

MINUTES OF MEETING OF BOARD OF REGENTS

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

March 8, 1982

Required statutory notice having been given, a special meeting of the Board of Regents of Western Kentucky University was held on Monday, March 8, 1982, at 10 a.m., CST, in the Regents Conference Room of the Wetherby Administration Building on the Western campus. Mr. Joe Bill Campbell, Chairman, presided.

The meeting opened with a prayer of invocation by Dr. John D. Minton, Vice President for Student Affairs.

Miss Sandra Kay Norfleet, a senior at Western Kentucky University from Middletown, Kentucky, elected on a runoff ballot February 16, 1982, to fill the unexpired term of Miss Marcel Bush, qualified as student regent by taking the Constitutional Oath. The Oath was administered by Mrs. Liz Esters, Notary Public for the Commonwealth of Kentucky and Secretary to the Board. Miss Norfleet was welcomed to membership on the Board of Regents.

The following members were present:

Dr. William G. Buckman
Mr. Joe Bill Campbell
Mr. Ronald W. Clark
Mr. John David Cole
Mr. Joseph Iracane
Miss Sandra Kay Norfleet
Mr. Ronald G. Sheffer

Absent were Mr. Michael N. Harreld, Mrs. Patsy Judd, and Mr. Julius E. Price, Sr.

Also present, in addition to Dr. Minton and Mrs. Esters, were Dr. Donald W. Zacharias, President; Dr. James L. Davis, Vice President for Academic Affairs; Mr. Harry K. Largen, Vice President for Business Affairs and Treasurer; Dr. Paul B. Cook, Assistant to the President for Resources Management and Director of the Budget; Dr. Randall Capps, Assistant to the President and Parliamentarian; Mr. William E. Bivin, University Attorney; Mr. Fred Hensley, Director of Public Information; Mr. John Oldham, Athletic Director; and Mr. Jimmy Feix, Head Football Coach.

Having been sworn in as a member of the Board, Miss Norfleet was appointed to serve on the Academics Committee, the Committee on Student Affairs, and the International Education Committee.

In compliance with the Bylaws of the Board of Regents, the re-organization of the Board followed. Motion for the election of Mrs. Elizabeth Esters as Secretary was made by Dr. Buckman, seconded by Mr. Clark, and carried by voice vote. Mr. Largen was reappointed Treasurer, and Dr. Capps was renamed Parliamentarian by Chairman Campbell.

The purpose of the special meeting, as stated by Chairman Campbell, was to give formal consideration to the invitation extended to Western Kentucky University to join the Sun Belt Conference. He noted that the issue had been reviewed by the Athletics Committee earlier in the morning and asked Mr. Ronald Clark, Chairman, for a report from the committee. A summary follows:

Athletics Committee (ad hoc) - Mr. Ronald W. Clark, Chairman; Mr. John David Cole; Mr. Joseph Iracane; Mr. Julius E. Price, Sr.; Mr. Ronald G. Sheffer - The Chairman reported that the committee met earlier in the morning with committee members David Cole, Joseph Iracane, and Ronald Sheffer in attendance. (Julius Price was absent due to recent surgery.) The purpose of the meeting was to review the recommendation of President Zacharias which follows:

Recommendation

President Zacharias recommends that Western Kentucky University withdraw from the Ohio Valley Conference and accept membership in the Sun Belt Conference, effective May 31, 1982.

Background

Western Kentucky University has been notified by Mr. Vic Bubas, Commissioner of the Sun Belt Conference, that the membership of the conference has voted unanimously to invite Western to join the Sun Belt Conference beginning with the 1982-83 season. Ohio Valley Conference rules permit a member to withdraw from the conference only at a regular meeting (Article VII, Section 4). The next regular meeting of the Ohio Valley Conference is May 26-27, 1982.

The Sun Belt Conference membership initiation fee is \$50,000. In addition, the conference requires a new member to purchase a share of the conference's budget for the coming year. That purchase may be paid for over a two- to three-year period.

