

Minutes of the  
**NIU Board of Trustees**  
**LEGISLATION, AUDIT AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING**  
March 3, 2011

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cheryl Murer at 11:30 a.m. in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Sharon Banks-Wilkins conducted a roll call of Trustees. Members present were Trustees John Butler, Barbara Giorgi Vella, Student Trustee Robert Sorsby, Chair Cheryl Murer and BOT Chair Marc Strauss. Not present was Trustees Manuel Sanchez and Myron Siegel. Also present were President John Peters, Committee Liaison Kathryn Buettner and Acting Board Parliamentarian Gregory Brady.

**VERIFICATION OF APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**

Confirmation of Open Meetings Act public notice compliance was given by Acting Parliamentarian Gregory Brady.

**MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL**

Trustee Strauss made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Student Trustee Sorsby. The motion was approved.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Trustee Vella and seconded by Trustee Strauss to approve the minutes of the November 11, 2010 meeting. The motion was approved.

**CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Chair Murer welcomed University Advisory Committee representatives Jay Monteiro, President of the Operating Staff Council, and Todd Latham, President of the Supportive Professional Staff Council. We are greatly concerned about some of the actions being discussed before the General Assembly and how that might impact our university, Mr. Latham commented.

It is very nice to see all of you this morning for our first committee meeting of the calendar year, the Chair said. Many things have occurred since we met in November. I am happy to say that we won the Humanitarian Bowl in Boise, Idaho, a stupendous event. We attracted a new football coach to take our program to even higher levels. Our new research vice president, Dr. Lisa Freeman, was named by Governor Quinn to a new prestigious Illinois Innovation Council led by Groupon co-founder Brad Keywell. The council will promote the role and importance of innovation and economic development and quality of life; convene and partner with academic, business and governments to evaluate and recommend initiatives to improve support for innovation; and align public and private resources.

As we all remember, our good friend and former General Counsel, Mr. Ken Davidson, retired, and the Board is poised to approve a new Vice President and General Counsel, Mr. Jerry Blakemore, at our meeting in a few weeks. The NIU accountancy program, which has always been heralded, continues to be ranked in the top 10 in the country. That is outstanding and a special recognition of our College of Business. The students now can utilize the Blackboard academic course module that was demonstrated for us at our last committee meeting. We are a pioneer in the interface with smartphones. That way, students can access assignments and coursework necessary for their studies. The blackboard system is the most heavily used ITS product among NIU students, exceeding Facebook usage.

I am happy that in this committee we have continued to emphasize the element of external affairs, not only the legislative and audit. I continue to be impressed with what we are doing and with how we get the word out. It is no secret that I love our billboards, and some of the things that were discussed today, some of our accomplishments, are food for such representation on billboards. At the Red and Black last Saturday night, under the auspices of the Foundation, we heard an extraordinary presentation by our steel band. I left my seat, walked over to Kathy Buettner, who was sitting at our table, and said "Take a picture of that, that's a billboard." What we are seeing now through this committee is that marketing is not some thing over here adjunct to; it is integrated within. Everything we do needs to be communicated, and communication is very much involved with marketing. So all of these things are coming together in a positive way for the university.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Chair asked Acting Board Parliamentarian Gregory Brady if any members of the public had registered a written request to address the Board in accordance with state law and Board of Trustees *Bylaws*. Mr. Brady noted that he had not received any timely requests to address this meeting.

#### **UNIVERSITY REPORT**

##### **Agenda Item 7.a. – Bringing NIU Policies/Regulations into Compliance with Public Act No. 96-1513**

During the past several committee meetings, we have discussed and then reported at the Board of Trustees meetings, our progress relative to addressing the issues and needs of domestic partnership. As I noted when we last met, when the General Assembly passed and the Governor signed into law, the Religious Freedom and Civil Union Act that legalized civil unions within the state of Illinois, that made things a lot easier in terms of the obstacles we had identified procedurally and operationally to achieve an end that we all agreed was very positive. In light of that, Vice President for Human Resources and Compliance, Dr. Steve Cunningham, will again address us on this issue and bring us the necessary background and next steps. One of the next steps will be to bring it back to the Committee where we will begin the endorsement and approval processes to successfully conclude this discussion.

