

August 24, 2009

TO: MSU Faculty, Staff, Student Leaders, and Board Members

FROM: David Fuller

SUBJECT: ¹Monthly President's Report

Current

Legislature: SB 2003

The legislative session ended and resulted in increased support for higher education and Minot State University. Thanks to the Legislature, the SBHE, the Governor, and all of you who assisted us in the legislative processes.

Community Bowl Partnership

Throughout last year and the summer, we worked with the county, the city, the Minot Public Schools, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, Bishop Ryan and others to reintroduce the concept of the community bowl, which was narrowly defeated in a city-wide vote last year. The plan was to proceed in three phases: 1) design and general dirt work to relocate the field and raze Herb Parker Stadium, 2) renovate the field with an all-weather material; and leased bleachers; and 3) construct a new stadium, with new lighting, signage, and parking, which we would take to the voters again in three years. The designs were completed by a local architect. Recently, we learned that the Minot Public Schools preferred to remain at Duane Carlson Field and did not wish to remain in the partnership. At a meeting with the partners, it was decided to dispense with the plans for a community bowl. The plans now are for Minot State University to proceed to refurbish Herb Parker Stadium and the existing field. Plans are underway to secure the support of an architect for these revised designs.

Health and Wellness Center

As a result of the decision to dispense with the community bowl project, we asked the architects to redesign our wellness center so that we no longer would need to move the football field north as originally planned. EAPC architects have considered options and will return with revised plans for the wellness center. It appears that the center will still be located on the southwest curvature of the dome across from Swain. We anticipate that the square footage of the center and original cost will remain the same as the earlier design. The only change to the field will require moving it a few hundred feet to the west.

Monument Sign

The sign and the associated landscaping will be completed prior to Homecoming. The actual sign recently received final additions to the top. Walter Piehl has been working tirelessly to oversee and provide the proper guidance to the contractors and landscapers for the placement of the boulders and rocks. Gravel Products of Minot has provided assistance as well, and have generously donated the large boulders in the major arrangements on the south and the north end

¹ The President's Report is a monthly summary of activities in the president's office and current issues affecting the campus. It is distributed widely to keep the community up to date on current initiatives and decisions. The report is provided at the monthly meeting of the University Cabinet, an advisory council comprised of all directors, vice presidents, and senate presidents. This report is distributed electronically to all faculty and staff, student leaders, the Board of Regents, Foundation Board of Directors, and Alumni Board. The report is also posted on the university's web site. Anyone interested in learning more about this information may contact the President's Office or the president directly.

of the area. When completed, this sign and the entire landscaping will express very well Minot State's exceptional quality and location. Thanks to Walter, Quality Landscaping, Mattson Construction and the other contractors, Gravel Products and Hallie Schriock, Roger Kluck and many more who have seen to it that this will reflect a distinctive university with a proud sense of our place.

Geothermal Update

The M.E.P. final feasibility study, which was partially supported with a grant from Xcel Energy, was completed in May and describes a full-campus geothermal upgrade at a cost of \$17 million. With the tireless and outstanding support of Linda Cresap, we have submitted two major Stimulus proposals to the Department of Energy and a preliminary request for support to the ND Department of Commerce to seek financial support for the upgrade. We have also received approval from the Legislature to use the appropriated \$2.5 million for our renovated boiler for the geothermal system, if we are able to proceed with geothermal. The proposed system will incorporate geothermal, heat-pump technology and solar for our campus and replace the existing coal, oil, and natural gas boilers, that is, if we can secure the funds to support the project.

Marching Band

Joe Alme and Mark Boren, with the support of our music division, have been working to reestablish a marching band which was dropped in the early 80s. Building on the historical success of our band, especially the Rose Bowl Band in 1969, we are aiming at a band of 60 members strong this fall to march, complete with band jackets, in the Homecoming Parade. The plan for the following year is to increase the band's size and to purchase, with the help of donations and others sources, new and deluxe marching band uniforms. By the time we play our first game as a part of the NCAA Division II conference, we should be ready with a full and impressive marching band. Thanks Joe and Mark!

Convocation and Start of the Year

The year has started off well with another fun MSU Kick-Off event at the Zoo, a major faculty and staff convocation, with introductions of new faculty and staff, a week-long orientation for new faculty, professional development presentations in four mini-sessions, college meetings, and the move-in day in which faculty, staff, and student athletes helped our new first-year students and parents move into the dorms. It's been another good start to our year.

