

Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees – Ad Hoc Search Committee
Zoom Meeting/YouTube Stream and Office of the Chancellor, Room 229
Thursday, July 7, 2023 at 8:30 a.m.

AGENDA

1. Call to order
2. Public Comment – sign up here: www.vsc.edu/signup
3. Approval of Minutes of June 22, 2023 meeting
4. Status update on search planning and discussion of next steps
5. Other Business
6. Discussion of possible candidates (executive session)
7. Adjourn

Minutes of the VSCS Board of Trustees Ad Hoc Search Committee meeting held Thursday, June 22, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom - UNAPPROVED

Note: These are unapproved minutes, subject to amendment and/or approval at a subsequent meeting.

The Vermont State Colleges Board of Trustees Ad Hoc Search Committee met on Thursday, June 22, 2023.

Committee members present: Janette Bombardier, Lynn Dickinson, David Durfee, Karen Luneau, Shawn Tester

Other Trustees Present: Sue Zeller

Chancellor's Office staff: Katherine Levasseur, Director of Governmental & External Affairs
Patty Turley, General Counsel

Shared Services: Danny Bazluke, Network/Security Analyst
Meg Walz, Director, Project Management
Sarah Chambers, Director, Learning Technologies

From the Colleges: Beth Walsh, President, VSCUP, Northern Vermont University

1. Chair Dickinson called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.
2. Public Comment

Beth Walsh shared that faculty and staff are feeling overworked and asked that decision-making be inclusive and transparent. She asked that the Presidential Search be conducted in the public eye and that faculty and staff be included in the process.

3. Search Committee Work

Chair Dickinson described the approach to the Search Committee, which addressed some of the concerns raised in public comment. The Board has determined that an interim position is appropriate, for a term of approximately 18 months – two years. During that time, a full academic search for a permanent president will be conducted. Factors include the time pressure, with Interim President Smith's commitment to a six-month term, and the timing expected for a full search. Because of these time pressures, the Board has appointed this ad hoc search committee, which will move expeditiously and meet biweekly. The committee will keep board members informed. The committee welcomes contributions and suggestions from internal and external stakeholders. Although this search for an interim appointment will be expedited, it will follow good search practices and applicable rules.

A discussion followed regarding the potential use of a search firm. Ms. Levasseur described how an external firm could serve as a resource for the process, by conducting background checks, gathering input from the public, collecting data, or developing community information. Trustee Bombardier emphasized that speed is important and that all aspects of the search must be conducted in parallel. The Search Committee agreed that using a firm for a limited scope of work would be beneficial. The Search Committee requested that the Chancellor's office research possibilities and report at the next meeting with additional information.

The Search Committee agreed that an interim President is needed in November, so they must work backwards from November. Ideally a hiring decision would be made in September to allow for onboarding in October. The Search Committee requested that the Chancellor's office put together a tentative draft calendar for the next meeting on July 6.

The Search Committee agreed that they would update the full Board at the scheduled meeting in August and that a special meeting could be held if needed. It was also agreed that written updates would be provided via the Transformation updates and correspondence to the full Board. Board members and other stakeholders will be able to attend the committee's meetings, which will be held bi-weekly by Zoom.

The committee next turned its attention to engagement with stakeholders. It was agreed that VTSU administration, faculty, staff, students, and Chancellor Office leaders are internal stakeholders who should be involved, while legislators, the Governor's office, and host communities are some of the external stakeholders to engage. The Search committee indicated they would look for the assistance of a search firm for some of the engagement. Trustee Bombardier indicated that this will likely have to be a very different process than last year, as there will not be time for extended campus visits. She also suggested the committee connect with faculty and staff to ask their thoughts on how the Search Committee could quickly get their input.

4. Executive Session

At 8:58 a.m. Trustee Dickinson moved that the Committee enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3) to discuss the employment of a public officer. Along with the members of the Board present at the meeting, the Committee invited the Director of External and Governmental Affairs and the General Counsel to attend. Trustee Luneau seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

The committee exited executive session at 9:46 a.m.

5. Other Business

There was no other business.

Chair Dickinson adjourned the meeting at 9:47 a.m.