

Meeting No. 961

THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS
OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM

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January 7, 2003

Austin, Texas

MEETING NO. 961

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2003.--The members of the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System convened at 11:40 a.m. on Tuesday, January 7, 2003, on the Ninth Floor, Ashbel Smith Hall, 201 West Seventh Street, Austin, Texas, with the following in attendance and absent:

ATTENDANCE.--

<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Chairman Miller, presiding	Regent Craven
Vice-Chairman Clements	Regent Estrada
Vice-Chairman Hunt	Regent Sanchez
Vice-Chairman Riter	
Regent Krier	
Regent Oxford	

Counsel and Secretary Frederick

In accordance with a notice being duly posted with the Secretary of State and there being a quorum present, Chairman Miller called the meeting to order. He announced that the purpose of this special called meeting was to consider matters of sufficient urgency to require immediate consideration by the Board prior to the next regularly scheduled meeting on February 12-13, 2003.

1. U. T. Health Science Center – Houston: Comments from State Representative Al Edwards, Houston, Texas, on Proposed Mental Sciences Institute – Replacement Facility, Phase I Project

On February 10, 2000, the Board authorized The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston to negotiate a ground lease with the Texas Medical Center, Inc., Houston, Texas, for construction of a replacement facility for the Mental Sciences Institute, which was included in the FY 2000-2005 Capital Improvement Program (adopted November 11, 1999) at a total project cost of \$20,700,000. On August 9, 2001, the project was redesignated as the Mental Sciences Institute – Replacement Facility, Phase I and the total project cost was reduced to \$16,500,000. On August 8, 2002, the FY 2002-2007 Capital Improvement Program and the FY 2002-2003 Capital Budget were amended to increase the total project cost to \$22,500,000.

Chairman Miller welcomed State Representative Al Edwards, Houston, Texas, who requested to address the Board on the proposed project for construction at 3028 South McGregor Way in Houston, Texas. Several members of the neighborhood community and the South McGregor Civic Club attended the meeting.

Representative Edwards said that while he fully supports the project, he does not agree with the proposed site as it would be detrimental to the neighborhood. He noted there is an existing in-patient psychiatric hospital in the area and referenced a packet of materials that was handed out to members of the Board that included alternative sites and maps. Representative Edwards expressed his support to assist in the relocation and funding of the project.

Chairman Miller asked President Willerson to comment and Dr. Willerson said that out of respect for Representative Edwards and the community, the decision had been made not to build at the proposed location and that an alternate site would be found in consultation with Representative Edwards and the community. Chairman Miller thanked Representative Edwards for his leadership and recognized the visitors. Representative Edwards expressed appreciation to President Willerson for his openness.

2. U. T. Medical Branch - Galveston - National Biocontainment Laboratory: Approval to Amend the FY 2002-2007 Capital Improvement Program and the FY 2002-2003 Capital Budget to Include Project

Following a presentation of the project by President Stobo, the Board amended the FY 2002-2007 Capital Improvement Program and the FY 2002-2003 Capital Budget to include the National Biocontainment Laboratory project at The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston at a preliminary project cost of \$180,000,000 with funding of \$120,000,000 from a federal National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant, \$20,000,000 from Gifts and Grants, and \$40,000,000 from Revenue Financing System Bond Proceeds. Dr. Stobo clarified that to qualify for a national biocontainment laboratory, the facility would have to be a NIH Regional Center of Excellence.

The project consists of design and construction of a state-of-the-art biocontainment facility complex, comprised of 160,000 - 170,000 square feet, including BSL-4, BSL-3, and BSL-2 laboratory space as well as associated animal facilities, clinical facilities, and research support space. The facility will allow research on infectious diseases including emerging and new diseases in the future.

3. U. T. Board of Regents: Discussion of Meeting Formats and Frequency

Chairman Miller proposed consideration of a new meeting schedule for the U. T. Board of Regents with four meetings per year and one additional special meeting, and assignment of Task Forces as necessary. He proposed committee meetings be held on the first day and the regularly scheduled Board meeting on the second day. He said operating in this manner would place fewer demands on the Board and staff, thus allowing a more effective and efficient operation and interim communications and dialog as needed.