The Athletic Committee unanimously passed and recommended to the Board for its approval the recommendation as submitted.

Motion for approval of the recommendation was made by Mr. Clark and seconded by Mr. Cole.

Noting that each member would have an opportunity to discuss, explain, or express their feelings on the vote, Chairman Campbell asked President Zacharias for his thoughts and comments.

President Zacharias commented that he had already shared most of his thoughts but wanted to emphasize two or three points for the record.

"This is a move that is made after careful consideration and a lot of conferring regarding the impact it will have on the athletic program," he noted, and added that "everyone within the administration at the University sees this as a move that is based upon the success which Western has enjoyed as a member of the Ohio Valley Conference and that it in no way is an expression, nor should it be interpreted as an expression, of dissatisfaction with any of the members of the Ohio Valley Conference or with the Commissioner." He felt the Ohio Valley Conference has one of the finest commissioners in the country who has worked extremely hard to promote the conference and to keep it in a strong position. President Zacharias noted that the University had enjoyed, as a charter member of the Ohio Valley Conference, a tremendous, competitive, and successful relationship with the other members of the conference and expressed the desire to continue that relationship with those schools with the hope that it would be very positive.

He indicated that when looking at the kinds of things that were happening in the NCAA and in examining the financing of the athletic program, this move was felt to be timely for Western Kentucky University. Dr. Zacharias commented, "We are at a period of success in our athletic programs, and that is a success that we want to continue to promote." "The Sun Belt Conference," he noted, "represents the best opportunity for Western to meet those various problems."

Dr. Zacharias addressed the requirement of the \$50,000 initiation fee into the conference as noted in the background material. In addition, the conference prepares its budget a year in advance; therefore, it would be necessary for Western to purchase its share of the budget for 1982-83. It was noted that, in the process of making that purchase (the amount is not yet determined), payment could be made over a two- to three-year period and should not work any budgetary hardship on Western in making the transition. In November, 1982, the Sun Belt Conference would distribute any money over and beyond the expenditures to members of the conference. Western would not be eligible to receive any of that money because it would be based on revenue for the current year. In the following year (November, 1983), Western would be eligible to receive a share of any dividends that may have come to the Sun Belt Conference at that time.

Another important consideration was the extremely attractive media package that the Sun Belt Conference had put together in its short

history which offers tremendous opportunities for promotion not only of the athletic program but, more importantly, the entire university and its programs throughout a wider geographical area of the country. It is anticipated that, within a short period of time, Western will be involved with national media coverage.

Responding to a question from Chairman Campbell regarding the proposed effective date, President Zacharias confirmed May 31 as the date for the change. He noted that the rules of the Ohio Valley Conference would permit a member to withdraw only at a regular, scheduled meeting of the conference, and the next regular meeting is May 26-27 in Nashville. Action would be taken at that time on the request to withdraw from the conference.

In conclusion, President Zacharias stated he had learned from the incoming President of the Sun Belt Conference, Dr. Jerry Young of University of Alabama-Birmingham, that Western would be invited to the Sun Belt's annual meeting in mid-May, a week or two prior to the Ohio Valley Conference meeting. Western would be invited as a special guest and would be given an opportunity to discuss the planning of the conference for the next year but would not be eligible to vote.

Following an invitation from Chairman Campbell for additional comments or questions, Mr. Cole noted "The primary purpose of this University is academics." "Athletics," he stressed, "serves to promote and enhance the academic programs of the University." He felt the move to be a wise and correct decision from the standpoint of athletics and underscored the statement of Dr. Zacharias that this should not be interpreted as negative comments on the Ohio Valley Conference. "Western deserves the opportunity and has earned the opportunity to have a program on a national basis," Mr. Cole stated. He felt the nonathletic benefits would greatly exceed the athletic benefits to the university.

Mr. Cole commended Dr. John Minton, Mr. John Oldham, Mr. Jimmy Feix, Mr. Gary West, and Mr. Dan Davis for working hard to bring about this change.

