

**WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2016**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Karen Lee called the special meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Washington University to order at 9:34 a.m., in the Boardroom, Old Main 340, in Bellingham, WA.

**Board of Trustees**

Karen Lee, Chair  
Sue Sharpe, Vice Chair  
Earl Overstreet, Secretary  
Betti Fujikado  
Chase Franklin  
John M. Meyer  
Mo West – *by phone*  
Seth Brickey

**Western Washington University**

Bruce Shepard, President  
Brent Carbajal, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Eileen Coughlin, Senior VP, Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services  
Brian Sullivan, Assistant Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs  
Stephanie Bowers, Vice President for University Advancement  
Steve Swan, Vice President for University Relations and Community Development  
Molly Ware, Faculty Senate President  
Kerena Higgins, Assistant Attorney General  
David Stolier, Assistant Attorney General  
Paul Cocke, Director of University Communications  
Barbara Sandoval, Secretary to the Board of Trustees  
Elissa Hicks, Assistant Secretary to the Board of Trustees

**2. EXECUTIVE SESSION MAY BE HELD TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL, REAL ESTATE AND LEGAL ISSUES AS AUTHORIZED IN RCW 42.30.110.**

At 9:35 a.m. Chair Lee announced that the Board would convene in Executive Session for approximately 45 minutes to discuss personnel matters as authorized in RCW 42.30.110 (1)(g).

The Board returned to open meeting at 10:21 a.m. with no action to report and announced a break at 10:21 a.m. The board returned and reconvened the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

**3. PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH: DISCUSSION OF CANDIDATES**

Trustee Lee started her comments by thanking President Shepard for his nearly eight years of outstanding service to the university. She also thanked Vice President Steve Swan for his years of service to Western and congratulated him on his upcoming retirement in December.

Trustee Lee then thanked Governors Gregoire and Inslee for appointing such a great group of dedicated Trustees to the Board and expresses her gratitude for the opportunity to work with all of them during this important time in the history of the university. She then provided an outline of the search process to date and thanked members of the Presidential Search Committee (PSAC) for their dedication to the process and for all of their hard work. Lee said that overall the search firm of Greenwood Asher & Associates made 411

contacts for Western's search which resulted in 80 final applicants. She said that of the final applicants 37% were Women and minority candidates which is an incredible level of diversity. She said that the PSAC interviewed 17 candidates and recommended five finalists and one alternate to the full Board of Trustees. Lee said the Board reviewed each of the 80 applications, focusing on the five PSAC recommendations, adding that one candidate withdrew during the process. She said that among the four finalists there was one sitting president, three provosts, one African American, two females, two males and one Hispanic applicant. They came from big campuses and rural campuses, there were three PhD degrees and one terminal degree among the group, stated Lee. She said that all of the candidates expressed challenges they have faced with budgets, and changes regarding shared governance, diversity and inclusion that have taken place at their current campuses.

Trustee Sharpe said that Board and PSAC members conducted 99 personal reference checks on the four finalists, of those 19 involved the preferred candidate. She also said that Trustees learned over this search process that personal interviews are the least reliable source for hiring, to really actively listen to others during the reference process and to avoid "crushes" on a view, a position or a particular candidate throughout the entire process.

#### **4. POSSIBLE BOARD ACTION ON CANDIDATES**

Trustee Lee asked for a motion from the Trustees for a candidate for consideration to invite to campus as a preferred candidate.

Trustee Sue Sharpe put forth the name and moved that Dr. Sabah Randhawa be named as the preferred candidate for President. The motion was seconded. Trustee Lee then opened up conversation regarding the nominated candidate.

Sharpe said that Dr. Randhawa is currently the Provost at Oregon State University. Trustees said that Dr. Randhawa emerged as the preferred candidate during the search process because he really seems to live the Western message of Active Minds, Changing Lives. She said that he has a profound understanding of Academics at the university level, has a strong commitment to student success, is concerned about the achievement gap in higher education in this country, and has a strong history of institutionalizing diversity and inclusion which he defines in three categories of numbers, safe places and spaces and being open to challenging conversations. Sharpe said that his commitment to shared governance and ability to think strategically about Western's future while respecting its unique culture were some other qualities which made him stand out among the other outstanding candidates. Trustees also commented that based on their observations and the reference checks he is a person of character, quiet strength, dignity, humor, does not rush to judgement and is a man of action.

**Motion 03-01-2016:** Trustee Sharpe moved that the Board of Trustees considers candidate 66 or Dr. Sabah Randhawa as a preferred candidate for the presidency of Western Washington University; and hereby authorizes the Chair to extend an invitation to Dr. Randhawa to attend meetings with student, faculty and staff governance leadership prior to possible final action by the Board at a special meeting on April 5, 2016.

The motion passed with Trustees Franklin, Fujikado, Meyer, Overstreet, Sharpe, West and Lee voting in favor of the motion by roll call vote. Student Trustee Brickey was excused from voting pursuant to RCW 28B.50.102(2).

Chair Lee asked if any trustee would like to put forward another name for discussion. There were no additional names put forward by the Board.

**5.** The meeting adjourned at 11:22 a.m.