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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE
LISTENING SESSIONS

SESSION 1: FIU FACULTY SENATE

Wednesday, April 13, 2022

8:00 A.M.- 9:00 A.M.

Modesto Maidique Campus
Graham Center Ballrooms
11200 Southwest 8th Street
Miami, Florida 33199

Stenographically Reported By:

Aurora C. Sloan, FPR

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APPEARANCES:

FIU University Staff Members:

FIU Board of Trustees Chair Dean Colson

FIU Board of Trustees Vice Chair Roger Tovar

FIU Ombudsperson Sofia Trelles

ALSO PRESENT:

Higher Education Search Consultant William Funk

1 (Whereupon, the following proceedings were
2 had:)

3 MR. TOVAR: Good morning.

4 My name is Roger Tovar, and I am Vice
5 Chair of the FIU Board of Trustees.

6 In addition, it is my pleasure to
7 serve as the Chair of the Presidential
8 Search Committee.

9 I would like to extend a warm welcome
10 to the Presidential Search Committee
11 members and the FIU community who are
12 joining us today listening -- joining us
13 for the listening sessions, and thank them
14 for participating in this important step.

15 The FIU Board of Trustees met on
16 April 5th to announce the Presidential
17 Search Committee members. The Presidential
18 Search Committee also held its first
19 meeting on April 5th.

20 To keep all of you and the members of
21 the FIU community informed, I am pleased to
22 announce that we have launched the
23 Presidential Search website which will
24 provide information on the search process,
25 meetings, and candidates. This website

1 will be updated routinely. We invite you
2 to visit the website.

3 R. William Funk & Associates, based in
4 Dallas, Texas, has been selected to assist
5 us with the search of FIU's sixth
6 president. The firm has conducted more
7 than 430 searches for colleges and
8 university presidents and chancellors.

9 Mr. Funk is joining us today as we
10 welcome members of the university community
11 and the general public who are joining us
12 via the website as we engage in listening
13 sessions.

14 Good morning, Dean.

15 Just for everyone to know, this is the
16 second session we're having with the
17 faculty senate. We are doing this because
18 we were aware that you all had some
19 meetings yesterday that some folks couldn't
20 also attend this meeting. So we'll take as
21 long as we need or as little as we need,
22 but again, glad to have the participants
23 today.

24 I now invite Mr. Funk to begin the
25 listening session.

1 Mr. Funk.

2 MR. FUNK: Great. Thank you, Roger.

3 MR. TOVAR: Sorry. And by the way,
4 today we have the added benefit that we
5 have our Chair here, Dean Colson. So I
6 welcome Dean for joining us today.

7 MR. COLSON: Delighted to be here.

8 MR. TOVAR: Thank you, Dean.

9 MR. FUNK: Great. Thank you, Roger.

10 Our firm is delighted to be working
11 with Florida International on this very
12 important recruitment of a new president.

13 We believe this is one of the most
14 exciting, compelling leadership
15 opportunities in higher education today,
16 and we expect and anticipate that we will
17 have a very robust and excellent pool of
18 candidates.

19 From the beginning, though, the board
20 has emphasized that it really wanted to
21 conduct a transparent search, and on the
22 front end of the search, wanted to be as
23 transparent as possible. And in that
24 regard, we are holding a number of
25 listening sessions. These began yesterday

1 and will continue through the day today.
2 And as I think most of you know, there will
3 be an all campus open forum at 10 o'clock
4 this morning, and we're looking forward to
5 that session and all sessions today.

6 But we wanted to really drill down to
7 find out what the various constituents were
8 looking for or would hope for in the new
9 president. And as you have seen, I think,
10 most everybody has seen this list of three
11 questions that we wanted to focus on today.

12 And the first one is, what do you
13 perceive to be the major challenges and
14 opportunities that this next president will
15 inherit, both immediately and longer term?

16 If those are the challenges and
17 opportunities, what kind of person do you
18 think will be best prepared to address the
19 challenges and exploit the opportunities?
20 What adjectives would you use in terms of
21 the ideal candidate's background, all
22 experience, personality, leadership style,
23 world view? How would you describe that
24 individual?

25 And then we can use that kind of

1 information as we go about targeting
2 candidates, looking to build the pool of
3 candidates, and trying to find individuals
4 who will match many of those attributes
5 that have been suggested.

6 And then thirdly, the job of the
7 search firm is really to be the proactive
8 agent to the search committee, and everyone
9 could collect resumes that come in in
10 response to the ads that will be run. But
11 we find that the best candidates are often
12 individuals who are very happy in their
13 current position, haven't thought about
14 leaving their current position, and need to
15 be nurtured and cajoled, if you will, in
16 terms of why they should take a look at
17 this opportunity.

18 And if you can help arm us with the
19 kind of information that could be very
20 convincing to prospective candidates, that
21 will be helpful to us. So we don't want
22 you to feel confined to just those three
23 questions, but they get, kind of, to the
24 nub of what will give us the information we
25 need to be a better steward of the

1 university to prospective candidates.

2 But we are eager to hear what you
3 might share with us today. We're going to
4 do more listening than talking from this
5 point forward.

6 Sofia, on my left, will be collecting
7 comments that come in virtually, and will
8 be sharing those with us as they do come
9 in.

10 But who would like to be first? We're
11 delighted that you squeezed into the
12 auditorium, and we are eager to hear all
13 comments. We hope to respond to any
14 questions you might have about the process
15 or the search.

