The Committee of the Whole of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College Board of Trustees was held on Friday, October 21, 2011 at 8:00 a.m. and 3:15 p.m., in the Silver Maple Ballroom, Room 401 at the Dudley H. Davis Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Robert Cioffi, Secretary Donna Sweaney, Samuel Bain, Bill Botzow, Ian Boyce, Interim President John Bramley, Carolyn Branagan, Christopher Bray, Frank Cioffi, David Daigle, Kyle DeVivo, Joan Lenes, Debbie McAneny, David Potter, Kesha Ram, Dale Rocheleau, Bill Ruprecht*, Brian Sozansky, Jeanette White and Mark Young

MEMBERS ABSENT: Vice Chair Harry Chen, Jeffrey Davis, John Hilton, Jr. and Governor Peter Shumlin

ALSO PARTICIPATING: Senior Vice President and Provost Jane Knodell, Staff Council President Ida Russin, Alumni Council Member Afi Ahmadi (for Ted Madden), Student Government Association President Julian Golarfini, Graduate Student Senate President Eduardo Cotilla-Sanchez, Vice President for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies Domenico Grasso, Graduate Student Courtney Giles and her advisor Assistant Professor in the School of Engineering Jane Hill, Graduate Student Valerie Sullivan and her advisor Assistant Professor in the Department of Leadership and Developmental Sciences Sean Hurley, Vice President for Finance and Administration Richard Cate, Director of Institutional Research John Ryan, Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel Francine Bazluke, and Vice President for Executive Operations and Chief of Staff Gary Derr

*arrived at 9:30 a.m.

Chair Robert Cioffi called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded and voted to approve the minutes of May 20, 2011 meeting as presented.

Chair’s Report (see full report appended to minutes)

President's Report (see full report appended to minutes)

Governance Leaders Reports

Faculty Senate President Julie Roberts reported several trends amongst faculty including a sense of encouragement with the progress of United Academic negotiations, appreciation of their involvement in the University’s decision making processes, and concern over the search for a new President. President Roberts acknowledged the strong leadership of Interim President John
Bramley, noting that much progress has been made in his short tenure. Faculty wish to encourage selection of a next President who has the ability to continue this progress and approach the University as a whole entity.

Staff Council President Ida Russin acknowledged the involvement of staff in assisting students throughout the year. She thanked Chair Cioffi for his letter recognizing the 40th Anniversary of Staff Council. Staff appreciation events, held throughout the week-long celebration, had excellent attendance. Staff Council recently honored former President Daniel Fogel for his support during his time of leadership. President Russin concluded by noting widespread concern regarding salary. The Staff Council Compensation, Benefit, & Budget Committee is discussing with the administration on how to set viable salaries.

Alumni Association Member Afi Ahmadi, also a former student trustee, reported on behalf of President Ted Madden. He expressed thanks for ongoing communication and inclusion of alumni in the Presidential search process. He also thanked Interim President Bramley for his commitment to alumni. Mr. Ahmadi noted that this year marked changes in several alumni programs, such as scheduling Reunion Weekend, typically held in June, in conjunction with Homecoming and Parents’ Weekend. The combined events were held October 14-16. Reunion was an overwhelming success with 112 events, representation from 40 states, and alumni participation increased over 50% of last year and 26% historically. Attendance for Parents’ Weekend dipped slightly, a result likely related to the event being held later in the semester. Mr. Ahmadi concluded by noting the excitement expressed by alumni in being included with the UVM Foundation.

Trustee Sam Bain asked if there was a central location alumni checked into during Reunion Weekend. Mr. Ahmadi replied that the Davis Center served as the main hub and likely will until the Alumni House is completed.

Trustee Dale Rocheleau inquired to the status of the Alumni House project. Mr. Ahmadi indicated that $2.3 million has been raised and that fundraising continues to progress. He also mentioned that exterior stabilization work has begun on the house.

Student Government Association (SGA) President Julian Golfarini observed that students face mounting financial pressures and noted that SGA strives to alleviate some of this burden for students. He reported that the SGA Committee on Academic Affairs is working with the administration and faculty to provide ISBN numbers for books prior to registration, looking into changes to diversity requirements, getting Club Presidents academic credit, and setting up a relationship with the Dean of Libraries Office to integrate students in the decisions for upcoming changes to the library. The SGA Public Relations Committee has been working on a Vermont Student Opinion Poll with the topic being the library renovations. This Committee also assists in his weekly email which is now available as a 60-second YouTube video. The SGA Legislative Action Committee has been working on a Veterans’ Day celebration as well as educating students on how to be good neighbors. The SGA Student Action Committee is addressing the ineligibility of homosexual men, as well as women who have had intercourse with homosexual men, to donate blood. The SGA Committee on Diversity, Equity and Environmental Ethics is working to reconcile UVM’s “green image”. The SGA Committee on Finance and the SGA Committee on Student Activities are under financial duress in terms of budgeting funds for clubs as well as
SGA. President Golfarini also reported that students are excited that late-night dining has come to campus. He noted that SGA is thrilled that it is being asked for the first time to participate in proposals for the new capital campaign, as well as ranking proposals. SGA has also begun regular meetings with the Student Government Leadership of St. Michael’s College and Champlain College. He concluded by noting that the selection process for the next student trustee has begun.