As the Chair indicated, we have been discussing the policy framework and history of domestic partner benefits and other related policies with this committee for sometime, and now there has been a game changer. In our discussion in November, we brought up the fact that the civil union statute had some probability of success and that has passed. A brief summary of the contents of the new public act are fairly well described in the agenda item. The main thing is that this new statute has the effect of clarifying eligibility and procedures for domestic partners and civil union relationships, so we now have a legal definition we can work from. The Illinois Religious Freedom, Protection and Civil Union Act was passed by the General Assembly on December 17, 2010 and signed by the Governor. It is effective June 1, 2011. The act defines a civil union as a legal relationship between two persons of the same or opposite sex. The act also provides that a party to a civil union shall be entitled to the same legal obligations, responsibilities, protections, benefits afforded and recognized by the same laws of Illinois for spouses. So it very closely equates civil unions with marital relationships.

Implementing regulations will be coming from the Illinois Department of Public Health now. They will involve licensures and certifications for civil unions. That will necessitate a change in our domestic partner policies and procedures and related Board *Regulations*. We discussed these at the last meeting on November 12, and generally the same body of regulations will be included in our next review. We will be bringing recommendations to the committee at the next meeting that indicate the effect of this new statute on those regulations. This new statute clarifies qualification for State of Illinois provided benefits, such as the health and life insurance programs, and especially survivor benefits under the State Universities Retirement System. During the interim, we will be consulting with internal areas of the university that have responsibility for different aspects of this benefit as well as constituencies in our preparation for recommendations at the next meeting.

Obviously, the particular legislation that you are talking about was something that I was very happy to see passed, Trustee Butler commented. I do not want to imply that I think this is not a major step forward, but I began to read the legislation and think of its implications for our discussions. There are some remaining

issues that we may want to contend with if we truly want to make policy changes once and for all and not have to continually come back to this issue. The main issue that I see in where we might go from here is that if we replace the term “domestic partner” with “civil union,” which is what one has to do to become party to a civil union, is very clearly prescribed in law. If we do that, we will actually produce the net effect of excluding from coverage, in some cases, people who are currently included. By this I mean people who recognize themselves in a domestic partnership, either same or opposite sex, who do not wish to enter into a legally recognized union. Currently we provide coverage to those individuals in a number of ways which we have discussed. What will happen to them? Will we produce a new standard that they must meet? If that is the will of the Board, so be it. Or will we create some sort of nuanced way in which we still recognize the existence of these types of relationships for particular purposes such as bereavement leave and so forth, or to be competitive or what have you, and simultaneously, have this new distinction, which we are now obligated to have?

Your point is well taken, Chair Murer said, and this is something Dr. Cunningham can investigate. But the issue we were struggling with was that of definition, and since we have a definition, we need to be very attentive to it. There are always means of grandfathering people who are in a process already so that they are not hurt. But I would be cautious to expand the definition beyond the scope of what the law has established. That is something I would ask Dr. Cunningham to take into consideration as we continue our discussions. I want to be very cautious that we do not go beyond what the law has established while being sensitive to individuals, and grandfathering is a means. I am not saying it is “the” means, I am saying it is “a” means, to assure that people are not hurt.

Due to time constraints, the Chair asked that the agenda be adjusted so that the legislative reports follow the Intercollegiate Athletics Report and the University Branding and Marketing Report.

#### **Agenda Item 7.d. – Intercollegiate Athletics Report**

The first thing I want to call to your attention is the presidential statement that we are handing out Jeff Compher, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics said. Last year we went through an NCAA certification with Matt Streb chairing that group. Having been through four certifications, this is the first time I have ever been certified at any university without any conditions. It was recommended that we describe the institution’s written governance policies regarding the administration and oversight of the Athletics Program, and this statement provides that administrative oversight responsibilities. This document was recently edited by our Athletics Board and reviewed by my administration.

