

The Virgin Islands Consortium

UVI Board Of Trustees Approves Recommendation For Relocation Of Multipurpose Center And Changes To UVI's Bylaws

Education / **Published On March 06, 2017 10:28 AM /**

Staff **March 06, 2017**



ST. CROIX -- In the regular session of its quarterly meeting on March 4 on the Albert A. Sheen Campus here, the [University of the Virgin Islands Board of Trustees](#) took action on multiple items, while welcoming its newest member, Trustee Winona Hendricks, who will serve as an ex-officio member as chair of the VI Board of Education, UVI announced Sunday.

In regular session, the board voted to approve the action of the Executive Committee regarding the relocation of the multipurpose center planned for the Sheen Campus,

[announced by Governor Kenneth Mapp in May of last year](#). The facility was set to be constructed to the rear of the campus near the basketball court, but a location on the front of the campus has been identified, according to UVI.

UVI President David Hall said Mr. Mapp has been promoting the idea of funding a much larger multipurpose facility, which would not be viable at the present planned location. Also, the original site at the rear of the campus may have other challenges that may increase the cost of construction. He said that having the facility in another location would help with fundraising, as naming opportunities may be more attractive to possible donors.

"The recommendation from the Executive Committee is not to say that it must be on the larger plot, but it gives the administration the freedom to try to identify donors that may be interested in locating it differently than what the master plan, right now, asks for."

To fund the estimated \$25 million facility, the governor in June of last year [revealed that he had asked Limetree Bay partner, Sinopec](#), as part of its show of goodwill to a territory that it's building a long-term relationship with, to foot the bill, and in turn receive the rights to name the facility.

"That's about a \$25 million investment," the governor said. "And the president of UNIPPEC (same as Sinopec) has advised me that they would take it under serious consideration." There's been little talk about Sinopec's interest in funding the facility since the governor's remarks last year.

In other business, the board approved a change to the UVI bylaws, which would delete the requirement of a fixed number of nine trustees necessary to establish a quorum of the board and to establish a quorum requirement based on the majority of the members of the board, according to UVI.

The Board also approved a change of the bylaws to establish the term for non-trustee members serving on all committees of the board. In addition to one or more trustees, the standing and special committees of the board may include one or more members who are not trustees, provided, however, that a majority of any committee shall be constituted by members of the board. Persons who serve on the standing and special committees of the board in an ex-officio capacity shall serve for the duration of their tenure in such capacity, according to UVI. Non-trustee members who serve on a committee shall serve for a term of three years, unless earlier removed, with or without cause, by a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees.

During the president's Report to the board, Dr. Hall highlighted the accomplishments of UVI students, faculty and alumni. He said that 23 UVI students gave poster presentations at various academic conferences around the country and some of the students have been published.

"That may not seem like a big deal, but it really is," he said. "I am proud of our students and the faculty that supported them."

In his report, Dr. Hall also informed the board of alumni accomplishments. He said UVI graduate student Tiffany Garbutt, a biology major, successfully defended her Ph.D. thesis in genetics at North Carolina State University. And UVI graduate Shellese Cannonier, a biology major, just completed her Ph.D. in the field of cancer biology at Vanderbilt

University. April Knight is beginning a master's degree at the University of Texas at Austin's School of Journalism.

Research and Technology Park (RTP) Executive Director Dr. Gillian Marcelle reported that the UVI RTPark delivered a very strong financial performance, generating \$2.3 million in commercial revenues, with corresponding total expenditures of \$2.1 million. This performance meant that there was a surplus, before depreciation and audit adjustments, of \$192,000.

"This continued demonstration of commercial viability has allowed the RTPark to move to a different phase in its partnership with UVI, and to agree to a promissory note to repay legacy liabilities of \$1.12 million over approximately seven years," said Dr. Marcelle. "At the end of 2016, the RTPark made payments totaling \$135,000 toward repayment of that principal. In my report to the Board of Trustees one year ago, the RTPark indicated that it had set this as an objective and we have delivered."

The RTPark program continues to generate significant growth, Dr. Marcelle said. In 2016, the actual number of clients grew from 33 to 42. "This growth has been achieved without any compromise on the standards applied to due diligence and has been accompanied by intense advance screening of prospective clients for their commitment to making a contribution to the US Virgin Islands and partnership with UVI."

As customary, Dr. Hall recognized UVI employees or units that have performed exceptionally well with the President's Appreciation Award. The Offices of Human Resources, Payroll and Budgeting were presented with the President's Appreciation Award.

Funds for raises from the central government were released to the University in October 2016 and the administration wanted to use the funds for these raises before the end of 2016.

"To that end, it was important that our compensation study be developed in such a way that would provide the administration with reliable and thoughtful information upon which to base our decisions in regards to distribution of the \$1.2 million received from the Government of the Virgin Islands for implementation of salary increases," said Dr. Hall. Once the compensation adjustment plan was approved, the implementation of salary increases across the institution required the collaborative and efficient work of the Human Resources, Payroll and Budgeting Offices.

The Human Resources Department, led by Ron Meek, UVI director of Human Resources and Organizational Development, was key in making sure that the compensation study was completed in a thoughtful and inclusive manner. The Payroll and Budgeting offices, led respectively by Sharlene Fahie, accounting supervisor, and Delicia Henley, Budget manager, were also very instrumental in this process and ensured that all the necessary information was provided so that all employees could receive their correct salary increase.

"The outstanding work of these areas ensured that all employees – over 400 faculty and staff – received their salary increases retroactive of Oct. 1, 2016," said President Hall.

"The long hours combined with the integral and tireless contributions of our Human

Resources, Payroll and Budgeting teams helped to ensure that all employees felt valued and appreciated.”

“These areas were collectively responsible for the seamless implementation of the salary adjustments, update of all salary grade classifications, notification to all employees of increases and the processing of payroll,” he said. “All of this had to be done in a very intense and short period of time, and it was done in a high-performing manner and in accordance with the timeframe stipulated by the President with minimal oversights.”

The Board also heard a report on [UVI's Key Performance Indicators](#), before moving into executive session.

While in executive session, the Board approved the minutes from their Jan. 19 and Jan. 31, 2017 meeting; declined a nomination for membership on the Foundation of the University of the Virgin Islands Board; approved a petition for emeritus status; approved a grievance policy being negotiated with the University and the American Association of University Professors; ratified the action of the Executive Committee to approve the appropriation request to VI governments for FY2018; received a report on the UVI Solar Project; approved the proposed Institutional Risk List for high risk and secondary risk items; received an update on legal matters; discussed certain personnel issues and authorized the president to proceed to host a visit by a potential donor.

The next meeting of the board is scheduled for June 4, on the St. Thomas Campus.