Graduate Student Senate (GSS) President Eduardo Cotilla-Sanchez reported on current GSS initiatives including improved advocacy, communication, and infrastructure. Regarding advocacy, the GSS has established regular office hours, is determined to assist in making UVM more competitive, has combined social and community service events with scholarly activities, and is improving campus accessibility to Apartments and Family Housing (AFH). Communication initiatives include weekly emails and an updated GSS website, closer collaboration with Graduate Program Coordinators, and the establishment of more effective communication paths with other governance bodies. Relative to infrastructure, Senators will organize the following standing committees: Budget Review Committee, Student Affairs Committee, and the Social Committee.

**Acceptance of Gifts & Grants Reports**

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously voted to accept the Gifts and Grants reports.

**Academic Presentations**

Vice President for Research and Dean of Graduate Studies Domenico Grasso provided a brief introduction to the graduate student presentations, noting that their research is pertinent regionally and globally. He also described the important role advisors have in the journey of each student at UVM.

Vice President Grasso next introduced Dr. Jane Hill, Assistant Professor in the School of Engineering and advisor for presenter Courtney Giles. Dr. Hill earned her Ph. D. at Yale University in chemical engineering. She in turn introduced presenter Giles, a Ph.D. graduate student in environmental engineering. Ms. Giles was recruited to the University in 2007 and was a Jeffords Fellow. Ms. Giles began her presentation by explaining that the world population is projected to reach 9.3 billion by 2050. Issues that the world is now facing will become more challenging, including a large increase in the demand for food. Ms. Giles noted that all of agriculture is dependent on phosphorus, which is a limited resource. She stated that securing phosphorus for global food production is critical and nearly half of phosphorus applied agriculturally will run-off, polluting surface waters. Ms. Giles’s goal is to address this issue by finding novel ways to produce more food with less phosphorus. Her focus is sustainable phosphorus biotechnology and her investigation includes how soil bacteria, or *Pseudomonas*, contribute to organic phosphorus cycling and plant phosphorus availability in soils. More specifically, she studies how the production of organic acids by *Pseudomonas* will impact these processes. Ms. Giles noted that her research is transdisciplinary, encompassing fields such as engineering, microbiology, plant physiology, molecular biology, geochemistry, and analytical chemistry.
Chair Cioffi thanked Ms. Giles for her presentation and offered an opportunity for questions. Trustee Christopher Bray asked if the soil bacteria are widely distributed naturally. Ms. Giles indicated they are and that there are some that are commercially sold and distributed.

Trustee Jeanette White inquired whether Ms. Giles works within the local school system. Ms. Giles indicated she has had hands-on opportunity to interact with local schools to educate students about her research.

Trustee Debbie McAneny asked Ms. Giles to provide insight regarding graduate education at UVM. Ms. Giles recalled her opportunity to study abroad and suggested that this be an opportunity available to more students and also encouraged raising awareness for such opportunities.

Trustee David Daigle inquired if there are patent issues in regards to research conducted at UVM. Vice President Grasso replied that the University is very aggressive in protecting intellectual property developed at the University.

Vice President Grasso next introduced Sean Hurley, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Leadership and Developmental Sciences with a Ph. D. from Vanderbilt University. Dr. Hurley serves as faculty advisor for graduate student Valerie Sullivan and introduced her as the next presenter. Ms. Sullivan, an Ed. D. candidate in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, presented her research on value-added modeling as a measure of teacher quality. She discussed the pressures of accountability and student success. Value-added modeling attempts to capture the impact a teacher has on student learning by isolating school-based factors from non-school factors such as gender, race or socioeconomics. Currently, evaluations are often observation-based and frequently do not include a measurement of learning. She also discussed the importance of teachers as a mechanism for social equity. The specific objective of Ms. Sullivan’s dissertation is to evaluate the effectiveness of an evaluation model that includes student achievement as an indicator of teacher effectiveness. She noted that her research falls under the Complex Systems Spire of the Transdisciplinary Research Initiative (TRI). She shared examples of value-added models and concluded that these types of models offer both promise and peril.

Trustee Debbie McAneny asked Ms. Sullivan to provide insight to the Board regarding graduate education at UVM. Ms. Sullivan emphasized the importance of having top-notch faculty advisors available to students.