I would like to give you an overview of where we are in several areas as an Athletics Department. Every unit on our campus, at our university, has a mission statement, and our mission in Athletics is to develop champions in the classroom, in competition and in life. In the classroom, for 11 straight semesters, our teams have achieved a 3.0 GPA or better. We are very proud of this, we have set the bar, and it is something that is important for us to continue. Last year we graduated 89 student athletes. Our graduation success rate, which is a new measure adopted by the NCAA several years ago, is above the national average. Cal Knotek, who just graduated from our business school, was a second-time Academic All-American who had a perfect 4.0 while he was here. He is now playing professional soccer in Japan. And Kristin Hoffman is our first ever Academic All-American from volleyball. Nationally, our football team ranks well within the range of some of the Top Ten programs in the country academically with institutions such as Northwestern, Duke, Notre Dame, Stanford, Ohio State and Vanderbilt. This year, we were pretty excited about the fact that our volleyball team and our football team both played for a conference championship. Chad Spann won the Mid-American Conference Vern Smith Leadership Award, recognized as the league’s top offensive player as well. Chandler Harnish was the All-MAC First Team and was Humanitarian Bowl MVP. Lauren Wicinski, became NIU’s second only Competitive All-American. She is a freshman, so the future looks very bright for our volleyball team.

What we are doing in this community is really outstanding. In and around the DeKalb-Sycamore area our student athletes participate in five thousand hours of community service. In addition to that, we have partnered with the American Cancer Society, American Red Cross and Salvation Army to do at-event kinds of fundraising and promotional activities. Last year our teams participated in over 50 different community service projects from the boy Scouts to the YMCA to the Brownies. Going into schools and

speaking has been a wonderful experience for our student athletes, and they take a lot of pride in doing that.

Future events begin this weekend when we host the MAC Wrestling Championships. Later this spring, we are hosting the MAC Track and Field Championships, a wonderful two-day event, on our new track for the first time. Next fall, we are hosting an NCAA Cross Country Regional. We have one of the best cross country venues in the Midwest because you can see 80 percent of our course while standing in one spot, and that is a rarity. We will be heading to Soldier Field for the Soldier Field Showdown II against Wisconsin this fall on September 17, and the following year we will play Iowa there. We have two home events with Army and Kansas coming up this year and next year. In addition to that, we learned yesterday that our women's basketball team beat Ball state last night, and they will be hosting the first round of the MAC on Sunday night and will play Ohio. If you can, come out and support Kathy Bennett, our new coach, and that team which has really exceeded expectations.

Jerry Rich donated and helped fund a van that is neatly decaled and displayed for use by our Men's and Women's Golf Programs. The men just took it to Arizona and back. Our track and soccer complex and the Yordon Center have been upgraded. When the Yordon Center was originally developed, there was the idea of having an indoor practice facility attached to it. We are working with Dr. Williams, Mike Malone and Mallory Simpson to put together a plan to build this facility. It would be a 120 yard field that would be used year-round for all of our programs in our preparation for competition for everything from softball to soccer to football. It is a large structure, something that more than half of the schools in the MAC already have and something that we need to have as well as our program continues to develop.

In the last two years, we have hired five new coaches. Tom Porten is our new Men's Golf Coach; Eric Luzzi is our new Men's Soccer Coach; Patrick Fisher is our new Men's Tennis Coach; and Kathi Bennett, who I already mentioned, is our new Women's Basketball Coach; and our new football coach, who I will introduce in just a moment, is Dave Doeren. We have many media partners. Most of you know we have been on ESPN quite a bit lately, and our schedule this year lines up pretty well for us to be on ESPN several times. Our radio partners include WLBK, our local Home of the Huskies, and we are on 670, The SCOR. We have games on Comcast, and we have a multimedia rights partner in IMG that sells our sponsorships and does a lot of our promotional activities as well. We have three regular bowl partners and two secondary bowl partners in the MAC. I do not have dates of these bowls yet, but we should know by early May.

In the last four years, we have nearly doubled our contributions to HASF (Huskie Athletic Support Fund). Each year, we have worked very hard, and especially in these economic times, to see an increase in donors and an increase in dollars over that period is amazing. We have very faithful fans, and we are very appreciative of what they have done.

I want to now introduce our new Football Coach, Dave Doeren, who comes to us from Wisconsin. Dave is a 16-year veteran of being an assistant coach. He has been all over the country – USC and Drake, in many different capacities; Montana, where they won a national championship; Kansas; and Wisconsin. But what I really like about Dave is that he is a professional, he knows what it takes to win. He has been at winning programs and has developed winning programs. He is also a former Academic All-American at Drake and a wonderful leader for the next step of our program.

