President Search Committee Meeting
September 13, 2021
12:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Remote
MINUTES

Committee members in attendance: Kevin Foley, David Baldwin, Dara Barros, Bob Bonnevie, Nancy Budwig, Wardell Powell, Elena Quiroz-Livanis, Nina Ricci, Robin Robinson, Luis Rosero

Not in attendance: Anthony Hubbard, Dana Neshe

Ex officio University members in attendance: Kim Dexter; Ann McDonald
Executive search firm members: Sandra Chu, Lucy Leske, Philip Tang

Chair Foley called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. He welcomed the committee members and requested a roll call to record attendance.

Roll call of attendance:

- Robin Robinson – Yes; Luis Rosero – Yes; Nancy Budwig – Yes; Nina Ricci – Yes; Bob Bonnevie – Yes; Kevin Foley – Yes; Elena Quiroz-Livanis – Yes; Wardell Powell – Yes; Dara Barros – Yes; David Baldwin – Yes.

I. Approval of minutes from the August 16, and August 19, 2021 meetings.
- Motion was made by Robin Robinson; David Baldwin, seconded the motion
- Roll call vote: Robin Robinson- Yes; Bob Bonnevie- Yes; Nina Ricci –Yes; Luis Rosero –Yes; Nancy Budwig- Yes; Kevin Foley – Yes; Elena Quiroz-Livanis – Yes; Wardell Powell – Yes; Dara Barros – abstained; David Baldwin – Yes

Minutes for the August 19, 2021 meeting
- Motion was made by Bob Bonnevie; Nancy Budwig, seconded the motion
  - Dara Barros clarified that she was not in attendance of the August 19 meeting but was in attendance at the August 16 meeting.
- Roll call vote: Robin Robinson- Abstain; Bob Bonnevie- Yes; Nina Ricci –Yes; Luis Rosero – Yes; Nancy Budwig- Yes; Kevin Foley – Yes; Elena Quiroz-Livanis – Yes; Wardell Powell – Yes; Dara Barros – abstained; David Baldwin – abstained

II. Search timeline updates
Lucy Leske updated the committee with the following:
- Advertising has been placed; outreach and recruiting are fully underway by the WittKieffer team.

Lucy Leske invited Philip Tang to update the committee on the changes to the timeline.
Philip Tang provided the following information and referred the committee members to the updated timeline document included in the WorkZone portal.

- Two key dates for the committee are:
  - October 15: 2-hour initial discussion to take place.
  - October 28, 4-hour meeting in which the committee will make decisions regarding first-round candidates.
- Finalist candidates to be identified during the week of November 29.
- First two weeks of December will be designated for on-campus interviews for finalist candidates.

Luis Rosero inquired how candidates that apply late will be managed; further clarifying his question in asking if there was an application deadline; would October 29 be the deadline.

- Philip Tang, responded by explaining that there is not a specific deadline, that the position will be open until filled.
  - Applications will continue to be received throughout the process. Access will continue to be given to the applicant materials and committee members will be informed, should materials be received later in the search process. However, he anticipates that the quality of the candidates selected will be set at a higher level, establishing a competitive pool which later applicants may not meet.
  - Lucy Leske emphasized that the committee members will be allowed to determine how to manage and/or review all candidates regardless of when they apply to the position.

Wardell Powell asked the search firm members how many candidates are expected to be identified during the October 28 meeting.

- Lucy Leske responded that typically, there are around 10 candidates selected for the first-round interviews.
  - From the first-round interviews, around 3-5 candidates will be selected for referencing. Leading up to the November 29 meeting, in which the committee will review referencing to determine the finalists to bring on campus.

Nancy Budwig asked, when the committee be informed of the dates for first-round interviews during the week of November 15.

- Ann McDonald responded that the committee members will be polled for their availability this week.
- Lucy Leske emphasized members may not be able to attend every interview. The goal will be for the majority of the committee to be able to attend the majority of the interviews.

III. Preparing for candidate review
In preparation for committee members to review candidates, a candidate review worksheet/rubric will be provided by WittKieffer. The worksheet/rubric will be shared with committee members for review in advance, via the WorkZone portal.

- The worksheet/rubric will be based on the items and themes outline in the Leadership Profile, predominantly from the professional qualification and personal qualities.
- Changes may be made to the worksheet, however, the professional qualifications, which are from the BHE guidelines, may not be altered.
Luis Rosero asked how far in advance will the candidate materials become available, as to allow adequate review time.

- Philip Tang responded that it will partly depend on the initial volume of applicants received. Candidate materials will be made available around October 11 or 12, prior to the October 15 meeting.
- Lucy Leske informed the committee members that the candidate materials will be provided for review in two separate folders: one containing candidates that did not meet the minimum requirements, the other containing all other candidates.
  - Minimum requirements from the BHE guidelines were read aloud for the committee’s review.

Conversations regarding relevant experience ensued, concluding with the importance of the committee’s discussions of candidate reviews (during the October 15 meeting) which may include candidates that have not met the minimum requirements.

IV. Mitigating bias in decision-making
Kim Dexter led a discussion regarding mitigating bias in the decision making process, and how to avoid illegal employment decision-making.