16 So with that, who would like to go
17 first? A brave participant.

18 MR. REINHOLD: As a Chair, I feel
19 obligated to take the microphone if no one
20 else wants to do this.

21 We spoke very briefly already
22 yesterday. I mentioned to you earlier when
23 we had coffee, that it's probably an early
24 morning time, and I heard already we had
25 some turnout yesterday, senators that were

1 online, and probably the 10 o'clock, the
2 community, I would expect we get also a
3 better turnout from faculty and so on.

4 First, I would like to elaborate
5 something briefly about some concerns that
6 faculty, I do know that they have. And one
7 of the concerns is that relates to the
8 search itself is, of course, this new law
9 that we're now operating under, that the
10 search will be closed until we get to a
11 final slate. I understand that this will
12 happen that way, but there has been an
13 interesting comment made by one of our
14 fellow senators, it was two weeks ago when
15 the senate met. I think this was also when
16 Trustee Chair Colson had visited us, and
17 that was the comment that, to the extent
18 possible, that we can publish, not
19 identifying, but information about the
20 candidates so that there is confidence that
21 the search, that we're having a wide open
22 pool.

23 And Trustee Tovar yesterday mentioned
24 already -- and I know Trustee Tovar for a
25 long time, and I trust him on that -- that

1 we will be looking broad, and we don't have
2 a predetermined outcome. But of course,
3 with a law like that, the perception is
4 always very easy to get to the perception
5 that it is not a broad and open search.

6 So I would urge you that, to the
7 extent possible, that you -- once we have a
8 good candidate pool, that we -- that people
9 know just general information about the
10 people. Maybe someone is a president at a
11 university, someone is at a Fortune 500
12 company, or someone is a sitting
13 legislature, or something like that, that
14 we know, okay, we're having a broad pool, a
15 diverse pool, without identifying the
16 candidates.

17 I myself, I understand the reasons
18 behind not identifying the candidates. So
19 I think I would like to ask the search
20 committee to consider this.

21 MR. TOVAR: Yes. I'll comment first,
22 and we discussed this a little bit
23 yesterday. I understand the concern.

24 I will tell you, I will try to be -- I
25 would try to push for as much transparency,

1 obviously balancing that with that I do
2 think we have an added benefit today where
3 people can apply and their names are not
4 out there.

5 And as Mr. Funk said yesterday, and
6 you can imagine in many positions, nobody
7 wants to say they are out there looking for
8 a job, not knowing if they're going to get
9 the job they are applying for. And because
10 of that, if they feel that their name is
11 going to be public, they will be very
12 hesitant to apply for that job.

13 So I do think this new law that's been
14 enacted is going to be a help for us to
15 broaden the pool of applicants, and we want
16 qualified people from throughout the
17 country to apply.

18 On the other side of that, I
19 understand the concern that people think
20 that this possibly can be cloaked in
21 secrecy. But I'd also ask you all to
22 look -- you know, now that Chair Colson is
23 here, I'm going to have to compliment him,
24 but he put together a very diverse search
25 committee.

1 And within that search committee, I
2 believe there is four faculty members,
3 there is two past chairs of the board,
4 there is folks from the foundation. So I
5 think within that, that should give a lot
6 of people some comfort as to who makes up
7 that search committee.

8 And then to the extent possible that
9 we can brief people without clearly
10 disclosing or identifying who the folks
11 that have given us their applications in
12 confidence, we will do that.

13 Dean, would you like to add anything?

14 MR. COLSON: No. I think I understand
15 the concern of faculty senate, and I think
16 that --

17 MR. TOVAR: Dean, you don't have a
18 mic.

19 MR. COLSON: I'm sorry. Let me see if
20 that works.

21 I understand that the concern of the
22 faculty senate, and I think that the search
23 committee, led by Roger, will do -- will
24 give you as much information as they can
25 while protecting the identities.

1 When putting together the committee, I
2 had in the back of my mind, I wanted the
3 faculty to have confidence in the committee
4 that we're searching for the next
5 president. That doesn't mean it was going
6 to be all faculty members, but I wanted
7 them to have confidence.

8 And I think -- you know, you can
9 second guess some of the decision, you know
10 somebody might have put together a
11 different committee. But I think, on
12 balance, this is a committee that everybody
13 can look at and say, you know, it's a
14 balanced committee.

15 MR. REINHOLD: I actually, I really
16 commend you on this. I think I mentioned
17 this at some point before when we met, this
18 is an excellent committee, I think. And I
19 tried to convey that message to my fellow
20 senators also.

21 Also, yesterday again, that we have
22 four faculty on the committee, and I
23 looked, actually, at some of the other
24 universities that are searching having two
25 or three right now. So I conveyed -- I did

1 convey this message.

2 And I think, also, the selection of
3 the other members on the committee, I
4 think, I recognized many of them, I know
5 many of them for a long time.

6 I know also Trustee Tovar, the Chair
7 of the committee, is someone who is really
8 devoted to our institution. I've known him
9 now for four years. So I do think that you
10 have put a very good committee together.
11 So, thank you.

12 MR. TOVAR: And again, to give folks
13 confidence, to me it's not only the four
14 from the faculty. It's the diversity of
15 the faculty that's on that committee as to
16 from the law school, the medical school,
17 your incoming president. So there's
18 diversity there.