It is a great pleasure to be here today, Coach Doeren began. This is an impressive building, and it is the first time I have been in it. I like to run, so now that the snow is gone I ran on campus yesterday and went places my car would not let me go. The various things happening right now, like the Red and Black, I thought, this is unbelievable. Then getting on campus, walking in this building, you feel the tradition, you see the professionalism. When I interviewed with Jeff and with Dr. Peters and met some of the other people in the room, I could feel the passion for this university. When I saw the vision from Dr. Peters and then got around and talked to other people in the business and found out how special the opportunity I had here, it was a slam dunk.

I am very blessed to be a part of this university. I know what I have, and I know where people want it to go. I have been a part of eight ball teams; four conference championships; two national championship teams – won one, lost one. I know what it is to be on a winning team, to be part of a winning product. I

also know how to turn a place around that has not won. I have seen the ups and downs of the profession and know where you want to be. Also, I know that on a winning team it takes everybody – the town, the people who work there from the top to the bottom, and there has to be one voice, one vision. It was fun to sit in the Red and Black with all the people that I met with my wife and then to hear the leadership talk about where they want to go and how they are behind us. So, we are behind you, we are working hard, and we are going to do everything we can to represent your product, but to put our stamp on it too.

Right now, our players are inching their way through the semester. Academically, we are getting a lot of the progress reports back, and our coaches were out on campus checking classes yesterday. The players are in the building, studying film, going to their tutors, talking to their coaches, but we are also training hard right now. We start spring practice in two weeks. We had a morning run today. It was the first time that we were in the stadium as a team today, and they were fired up. There were 90 players going crazy in the field at 6:30 this morning. I am fortunate to be around players who want to win. I have been places where you walk in the door and you have to train them on how to do everything. The NIU team knows how to win, they know how to compete and they are very proud. It makes me feel good every time I walk in the doors to see what we have. So, thank you for this opportunity. I welcome anybody to come over and spend time with us.

I want to thank Jeff and Coach Doeren, President Peters said. One of the things we wanted to do as part of our recertification is a loopback with our Athletics Department, directly with the governing board, so that this will be a permanent feature once a year. You can see that Jeff and the Athletics Department have their priorities straight, and we are very pleased. I just cannot tell you how excited I am about the program attracting a coach of Dave Doeren's character – watch out MAC; watch out Wisconsin.

#### **Agenda Item 7.e. – University Branding Report**

In light of what we just heard, Chair Murer said, it is important that we communicate. We have talked about this element of LAEA, which is External Affairs. Marketing is not something that is singular nor is it sequential. It is a culmination of activities. Under Kathy Buettner's tutelage in this last year, we have seen great things happen in communicating the name of NIU. It is really important is to continue to reiterate that we do this in-house. The talent is here, and it is the talents of the NIU graphic designers, the writers, the photographers, the videographers and the web communicators. These are all people on the staff of NIU; we do not outsource these things to New York. Keeping it in-house is a reflection of our own excellence. On behalf of the committee, I want to thank you for your leadership, Kathy, but as importantly, to thank your team for what they have done and continue to do to get the message out.

Over the last few months, several of you on the Board have had private conversations with me about the marketing and the branding efforts of the university. After discussing this with Chair Murer, we decided that perhaps the best way to share exactly where we are right now in our branding effort was to give a presentation through the committee process so you can get a sense of the scope and the magnitude of which we are reviewing this issue. The Chair just said, related to the athletics issue, that branding and defining who we are is a cultural issue. We have a big committee that has struggled with this issue of defining just who we are and what our brand is in the marketplace. One of the things I was charged with by President Peters when I was asked to take over as University Relations Vice President was to develop a brand identity and a corresponding marketing strategy for NIU to allow us to compete and flourish. The good news is, NIU is in a wonderful region which is vital and growing, and we are an integral part of that. The difficult issues we face are that we are in that region, and everybody else knows that region and comes and recruits high school students to attend at the community college level, at the private college level, or at other public universities. We have Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana and Michigan all around us, not to mention many others. So we are constantly faced with competing for what is now actually a declining pool, according to the demographic trends, of graduating high school seniors in the northern Illinois region. So the importance of defining who we are institutionally and moving that forward is absolutely critical for this university long term. We have taken this idea of student recruitment, as the President has charged us, and looked at the major issues that are going to drive our branding process, and they were student recruitment and enrollment. Why should a student choose to come to NIU is the question we have been focusing on institutionally for almost a year now.