Chairman Miller also said one of his goals is to streamline the Regents' Rules and Regulations and have a revised document to the Board by August 2003. He noted a periodic review of such processes is necessary to suggest improvements, particularly in light of technological advantages. Chairman Miller noted that the members of the Board would receive information on proposed meeting formats and frequency prior to the February 2003 Board meeting, including comparisons with how other universities operate, their committee structures, and meeting frequencies.

Chairman Miller said that the U. T. Board of Regents is a very effective and efficient structure with nine Regents. Under the proposed meeting structure, the Board could act as a Committee of the Whole, meetings could be compacted, all Regents could attend committee meetings even if they are not officially assigned to that committee, and Regents could get more involved in policy and other issues. He proposed that the new structure would allow Regents to have more time to be more effective in communicating with each other and with staff, such as through electronic means to do more policy work, and to make informed decisions.

He proposed committee meetings could begin the first day of the two-day Board meeting at 9:00 a.m. and adjourn around 3:00 p.m. with attendance by as many Regents as possible, action could be taken in committees, the social event could or could not be held, advisory councils could meet, and the committee meetings could be interspersed with the Board meeting. He said the Board meeting could then be held the second day and reserved for policy discussions, meetings with the advisory groups, and consideration of special items. He suggested a special meeting for the Capital Improvement Program or following a legislative session and proposed the new schedule could be tried for a year to see how it works.

In reference to the heavy volumes of meeting materials, Chairman Miller also suggested the possibility of having meeting information displayed on computers at the Board table and technologically broadcasting the information for the audience and beyond.

Vice-Chairman Clements expressed concern with the proposal that there may not be sufficient time between committee and Board meetings to deliberate and evaluate decisions.

Regent Krier said it is critical to receive information in a logical format, all at the same time, and in sufficient time prior to the meeting. She emphasized the importance to have background information in advance on all issues to come before the Board.

Chancellor Yudof recapitulated that staff currently have eight meetings to prepare for (four committee, four Board) whereas prior to 1994, there were six meetings a year. He said that the Board meeting structure at the University of Minnesota is similar to what is being proposed. An item approved by a committee could be carried over for consideration at the next Board meeting.

Vice-Chairman Hunt said that the key issue regards what it takes to make an effective Board member. Changing the schedule from a meeting every six weeks to a meeting every three months may impact the effectiveness of Board members to establish personal relationships and dialog to make a difference and add value that cannot be established with electronic information flow.

Chairman Miller said that was a good point and said there are ways to develop informal relations. He is looking for a balance in that the current schedule is rigid and inflexible, there is a big cost to staff, and resources tied to meeting preparation could be spent instead on policy work. The emphasis would be on effective communication between meetings, with interfacing between Regents and senior staff of the U. T. System.

Vice-Chairman Hunt said that it would help if the Board of Regents could be less involved with informal decision-making and delegate authority to the Chancellor in whom the Board has high confidence.

Chairman Miller said that U. T. System would be asking the Legislature for deregulation and decentralization so that the System can in turn delegate further to the component institutions.

Vice-Chairman Clements stated that the most valuable meetings held during her tenure on the Board of Regents have been the retreats with the academic and health component presidents, and Regent Oxford agreed that these retreats help with information flow, could be held every other summer before the new fiscal year begins, and would be beneficial for new Regents. Chairman Miller said that the best thing for new Regents is experience, but that meetings were also important.

Chairman Miller said an outline of the new meeting process will be distributed before February and that he would like the Board to approve a schedule for the next year at the February 12-13, 2003 Board meeting. He encouraged the Board members to discuss the proposal with each other.

ADJOURNMENT.--Chairman Miller announced that the purpose for which this meeting was called had been completed and the meeting was duly adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

/s/ Francie A. Frederick
Counsel and Secretary to the Board

February 21, 2003