19 And the other thing that I can assure
20 you, because I've seen these things play
21 out, is many times you will start a search
22 and they are predetermined. And I will
23 categorically tell you that it will be a
24 surprise to me who our next president will
25 be, because we want to go out there and

1 find the most amazing, dynamic leader that
2 fits into South Florida, that understands
3 the importance of this institution to South
4 Florida. It's the only public university
5 in Miami, and I can go on and on.

6 But I think we as a university, you
7 all as the faculty, have done an amazing
8 job as to where we're at, as to how we've
9 elevated our standing, our status. We have
10 somebody here from the medical school. I
11 mean, a very young medical school that
12 still needs to find its way, still needs to
13 develop a culture. So there's many moving
14 pieces here.

15 And so I think what we all hope for is
16 somebody that understands every piece of
17 this component and provides the appropriate
18 leadership to move us forward.

19 And again, as I mentioned many times
20 yesterday, I think whoever takes this
21 position, they are walking into an amazing
22 place, because I think we're in a great
23 place. We're moving forward. We've got
24 many things that I think still could be
25 elevated higher. So I'm excited to see who

1 the possible candidates could be.

2 Bill, would you add anything?

3 MR. FUNK: Sure. Just two quick
4 comments.

5 As Roger mentioned earlier, there is
6 the presidential search webpage. And in
7 addition to being a tool that we will use,
8 eventually the leadership statement will be
9 posted on that website for candidates. But
10 it's also a vehicle that we can use
11 periodically to update the university
12 community relative to the progress of the
13 search.

14 And I can see the opportunity will
15 arise where we can broadly indicate the
16 composition of the pool. You know we'll
17 never be able to give the kind of
18 information that would allow for specific
19 identification of the candidates, but I
20 think we can keep the university community
21 informed of, you know, roughly how many,
22 the diversity of the pool, the current
23 titles of many of the candidates.

24 And by the way, we'll be looking at
25 sitting presidents, sitting provosts, deans

1 of major disciplines. We're going to cast
2 a wide net and really look for the best
3 leader. So I do think that presidential
4 search page can be helpful.

5 The second thing, though, and I'd like
6 to reiterate today, is that we really
7 welcome the faculty to share with us any
8 nominations that they'd like to make.

9 The faculty obviously belong to
10 various associations, they meet for
11 conferences, they have colleagues
12 throughout the country. And if they will
13 engage those colleagues and ask them who
14 they might suggest to be a candidate for
15 our position, if they will share those
16 names with us, I can promise that we will
17 contact each and every one of those
18 nominees. And, you know, that's a way to
19 be truly involved in the search.

20 So help us build the pool. You know,
21 we'd like that support.

22 MR. REINHOLD: That's an excellent
23 suggestion.

24 I think I would like for both of you
25 -- you are probably going to do this, but

1 just when we have the listening session, I
2 think at 10 o'clock, to repeat those
3 statements, because I would assume we have
4 probably more people, hopefully, in the
5 room, but also more people online. I'm not
6 sure how many people we have right now
7 online.

8 MR. FUNK: You bet. We will indeed.

9 MR. REINHOLD: Bring that point up
10 again. I think a very good, very good
11 suggestion that faculty know they can also
12 take part in that, in looking for
13 candidates.

14 MR. FUNK: You bet.

15 Roger and I were commenting yesterday
16 with the series of these listening
17 sessions, we find ourselves saying some of
18 the same things time again because we want
19 to get the same message to all the groups.
20 And we'll be delighted at 10 o'clock to
21 repeat those ideas.

22 MR. TOVAR: Yes.

23 Sofia, any questions or comments
24 online?

25 MS. TRELLES: Sorry. I'm having

1 technology issues.

2 We do not have any questions at the
3 moment, but I do want to share that we have
4 16 members of our faculty senate with us on
5 our virtual platform.

6 So if anybody has any comments or
7 questions that they would like to share
8 with the members that are here present
9 today, please use the platform so that we
10 can hear your voice and understand what you
11 would like in the next FIU president.

12 MR. TOVAR: So any other comments?

13 Joerg, you're approaching the
14 microphone. The floor is yours.

15 MR. REINHOLD: I'm just checking with
16 anyone. I asked colleagues, even this
17 morning, that they can also share comments
18 with me. I'm just checking my email. I
19 have received, also, no email right now.

20 MR. TOVAR: I'll make a brief comment
21 because it was interesting yesterday that,
22 you know, sometimes you get comments and
23 they are very much aligned.

24 And so last night, our last session
25 was with the students, and they were

1 interesting because they talked about the
2 importance of the president being engaged
3 on campus, walking through campus, being
4 visible.

5 And one of the things that I have
6 talked about numerous times is, you know,
7 we have the main campus, which is the Mitch
8 Maidique campus, we have the North Miami
9 Beach campus, which is our secondary
10 campus. Then we have a lot of satellite
11 locations, and I won't even be able to
12 remember them all. But you look at the
13 Broward campus with Broward Community
14 College, you look at our marine science in
15 the Keys, you look at what's being built
16 over in Coconut Grove, that it's taken
17 awhile, but it's almost come to completion
18 over at the Kampong, and then the museums
19 and everything else.

20 And so one of the things I would
21 encourage all of the leadership here to do
22 is to go out there and visit these
23 different places.

24 You think of the engineering center,
25 you know, I visited there a couple of years

1 ago, and it was because of the student body
2 had identified things that weren't the
3 condition that they should be, the
4 bathrooms, some of the lighting, some of
5 those things, and we got those things
6 addressed.

