
SUBJECT: Executive Committee Executive Session Notes for September 17, 2014

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of Salem State University voted unanimously to go into Executive Session on Wednesday, September 17, 2014, in Room 210 of Marsh Hall, located on Central Campus of Salem State University.

Board Secretary Fleischman took the roll at 7:27 pm; voting in the affirmative to enter executive session were Trustees Davis, Mattera, Scott and Segal. VP Keenan and CFO House were invited to participate in the session.

The purpose of the session was to discuss the potential merger with and acquisition of property of Montserrat College of Art (Attachment A). The president explained that Salem State and Montserrat have been in discussion over strengthening the affiliation between the two institutions for three years. We have received a request from Montserrat to consider merging. The president is seeking the board's permission to continue these discussions.

Implications for Salem: Our initial offer to allow them access to our liberal arts courses was not helpful as those are not the courses that are the most expensive for them to mount. Their students are like Salem State students demographically; Montserrat is fully accredited and with a good reputation. A merger might add capacity to our art programming, however we won't know that until we examine this opportunity more carefully. There was discussion of other examples of public institutions taking over private entities (e.g.: UMass Dartmouth, UNH).

Trustee Segal suggested that the first question to be answered was whether a merger made sense from an academic standpoint. If that answer was yes, then the financial and real estate issues could be worked out. We will need to examine whether an expanded arts program is an important expansion. If it is not a net positive in cash flow, could it be a net positive in offerings and program enhancement? The president also stated the need to identify whether there is an actual pathway for accomplishing this type of transaction, through the Department of Higher Education.

The consensus of the committee was that discussions should continue to answer those two main questions: (i.e.: Does it make academic sense? Is there a pathway to getting it done?). The board would like to be kept apprised of what is learned.

With no further business to be discussed in Executive Session, Chair Scott called for a motion to come out of Executive Session.

Upon a motion duly made by Trustee Mattera and seconded by Trustee Davis, it was unanimously

VOTED: To adjourn from Executive Session

Board Secretary Fleischman took the roll at 7:44 pm; voting in the affirmative to exit executive session were Trustees Davis, Mattera, Scott and Segal.

The Board came out of Executive Session and the meeting was adjourned.

Prepared by: J. Fleischman, Secretary to the Board of Trustees