A meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees convened at 8:36 a.m. on Friday, October 14, 2016, in Room 326 of Stewart Center on the campus of Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana.

All committee members were present: JoAnn Brouillette, chair; Vanessa Castagna; Malcolm DeKryger; Cameron Mann; and Professor David Sanders (ex-officio). All other trustees were present: Sonny Beck, Michael Berghoff, Michael Klipsch, Gary Lehman, Thomas Spurgeon, and Don Thompson.

Officers and administrators in attendance were: Mitch Daniels, president; Peter Hollenbeck, vice provost for faculty affairs (sitting in for Provost Dutta); Bill Sullivan, treasurer and chief financial officer; Jim Almond, senior vice president and assistant treasurer; Steve Schultz, legal counsel; Janice Indrutz, executive assistant to the Board and corporate secretary; Tom Keon, chancellor of Purdue University Northwest; and Vicky Carwein, chancellor of Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon proper motion duly seconded, the members of the Academic Affairs Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of its last meeting held on August 26, 2016.

II. APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENTS

As recommended by Vice Provost Hollenbeck, and upon proper motions each duly seconded, the members of the Academic Affairs Committee voted unanimously to recommend full Board approval of the following appointments: Dr. Jeffrey S. Dukes, inaugural Belcher Chair for Environmental Sustainability; Dr. George R. Wodicka, Dane A. Miller Head of Biomedical Engineering; and Dr. Sangtae Kim, Jay and Cynthia Ihlenfeld Head of Chemical Engineering, all on the West Lafayette campus. Supporting documents were filed with the minutes.

Prior to the Committee’s vote regarding Dr. Dukes’ appointment, Vice Provost Hollenbeck informed the Committee that Dr. Dukes had devoted his career to researching the effects of human actions on natural and managed ecosystems and that he had been selected by the American Association for the Advancement of Science as a Public Engagement Fellow for 2016-2017. Following the Committee’s vote, Dr. Dukes offered his thanks to many, including those students and colleagues who had contributed to his
research, as well as his family, Mr. Dick Belcher, who was in attendance, and Mr. Belcher’s late wife, Suzanne. Dr. Dukes said he would do his best to reward the Belchers’ confidence in him. He then discussed environmental sustainability as one of the greatest modern challenges, and he suggested that attracting large, unrestricted gifts would help Purdue realize its potential to address the challenge.

Prior to the Committee’s vote regarding Dr. Wodicka’s appointment, Vice Provost Hollenbeck discussed Dr. Wodicka’s significant accomplishments as head of the Weldon School of Biomedical Engineering and his other service to Purdue, as well as his professional service and many affiliations. Dr. Hollenbeck also informed the Committee that Dr. Wodicka had been a recipient of the National Science Foundation’s Young Investigator Award. Following the Committee’s vote, Dr. Wodicka remarked that he was honored to serve as the inaugural Dane A. Miller Head, saying it linked the Weldon School of Biomedical Engineering to the namesake of someone who was synonymous with the orthopedics industry worldwide. He thanked those at Purdue who helped secure the tie and explained to the Board how and why Dr. Miller had become a pillar of the orthopedics industry. Dr. Wodicka shared a quote from Dr. Miller and said he would strive to direct students to follow in Dr. Miller’s footsteps. Chairman Berghoff expressed his appreciation for Dr. Wodicka’s remarks, and at Chairman Berghoff’s request, Dr. Wodicka discussed his optimism for the future of the Weldon School and how it was poised to make a huge impact on health care.

Prior to the Committee’s vote regarding Dr. Kim’s appointment, Vice Provost Hollenbeck reminded the Committee that Dr. Kim was a Distinguished Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Chemical Engineering. He discussed Dr. Kim’s research program, which he said spanned from discovery to delivery, and he outlined Dr. Kim’s industry and other professional experience. Dr. Hollenbeck added that Dr. Kim had been a recipient of a Young Investigator Award from the National Science Foundation, was a member of the National Academy of Engineering, and had received South Korea’s highest engineering research award. Following the Committee’s vote, Dr. Kim expressed his thanks for the opportunity to lead the School of Chemical Engineering, and he thanked the Ihlenfelds for the endowment. He also discussed the span of the chemical engineering field, commented on the School’s students and alumni, and acknowledged the tremendous achievements of immediate predecessor, Dr. Arvind Varma.

Trustee Brouillette congratulated Dr. Dukes, Dr. Wodicka, and Dr. Kim. At Trustee Brouillette’s request, Mr. Belcher shared the story of how he and his late wife made the decision to make their endowment gift.

III. REPORT PRESENTATION: HONORS COLLEGE

Dr. Rhonda Phillips, dean of the Honors College, was in attendance to provide an update on the Honors College. She began with a reminder that the Honors College was in its fourth academic year, with an enrollment of 2,200 students. She reviewed the Honors College vision and mission and discussed its four pillars of interdisciplinary academics, community and global experiences, leadership development, and undergraduate research. Dean Phillips provided a snapshot of the 741 students that comprised the freshmen class, including the academic colleges in which they majored.
During a discussion of scholarships, Dean Phillips pointed out that Purdue had reinstated National Merit Scholarships to help attract high-ability students, and she noted a record number of Fulbright Scholarship recipients. Dean Phillips briefly outlined three challenges and opportunities (completion rates, number of honors courses offered across campus, and continued fundraising), and she concluded her report with an update on development activities.

In response to questions from Trustee Castagna and Trustee Beck, Dean Phillips described how the College would measure success, and she discussed the occupancy and capacity of the Honors College residences, saying demand had exceeded supply. Questions from Trustee Brouillette and Trustee Thompson generated discussion about the application process, which, Dean Phillips said, would move next year from an invitation-based model to an admissions-based model. Dean Phillips and the Board members concluded that there was work to be done with regard to admitted students being notified in a timelier manner.

A copy of Dean Phillips’ presentation was filed with the minutes.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

By consent, the meeting adjourned at 9:29 a.m.