7 But again, I think the future
8 president wears so many hats. And even
9 visiting the different schools within this
10 campus, if you go to the business school,
11 the medical school, the engineering school,
12 and there's so many buildings, I think
13 yesterday somebody mentioned there was 100
14 and some-odd buildings, and you learn so
15 much as you walk around, as you visit, as
16 you talk to people.

17 So one of my goals outside of
18 obviously the background, the expertise, is
19 that personality; is to somebody that wants
20 to be out there and engage and talk to
21 different people. It could be the faculty,
22 it could be the folks that are -- that are
23 cutting our grass that do such a hard job.
24 And so that was mentioned.

25 And then another thing that was

1 mentioned yesterday numerous times is
2 somebody that can engage in this community,
3 because we have -- to me, this is the most
4 amazing, dynamic city in this country, if
5 not the world. But it is something that is
6 not something for everyone.

7 And so we, as a committee and then the
8 board as they look at the candidates that
9 the committee takes to the board, is to
10 consider how that person fits into this
11 community. It could be somebody from here,
12 but it could be somebody from outside that
13 has that type of personality that you can
14 put down in a place and they are going to
15 thrive and assimilate and feel at home.
16 Because again, the president's job is many
17 constituencies, and many people that the
18 president will need to interact with,
19 engage with, win over.

20 And then the other thing that we
21 mentioned many times yesterday that we
22 ended up in the same place, is, part of the
23 job for the president is going out there
24 and telling the FIU story. There's people
25 that live within a mile from here, but they

1 don't visit this campus.

2 So, once we get people on this campus
3 or once we tell them the story, they are
4 usually pretty amazed and proud that FIU is
5 in the Miami community.

6 So I would just mention that as
7 somewhat of a recap of yesterday. And
8 again, it's one of the important points
9 that came out yesterday in our numerous
10 discussions.

11 Sofia, do you have anything?

12 MS. TRELLES: We just received a
13 question.

14 So, regarding challenges, I think that
15 there are a few at the moment.

16 One, reinvigorating the community;
17 two, advancing equity and inclusion; and
18 three, faculty concerns relating to
19 academic freedom, tenured, and employment
20 security for teaching professors which are
21 non-tenured or tenured track.

22 Also, it would be helpful if the next
23 president had experienced advocating on
24 behalf of the university and its
25 constituents as a public institution.

1 MR. TOVAR: Sofia, why don't you -- we
2 have time and we have our chair here, why
3 don't we break those out into four
4 questions, and then we could take turns
5 giving our point of view, and it's only our
6 point of view. So let's start with the
7 first one.

8 MS. TRELLES: Let's do it.

9 Regarding challenges, I think that
10 there are a few at the moment. FIU has a
11 challenge with reinvigorating the
12 community.

13 MR. TOVAR: Do you want to take that,
14 Dean?

15 MR. COLSON: I don't know if I agree
16 with the observation that we need to
17 reinvigorate the community. I find the
18 community pretty invigorated.

19 The people involved at FIU love FIU,
20 and I think that it's a passion. When the
21 student body loves the place, the alumni
22 appear to be very proud of being Panthers,
23 they haven't -- maybe we haven't done a
24 good job of that, of keeping them involved,
25 like we can do a better job of that.

1 But there's a real sense of -- that
2 FIU is -- you know, I've been saying this,
3 we're the economic engine in this town.
4 And I'm very proud of the fact that that's
5 even going to become more true over the
6 next decade. We're making the big
7 difference. We're supplying the teachers,
8 the nurses, the government workers, we're
9 -- you know, FIU and South Florida are
10 almost one and the same now.

11 Now, we've gone through a tough couple
12 of months, but I think we've done it, you
13 know, as well as it could be done. And I
14 think that we're -- the university, the
15 trains are running on time. I think that
16 current administration is doing a fabulous
17 job, and I'm very excited about where FIU
18 is right now.

19 MR. FUNK: I would just add that, not
20 in the sense of reinvigorating the
21 community, but rather, we talked yesterday
22 about how the search is more than just
23 finding a person to fill the position.
24 And, you know, I think the search process
25 that we've begun is an opportunity for the

1 university to build excitement about the
2 next president, to have involvement about
3 how the search is conducted.

4 So in that sense, I think the search
5 itself will be -- will add to the
6 excitement on the campus, in the university
7 community.

8 Yes, ma'am?

9 AUDIENCE SPEAKER: So I'm from the
10 medical school and I also teach ethics. So
11 a lot of those points that you mentioned
12 resonate.

13 I think the person may be, and from
14 the way I feel, it's not just
15 reinvigorating the community at large, but
16 reinvigorating our community, the faculty
17 members, the physicians, the connection
18 between one and the other, and between the
19 different schools. We are a city. So
20 we're not just a university, we're a city.
21 We can provide almost everything.

22 And sometimes -- and totally personal,
23 we feel outsourced in each place, and I
24 understand. My daughter loves marine
25 biology, so I know the one in Biscayne. I

1 love multiple places. It is hard to get
2 that communication, and it is hard to get
3 faculty between the other.

4 So I think one of the challenges for
5 the president would be to get the family
6 together; right? To get all the different
7 parts that are fabulous on their own
8 together, to remember that, and what we
9 serve is our city, and a lot of
10 underserved, that we're one of the most
11 diverse universities, and put that as a
12 forefront to keep going.