There being no further discussion, the roll call vote was as follows:

Aye: Buckman, Campbell, Clark, Cole, Iracane, Norfleet, Sheffer

Nay: None

Secretary's Note: Chairman Campbell requested, for the benefit of members of the media who were present, that each member of the Board come

to the microphone to vote and make whatever comments desired.

A summary of those comments relative to the withdrawal from the Ohio Valley Conference and acceptance of membership in the Sun Belt Conference follows:

Dr. Buckman stated that all the information he had received had been very positive and felt the move provided the opportunity to compete at the national level. He expressed the hope that recruiting would be such that Western could be competitive at the national level and that attendance would increase substantially so that the arena would be filled within a few years.

Mr. Campbell echoed the sentiments expressed by Dr. Zacharias and Mr. Cole and indicated there had always been a tremendous spirit of support in this community for Western and its athletic programs. Stating, "Having lived in Bowling Green all my life; having hung over the rail at the 'Old Red Barn' watching John Oldham be an All American," he had a lot of memories about Western and about its relationship with the OVC. He felt the Ohio Valley Conference had been a very fine conference with Western's being a very integral part of it, and he wished continued success for the conference.

He stressed the importance for the public—especially the public in Bowling Green—to know that one of the persons who took the leadership role in this change was John Oldham. He commended Mr. Oldham for the work he had done as Athletic Director, stating, "Those associated with Western and those who know Western know that, in John Oldham, Western has one of the finest Athletic Directors in the country." He felt this move would not have been possible without the leadership of Mr. Oldham and thanked him for the outstanding job he had done in providing the athletic department with the leadership necessary for it to have had the success it has had, not only in basketball but in every other sport.

In addition, he credited President Zacharias for the role he played in making this decision. Adding that he had only good things to say about Dr. Zacharias, he felt he was the greatest thing that had happened to Western. He noted that if Western could keep Don Zacharias, the other problems would be solved.

Mr. Campbell thanked others who had worked to bring about the change—Dr. John Minton, Mr. Gary West, and Coach Clem Haskins. Commenting that Coach Haskins would be the individual who would in a couple of years bear the brunt of this decision, Mr. Campbell reported he had talked at length with Coach Haskins about the proposed move. The Coach was very much in favor of this move and felt it would enhance the ability to recruit and viewed it as an opportunity to have national exposure for the basketball program.

In closing, Mr. Campbell noted that President Zacharias suggested in earlier discussions one of the factors which would make Western look good in joining the Sun Belt Conference in a few years was the soccer program, one of the fastest growing sports in the country. He expressed the hope that Western could be competitive in the soccer program.

Mr. Clark congratulated the Ohio Valley Conference for the affiliation Western had had with that conference. Saying the conference had helped to make this move, he extended best wishes to the Ohio Valley Conference for the future. Mr. Clark felt the ability to make this move was a tribute to Coach Diddle; Coach Oldham; Coach Richards; Coach Haskins; Coach Feix; President Thompson, who worked so hard to make the Ohio Valley

Conference a showcase; President Downing; Dr. Minton, and President Zacharias.

Athletics, he noted, is the showcase of the University and is like a good advertising program. Even though there is an economic depression, he pointed out, General Motors and others continue to advertise, and athletics will continue to be a prominent factor at Western Kentucky University. Noting that the Board had committed the University to a first-class athletic program, he assured his support for that commitment. In conclusion, Mr. Clark asked all the fans of Western to support the decision and get with the Sun Belt program and move forward.

Mr. Cole observed that Western and the Sun Belt Conference were two organizations that were in the right place at the right time and felt this was a very positive move for Western. Again he stressed the importance for remembering that the primary purpose of this institution was academics, with athletics serving the purpose of supporting the academic programs not only in terms of student participation, but participation in raising money to support the overall goals of the institution. The move, he felt, would improve the overall athletic programs of the university not only in basketball, but in soccer and in women's athletics. "The nonathletic benefits to the university will greatly exceed the athletic benefits by virtue of this move," he noted.

