



Government Relations Advisory Committee Minutes

Minutes of March 20, 2022

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Present: Larry Gant (Chair), Chris Kolb (VP for Government Relations), Michael Atzmon (SACUA Liaison), Marisa Conte, Justin Hodge, Daniil Manaenkov, Michael Thompson, Ruth Person, Jacob Pearlman, Nell Dority (Chief of Staff for Government Relations) Elizabeth Devlin

Absent: Erin Kahle, Okeoma Mmeje, Renee Nguyen, Megan Tompkins-Stange, Stilyana Mechkova

1:01pm Chair Gant called the meeting to order. Chair Gant introduced the first topic that was requested by a committee member and turned the floor over to VP Kolb.

Topic 1: Regent Election Process and Preview of 2022 Regent Race

VP Kolb gave the committee an overview of the regent election process. He indicated that regents are elected for an eight-year period, with elections each even year so there are overlapping terms. This year there are two regents whose terms are up: Michael J. Behm and Katherine E. White, both Democrats. Regents for the University of Michigan, Michigan State and Wayne State are nominated by the state parties at their conventions. VP Kolb shared that the Democratic Convention will be held April 9 in Detroit and the GOP will be doing their state convention, April 22 and 23 in Grand Rapids. The change from fall to spring allows the candidates to campaign for a longer period versus the late August early September timeline for statewide candidates.

VP Kolb shared that he anticipated two Democrats will be renominated by the state party. He knows of two candidates so far that are actively campaigning, former regent Andrea Fisher Newman and Lauren Hunts.

The committee asked if there was any kind of overt campaigning by the candidates. VP Kolb shared that the campaigns are typically low key, and he was unsure if there will be many forums held for them around the university.

The committee discussed what type of issues would be raised during the campaign. They discussed if issues would be specific to the university or also include broader concerns.

The committee discussed straight ticket voting and how it was promoted in the vote ballot initiative of 2018 as part of the state constitution. The committee discussed the different systems for electing regents in different states.

VP Kolb shared with the committee that the budget process has started at the state level. The governor was presented with her budget in February. In April, the legislature will announce their target budget numbers. The governor initiated a 5% ongoing increase to operational base, a one-time increase of 5% to all universities, and \$200 million for



maintenance efforts for universities and community colleges. The money will be dispersed based upon enrollment numbers.

VP Kolb indicated, in the Labor and Economic Opportunity budget, there is over \$200 million in appropriations, 130 million of which is for a University of Michigan electric vehicle center proposal. He will provide more information as the budget process moves forward.

Topic 2: Future Items

Chair Gant invited the committee to send future agenda topics to him for consideration for the next meeting's agenda.

1:33pm: The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Devlin
Faculty Senate Office