13 MR. TOVAR: And I would add to that,
14 that I think it's the quality of the leader
15 that you choose. And you really do, and
16 it's a little cliché, but you set the tone
17 at the top. And it's in any organization
18 that you oversee.

19 If the person at the top handles
20 things in a certain way, talks to people in
21 a certain way, and addresses things in a
22 certain way, it flows down.

23 And in this particular situation, you
24 start with the president, and then the
25 deans. So you've got to set that tone,

1 you've got to set the environment, the
2 vibe.

3 But I do think, and I don't want to
4 lose this, we're at a good place to begin
5 with. It's not that the house is on fire.
6 We're at a very good place. And every time
7 I come on this campus, I feel very good.

8 When you go to a graduation and you
9 see those students, and you know what's
10 amazing is that I'll go to one or two
11 graduations a semester, but there's usually
12 eight to twelve of these commencement
13 exercises. But there's never been an
14 occasion when you go there and you see
15 those students walking across the stage and
16 you see that determination and those
17 smiles, and the work that they have put
18 into it and the type and caliber of
19 students that we put out.

20 And then when you go out into South
21 Florida and into Miami, and throughout
22 Florida, you talk to the president of
23 Florida Power & Light, and I forget what
24 the percentage was, but he has more FIU
25 graduates than any other university.

1 And so we make a difference in this
2 community throughout Florida, throughout
3 the country.

4 You go to DC, you see how many staff
5 members and different people in DC that are
6 FIU graduates.

7 So the university is making a
8 difference. I think it will -- that will
9 continue growing. But again, we're always
10 looking to do even better, and that's why I
11 think we have a great opportunity here with
12 our future president. So, appreciate that
13 comment.

14 Sofia, what's the second?

15 MS. TRELLES: So the second portion of
16 this would be advancing equity and
17 inclusion.

18 MR. TOVAR: Listen, we've talked about
19 that a few times yesterday and, you know,
20 I've looked at the numbers.

21 I think we -- as a university, we do
22 pretty good. I think we probably have, as
23 a student body, the most minorities of any
24 university in the country. When you look
25 at the percentage of black students, I

1 think, outside of FAMU and FAU, I think
2 we're the third largest. As far as a
3 percentage of the total student body, I
4 think our percentage of black students are
5 12 percent. Most universities in the state
6 hover around 5 to 6 percent. So I think we
7 do well there.

8 I think we could still do better,
9 because the percentage of black people in
10 our community, I believe, is 15,
11 16 percent. So I still think there's room
12 for improvement there.

13 Where I still think we can do much
14 better is in our deans and our associate
15 deans, and then when you get into faculty,
16 and then our tenured faculty. So we had a
17 few discussions there yesterday.

18 One of the comments I said yesterday,
19 and we as a board, I think, and I would
20 invite Dean to comment on this, we have to
21 be careful because we have a shared
22 governance. And I think the board has been
23 respectful as to the faculty process as to
24 how you get tenure. And one of the
25 comments I made yesterday is, every time

1 that I've been at a meeting, and it's been
2 four years now that I've been on the board
3 and we voted on tenure, there's never been
4 one objection as to anyone that's gotten
5 tenure.

6 Now, I would also invite whoever to,
7 if there's something that we as a board
8 could influence, to improve what we're
9 doing in the area of advancing minorities
10 within our faculty, I think everybody would
11 be receptive.

12 I would tell you, it would appear to
13 me that it's an area that needs to be
14 looked at, improved upon. But we also have
15 to be careful that we don't get into the
16 game of just poaching people from other
17 universities. I think there's a
18 development issue.

19 And so how do we determine what that
20 issue is, and then determine what we can do
21 to change that? And so I think from
22 everything I see, we would all be receptive
23 to that. So that's how I would answer
24 that.

25 Dean, would you add to that? I think

1 it's very important.

2 MR. COLSON: I spent a lot of time on
3 this tenure issue the last year working
4 with the legislature and trying to -- in my
5 view, it's not a huge problem in our state,
6 the fact that we have tenure. There's some
7 issues that could be tweaked and fixed, and
8 we can work around the edges, but it's a
9 process that has worked well, as far as I
10 can tell.

11 In the years I've been involved on
12 university boards, I have never once
13 questioned the decision about the merits of
14 a particular faculty member who's up for
15 tenure. It's not -- I'm not going to ever
16 question a recommendation for the president
17 and the provost about someone's
18 qualifications as a chemist or a physicist
19 or a Shakespearian scholar.

20 I do think it's my job to say, who's
21 not making tenure and why aren't they
22 making tenure? Are we giving those people
23 the support they need? What is the
24 diversity of our tenure candidates at the
25 beginning of the process and at the end of

1 the pipeline.

2 You look at our situation here and,
3 you know, our demographics are such that
4 we're low on black professors, we're low on
5 Hispanic professors. Is that a pipeline
6 problem?

7 I agree with Roger, poaching from FSU
8 a black professor in chemistry doesn't
9 improve the overall situation. We've just
10 moved one black professor out of
11 Tallahassee and moved them to Miami. Might
12 have improved their situation, but doesn't
13 help solve the problem. And a university
14 like FIU ought to be thinking big picture
15 about how to solve this problem.