Trustee David Potter asked if there is evidence of the task of evaluation becoming more complex through different age categories. Ms. Sullivan replied that there is a difference in the types of areas evaluated. The biggest area where evaluation becomes problematic is when it is required to be performed by school principals who might not be as knowledgeable in certain areas as others. Trustee Potter asked if the value-added model could be used for the evaluation of college professors. Ms. Sullivan replied that it would be difficult because a primary goal in higher education is developing new knowledge.

Trustee McAneny asked Vice President Grasso for any insight he could offer the Board on graduate education at UVM. He stated it is vital that there be an appreciation for the role of
graduate education as a major part of the University. He indicated that the measures of graduate research are the problems they solve and contributions they make.

Trustee Bill Ruprecht joined the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

At 9:36 a.m., Chair Cioffi recessed the meeting.

At 9:53 a.m., the meeting reconvened.

**Strategic Initiatives Project (SIP) Status Update**

Interim President Bramley indicated that SIP is about creating a sustainable budget and environment at the University that can assist the University in navigating the future. He stated that the leadership Provost Jane Knodell has shown is what will make this project a success and he invited her to describe the Project further.

Provost Knodell stated that SIP is a roadmap that combines the goals listed in the 2009 Strategic Plan and the financial imperatives needed to accomplish them. SIP can be disaggregated into the following areas: Diversity and Internationalization; TRI and Research; Student Success and Satisfaction & General Education; Net Revenue Enhancement; and Cost Structure & Productivity Improvement. There are teams assigned for each of these areas.

The Diversity and Internationalization Team has conducted an analysis of current initiatives and future opportunities. The results so far indicate that small-scale internationalization will not work as it would not achieve critical mass and would not be viable from a resource point of view. The team is currently exploring large-scale internationalization and the potential of working with a third party to achieve these goals. The team is looking to incorporate domestic diversity as well.

The TRI and Research team is identifying strategic investment priorities and developing five-year projections of the financial support needed in this area. Final proposals will be available by December.

The Student Success and Satisfaction & General Education Team is working to identify key initiatives in their areas and to develop a five-year action plan. In terms of general education, the team is developing recommendations for investment in the first phase including assessment and faculty development, the first-year experience, career planning and experimental learning, and residential learning communities. The team is also working on evaluating and prioritizing these initiatives.

The Net Revenue Enhancement Team has a target of identifying opportunities that will generate $12 million in net revenue by FY 2018. An area of intense focus is distance education, which the Budget, Finance and Investment Committee and Educational, Policy and Institutional Resource Committee will each discuss today.
Trustee Kesha Ram asked about the relationship between distance learning and internationalization. Provost Knodell stated that this is an example of two areas that connect and that, ideally, distance learning will assist with internationalization.

Trustee McAneny sought clarification on how the $12 million goal was determined as a target. Vice President for Finance and Institutional Resources Richard Cate recalled that a 10-year plan had been developed and presented at the 2010 Board retreat. The plan included the generation of $36 million by year five. This number was fine-tuned, and it was determined that $12 million could be generated by net revenue enhancement and $24 million from re-allocation. Trustee McAneny asked if the administration could think on a larger scale in terms of numbers, to which Vice President Cate replied that they are trying to stay realistic and will re-visit the number throughout process to determine if there is more potential.

Trustee Bain asked how this financial work relates to the outlook on tuition. Vice President Cate explained that, if the University were make no changes over the next ten years and annual tuition increases were less than 3.5%, as announced by Interim President Bramley this morning, the budget would remain balanced, but there would not be money available to invest in opportunities. The $36 million would create the capacity to invest in such opportunities, which will better position the University in the future.

Trustee Bill Botzow commented that the University is not alone in re-fashioning itself, and asked how satisfied administrators are with our rate of progress. Interim President Bramley replied that, if one compares UVM to public universities nationally, UVM is in good shape as it does not rely on large amounts of revenue from the State. When compared to public universities, the University is more in the middle and is small and nimble enough to adjust to changes in comparison to private peers.

Trustee David Daigle challenged the University to be nimble enough to aim at reducing the budget rather than utilizing the standard annual increases. He noted that we are living in a world of scarce resources, which will likely continue for the next decade. Provost Knodell explained that there is a Cost Structure and Productivity Enhancement Team that is looking into this and even if tuition increases by 3-3.5 %, efficiencies would still have to be identified.

Provost Knodell moved on to discuss strategic value criteria that would be used to evaluate academic programs. There are four criteria, each with an accompanying set of metrics. Provost Knodell is currently having discussions with the Faculty Senate and Senate leadership about these criteria and metrics, and has established an engagement plan that will allow faculty members and Department Chairs to help shape them. In the spring, after the final criteria and metrics have been adopted, numbers will be run on strategic value criteria. This will be coupled with each academic program. Financial attractiveness captures tuition revenue and expenses associated with each program. Programs will be categorized according to their combined strategic value and financial attractiveness. When this step has been completed, the campus community will consider the implications of the data and think critically about the current array of academic programs. The goal is for these discussions to take place during spring semester and to bring related information to the Board May.
Trustee Jeanette White asked if this type of strategic analysis would be used to evaluate administrative costs. Provost Knodell and Interim President Bramley indicated that this evaluation process will cover all aspects of the general budget.

