

**WEST LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**Executive Committee
Minutes
May 13, 2016**

Executive Committee Members Present: George Couch, Les DeFelice, Richard Carter, Patrick Ford

WLU Administrators: Scott Cook, Brian Crawford, Stephen Greiner, Stephanie Hooper

Others: Jack Adams, John Gompers, Jim Haizlett, Jim Stultz, Rhonda Tysk

1. Chair Couch called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.
2. Chair Couch announced that the single item on the agenda for this meeting would be the consideration of a proposal put forth by the President's Cabinet to purchase real estate at 409 Van Meter Way in West Liberty, WV using funding provided by the WLU Foundation. Detailed information regarding the property, proposed purchase and subsequent use of the property were sent to all Board members via email. Chair Couch then turned over the floor to President Greiner for presentation of the proposal.
3. President Greiner described the proposed purchase as having several positive outcomes. It would; 1) prevent an absentee landlord from renting to students while allowing the condition and appearance of the property to decline, 2) provide the University with land that it may want and need in the future, 3) provide housing for current and future students who are looking for alternatives to existing on-campus housing, 4) provide a positive revenue stream. The WLU Foundation is ready to provide a loan for this purchase. With some renovations, the house will be able to provide housing for six students initially and up to eight in the future.
4. Ms. Hooper spoke in support of the proposal, commenting on the location of the property relative to campus, the demand for alternate student housing, and the generation of revenue. She added that paying interest to the Foundation, which would ultimately come back to the University in support of other activities, is an investment in the future. She continued that the property would be a relatively liquid investment, as there is always a market for such properties and that the projected net revenue generation would be approximately \$8,000/year. She indicated that if the Foundation simply purchased the property, the University would not be able to renovate or maintain it, as it would not be state property. Also, the Foundation Board has indicated that they are not interested in owning property at this time.
5. Mr. Adams expressed his support as a former member of the Foundation Board.
6. Mr. Ford also expressed support for the purchase and suggested that several other possible sources of support, including the Northern West Virginia Brownfields Assistance Authority and the West Virginia Housing Development Fund, be investigated for future purchases of other similar properties in the area surrounding campus.
7. Mr. Adams suggested that a particular house across the road from campus be investigated for possible purchase even though it is not currently for sale.
8. Mr. Cook relayed that he has had numerous comments from parents of students regarding the rental property directly across from campus that is known for public parties, especially during move-in weekend. The impressions of the surrounding neighborhood do have an impact on prospective students and parents.

9. Mr. Stultz expressed some reservations about the purchase, indicating that he is skeptical of the viability and necessity of changing the appearance of the area surrounding campus as well as its long-term financial sustainability. He suggested that the renovation costs seem high and asked if the Foundation could purchase the property and give it to the University.
10. Ms. Hooper responded that the Foundation is not in a position to make the purchase, but would provide the loan as an investment. She again made the point that the purchase will result in positive revenue generation.
11. Mr. Stultz commented on the excess square footage currently owned by the University and suggested that a long-term plan is needed to address this issue.
12. Mr. Ford concurred that a long-term plan is needed and again referenced possible alternative funding sources.
13. Mr. DeFelice suggested that the excess space currently owned is a separate issue and expressed his support for this purchase and for the purchase of any similar properties adjacent to campus that may become available.
14. Ms. Tysk related questions she has had from prospective students and their parents regarding alternative student housing options and said she was certain that WLU has lost students because of this issue.
15. Mr. Cook expressed his agreement with Ms. Tysk and indicated that the poor state of student housing at WLU has been highlighted on social media and used against the University by other institutions competing for the same students.
16. Ms. Hooper reiterated that this purchase would be positive in several ways.
17. President Greiner indicated that he has already identified the need for a Physical Facilities Master Plan and that work is underway to create this document.
18. Chair Couch asked for any further comments.
19. Mr. Gompers directed several questions to Ms. Hooper:
 - a. Are there any Realtors involved in the proposed purchase? A: No. A broker is being used.
 - b. Is the current owner definitely prepared to sell for the price of \$128,000? A: Yes.
 - c. Has there been discussion of oil and gas rights? A: No. Ms. Hooper will investigate this.
 - d. Will there be any contingencies in the contract? A: No.
 - e. Are the owner and WLU in agreement with the appraisal? A: Yes.
 - f. Has a timeline been proposed for the closing? A: No.
20. Mr. Ford asked if there were any liens or back tax issues with the property. A: None have been identified. This would be part of the closing.
21. Mr. Gompers was asked by Chair Couch if he would prepare the necessary legal documents if the purchase was approved. Mr. Gompers indicated that he would.
22. Chair Couch listed three possible actions for the Executive Committee:
 - a. Approve the proposal
 - b. Send the proposal to the full Board
 - c. Reject the proposal
23. Mr. Carter moved that the Executive Committee authorize the President, CFO, and/or Board Chair to negotiate and execute a Contract on behalf of the Board of Governors of West Liberty University for the purchase of 409 Van Meter Way, West Liberty, WV, for the purchase price of \$128,000.00 and that they also be authorized to negotiate and execute loan documents for a loan from the West Liberty University Foundation for the purchase and renovation of said real estate. Motion seconded by Mr. Ford and carried by unanimous vote.

24. Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Carter and seconded by Mr. Ford. The meeting adjourned at 8:43 a.m.

Chair, George Couch

Secretary, Patrick Ford