EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT AND STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

A special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College was held on Wednesday, June 1, 2011 at 1:00 p.m., in room 351 Waterman Building.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Robert Cioffi*, Vice Chair Harry Chen*, Bill Botzow*, Ian Boyce*, Frank Cioffi*, Debbie McAneny*, Donna Sweaney* and Mark Young*

REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Staff Council Representative Ida Russin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Daniel Fogel and Faculty Representative Jim Burgmeier, Student Government Association Representative Julian Golfarini, Graduate Student Senate Representative Eduardo Cotilla-Sanchez, and Alumni Association Representative Ted Madden

OTHER TRUSTEES PARTICIPATING: Sam Bain*, Jeff Davis*, Kyle DeVivo, John Hilton*, Kesha Ram, Dale Rocheleau* and Jeanette White*

PERSONS ALSO PARTICIPATING: Provost Jane Knodell, Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel Francine Bazluke, Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations Richard Bundy, Vice President for Executive Operations Gary Derr, and Associate Provost for Curricular Affairs Brian Reed

*By means of telephone

Chair Robert Cioffi called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Dissertation Review Status Report

Chair Cioffi reported that a review of the doctoral dissertation of Dr. Michael Schultz has been completed, the first of three areas of review initiated to determine whether the actions that have come to light in recent weeks were appropriate under the University’s policies and standards of conduct. Provost Knodell was invited to present the report.

After a brief description of the process leading to award of an Ed.D, Provost Knodell read the following summary statement prepared by Associate Provost for Curricular Affairs, who conducted the review:

“A review of the doctoral dissertation of Dr. Michael Schultz was conducted during the time period May 16-May 27, 2011. The purpose of the review was to ensure the dissertation had in fact followed all institutional policies and procedures and that there
had been no irregularities including direct or indirect attempts by Rachel Kahn-Fogel to influence the inception or the outcome. The research consisted of a review of all Graduate College files on Michael Schultz and interviews with each of the dissertation committee members and the responsible administrative officers in the Graduate College. The Schultz file was in order and the documents in it were unremarkable. All members of Schultz’s dissertation Committee testified that the process was rigorous; that the research was original; that the dissertation was of very high quality and stood on its own merits. All Committee members and administrative officers stated that they had not been aware of any attempts by a third party to influence the outcome of the dissertation, and that if they had suspected such they would have “blown the whistle”. In conclusion, the interviews and the review of files revealed no evidence of irregularities including attempts by Rachel Kahn-Fogel or any other party to influence the outcome of the Schultz dissertation. These findings reinforce the integrity of the Committee members, the dissertation process and the quality of Dr. Schultz’s work”.

Chair Cioffi thanked Associate Provost Reed for conducting the review and stated that Michael Schultz had granted the University a limited FERPA release to allow for the open session presentation on this topic.

**Executive Session**

At 1:10 p.m., the Chair entertained a motion to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing personnel matters and contract negotiations. He reported that the session would last approximately one hour with action anticipated following the session, specifically an authorization to initiate contract negotiations. All in attendance were excused from the meeting with the exception of Vice Presidents Bazlue, Bundy, Derr, and Knodell, all of whom were invited to remain initially. Trustees Ian Boyce and Jeanette White departed before the executive session concluded.

**Other Business**

The meeting was re-opened to the public at 2:33 p.m. Chair Cioffi entertained a motion to authorize the administration to initiate and conclude contract negotiations in a manner consistent with the briefing it provided today. The motion was made, seconded and approved.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert F. Cioffi, Chair