COWBOY PARENTS COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2013

The Cowboy Parents Council held it’s fall meeting on Friday, September 20, 2013, at 5:00 p.m. in the Shoshoni Room-West, Washakie Dining Center. Members present: John Rundel, Kim Conci, Riki & Kevin Haukaas, Stan & Pat Horton, Brad & Carlene Irion

Ex officio : Sara Axelson; Staff: Kim Shannon, Dave Micus, Mary Aguayo, Roxanne Rector

Prior to the meeting, the Council members toured White Hall.

Co-Chairman John Rundel called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Vice President’s Update: Sara Axelson, Student Affairs, updated members on Mary’s new position in recruiting and maintaining student enrollment, as an assistant to Sara. Enrollment is at 12,923; freshman at 1600; enrollment is very stable. President Sternberg is very visible. He is emphasizing that we are a land grant university and is striving to be number one. There have been several changes in leadership throughout the University. Governor Mead has led the College of Engineering improvements and President Sternberg is committed to continuing these efforts. The University of Wyoming is continuing it’s efforts on the strategic plan. Sara shared the strategic objective and overall goals for the 2013/14 school year. Really looking at the retention rate; connecting them to student support services. Second goal is looking at how the University of Wyoming can improve it’s service to stakeholders. Also looking at how the University of Wyoming can attract quality resources. Tuition increases will probably have to take place over time. She also reviewed the last two goals. (see attached) Sara praised the group on their work on our strategic plan and that we have a great start. John praised Sara for all she does for our group and appreciates the access our group has to administration.

Financial Update: A year to date financial update was presented by Kim. The endowment is held at foundation and interest is posted quarterly. It has accrued $359.69 (which also includes a donation). Sara explained that the fund accrues at a larger rate due to being managed through the foundation. The student emergency fund was discussed with regard to pay back of funds loaned. Last school year (2012), some international students accessed the fund and have not offered to repay
their loans in the amount of $9,000. Joanna in financial aid is trying to explore other options and the student emergency is utilized as a last resort. Kim also gave an example of a student losing their wallet that repaid what she needed while waiting for new ID’s. Most all of the group agreed that this is more in line of what the fund was designed and expressed concern over the large amount given during that year. A discussion regarding the endowment ensued with regard to donations being made directly to the endowment instead of the discretionary fund. When donations are sought from parents, parents can choose between the emergency fund or the endowment. Members want to maintain the integrity of the donations if donors designate the endowment fund. Some of the questions will be clarified at the next meeting. The financial report was well received and Kim was praised for the clearer report and having Roxanne present for questions.

**Summit Update:** Kim felt that it went really well this year. There was a huge turn out. Kim offered a drawing for a Cowboy Parent t-shirts if people would sign up for Family Weekend. It really encouraged parents to sign-up. Personal notes written by parents during Summit were mailed to students last week. There were 48 personal notes delivered to students. T-shirts and calendars were also sold at Summit which resulted in approximately $400, as Kim remembers.

**Homecoming:** Kim asked if the council still wanted to do a float for the parade this year on October 12th; parade starts at 9:00. The theme is: This is the West: Forever Brown and Gold. Kim will get all the candy. The football game starts at 1:30. Kim discussed wanting to have a social gathering for the members going off the council either homecoming weekend or another weekend. She encouraged everyone to visit and try to get a time that everyone can get together. Kim encouraged an email dialogue to organize the float. Kim will submit the application.

Kim clarified that some of her responsibilities of her job have been narrowed down, so that she can focus more of her time on Cowboy Parent Council items. Kim led a discussion on adopt a student program, which was brought to her attention by a parent who lives out of state. It could be a program that might encourage Laramie parents become more involved with our council.

**Family Weekend:** Kim asked that we all come to West Fraternity Mall around 10:00 to help set-up for the silent auction. Mary has everything to be put up. Auction will begin at 12:00 and close at 1:00. It will be a meet and greet with the Deans during the lunch. There will be about 42 items available at the silent auction. In the evening, there will be an event at the Wild Catter for Cowboy Parents and Alumni Meet & Greet with a fall theme. Sunday morning will be the President’s Brunch and John will speak about the council. Kim asked that council members be introduced during the brunch to be recognized. The brunch is being held at the Hilton this year, starting at 9:00; Kim will begin setting up at 7:30 and asked that members assist.
Cowboy Parents Council Nominations and Elections: Kim passed out 5 nomination applications for members to review. Kim also said that she has a student that would be interested on serving on the council. Brad moved to accept all 5 applications; Stan seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Cowboy Parents Strategic Plan: Kim reviewed the draft strategic plan that was worked on in June 2013. Admissions and Alumni hosted big “send-offs” for parents for incoming students. It is imperative that the parent council become a part of these events as they involve parents. Members discussed writing a letter to Sara to encourage the involvement of Cowboy Parents when these events are planned. There is a big push by the University of Wyoming for retention and parents are vital part of this and Cowboy Parents are an excellent resource. It was discussed to go ahead with a letter to Sara to invite Alumni Association and Admissions to our meeting in February to discuss our involvement in these events. It was discussed to include our mission and goals in the letter. It was discussed that Cowboy Parents would serve an important role for parents that are experiencing a lot of anxiety with sending their child off to college. Having Cowboy Parents present at these events would be of great value and increase our visibility as a resource to parents. Members discussed the wording of the mission statement and goals. Revisions were made. The final/revised mission statement/goals/strategies will be emailed out to council members to be voted on for approval. Once we finalize our mission statement, all of our marketing publications will reflect this throughout. Kim reviewed strategies to improve our council.

New Business and Open Discussion: The next meeting will be February 22, 2014 at 1:00.

John adjourned the meeting at 10:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Horton