than the task at hand.

"One aspect of our work should not go without comment. During these past months, many of you have read in the press or heard on the air that a president had been selected. How and where some of the reports originated remains a mystery to us. However, we do want to thank the Board for its patience and for taking the rumors at their minimum value.

"Fortunately, no harm was done although several fine nominees may have been embarrassed. On the other hand, we have been assured by them that it was an honor to be considered for the high position.

"In concluding this report, we want to thank the members of the Board for their attitude. Not once have we been subjected to political pressure, not once have undue demands been made. The advice and counsel given to each of us has been given and received with the full knowledge that all of us are working toward the same goal, a great University president, for a great University in a great and growing state.

"The recommendation which the Screening Committee now makes to the Board of Trustees of the University of Kentucky is made with the deepest sense of responsibility as defined in the utmost dedication to the stated aims and objectives of our University. In making our recommendation we believe that we are saying to the Board of Trustees that here is the name of a man of exceedingly high quality who can lead our University into its next stage of realizing the dream of excellence of higher education in the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

"The Screening Committee unanimously recommend Dr. John W. Oswald be invited to become the president of the University of Kentucky."

Mr. Floyd Wright made the motion to nominate Dr. John W. Oswald as president of the University of Kentucky. Governor Combs expressed the thanks of members of the Board to members of the Screening Committee and then called for a second to Mr. Wright's motion. Dr. Aubrey Brown seconded the motion, stating that those on the faculty felt he would make a great president. Dr. Lewis Cochran joined in seconding the motion and expressed his pleasure at Dr. Oswald's selection. On roll call vote by Governor Combs, the following persons voted aye: Dr. Angelucci, Dr. Murray, Dr. Bushart, Mr. Smith, Dr. Denham, Mr. Wright, Mr. Butler, Mr. Kingsbury, Mr. Ezelle, Mr. Hillenmeyer, Governor Combs, and Judge Sutherland.

B. Dr. Albright Named Acting President

Governor Combs indicated that, since it would not be possible for Dr. Oswald to assume his position until August or September, it would be necessary for the University to have someone serve as its chief executive officer after Dr. Dickey's departure and before Dr. Oswald's arrival. Mr. Smith made the following motion:

Mr. Chairman, we have a man who has rendered a very valuable service as Executive Vice President of the University in the person of Dr. A. D. Albright. Dr. Albright is a very outstanding man in the field of education and administration and I would like to move that Dr. Albright be named as the acting or interim president with the full power to act, to perform all acts, that the president would act until Dr. Oswald is ready to assume the duties as president. I think we are indeed fortunate that we have a man of Dr. Albright's character and qualifications to fill that bill and I think that Dr. Albright has rendered a very fine and outstanding service to the University of Kentucky. So it is my pleasure to make that motion.

Mr. Ezelle seconded the motion. Governor Combs indicated that he had a letter from Dr. Albright which he read to the Board.

May 31, 1963

The Honorable Bert T. Combs
Chairman, Board of Trustees
University of Kentucky
Lexington, Kentucky

Dear Mr. Combs:

The Board of Trustees is to be commended highly and unreservedly in the selection of Dr. John Oswald as president of the University of Kentucky.

Dr. Oswald is a most outstanding and able man. His leadership will brighten the prospects of future advancements for this institution.

I know all of us here and throughout the Commonwealth will assist fully in generating the human and material support essential to the fulfillment of the University's mission in the days ahead.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)

A. D. Albright
Executive Vice President

Governor Combs expressed the feeling that Dr. Albright was the logical person to serve as chief executive officer of the University during the interim period. There being no further discussion, a vote was called for on Mr. Smith's motion and the following persons voted aye: Mr. Hillenmeyer, Mr. Ezelle, Mr. Butler, Mr. Wright, Dr. Denham, Mr. Smith, Dr. Bushart, Dr. Murray, Dr. Angelucci, Governor Combs, and Judge Sutherland.

C. Salary for Dr. Oswald

In answer to a question from a member of the press, Mr. Kingsbury, spokesman for the Board, indicated that Dr. Oswald would receive a salary of \$30,000. In addition, he would receive those fringe benefits already approved for President Dickey and perhaps others might develop after further discussion with Dr. Oswald.

D. Dr. Oswald to Assume Duties Not Later than September.

Governor Combs stated that he had talked with Dr. Oswald by telephone at the suggestion of the Board and in its presence and Dr. Oswald had accepted the position as president of the University of Kentucky effective not later than September.

Mr. Kingsbury indicated that Dr. Oswald would be in Kentucky on the ninth and tenth of June and that the Board would attempt to arrange a public reception for him at that time.

E. Meeting Adjourned

There being no further business to come before the Board at this special session, Governor Combs adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James A. Sutherland
Secretary