16 Tenure has some issues. You talk to
17 people in Tallahassee, and they are
18 concerned that -- and the process when it's
19 100 years ago when all this started, you
20 had mandatory retirement. And now you give
21 somebody tenure, they could be tenured
22 until they are 90 years-old, and what does
23 that do for your pipeline of younger
24 faculty trying to come up? You know, these
25 are issues that are fascinating to talk

1 about, and I'd love to talk about them at
2 length with anybody on the faculty, but we
3 have to -- somebody's going to have to
4 address that.

5 I personally have thought that the
6 universities in Florida should not
7 necessarily take the lead on tenure reform
8 in the country. Let's let Harvard take the
9 lead, let's let Berkley take the lead. And
10 then we -- because we need to recruit and
11 we -- right now we need to be out there
12 offering the -- we want to recruit the
13 best, I think we need to offer the same
14 type of packages that are being offered
15 elsewhere in the country.

16 MR. TOVAR: Bill, were you going to
17 say something?

18 MR. FUNK: No. I'm good.

19 MS. TRELLES: So before we get to the
20 next portion of that question, I did want
21 to provide a couple of comments from our
22 audience regarding the statements that we
23 just made.

24 The first one is, I agree with Dean.
25 There is a lot of love for the university

1 and its leadership. Also agree that the
2 challenges of the past few months have been
3 very difficult.

4 Yes, the term community was in
5 reference to the university community.
6 Yes, I agree with the current speaker,
7 bring the fabulous components together.
8 The quality of the work experience and
9 environment has declined.

10 Additionally, this is a separate
11 comment, the comment regarding equity and
12 inclusion was not intended to be about
13 diversity. The issues are inclusion and
14 opportunities for diverse constituents.
15 There are also concerns about gender
16 equity, faculty, not students, including
17 particularly compensation equity.

18 MR. TOVAR: Well, as to compensation
19 equity, I do not know the statistics on
20 that, that's the first I've heard of it as
21 far as gender compensation equity. I
22 think -- I'd be glad to be briefed on it
23 and understand it and understand what the
24 concern is.

25 Dean, would you add to that?

1 MR. COLSON: I would.

2 There is no place in our university
3 community for discrimination of that type.
4 And so we just need to -- you know, if
5 that's happening, we need to fix it, and so
6 it's not something that I'm aware of.

7 There is, you know, there has been
8 overall concern about the use of adjuncts
9 and how poorly they are paid. And we did
10 do -- we came up with a teaching position
11 that pays a salary, I think it was two
12 years ago, that is an improvement. You
13 know, these are big, big issues. And so I
14 think we can improve on these things. We
15 need new ideas.

16 You know, one of the problems with
17 universities is you get stagnant, and you
18 need new people to come in here, and that's
19 one of the negatives of keeping your
20 university administration 10 years,
21 20 years, is that you don't get new ideas
22 coming in. And you tend to recirculate the
23 same ideas that happened the last time, you
24 know, the problem arose seven years before,
25 you know. If you want new ideas on how to

1 solve the parking problem, don't bring the
2 person who did it seven years ago who
3 didn't solve the parking problem.

4 So these are important discussions,
5 and I welcome those discussions.

6 MR. TOVAR: Jorge wanted to make a
7 comment.

8 MR. REINHOLD: Just as I think, sort
9 of, what I'm getting from this was, because
10 you are having a lot of discussions here
11 amongst ourselves, but I --

12 MR. TOVAR: We're supposed to be
13 talking about the president, but this is
14 good.

15 MR. REINHOLD: We were supposed to be
16 talking -- yes, that's good.

17 So I think what we should take from
18 that question is that what we are looking
19 for in a new leader is someone with an open
20 mind coming in and reaching out to the
21 constituencies that are working on the
22 issues of equity and inclusion, and willing
23 to educate themselves about this with an
24 open mind. We might not necessarily see
25 the issue, but there are people at the

1 university that are seeing the issue, and
2 they want to work on this.

3 So what we need in a leader is to be
4 open minded, and go out and talk to the
5 different constituencies once they come in
6 and educate themselves.

7 I do have, also -- I'm not sure
8 whether you have any other questions in the
9 pipeline.

10 MS. TRELLES: I actually do.

11 Is it okay if we just provide an
12 opportunity for our virtual audience one
13 more question?

14 MR. REINHOLD: I have also, then -- if
15 you run out, I have a few people that have
16 sent me stuff, too.

17 MS. TRELLES: So our next question
18 from our virtual audience is:

19 Good morning. Thank you for this
20 opportunity. FIU is a great place to work.
21 The people make this place great. I think
22 a huge challenge for FIU students and staff
23 is the cost of living in Miami.

24 How will that be addressed when
25 seeking the next president?

1 MR. TOVAR: Well, it's interesting
2 because I think that that discussion has
3 been had, and it's throughout Miami and
4 South Florida.

5 As a matter of fact, yesterday I was
6 up -- yesterday morning I was up in Port
7 St. Lucie with the new Center for
8 Translational Science, and it's amazing all
9 the housing that's going up around that
10 center.

11 And one of my comments was, well, this
12 is more affordable. And somebody
13 immediately chimed in and said, no, no.
14 It's very expensive. And so very expensive
15 also becomes relative because, obviously,
16 it's not as expensive there as it is here.

17 I do think that it's something that
18 most universities see as a challenge.
19 We've heard about different models and
20 different universities. There has been
21 talk here as to whether there is an
22 opportunity to find a place to build
23 housing for faculty, especially faculty
24 that are starting out.

