COWBOY PARENTS COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2013

The Cowboy Parents Council held its spring meeting on Saturday, Friday 23, 2013, at 1:00 p.m. at the UW Honors – Red House on the University of Wyoming Campus. Members Present: Kurt Kinderwater; John Rundel; Dan Herlihey; Vickie Herlihey; Robert Balzan; Julie Balzan; Rikki Hawkaas; Stan Horton; and Pat Horton. Kathi Morrison and Lida Citroen were present via Skype. Ex officio – Sara Axelson; Staff – Kim Shannon; Guests – Chris Boswell and Patrick Call.

(Prior to the meeting several members toured the UW Geological Museum)
Kurt Kinderwater called the meeting to order at 1:14 p.m.

**Legislative Update:** Sara introduced Chris Boswell, Vice President of Government/Community Affairs. Chris discussed our role interacting with the legislative efforts as a voice of UW Parents, utilizing our title as Cowboy Parents. He feels it has the potential of being very significant, ie – letter transmitted via email. Legislatively, UW is being asked to make a 6% reduction or $11.5 million split over the next 2 years (3% each year). All other institutes across the state are also dealing with massive budget cuts. The Legislature as committed to one time investments – appropriated 65 million toward the new engineering building (Energy Engineering Research Facility). There are discussions regarding the Hathaway Scholarships to increase amounts due to inflation. UW will receive $70 million for higher education endowments ($30 million to community colleges).

Disappointments include no increase in salaries. It has been 4 years since there has been money legislated for raises. There will be a one-time 1% bonus this year. It makes it hard to entice new professors and keep the quality of professors we have. UW is below average compared to other institutions our size. Chris explained that other states are increasing tuition rates, however constitutionally, we have to hold tuition rates low. The Legislature passed the ability to hold a confidential Presidential search. Four finalists have been announced. It was suggested that we discuss budget issues pertaining to UW at our Fall meeting.

**Gender Neutral Housing Discussion:** Sara introduced Patrick Call, Executive Director Residence Life and Dining. PC shared that he has had more requests from students to live with an opposite gender roommate and wanted feedback from the Cowboy Parents regarding this issue. He explained that it would have to be a joint request of both students. Students are raising the question of transgender and it is a campus trend nationally. Concerns expressed by member present included: Wyoming is a conservative state and
UW funding is dictated legislatively which may not be supportive of the specific housing requested. Additionally, there was concern that separate housing may set these students as a target. Even though it is a trend nationally, doesn’t mean it is a good choice for UW at this time.

Further updates: Bison Run is for upper classmen and is almost full for next year. Accommodations are being made for therapy animals. Half Acre Gym renovations start at the end of the semester. The renovations will take about a year; however there will not be a total closure of the facility during that time.

Financial Reports: Kim shared the current reports, however indicated that they may not be completely accurate. Discussion regarding our endowment fund followed. Carlene moved that the Cowboy Parent Council put $10,000 toward the endowment fund to fully fund it at the $25,000 level, pending that the discretionary fund is accurate. Robert seconded the motion. Motion passed. Kim will email the corrected financial reports.

Each Student a Person Award: Members reviewed the nominees. After discussion and voting, Kristy Isaak and Bruce Culver were chosen as the award winners. An email congratulating all nominees will be sent out.

Vice President's Update: Sara indicated that enrollment this spring semester is steady/strong. 12,873 students are enrolled thus far this semester. She added that is also looking strong for the fall as well. She stated that Chris Boswell has been a great addition to UW. Positions are not automatically being filled to avoid a reduction in force. The search for a Registrar and replacing John Nutter will start soon. UW is preparing for a new President and Dean of Arts and Sciences. Student Affairs is in the middle of University Planning. Sara suggested that Cowboy Parents may want to look at the University plan at our June meeting.

Strategic Planning for Cowboy Parents Council: Sara suggested a strong relationship with the new President. It was also suggested that the council invite the new President to our next meeting. Members reviewed components of our strategic plan. Kim attended a seminar in which she learned that one of the most valuable and over looked resources are parents. Parents are instrumental to student success. It was suggested that we look at a vision statement. Members discussed our direction as a council. Suggestions were made to video/audio conference before our June meeting or plan a retreat to just work on a plan. Sara said she could help with an overnight stay, transportation and a meal for council members. Kirk suggested that we try to have something in place by this fall. Sara reviewed the time line of the University Plan and felt that Fall 2013 would be a good fit. It was suggested to do our planning in chunks before our June meeting. Lida is willing to assist the council in this process and she said that it’s not about throwing out all the old, but looking at it and making the necessary adjustments. Members decided:

- **June 7th – 3:00 for our next meeting**
- **June 8th – 8:00 until 2:00 (or so) for strategic planning**
- **Sara will reserve rooms for council members for the night of June 7th and provide a meal.**
**Cowboy Council Membership:** We have three open positions to be filled. Kim will pull up the past applicants for us to review.

**Family Weekend:** Kim shared that the feedback from parents that not competing with a football game was positive. Discussed the pros and cons of choosing a non-football weekend for this fall.

**Election of Officers:** This was tabled again. Members discussed a need to amend our by-laws for a secretary position. The council is very appreciative of Kurt stepping up to fill the Chair Position.

**Silent Auction:** It was discussed that the auction needs involvement from all council members. It was shared that Laramie businesses are usually talked to about donations on the Saturday of Jubilee Days. Kim asked the Herlihey’s to write up the plan for the silent auction. At the June meeting, the council needs to identify people for the roles to have a successful auction.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned by Kurt at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Pat Horton*