

**Western Washington University  
Board of Trustees  
Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, June 14, 2018**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair Sue Sharpe called the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University to order at 3:04 pm in the Board Room, Old Main 340, in Bellingham, WA.

**Board of Trustees**

Sue Sharpe, Chair  
Earl Overstreet, Vice Chair  
John Meyer, Secretary  
Betti Fujikado  
Chase Franklin  
Trista Truemper  
Mo West  
Karen Lee - *Absent*

**Western Washington University**

Sabah Randhawa, President  
Brent Carbajal, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Richard Van Den Hul, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs  
Stephanie Bowers, Vice President for University Advancement  
Melynda Huskey, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services  
Donna Gibbs, Vice President for University Relations and Marketing  
Allison Giffen, Faculty Senate President  
Simrun Chhabra, Associated Students President  
Paul Cocke, Director of University Communications  
Paul Dunn, Senior Executive Assistant to the President  
Barbara Sandoval, Assistant to the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees  
Rayne Rambo, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees

**2. UNIVERSITY MARKETING AND BRANDING**

Donna Gibbs, Vice President for University Relations and Marketing provided the board with an overview on university marketing and branding. Gibbs noted that there is increasing competition for faculty and resources and that smart branding and marketing can set Western apart from other state institutions.

Gibbs reported that during winter and spring quarters, marketing and communications professionals in Admissions, University Advancement, the Alumni Office, Extended Education University Relations and Marketing, and faculty in the College of Business and Economics worked with the Seattle advertising and branding agency, DNA, to define a unified brand

positioning statement for Western. Gibbs added that this statement will guide more coordinated marketing efforts targeted to prospective students and their families. She also noted that it will become the basis for more sustained and consistent brand advertising efforts statewide.

Gibbs explained that the competitive environment necessitates that Western become more proactive in marketing efforts that will build consistent messaging that speaks to historically underrepresented populations. She added that expanding efforts with more consistent messaging to alumni, state-wide private industry and legislative audiences will help align and support Western's mission.

Gibbs provided a summary of the work that has been completed by the Brand Council, a collective of Western's marketing professionals, who prioritized their work aligns and supports Western's mission, vision, value statement and the strategic plan. She noted there are three themes that became clear: independent spirit, close collaboration, and activism. Gibbs explained that the Brand Council also completed work on a Brand Promise and Value Proposition that together form the foundation for the in-market messaging that will express the brand to Western's external audience. She added that Brand Attributes, the qualities that should always be associated with the Western brand, are derived from the overlap between Western's values and Western's intended target audience. Western's Brand Attributes include; academic distinction, forward thinking, refreshingly original, and versatile and collaborative.

Gibbs concluded her presentation with the newly created Positioning Statement for Western that defines and guides the Western brand and becomes the foundation for the experience Western delivers for our current and future students, parents, faculty and anyone else who interacts with Western. The defined Positioning Statement is, "A collaborative of independent minds creating a better future".

Trustee Sharpe inquired about next steps in the marketing and branding process. Gibbs responded by articulating next steps after further review and refinement that will include; an anthem video, creative executions and targeted efforts in the Seattle and Everett area, and working in conjunction with the Admissions Office to integrate these materials into the "look book" provided to high school juniors and seniors. She added that the work thus far has been shared and vetted by the Alumni and Foundation Boards, students and faculty, and their input and feedback was represented in the final product.

### **3. WATERFRONT EXPANSION UPDATE**

Donna Gibbs, Vice President for University Relations and Marketing introduced Rob Fix, Executive Director for the Port of Bellingham, who provided an update on the continued conversation of Western's presence on the Bellingham Waterfront. Fix provided the board with the progress of the projects currently underway at the waterfront including Western's property, Western Crossing. Fix added that there is momentum within the city of Bellingham to move toward a technologically advanced economy and moving away from older industrial economy.

Donna Gibbs, Vice President for Relations and Marketing, provided the board with an update on the collaborative efforts to explore the future of Western on the waterfront. The Ideation Group which currently includes faculty and staff representation from Business and Sustainability,

University Relations and Marketing, College of Science and Engineering, Chemistry, Scientific Technical Services, Biology Department, Interdisciplinary Entrepreneurship in Action, (IDEA), Small Business Development Center, Institute for Energy Studies, Environmental Studies, and Sustainability Studies. She noted that this group will be expanding in the fall to include more campus groups to explore all possible opportunities. Gibbs added that the Ideation Group also engaged the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Studies program which consists of ninety students to formulate their own prototype projects that can be shared with the campus community.

Gibbs highlighted the expectation the Port of Bellingham has expressed for Western's presence on the waterfront. She noted that Western is seeking a presence that supports the economic development of Whatcom County and the City of Bellingham through innovative economy enterprises. She added this will create attractive jobs for the future and strengthen the tie between local jobs and resources that will create a vibrant and welcoming space for the community. Gibbs stated that Washington State leads the nation in energy efficiency jobs with substantial growth in leadership position and design capacities and there is great economic opportunity in clean, efficient energy concepts. She concluded that the Ideation Group will continue to define the scope of the waterfront project and will reach out to strategic industrial and community partners to build a success presence of Western on the waterfront.

#### **4. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 4:49 p.m. Chair Sharpe announced that the Board would convene in Executive Session for approximately 30 minutes to discuss a personnel matter as authorized in RCW 42.30.110 (1)(g)&(i).

The meeting adjourned at 5:35 p.m.