Trustee Kyle DeVivo urged the administration to consider the consolidation of programs that are perceived as having high strategic value and financial attractiveness.

Trustee Christopher Bray asked if there is a sense of agreement about the criteria. Provost Knodell indicated that differentiating UVM from its peers resulting in distinction, identity and competitiveness (first criteria) is the hardest metric to address, and that the team finds that measures of attracting and retaining high quality faculty who deliver superior teaching, scholarship and research and providing exceptional academic experience that attracts, engages, and retains high quality diverse students (criteria 2 and 3) are easier to determine.

Trustee Rocheleau indicated it will be helpful if SIP process aligns with the metrics of dashboard indicators, otherwise it will confuse stakeholders.

Ad Hoc Report Oversight Committee (ROC) Status Update

ROC Chair Bill Botzow began his update by thanking the Committee and support staff for the work conducted thus far. The Committee was established in August 2011 as a result of the Report on 2011 Reviews, and its charge is to provide oversight of progress toward, and the completion of, three directives.

The first directive was to develop a policy regarding volunteer or other services to be provided by a presidential spouse or partner who may be involved with University. On October 12, 2011, ROC passed a motion recommending to the Board adoption of a new policy.

The second directive was to generate recommendations to strengthen University practices in documenting, reviewing, and approving the reimbursement of employee and volunteer expenses. The University Chief Internal Auditor, William Harrison, generated a detailed report outlining steps that might be taken to strengthen its practices related to documenting, reviewing, and approving the reimbursement of employee and volunteer expenses. These recommendations have been reviewed by management. ROC has received and preliminarily discussed management’s response. After a forthcoming review by ROC of next steps, oversight of this initiative will be transferred to the Audit Committee.

The final directive was to draft a UVM-community-vetted policy statement regarding workplace climate, which incorporates and reinforces new and/or existing requirements and standards. Provost Knodell has initiated a research, drafting and consultation process designed to yield a workplace climate statement consistent with this directive. Provost Knodell’s offered a status report to ROC on October 12 indicating that the draft that will be circulated to the University community (and concurrently, to ROC) for comment will operationalize Our Common Ground in the workplace by identifying channels for reporting of, and informally resolving, conflicts that do not rise to the level of policy or legal violations. The statement will also identify existing policies, procedures and statements addressing safety and security, diversity and inclusion, and
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integrity.

Provost Knodell will request that the community and ROC convey its input to her by the end of the calendar year, so as to facilitate finalization of a statement that the Board will be asked to endorse at its February meeting.

Chair Botzow presented the following resolution for approval and added an amendment as highlighted. He acknowledged that the presidential spouse or partner services piece is important for the presidential search and that the policy has been circulated to Audit Committee members, governance leaders, and the administration for comment.

Resolution Approving Policy on Presidential Spouse or Partner Services

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby adopts the Policy on Presidential Spouse or Partner Services, as recommended by the ad hoc Report Oversight Committee and appearing as Appendix A; and

BE IF FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Committee on Board Governance shall review the policy two years after adoption, and thereafter no less often than once every three years.

A motion was made, seconded and it was unanimously voted to approve the resolution as presented and amended.

Dashboard Indicators Annual Review

Interim President Bramley presented the Dashboard Indicators for the Committee’s annual review. He noted that it is useful to focus on trends, dissect and understand them, and then determine their significance. He suggested an additional column be considered specific to trends. He used student satisfaction as an example, noting that it has declined recently, but pointed out that the trend over the past decade shows general improvement.

Provost Knodell observed that certain trends can be warning signs. In terms of student perception indicators being down, the SIP team is mining these numbers to understand them at a granular level. Director for Institutional Research John Ryan has researched this trend as well, and believes that it indicates the area of academic challenge and the overall university environment need to be focused on.

Trustee Frank Cioffi asked what the response rate was to arrive at the positive indicator of UVM graduates whom are employed full-time. Director Ryan stated the rate was approximately in the mid-30% range of graduates from the past year.

Trustee Ruprecht opined that there are too many indicators and suggested that five or six items be identified to track. He further opined that the indicators are intended as more of a health report, and not a driver of improving the institution. Several Trustees agreed it would be helpful to have a
shorter list of indicators. Provost Knodell concurred, and added that the metrics used in the SIP process can be utilized as such indicators for the Board.