25 So I think that is something that the

1 new president needs to look at, see where
2 there's an opportunity to do something
3 either here, possibly in the area of
4 Sweetwater. But again, I think we need
5 something that's viable brought to us as a
6 board to say this can help address an issue
7 that does exist and see if it makes sense.

8 So that's what I would say there.

9 MR. FUNK: You had additional comments
10 you would like to make?

11 MR. REINHOLD: I do have some. Let's
12 do this in order that I get them.

13 One was actually a comment which would
14 have been my next question, if we wouldn't
15 have started that, relating to that, and
16 the colleague also alluded to that is, we
17 are living in the climate right now where
18 there is some political interference in how
19 are we running the university. It's
20 apparent. There are laws being made. This
21 is not just a recent occurrence here.
22 There have been specific laws about
23 curriculum and so on, on the Florida
24 Statutes, and that's a concern for some of
25 us.

1 And my colleague actually phrased this
2 the best, better than I could have done.
3 The president needs to have the temperament
4 to defend the mission of the university
5 against --

6 MR. COLSON: I'm sorry?

7 MR. REINHOLD: The new president needs
8 to have the temperament to defend the
9 mission of the university against political
10 interference of the -- I think that's also
11 something we expect from the board of
12 trustees, but also from the president to
13 shield the university against political
14 interference and where politics should stay
15 out of the university business.

16 So I think that's what we also would
17 like to see in a leader.

18 MR. TOVAR: Joerg, the thing I will
19 tell you is, I hear that repeated time and
20 time again. And I know what went on at --
21 you know, from just hearing the news at
22 University of Florida and some of the
23 concerns there. I haven't seen that here,
24 and I think sometimes we see these enemies
25 out there. The politicians have every

1 right to voice their concerns as to what
2 they perceive, what they think, what they
3 hear. But at the end of the day, that has
4 not translated into any interference as to
5 what this university is doing or what the
6 professors are teaching.

7 The only thing I will mention to you
8 is to encourage every one of the professors
9 when they are giving a class that requires
10 people with an opinion on one side or the
11 other, that they make sure that they are
12 giving all sides an opportunity to speak
13 and be heard and respected, and that no
14 student ever has a concern that, based on
15 their opinion, their grade will suffer or
16 they are looked at differently.

17 So I'd be the first to tell you that I
18 don't want anyone interfering into
19 viewpoints being spoken. This is a place
20 to educate, and education is learning not
21 one side, but all sides. But I don't think
22 -- I haven't seen what I think that
23 perception is. But again, I'd be glad to
24 hear anyone's point of view if there's
25 something different that maybe I haven't

1 been informed about.

2 MR. REINHOLD: I think that the
3 statement -- let's look at the statement as
4 that the faculty need to have trust in the
5 new leader that this also continues.

6 I do agree with you that a lot of this
7 has not come down to us at FIU, but the
8 perception is there.

9 MR. TOVAR: Right.

10 MR. REINHOLD: And a strong leader
11 should also convey the message to the
12 faculty that --

13 MR. TOVAR: Well, and for the faculty
14 to have that confidence. I agree.

15 MR. REINHOLD: -- that confidence. I
16 think that's what that request alludes to.

17 MR. TOVAR: Dean, were you going to
18 say something?

19 MR. COLSON: I was going to add that I
20 have never been called by the governor's
21 office on an issue in front of our board,
22 and it just hasn't happened.

23 When we had the issue -- when we had
24 the situation with President Rosenberg
25 leaving, there were immediately rumors,

1 some started by the faculty, that he was
2 forced out because Governor DeSantis put
3 pressure on me and other trustees. It just
4 wasn't true. And within 48 hours,
5 everybody knew it wasn't true.

6 But that says something about, you
7 know, there's a perception out there that
8 there's great influence being exerted by
9 Tallahassee on our university, and I have
10 not seen that.

11 Now, Roger and I and other trustees,
12 we spend a lot of time in Tallahassee
13 trying to make things go smoothly.
14 President Rosenberg was good at trying to
15 walk that tightrope between assuring their
16 faculty everything is all right and making
17 sure the politicians understand we're not
18 trying to indoctrinate our students into a
19 particular political philosophy.

20 We need someone with those skills as
21 our next leader. The job requires that.
22 And if you can't do that balance, if you
23 can't, then, you know, you are not the
24 right person to be our next leader.

25 MR. REINHOLD: Next question is a

1 change of topic.

2 Given that the composition of the
3 search committee does not have many members
4 who represent the science and engineering
5 professions, what will be the priority of
6 supporting those disciplines in the
7 selection of a new president for FIU?

8 MR. COLSON: I'm not sure I understood
9 the question.

10 MR. REINHOLD: So it alludes to that
11 on the search committee, the science and
12 engineering professions are not
13 represented. And what would be the
14 priority of supporting those disciplines in
15 the selection of a new president for FIU?

16 I don't know the exact background of
17 the question.

18 MR. TOVAR: I would tell you to look
19 at the -- of the four faculty, two of them
20 are from the science side.

21 MR. COLSON: Well, you know, one is a
22 physician, and one is in disaster recovery
23 and management. And I guess, technically,
24 he's tenured in the Green School. But I
25 can tell you as putting all this together,

1 there are a lot of different areas out
2 there, you couldn't cover them all.

3 I can think of nothing more important
4 than somebody who is, for our next leader,
5 understanding the importance of building up
6 our funded research and making this a great
7 research center. Necessarily, that
8 includes engineering and the sciences.