He congratulated those involved with bringing about the move and noted, "Those who write about events that have transpired during the course of Western Kentucky will look on this day as a very significant day—a day of change; a day of maturity; a day of taking a rightful place in overall national athletics by virtue of what Western Kentucky University has accomplished in the past."

Mr. Iracane expressed his hope that the move to the Sun Belt Conference would prove to be the best for the entire university and that Western would continue to grow as it grew in the Ohio Valley Conference. He further stated his hope that history would treat this day as a fine step forward—one that in future years would prove to be an outstanding move which the Board of Regents felt necessary to make.

Miss Norfleet stated she was proud to be present and pleased to vote on behalf of the student body. Reporting that she had gone to great lengths to determine the feeling of the students, as a whole, she received very, very minimal negative feedback, with a few students feeling sad to see Western leave the Ohio Valley Conference because of the tradition involved. In conclusion, Miss Norfleet stated, "I feel the move is a good one, and the student body feels it is a good one."

Mr. Sheffer noted he had mixed feelings because of the many years of association with the Ohio Valley Conference and the very good and pleasant memories as a student at Western Kentucky University. He echoed the appreciation expressed by other members of the Board to those who have been responsible for making the move and added the name of J. David Cole. He explained that it was Mr. Cole who first mentioned the possibility of Western's being in another conference; that came approximately three years ago. At that time, Mr. Cole served as Chairman of the Board. He felt that it was under Mr. Cole's leadership and at his direction that the Board began to consider the possibility of another athletic conference. "Having done that," he noted, "made the decision today much easier." Mr. Sheffer called it a significant day in the history of the university, and indicated he felt proud to have been a part of it.

The Chairman expressed appreciation to the members for their votes and noted the special importance of having the votes of the faculty and student representatives expressing the sentiments of their constituencies.

Chairman Campbell asked Dr. Robert Nelson, Dean, Bowling Green College of Business Administration, for an update on the accreditation process for the College. Dean Nelson reported that the process to have the College of Business Administration accredited by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business started about three years ago. Dean Clifford Eubanks, University of South Florida, who served as Chairman of the Visitation Team, visited the campus last Monday and has submitted a preliminary report. The report did not contain any negative implications relative to the accreditation and indicated Western had complied with every standard. Dean Nelson felt the report to be very positive, and he was optimistic that the notice of accreditation would be received at the national meeting on April 30.

Mr. Campbell thanked Dean Nelson for the accreditation report, noting the hard work that had gone into the process of seeking accreditation.

Mr. David Cole introduced the following resolution which was unanimously passed by the Board:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Mr. Julius E. Price, Sr., has served Western Kentucky University as a member of the Board of Regents since June 9, 1981; and

WHEREAS, his distinguished service to the University has been characterized by able representation, faithful service, and dedication to his responsibility; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Price has undergone surgery at the Jewish Hospital in Louisville on March 2, 1982,

NOW, THEREFORE

Be It Resolved By the Board of Regents of Western Kentucky University, that

1. The Board of Regents in a special meeting on March 8, 1982, goes on record expressing to Mr. Price best wishes for a speedy recovery.
2. The Secretary of the Board of Regents convey to Mr. Price and members of his family the contents of this resolution.

Ordered at Bowling Green, Kentucky, this eighth day of March in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eighty-two.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:50 a.m.

CERTIFICATION OF SECRETARY

I hereby certify that the minutes herein set forth an accurate record of votes and actions taken by the Board of Regents of Western Kentucky University in its special meeting held on March 8, 1982, in the Regents Conference Room of the Wetherby Administration Building on the Western campus and further certify that the meeting was held in compliance with KRS 61.810, 61.820, and 61.825 (enacted as Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of House Bill 100, 1974 Regular Session, General Assembly).

Elizabeth W. Esters
Elizabeth W. Esters, Secretary

Joe B. Campbell
Chairman

Elizabeth W. Esters
Elizabeth W. Esters, Secretary