Trustee Botzow commented that the dashboard indicators are a valuable tool for understanding and evaluating the University as a whole. He was concerned by the level of undergraduate dissatisfaction illustrated. Provost Knodell stated that undergraduate advising is measured, but it is not measured at the graduate level. Through action of Faculty Senate, advising is now included in evaluating tenure qualifications. She noted that advising is a challenge, as not every faculty member is good at it. Interim President Bramley observed that good advisors often get overloaded with students and, as their workload increases, the quality of advising is likely to decrease. He also stated that student assessments of advisors vary greatly across University and are unit-based; thus, there is not a one size fit all for this type of indicator.

Trustee Christopher Bray referenced the indicator addressing undergraduate satisfaction with advising, as well as the percentage of seniors that said they would attend UVM if they had to do it over, noting that both have declined. He asked what the likely measure of these targets would be at peer institutions. Director Ryan replied that the first indicator is based on a UVM survey and is not something that would be a direct comparison to peers. He approximated that the University trails on the second indicator by about 5-7% when compared to peers.

Trustee Bain asked if the University is advising students on their post-graduation plans. Interim Bramley replied that academic advising is a holistic approach intended to help students succeed during their journey at UVM as well as helping them apply to graduate schools.

Trustee Kesha Ram asked how indicators related when looked at granularly, noting that satisfaction is different for each student. Provost Knodell responded that the University is looking to integrate student success into experience and that examining the relationship between metrics is helpful.

The meeting recessed at 11:35 a.m.

The meeting reconvened at 3:15 p.m., shortly after which a group of approximately 75 faculty, students and staff members expressing disapproval of the status of various University issues joined the meeting

Chair Cioffi acknowledged the group and its right to express opinions in a peaceful, non-disruptive manner. He asked the members of the group to respect the Board and the important work it must complete as well as to show respect for the other members of the UVM community present.

**Educational Policy & Institutional Resources (EPIR) Committee Chair Report**

EPIR Chair Donna Sweaney reported that the Committee received an update from Provost Knodell regarding current Provost Office initiatives, FY 2012 academic investments, recent faculty recruitments, and the Sustainable Transportation Certification Program.
The Committee also discussed distance learning as a revenue enhancement opportunity endorsed the development of distance learning at UVM.

The Committee endorsed for referral to BFI for financial review the proposed Phase II – Mason/Simpson/Hamilton renovation. Additionally, the Committee recommends a one-year renewal of the existing contract with Northeastern University and Shanghai Kai Bo Education Investment Management Co., Ltd., for the purpose of continuing the multi-component pathways program for students from the Peoples Republic of China (PRC) to begin studies in the PRC and complete them at the University of Vermont; and to enter into a contract with Northeastern University and Kaplan Higher Education Academy PTE, Ltd., for the purpose of establishing a multi-component pathways program for students from Singapore and the Asia Pacific region (“Territory”) to begin studies in the Territory and complete them at UVM.

Trustee Kesha Ram noted that BFI approved a funding mechanism for the one-year renewal contract discussed above. She asked if EPIR discussed quality issues, as some students in the program have expressed feeling isolated at the University. Chair Sweaney replied that quality issues were discussed, which influenced the Committee to recommend a one-year renewal, after which it will be re-assessed.

Budget, Finance and Investment (BFI) Committee Chair Report

BFI Chair Debbie McAneny reported on the preliminary FY 2013 budget discussions. She noted many challenges such as balancing tuition costs, with the State’s recovery from Hurricane Irene, faculty contract negotiations, the state appropriation, and federal issues. She affirmed that the Committee and administration are committed to do everything possible to present a balanced budget in May. She also mentioned that the Committee spoke about the budget process and how SIP will assist in the long-term plan to manage the level of tuition increases. The Committee discussed distance learning, noting that it is a way to diversify revenue streams without making significant changes to campus infrastructure.

Presidential Housing Work Group Status Update

Work Group Leader McAneny reported that the group continues to meet regularly. Bids have gone out for exterior work to Englesby House and several bids are under consideration. Bids for interior work will soon go out.

Trustee Jeanette White asked how much cost is related to it the building being historic. Trustee McAneny stated that there are definite costs related to this status, and cited as an example that the Group inquired if the slate roof could be replaced with shingles -- a much cheaper material -- but learned that it had to be replaced with slate due to historical status.

Trustee David Potter asked if a decision has been made regarding the potential requirement for Presidents to live at Englesby, as to which Chair Cioffi replied that a decision has not yet been made.
Executive Session

At 3:25 p.m., the Chair entertained a motion to go into executive session to consider civil actions and contracts. Chair Cioffi noted that action was anticipated following the executive session. All in attendance were excused from the meeting with the exception of Provost Knodell, Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel Fran Bazluke, Vice President for Student and Campus Life Thomas Gustafson and Vice President for Executive Operations Gary Derr.

Trustee Bill Ruprecht departed the meeting at 4:42 p.m.

Other Business

The meeting was reopened to the public at 4:48 p.m.