9 It would also be great if we could
10 build up the medical school research, which
11 is still in its infant stages, because
12 right now we're at 230, \$240 million with
13 very little from the medical school. If we
14 are able to jump start that medical school,
15 we could be at \$400 million in the next
16 seven or eight years, and that puts you in
17 a different level.

18 So we worked hard to get the
19 \$33 million for the first engineering
20 building Phase I. We just got a second
21 grant -- or we have to assume the governor
22 signs the budget for another \$33 million
23 for building No. 2. I mean, we're
24 committed to engineering. And so, I don't
25 know, maybe I should have said that -- you

1 know, I shouldn't have had somebody in
2 disaster management, I should have had
3 somebody in engineering. But I was trying
4 to make a statement about the environment
5 and resiliency and, you know, that was what
6 I was thinking when I was putting all this
7 together.

8 MR. TOVAR: But to alleviate,
9 somewhat, of that concern, and as to the
10 importance of this science, as I have
11 already mentioned, you know, yesterday I
12 was at the ribbon cutting up in Torrey
13 Pines for the Center for Translational
14 Science. And, you know, to add that
15 facility and the research that is going to
16 go on -- that's already going on there, and
17 that's going to go on there, but to me what
18 was key yesterday being there -- and I met
19 Dr. Black who is heading up that center --
20 already seeing the collaboration between
21 Dr. Black, Dr. Cendan, Dr. Guilarte, so we
22 have health science, we have our medical
23 school, we have our research center. I
24 think that's very important for people to
25 start talking, collaborating, and I could

1 already see that going on.

2 And I think that gets back to how the
3 deans work together, and then the
4 leadership that they get from the
5 president, to make sure that the different
6 heads of these schools are working
7 together, talking, figuring out what makes
8 sense so that we really leverage what we
9 have.

10 So it is very important. Whoever is
11 making that comment, maybe, doesn't see it.
12 But I agree with Dean, and I don't know how
13 he put the -- because it's very hard to put
14 a committee together that has every --
15 representation from every facet of a
16 university this size. But I understand the
17 concern and the point, but I think the
18 focus will still be there.

19 MR. REINHOLD: Yeah. I think you
20 answered very nicely.

21 MR. TOVAR: Thank you. Thank you.

22 MR. REINHOLD: There's -- actually,
23 it's not really a comment or a question.
24 The question is, what's the process for
25 nominating someone to the search committee?

1 There's probably a contact on the website?

2 MR. TOVAR: I'm sorry, I didn't hear.

3 MR. REINHOLD: What is the process --
4 we talked earlier about faculty also being
5 able to reach out and suggest -- make a
6 nomination.

7 So the question is, what is the
8 process of nominating?

9 MR. FUNK: You will find when the ad
10 is published -- and I think it was placed
11 just yesterday and will begin to appear on
12 the online version of the Chronicles of
13 Higher Education, and then the other
14 publications will follow. Our address and
15 contact information will be in the ad.

16 It will also be in the leadership
17 statement that will be posted to the
18 presidential search page. And an email is
19 all we need, a quick telephone call if
20 that's more convenient. I think our fax
21 number will appear as well.

22 And any name we receive, honestly,
23 will immediately be posted on the master
24 log. Those individuals will be contacted
25 and informed that they have been nominated

1 for the position. They will be referred to
2 the presidential search page and the
3 leadership statement. And then there will
4 be a series of followup calls until they
5 either say yes, no, or after four or five
6 followups if they haven't responded, we'll
7 assume they are telling us that they are
8 not interested.

9 But really, we welcome those
10 nominations and we will repeat that during
11 the 10 o'clock meeting.

12 One other quick add on relative to the
13 discipline of the candidates or the search
14 committee, there will be a question during
15 the interviews of the candidates about
16 their involvement in cross-campus kinds of
17 activities and interdisciplinary research.
18 I think that will be one of the things that
19 the committee will look to, even if someone
20 is a dean of a particular school, how have
21 they collaborated with other deans across
22 campus. And I think that goes into the
23 psychology of selection.

24 And we've also found that no
25 discipline has a monopoly on leadership.

1 There are good leaders from every
2 discipline, and we are looking for those
3 good leaders.

4 But thank you for all of your
5 questions.

6 MS. TRELLES: I just wanted to share
7 that, as we wrap up our first listening
8 session of the day, that any comments or
9 questions that we receive, we will be
10 making a note of them. Even if we,
11 unfortunately, didn't get to answer them or
12 comment on them during our first listening
13 session, we are keeping a record of every
14 comment and question.

15 MR. TOVAR: Thank you, Sofia.

16 I think we have run out of time.

17 So our university-wide listening
18 session will take place at 10:00 a.m. today
19 to get input from our students, our
20 faculty, and staff regarding the qualities
21 and qualifications we want in our future
22 president.

23 Please, join us today at 10:00 a.m.
24 here in this room for a university-wide
25 listening session.

1 So thank you very much. Thanks for
2 your participation. Thank you.

3 (Thereupon, the proceedings were
4 adjourned at 9:00 a.m.)

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STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE)

I, Aurora C. Sloan, Registered Professional
Court Reporter, State of Florida at Large,
certify that I was authorized to and did
stenographically report the foregoing
proceedings and that the transcript is a true
and complete record of my stenographic notes.

Dated this 18th day of April, 2022.



Aurora C. Sloan, Florida Professional Reporter

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