I want to make the Board aware of our branding website. A brand is the sum of all of the experiences we have individually with a product, a service or an institution. The problem we are facing is that for over a century, we have delivered a brand experience that is second to none; but we have not figured out a common language to describe that experience. We have been focused on breaking through that clutter with a clear and distinctive message. A group of 45 people from across the campus comprises our committee. It has really opened everybody's eyes to the fact that every single person sitting on that committee has a different idea of what NIU means to them. Some were students here, some work here, some had children attend here and some had parents who attended here, so they all bring a different perspective. One of the things that has been helpful to me as we have gone through this effort of "excavating" our own brand is that we have done it in-house. Tim Aurand, who is a professor in the Marketing Department in the College of Business and specializes in brand management, joined our committee. He has been very helpful to the committee as we have worked through this process. He said to me, "Kathy just never lose focus of the fact that there are over 3,500 colleges and universities. Why would a prospective student choose NIU over all of the other schools? What do we promise institutionally and deliver that our competitors don't?" We have to answer that question as part of our branding effort, and that is what we have been focusing on. What we have identified throughout the process of our research is that there are several key attributes, and they are listed on the website in the branding initiative.

- Obviously, we are transformational in many people's lives.
- We have 225,000 alums who have woven themselves into the fabric and the richness of the environs of the Chicago metropolitan area.
- We provide caring and personal attention for students from faculty and staff.
- We have very strong academics.
- We have nationally prominent faculty and programs.
- We are known for experiential learning.
- We have Division I athletics, which is something that other schools our size do not.
- Our proximity to Chicago is a real asset.

Those are the attributes that surfaced as a result of the research we have been doing. As a committee we went out and did a series of focus groups, qualitative survey research, which was scientifically based, through the Public Opinion Laboratory. Then we did anecdotal research wherein we communicated with the different stakeholder groups across the campus via the Internet and allowed them to take surveys, etc. Altogether, this process lasted for about six months, and we had over 2,000 people participate and complete either a focus group or the survey to help us shape our identity. We went through alums, we talked to students, to prospective students and the parents of prospective students. We talked with high school guidance counselors and with our faculty and staff. People were asked questions such as "What was your experience at NIU?" As a result of the research, we came up with several themes. The theme we tested amongst all of the stakeholder groups that actually polled and tested the best in terms of acceptance level and enthusiasm was the theme of "Learning Today and Leading Tomorrow." That is the theme we have chosen to further refine and begin to build our brand messaging. In 2011, we are focused on determining what that means to people ... if you are a prospective student ... if you are an alum? Through our research, we know the answers to that and now have to build out the more specific brand messaging.

As the research came in, we tried to refine an advertising campaign and a marketing campaign for the university. We had a fall campaign, which was fairly aggressive and involved print publications, Facebook marketing, radio ads, video ads during our sports performances of sports programming on television, billboards, etc., a fairly comprehensive campaign, as well as individualized letters from the President to certain targeted prospective high school students and such on the same message. We have refined that some for the spring and are working very closely with Admissions and Student Affairs to make sure we are enforcing and augmenting their messaging that is going out on a regular basis as they recruit not only the students who are coming in this fall, but those they are already starting to recruit for the fall of 2012.

The second major focus we have been working on this spring is a logo redesign for the university. Historically, we have had many different logos. But we have had two logos since I joined the university in 1995. In 1995, we had a logo which, basically, was the castle logo which commemorated our centennial