The following resolutions were presented for approval:

**Resolution Regarding UVM Foundation Memorandum of Understanding**

RESOLVED, that the Board hereby authorizes the administration to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with The University of Vermont Foundation on terms and conditions consistent with those reported on this date.

**Continuing Authorization relative to Collective Bargaining**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board hereby re-authorizes the administration to negotiate and, as appropriate, resolve, collective bargaining agreements with United Academics governing the employment of faculty in the certified unit; the Teamsters governing police services staff; and with United Electrical governing service and maintenance workers in the certified unit, such the terms and conditions of such agreements to be consistent with the material terms the administration has described to the Board.

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously voted to approve the resolution as presented.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Sweaney, Secretary
Good morning, everyone, and welcome. I will be delivering a brief report this morning, as we have a full agenda. Actually, when do we not have a full agenda? At any rate, here goes:

There is a Chinese Proverb that is translated as follows: “May you live in interesting times.” Actually, this proverb is more often called: “The Chinese Curse.” I will tell you that in the context of my time on this Board in general, and specifically during my tenure as Chair, I can safely say, “Mission accomplished!” It is hard for me to imagine a time of more twists, turns, highs, and lows, and I can report to you that these are indeed interesting times. I should report that this curse is the least serious of a group of three Chinese Curses, the more powerful ones being, “May you come to the attention of those in authority,” and “May your wishes be granted.” I have considered the pros and cons of these other two, but have decided I am not cut out to be a multi-tasker of curses. One curse at a time is plenty, thank you very much.

So, how are we doing in these “interesting times,” anyway? I must tell you that, in spite of a few scrapes and bruises, we are doing very well. Our University continues to make forward progress by being smart, opportunistic, and doing what must be done to strengthen our hand for the future. Much has happened since our last Board meeting on this campus, and most has been very positive.

Some examples:

- We have enjoyed a smooth Presidential transition, and as we knew he would, John Bramley has hit the ground running and has accomplished a great deal, with honesty, transparency, humility, and a good sense of humor. As I have said before, thank you John (and Janet) for agreeing to help us during the interim period.
- The academic year got off to a very good start, with some 2500 new students experiencing UVM for the first time. Once again, we can report that the incoming class is among one of our strongest on many fronts including academics and diversity. They join a student body which many of our peers and indeed some of our aspirants would be thrilled to have.
- Our Presidential Search is on schedule, and our pool of interested candidates looks strong. We will be meeting over the next few weeks to narrow this pool to a list of semi-finalists with the intent of bring 2-4 finalists to campus in late January.
- Fletcher Allen Health Care is also searching for a new CEO, and the timing of the two searches should prove fortuitous. As many of you know, I have asked Rick Morin, Patty Prelock and Carl Lisman to serve on this search committee on behalf of the University.
- We just completed a highly successful and well-attended Alumni/Reunion/Parents weekend, with scores of different events and an attendance of over 5,000. Please take the opportunity over the next couple of days to thank Rich Bundy and his staff on pulling off a first for UVM with the combination of these three events.
- The UVM Foundation also met last week. I attended those meetings and can report that we have a highly enthusiastic, engaged, and motivated set of volunteers and development
professionals involved in the Foundation. We are on target to officially kick off the new UVM Foundation on January 1, 2012.

- The Strategic Initiatives Project is moving ahead under the leadership of Provost Knodell, with the goal of focusing our institution on what is most important, and creating opportunities to invest in our highest priorities – which is what any successful organization must do. We will hear more about these initiatives during our meetings.
- The process to create a General Education curriculum is moving forward, as are initiatives within the Transdisciplinary Research Initiative.
- Our athletes earned a seventh straight America East Academic Cup for the highest collective grades among our competitive peers. And I note that our Club Football team is ranked first in the nation.
- We have made progress in negotiations with United Academics, to the point that we believed we had a mutually acceptable preliminary agreement last week. It now appears that there may be more work to do, but we are hopeful that closure in the near term is possible.
- Our relations with the Governor are in a healthier place, and Governor Shumlin and John Bramley are finding much common ground to work together for the good of both UVM and Vermont, including a willingness to examine our current relationship with the state and see if it can be made better.
- UVM has been a very active player in helping Vermont deal with the many complex and difficult problems created by Tropical Storm Irene. We hope all affected will be back on their feet soon, and Vermont’s University will continue to provide assistance wherever we can.
- And lastly, recognizing our many challenges, this Board continues to work effectively and tirelessly in the best interests of The University of Vermont. I continue to be proud of and grateful for our work together.

I could go on. But I think you can see that we continue to move forward and are accomplishing a great deal on a great many fronts. Bumps in the road? Sure. Occasional delays and detours? They come with the territory. Controversy and disagreement? Of course. All are a part of the process of sustaining our momentum.

Yes, we are living in interesting times. I want to thank everyone gathered here today, as well as our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends for all you are doing to keep Vermont’s University moving ahead. I look forward to our continuing work together.