Graduation rate and retention task force work

This summer we have held a number of meetings with key staff in enrollment management and institutional research to discuss and examine our graduation rates and to determine how those rates may be improved to meet the average rate of our Great Plains aspiration schools. The meetings have led us to understand better some of the key factors for students leaving us, what we can do to intervene, and what we should do to address the attrition through special strategies and new admission standards. The results of this study will be shared with the campus and the senates for immediate review and consideration.

Admission criteria task force

In response to our performance indicators goals and the admission criteria of our aspiration peers, another task force has been meeting this summer to consider revised admission criteria, which will address student preparation for our university, improved retention and graduation rates, and proactive steps to support admitted students. The admission criterion of 21, which is the average admission standard for our Great Plains peers, is being used as one benchmark for this review. A 22 ACT composite score and identified GPA scores are being considered for automatic admission, with a specific list of provisional admission qualifications.

Enrollment management

The Higher Learning Commission has directed us to develop an enrollment management plan and to submit it for review in two years. Kevin Harmon, our dean of admissions, has attended Noel-Levitz and other enrollment management conferences and workshops in preparation for this continued work on a plan and strategies.

Enrollment and preliminary numbers

With classes starting tonight and Tuesday, the preliminary enrollment numbers look positive. Registration in our residence halls has increased substantially, food service registrations are up, and our enrollment prediction models are showing potential increases of 3-5%, with first-year student enrollment and out-of-state and international student increases.

Swain Hall

The primary contract was given to Mattson Construction, and the full renovation is well underway. The construction is slated to be completed in a little more than a year.

Meeting with YMCA Board regarding Wellness Center

I met with the YMCA Board in August to describe our plans for the Wellness Center, assure the Board that we are interested in collaborating with the YMCA, and to explain the reasons that a school like Minot State University, such as our aspiration schools in the Great Plains, and its students depend on an attractive and functional wellness center. After the presentation, I responded to specific questions. I appreciated the opportunity to meet with the Board.

Sustainability and recycling

The Sustainability Committee is meeting regularly to identify initiatives to improve our campus' environmental practices. I signed a President's Commitment to Sustainability, and the committee has identified primary objectives to fulfill under this commitment, ranging from a recycling initiative to sustainability purchasing.

Dakota Athletic Conference

Prior to being accepted by the NCAA Division II membership committee, the Dakota Athletic Conference athletic directors advanced a proposal to penalize Minot State by not allowing our teams to participate in post-season play this coming year and eliminating us from the conference at the end of next year. Rick Hedberg and I worked hard to argue against this penalty. A letter that I prepared and sent to the presidents of the DAC explained the reasons such an action was too harsh, in that it would penalize our students unnecessarily and put us in a very difficult position next year. At the DAC Board meeting, I reviewed those points and urged the Board to allow us to stay in for two years and participate in post-season play the first year. The presidents, in an executive session, motioned to go even further than my compromise proposal and voted to allow us to remain in the conference and to play in post-season play until we move to Division II. Seven presidents voted in favor of that motion, with the Dickinson president voting against it and in favor of the AD's resolution. We certainly appreciated the Board's majority support.

Membership Committee of NCAA Division II

We received word in June that the membership committee voted to approve our application to move into candidacy status for the NCAA Division II. Only seven of the 13 schools nationally that applied for memberships were accepted. We now enter a two-year candidacy period in which we are to fulfill specific expectations, complete a full study, and begin to make adjustments to our program to meet the requirements for full membership. We hired a consulting firm to assist us in this transition. Following the two years of candidacy status, we will enter

provisional membership status in the third year, at which time we can play in Division II. In the fourth year, if all goes well, we will be full members of NCAA Division II.

Seeking Membership in the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

Minot State has written to the Northern Sun Athletic Conference to notify it of our intention to apply for membership. At their June meeting, the Northern Sun Board of Directors voted to postpone consideration of the question of whether the conference will expand from 14 schools to 16 and if it will take in any new members. On September 21, the Board will meet again to consider expansion and, if expansion is approved, decide on the application processes for membership. If the Northern Sun expands to 16, the conference is anticipated to form into a north and a south division. And if we gain membership in the conference, we could be a part of the new north division of the Northern Sun. Rick Hedberg and I will be driving to 11 of the 14 schools in early to mid September to meet personally with the respective university's president and athletic director. Our purpose is to visit the schools and to encourage the president's support of our membership in the Northern Sun. A vote to get into the conference requires 2/3 of the Board, which means that 10 of the 14 presidents would need to vote in favor of our membership.

New programs and initiatives

We are working to implement a number of exciting initiatives for our campus, from the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning, the Foundations of Excellence for First-Year Students, our new Student Success Center, a new advising director, two new academic majors, support for service learning and civic engagement, and new building projects. A lot is happening on campus and will be in the future.