as a university. Approximately, three years ago we shifted to a ligature type logo, which has been criticized as being too bland. It has been a real exercise, as a committee, studying logos from colleges and universities across the country. We have looked at hundreds of logos. We have looked at all of the logos in the Big Ten, throughout the MAC, at the Illinois colleges and universities, and we have had our internal designers take all of that information and research gleaned from the branding efforts and try to put forward those ideas along a "Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow" tagline theme to take us into a design process. We started with a hundred-plus different designs and are now at four. Next week, we are going to begin the process of taking these different design structures out to all the different stakeholders for input. Hopefully, the data will be as clear as it was during the branding effort when we talked about themes and what should we be focusing on as our central message on behalf of the university. We are going to put forward for review, both publicly on the web and through the Public Opinion Lab, three different styles of logos for consideration and discussion by the different stakeholding groups to get scientifically based survey data. The first one would be a graphic representation of our name, the second would be another version of the ligature logo, and there also will be an architecturally based logo. We are asking everyone for their reactions to these and to give us your thoughts on why people do or do not like a design so that we can settle on a logo and an image that will shape the messaging and the brand tagline for the university. The goal is to have this done in early April in order to meet the deadlines of Collegiate Licensing so that our products can be developed and in the stores in the fall.

We are working closely with Admissions, Student Affairs and the Housing Department on all of the new housing options that are available to students. We will be rolling out a comprehensive new look for the university in August and September, not only in DeKalb, but throughout northern Illinois. The capstone event will be the Soldier Field game.

Ms. Buettner then introduced her leadership team members: Brad Hoey, Media Relations; Jay Orbik, Media Services; and Jennice O'Brien, Web Communications.

#### **Agenda Item 7.b. – 97th General Assembly Report**

Almost 5,000 bills have been filed already in the first few weeks of the General Assembly, Ms. Buettner reported. There are a couple related to procurement that would impact the university, and they are listed in your agenda materials. There are numerous Pension Code bills, but I want to draw your attention to House Bill 180. The interesting thing about this bill is that it somewhat ties in with the Supreme Court decision handed down yesterday allowing protestors at military funerals. This bill actually stemmed from an NIU sociology class that became particularly incensed by the protests going on at military funerals, wrote a bill and took the concept to a brand new state representative. She filed the bill, it is on Third Reading and poised to pass the House this week.

House Bill 1503 provides that, beginning with Fiscal Year 2013, the annual budget request must incorporate performance-based funding, pursuant to the report of the Board's Higher Education Finance Study Commission. The bill is on Second Reading in the House. President Peters was on the Higher Education Finance Study Commission that has been working on this bill.

Senate Bill 0001, which has been sent to the Governor, addressed state appointees and temporary appointees that require Senate confirmation. It limits terms in office past the date of cutoff to 30 days. The Governor has not signed the bill as of today. He has 60 days in which to act and another 30 after that to implement the bill. It should not affect any of our Board members, but it has been an issue in the past particularly for many paid appointees under the Blagojevich administration. Most of the attention has been focused on paid positions.

The bond restructuring bill is still in the Senate Executive Committee. Senator Sandoval has introduced many different bills related to higher education. Most of them remain at the committee level. There is one that would set a separate Inspector General for higher education that passed the House. It remains to be seen whether it will pass the Senate. Senate Bill 1668, put forward by NIU, involves giving the Board of Trustees for NIU authority to create an alcohol policy wherein public events that are not student related could serve alcohol using NIU facilities. This is something that was thought might be helpful, for instance, in athletic events or some of the other entrepreneurial activities at the university. It is part of the

sustainability type initiatives that the Board has asked us to develop because, obviously, state dollars are dwindling. Again, this is for non-student activities.

The Governor's budget was released about two weeks ago, and basically provides the same level of support as Fiscal Year 2011. We did suffer a \$6.7 million cut in FY11, so that is basically the bottom line as we go forward. He did include an additional \$25 million in new funding for the Monetary Award Program, specifically targeted toward community college students. The House Revenue Committee set a much lower appropriations ceiling for the budget. They slashed \$730 million in expected revenues out of the budget, almost a billion dollars. Therefore, the House appropriations process will be working through over the next couple of weeks to cut appropriations for the entire state budget by at least \$730 million. The Senate is pursuing a different course of action. The President can probably address this in greater detail from his discussions with OMB and the other presidents. We anticipate that there could be additional cuts forthcoming as the discussions roll forward on the actual budget for 2012.