In closing, I want to take a moment to recognize an employment milestone of a person without whom this Board could not function. Will Corinne Thompson please stand? Corinne, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for 25 years of outstanding service to our University, and for all you do every day for this Board. Well done!

Thank you. This ends my report.
A. John Bramley
Board of Trustees, President’s Report
October 21, 2011

Fellow Trustees, colleagues, faculty, staff, students, alumni and friends – good morning. As once again I find myself sitting at this table I reflect on past achievements and progress and conclude they are both substantial and impressive. This is a much stronger institution than the one I joined in 1990. A decade ago we set out on a plan of action in recognition that the institution needed greater resources to fulfill and sustain its responsibilities as Vermont’s only research university. Bluntly, we were too small and in a state with very limited capacity to help us. Now we are larger in terms of the student body and our student quality and outcomes are better as our reputation has gained strength. Our research has grown both in the volume of sponsored awards and in our national recognition. We acquired a new campus at Trinity, critical to the expansion, and we have addressed many issues around facilities and physical plant. In 2001-2002 our annual base, or general fund, budget was $150,000,000. Today it is double that at $292,000,000. So our growth strategy was highly successful and has placed us in a strong position to face a challenging environment.

Virtually all sectors of the US economy and business, including higher education face difficult and stormy times. The federal deficit looms large and, despite congressional gridlock and partisanship, we know that federal spending will fall. While the details are uncertain it will impact the research budgets of the federal agencies and in turn the research grants that drive our research enterprise. Federal student aid programs that support access for many of our students may also be threatened and the flow of funds from the federal government to states will decline. Even before the havoc of tropical storm Irene, Vermont faced significant budget challenges and now it has monumental infrastructure challenges to address. There will be no growth in state resources to higher education. Our current and prospective students and their families are facing high unemployment, housing and mortgage challenges and a stagnant economy. They are in no position to accept or manage high tuition increases. With that in mind I have instructed my budget colleagues that the UVM tuition increase for 2013 must not exceed 3.5%. Figures like that or lower will be the norm.

Not only is there no significant growth likely in our revenue streams, but we are at our physical and infrastructure capacity for undergraduate enrollment. Fewer students are graduating over the next decade in our primary recruitment areas. As other states reduce spending on public higher education the UVM strategy of funding the organization via out of state enrollment will become the strategy of other public institutions also. There will be increased competition for a declining student pool. So not only can we no longer fuel ourselves by growth but we will face significant challenges in maintaining our current size and quality.

I am confident that we are better placed to address these challenges because of our work and progress in the last decade but we cannot be complacent. How, with very constrained revenue, are we going to make the necessary investments, attract and compensate faculty and staff competitively, increase quality and deliver our mission? What options do we have? We must grow private support to the institution through our development and fund raising activities and that is what is intended through the launch of the University of Vermont Foundation. We can
seek additional revenue sources such as expanded summer programs and activities when our physical plant is seriously underutilized. We can be more competitive and grow revenue from industry and foundation partnerships. We should explore profitable new academic ventures around professional and graduate programs and expand distance learning which is not constrained by physical infrastructure or by the demographics of our region. We might enter partnerships with other institutions to share courses or faculty. Several possibilities exist. However, it is also essential to ensure that we are spending our $300 million of general fund revenue wisely, and on mission critical elements. Like most institutions we are excellent at starting new programs but poor at identifying and eliminating those that should no longer continue. There has been a steady drum beat of publications and reports by many distinguished and experienced academics and teachers warning higher education against complacency. We need to focus on assessing what our students are learning and the skills they are acquiring to help them be successful and competitive. I am pleased that we have processes underway with the faculty senate to revise our general education requirements, measure outcomes and seek to ensure our programs are both high quality and still relevant or needed. Organizations that do not do that will decline. The process to investigate the revenue and expenditure and priority setting that will lead to a strategic and sustainable budget is enshrined in our strategic initiatives project led by Provost Knodell. She is seeking to create a broadly based and inclusive campus effort through which we will look at ourselves carefully and critically, assess priorities and strategic value and ensure we are expending our resources wisely and well. It will be difficult but there really is no acceptable alternative. You will be hearing more about this today and in the weeks to come.