Summer Board of Regents Meeting

The BOR met for a formal meeting, a barbecue, and the attendance of one of our Summer Theatre performances. The support of our Board of Regents is critical for us, and I greatly appreciate their support and guidance. The meeting included reports from the standing committees of the Board and the initiatives they have been considering in support of MSU.

List of Selected Activities and Events in President's Office (since May 20, 2009)

May

- Hosted luncheon for visiting professors from Telemark University College
- Annual performance evaluation meeting with Chancellor
- Mission review meeting at North Dakota University System
- Meeting with President David Gipp from at United Technical Tribes College

June

- Meeting to discuss new marching band
- Meeting with President Rusty Mason from Ft. Berthold CC
- Trinity Board's Quality Improvement Committee meeting
- Sustainability Committee Meeting
- Meeting with Art Department and architect to discuss potential facility
- Meetings with Senator Conrad, Senator Dorgan, and Representative Pomeroy in Washington DC; meeting with the head of the Geothermal Division from the Department of Energy in D.C.

- Attended AAC&U's President Trust meeting in Washington DC.
- Chamber Board meeting
- Marching band meeting and planning
- Minot Public School Board presentation regarding Community Bowl
- Meeting with Richie Smith, president of the SBHE, in Wahpeton to discuss Minot State's initiatives
- SBHE meeting in Wahpeton
- Meeting with the president of staff senate
- Chaired the Dakota Athletic Conference Board meeting in Bismarck
- Board of Regents Executive Committee meeting
- President of the Minot Public School Board meeting

July

- Center of Excellence committee meeting
- Meeting with architects regarding football stadium
- Attended Gordon Olson's funeral
- Meeting with Kathy Gaddie
- Hosted Northern Plains Writing Project luncheon

- Minot Area Development Corporation Board meeting
 - Board of Regents Summer meeting
 - Meeting to discuss Enrollment Management plan
 - Search and recruitment process meeting
 - Community Bowl meeting
 - NCAA Div II Press Conference
 - Presentation at Sertoma
 - Economics candidate
 - George Mellem golf tournament
 - Attended Morris Anderson's funeral
 - Trinity Public Relations Committee meeting
 - Meeting with coaches regarding Div II
 - Meeting with MDU president
 - Graduation rates and retention task force meeting
 - Community Bowl partners meeting
 - Admissions standards task force
 - Reception hosted by Dr. Darrell Williams for visiting physician from Vietnam
 - Vacation
- August
- Geothermal grant writing with Dr. Cresap
 - Presentation to YMCAA Board of Directors
 - Soccer coach candidates
 - Wrestling coach candidates
 - NACDA consulting group conference call regarding Division II fundraising
 - Apartment building meeting
 - Meeting with Karen Krebsbach and Jon Backes
 - Interview at Clear Channel Radio
 - Foundation Board Investment Committee meeting
 - Alumni Board picnic
 - Interview with Paul Lee with the Patron magazine
 - Trinity Board meeting
 - Great Tomato Festival
 - Conference call with DII consultants
 - Pringle and Herigstad Anniversary Reception
 - Admissions criteria task force meeting
 - Academic rate and retention follow up meeting
 - International positions interviews
 - Title III Press Conference
 - Academic priorities meeting
 - Hosted new faculty and staff at home
 - Welcome to new faculty and discussion of Vision 2013
 - MSU Kick Off at the Zoo
 - Convocation and presentation
 - Attended each of the three college meetings
 - Hosted Ice cream floats for campus
 - Attended mini-sessions
 - Participated in "Move-In" event for students and parents
 - Hosted luncheon for International Students.

Concluding Remarks

This report is lengthier than most reports, since there have been no University Cabinet meetings since our last meeting in May. The summer has been busy, and we have been working hard on special initiatives related to Vision 2013 and planning for the start of the new academic year. My remarks to the faculty and staff during convocation outlined many of the initiatives and achievements of which we are very proud. Increased enrollment, grant awards, new initiatives, building projects, word from the NCAA Division II, and strong support from the North Dakota Legislature and the SBHE, to name but a few, describe our good fortune and our promising future. We had another fun kick-off event for faculty and staff at the Zoo, and our annual event to assist students and their parents moving in the residence halls was fun, tiring, and exceptionally satisfying and rewarding for all of us. The parents certainly appreciated the help!

For everything we are very grateful. As I have said on countless occasions, all of this is done on behalf of serving our students better. We are looking forward to another good year at Minot State University.

David Fuller
August 24, 2009