As far as capital funding, the NIU received just under \$18 million dollars in capital renewal money. There was a total of \$216 million in the Governor's budget for capital renewal. Unfortunately, only two projects on the IBHE list were recommended for funding in the Governor's budget, the Advanced Chemical Technology Building at UIC and electrical switch gear distribution at Chicago State. I want to point out that the UIC project was originally funded at \$61 million in FY02 and has not yet been completed. We now are talking about FY12, and they have had to escalate the cost of the building. One can see the result on the budget for not only the universities, but for the state as a whole, by deferring and not appropriating sufficient funds for these projects when they are scheduled to run.

We are preparing for both House and Senate appropriation hearings next week, President Peters said, and I will be recommending our support for the Governor's recommended budget. This is the first year, in over a decade, that it seems as if the committee chairs on the House side are going to have the authority to actually shape the budget.

#### **Agenda Item 7.c. – Congressional Report**

I wish I could report that things on the federal level were good, Director of Federal Relations Lori Clark said, but they probably are even worse than in Springfield. I will give you a quick update on what has happened in the last couple of weeks since the Board report was prepared. The budget environment in D.C. still remains very uncertain. As you know, that Congress has been unable to pass any appropriations bills for Fiscal Year 2011 and, as a result, we have been operating under a series of short-term continuing resolutions. The continuing resolution was set to expire on March 4. When both sides found out that the public was not showing the wherewithal to put up with a government shutdown for which both parties would be blamed, they extended the continuing resolution until March 18. That included \$3 billion in cuts. Of that, \$1.7 billion was the elimination of earmarks to the federal budget. Then they made cuts in the Department of Education programs that already had been slated for defunding, and some Department of Transportation funds were cut. As you will recall, the Republicans took over the House of Representatives. Approximately two weeks ago, the House passed HR1. By passing this, they cut \$60 billion from the FY10 budgets. That is \$100 billion below the President's budget request for FY11. Also important to remember is that this is only for the seven months remaining in the fiscal year; so it is going to have an even bigger impact. The President and leaders in Congress are scheduled to meet today discuss this issue. I understand the Senate will not deal with HR1, but they are comparing notes to see what a possible budget solution might be to keep things going. Regardless, this will have a devastating impact on the university. They are looking at cuts to student financial assistance programs, and they are looking at significant cuts to federal R&D programs. Our Office of Sponsored Projects and our academic side rely on a lot of those research and development projects for competitive funding. We expect those programs to become even more competitive and a lot more difficult to secure funding.

Not only the university will be impacted by these budget cuts, but the whole northern Illinois region will be impacted. As an example, the proposed cuts for the Department of Energy Office of Science, alone, will affect funds for FermiLab and Argonne. Between the two labs, if things were to stay the way they are, it would mean 4,000 to 5,000 direct and indirect job cuts. That impacts NIU because we have joint faculty appointments and research projects. We are joining with fellow universities throughout the United States,



through APLU and AASCU and other organizations to inform Congress about what the impact of these cuts and the very dire situation they would create. It is taking us back to FY08 funding levels, and there are many indications that the Republicans want to take it back even further to 2006 levels. I will be traveling back to D.C. next week, and hope to sit down with members of the delegation and inform them what the impact of the proposed cuts is going to be to NIU.

**Agenda Item 7.f. – Freedom of Information Act Requests for June 1, 2010 – February 18, 2011**

Ms. Buettner reported that 102 FOIA requests had been received since June 1. Again, in the breakdown, the media requests are not the problem in keeping up with those requests. I have talked to our local media and asked them if they would just simply ask when they have an information request before filing a FOIA, she said, because it would save a lot of work, money and administrative time. They have been very diligent about doing that. I am working on a simpler method to categorize and classify how much administrative time and, therefore, money we are spending in responding to these. As the FOIA statutes are written, we are not allowed to withhold documents for information requests, despite the fact that people do not pay the copying fees. You can see that we have five requests that have grossly exceeded the 50 copies by thousands of pages. Only one person who requested that information has paid their bill and four have not, and there is no recourse for any of the public entities as a result of the way the statute is currently written.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Chair Murer announced that the next meeting of the Legislation, Audit and External Affairs Committee will be on Thursday, May 12, at 11:00 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Murer asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Strauss so moved, seconded by Student Trustee Sorsby. The meeting was adjourned at 12:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon M. Banks-Wilkins  
Recording Secretary