I am also struck by the fact that recent events reflect confusion or misconceptions about our role as the University of Vermont. We have contributed to that by our own lack of clarity. We are Vermont’s only research and Land Grant University now and will be for the future. For over 150 years UVM was an independent institution, becoming an instrumentality of the state in 1955, largely at the urging of then President Carl Borgmann. At that time there was no state college system and no Vermont Student Assistance Corporation. Now, 55 years later the landscape has changed and there are new challenges. There is a substantial state college system with 4-year colleges, a 2-year college expanding to offer 4-year degrees, growing graduate programs and a community college system. The state provides $20 million annually to VSAC to facilitate access for Vermonters in addition to the subsidized tuition model that UVM provides. Overall the state college system has 10,000 enrollments, mainly Vermonters. However, UVM is the only research university and we must have complementary and distinct roles to those of the state colleges. Our distinctiveness is around the creation and dissemination of new knowledge, advanced educational offerings, particularly but not exclusively, in engineering and the sciences, in a range of professional and graduate degrees, Extension and agriculture programs and as the state’s only academic health center. We need to be focused on serving the state through our unique capacities, a different emphasis to the role promoted in 1955 which was about increasing access to higher education for Vermonters. Today the state has excess public higher education capacity, particularly as 50% of college bound Vermonters leave the state to study. The state spends about $80 million annually on higher education and $1.8 billion on K-12 education. It is very unlikely that these resources will grow or and be significantly adjusted in the near future. Vermont has to ask whether the resources for public higher education are allocated strategically and effectively to support the growth of a competitive economy, encourage entrepreneurship and
new business development, provide affordable and accessible opportunities for Vermonters, have strong workforce training in the right areas, attract the best and brightest to our state, protect our health, working landscape and environment. That means ensuring we have financially sound and sustainable institutions, with complementary and distinctive roles, which effectively collaborate, allow for seamless movement between parts of the system and avoid unnecessary duplication. That is a crucial debate that I believe should occur and in which Vermont can show national leadership.

As an important step towards UVM leadership on critical issues, I am challenging UVM to establish an annual discussion series aimed at transforming the quality of life and economy in Vermont and the nation through sustainable, systemic approaches to our food system, our health, and science and technology. I am envisaging a UVM or Vermont brand of the Aspen Institute which is respected internationally for its leadership around critical issues and the human condition for over 50 years. The first event will focus on the Vermont Food System in the summer of 2012. It will explore food and its relationship to health and health care, the appropriate scale and reach of the food system, the potential of renewable farm based energy, transportation, environmental impact and sustainability, affordability, tourism and economic development. We will partner with other organizations and while this event will utilize the campus and Burlington it must also engage throughout Vermont. It must illustrate that we are the University of Vermont, not the University of Burlington. It should explore how UVM, its community, farms and land and the city itself can model rural urban interfaces and be an integrated sustainable food system. Other initiatives will follow in health and the sciences, areas where UVM also has great expertise. I am confident that this can grow into a signature UVM activity, that will attract significant sponsorship and support and demonstrate what being a 21st century land grant institution actually means.

Let me finish on more local items. Our state has been ravaged by Tropical Storm Irene and while UVM survived relatively unscathed, friends and neighbors were less fortunate. It has been our responsibility to apply our unique resources to help benefit Vermont and its people and we have done so. Our Extension faculty and staff have worked tirelessly throughout the state supporting and advising Vermont’s farmers. Since many state offices and laboratories had to be closed, our agricultural scientists have been providing critical diagnostic tests and analyses. The state colleges lost their computer systems so we were able to provide support to keep them running. We offered office and laboratory space to the state, and now have state scientists working alongside UVM faculty and staff. Our police services worked in beleaguered Windham County. Our staff and students have volunteered in numerous ways and in many communities and that continues this weekend. Our alums have raised money in distant places and our whole community has been generous. An incomplete summary, prepared at the request of the Governor’s office, has been placed before you of the numerous ways in which Vermont’s university has contributed. However the effects of Irene will be long lasting and the needs great. With that in mind I have informed the Secretary of Administration and the Chairs of the relevant legislative committees that we will forego our 2013 request for a capital appropriation as we acknowledge the huge infrastructure challenges and more urgent priorities the state must address.

As I have said our University is strong and you will see evidence of that throughout this meeting. But let me highlight a couple of notable items. At the end of September we learned that
that we had been successful with a new award of $20 million for our EPSCOR program focused on Lake Champlain. Our spire strategy is designed to build excellence in focused areas and retain strong faculty and help us be more competitive in increasingly competitive research world where collaboration and cross disciplinary approaches are essential. One of those outstanding faculty colleagues, Josh Bongard, has been honored by President Obama as one of 94 recipients of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers. This award is the highest honor bestowed by the United States government on science and engineering professionals in the early stages of their independent research careers.

I came back to serve this University at this time because I care about it, its people, its mission and its critical contribution to Vermont. The institution has suffered blows to its morale and its esprit de corps. I will do my best to help repair some of the confidence and trust but I cannot do so alone nor can this happen overnight. That will also have to be a priority for my successor and for all members of the community. We all must bear responsibility for openness, transparency and civility. The Strategic Initiatives project is seeking to engage the community in a dialog that requires that openness and honesty and an institutional perspective transcending constituency interest. Easy to say perhaps, but it is difficult to achieve. We will have to decide on priorities and make tough choices as we move forward. We have often failed at that in the past but now we must succeed or put all our progress at risk. Thank you.