Kim Dexter began by inviting Ann McDonald to present information regarding records retention. Ann McDonald defined Commonwealth Laws applicable to the search:

- Public Records Law: records must be maintained and retained by the University for a specific amount of time.
  - All materials gathered during the search are subject to the law’s requirements.
  - Objective of the Public Records Law is transparency and search documents are maintained to protect the University and to illustrate a valid and legal search.
  - In the case of reviewing candidates, all records including notes, will be part of the document file retained for the purpose of the Public Records Law.
  - Assessments should be within the boundaries of the search and unnecessary records should not be created.
  - At the conclusion of the search, committee members will submit all materials, including hand-written notes and worksheet/rubrics information, to the General Counsel.

Bob Bonnevie asked for clarification regarding personal notes, asking if they are subject to the Public Records Law.

- Ann McDonald responded that there is an exemption for personal notes but clarified the difference between a personal note and note that refers to the candidate being reviewed.

Kim Dexter continued by discussing the recommended pre-work of taking the Implicit Association Tests.

- Baseline understanding that everyone has biases and makes decision based on biases.
- Race and gender-based biases are shown to permeate the hiring processes: i.e. assumptions based on names, what a person in a particular role may look like.
- Best way to counteract biases is to first acknowledge them and then to pair this with tools to keep ourselves and other in check.

Questions for reflections were reviewed and committee members were asked to respond:

*Q: What does conducting a search that embraces diversity, equity and inclusion mean to you?*

Responses included:
• Having a clean slate and trying your best to focus on the position and qualifications.
• Being ready to listen and learn.
• Coming in with a commitment to mitigate biases. Not assume our judgment is the only correct judgment, but to listen to what others are taking away as a strength or weakness.
• Not holding back, but instead being open; allowing oneself to speak honestly and with sincerity; trusting committee members to give honest feedback, and not being afraid of being perceived in a specific way, but to learn from each other.

Kim Dexter reflected on the larger issues addressed in the question:
• A search that embraces diversity, equity, inclusions demonstrate the values defined in the Leadership Profile, and the commitment to these values that is expected of the new President to promote.
• Must be willing to reassess the review process should the outcomes not align with our expectations.

Q: In what ways, if any, are you aware of potential bias that might affect your decision-making?
 Responses and comments included:
• The traditional professional trajectory is a preference- the preference for people with the traditional academic background is a bias that I have to challenge. Another is scholarship and what is defined as scholarship; acknowledgement of Tenure and Promotions policies and whether they are equitable. This may mean unlearning, un-conditioning how knowledge and scholarship are defined.
• There are large cultural and gendered differences in the ways that candidates present themselves and their achievements. Coming from my own perspective, with my background, I will have to keep in mind that people present themselves in particular ways. Other candidates may have the same achievements, but may choose not to present them. How I watch, listen and probe for that information will be something I will need to keep in check.
• How will I fairly assess a candidate that has never been in a classroom. This will be a challenge, but my goal is to be fair.

In addressing how committee members might minimize bias as the search proceeds, Kim Dexter recommended the following:
• Use job related criteria, specifically the Leadership Profile, to assist in reducing unrelated criteria to review candidates.
• Sticking to the application materials and rubric. Strongly urged committee members not to conduct any online searches.
• Spend a block of time with frequently scheduled breaks for review of candidates.
• Ensure you are able to articulate why you would recommend or not recommend moving a candidate forward.
• If you see bias, call it out in a thoughtful way. If you see something in a candidate, even if all other committee members do not, please speak up. Your voice is critical.

Kim Dexter concluded in asking the committee members to think about one thing that they can do to personally mitigate their own bias, to minimize the effect that it is going to have in the actions that they will take in reviewing candidate materials and making recommendations on who might become the next president.
• She provided an example of a tool she used, the 21-day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge, to mitigate her own bias. For 21-day, once a day, you would do one thing to
promote your understanding and commitment to racial equity and keeping a log of your actions.

Kim Dexter continued to encouraged members to take the implicit bias test. For those that have already taken some tests, consider taking new additional tests. For those that took them some time ago, the same tests again now, think about how the results may have changes or stayed the same.

Elena Quiroz-Livanis noted that the Commissioner reviews the semi-finalist pool and will look for racial, ethnic or gender diversity within the pool. Although not common, he has been known to recommend adding candidates if the pool is not diverse. She concluded in commending the team for dedicating this time to the topic.

In closing, Lucy Leske reminded the committee members that all conversations discussing candidates must be conducted during executive sessions. She reminded members that they are not to email comments about a candidate via email, and asked again, for members to contact the search firm members directly, should there be any questions regarding a candidate.

V. Motion to adjourn

Motion: Nancy Budwig; Dara Barros, seconded the motion.
Roll Call: Robin Robinson – Yes; Nina Ricci – Yes; Luis Rosero – Yes; Nancy Budwig – Yes; Nina Ricci – Yes; Bob Bonnevie – Yes; Kevin Foley – Yes; Elena Quiroz-Livanis – Yes; Wardell Powell – Yes; Dara Barros – Yes; David Baldwin – Yes.

The meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.