VERMONT AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

A meeting of the Vermont Agricultural College Board of Trustees of the University of Vermont and State Agricultural College (the Board) was held on Friday, November 30, 2007 at 4:00 p.m. in the Spruce Room of the Dudley H. Davis Center.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Claire Ayer, Secretary Edwin Amidon, Jr., Bill Botzow, Harry Chen, Martha Heath, James Leddy, and Donna Sweaney.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Johanna Donovan, and Jeanette White.

ALSO PARTICPATING: John M. Hughes, Senior Vice President and Provost, Francine Bazluke, Vice President and General Counsel, Karen Meyer, Vice President for Federal, State, and Community Relations, Doug Lantagne, Dean of the Extension System, Susan Wertheimer, Interim Dean of Admissions, and Gretchen Babcock, Director of Government Relations.

Chair Ayer called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made, seconded, and voted to approve the minutes of the meeting of May 19, 2007.

Approval of Proposed Amendments to Bylaws

Vice President and General Counsel Francine Bazluke explained the proposed amendments to the Board’s bylaws that were formulated to ensure compliance with the Vermont Nonprofit Corporation Act and other applicable law. The Board approved the proposed amendments, which will require the Board to elect a new officer, the Vice Chair, at the next meeting. Members interested in serving as Vice Chair were asked to contact the Chair.

Vermont Agricultural College Board’s Role in UVM’s Land Grant Mission

Senior Vice President and Provost John Hughes presented his views on the February 2006 white paper on the University’s land grant mission authored by former Provost John Bramley. Vice President Hughes discussed major milestones in public education since the passage of the Morrill Act creating the land grant system and gave many illustrations of ways the University is accomplishing a modernized land grant mission.

A discussion followed as to how the University could build on existing land grant programs and expand them throughout the state and how the Board could assist in that effort. Dean of Extension Doug Lantagne indicated that Extension is working with other units in the University to expand the scope of outreach activities. Vice President Meyer described the work being done to develop a web portal to help the community connect to various University research,
instructional, and service programs. She suggested that the prototype could be brought to the Board for review and comment before it was activated on the University’s website.

The Board then focused on three possible areas for future attention and activity:

- University operations and policies that favor or inhibit the conduct of the land grant mission;
- Ways to create a more cohesive and accessible communications structure about outreach activities in Vermont communities; and
- Developing a user-friendly “front door” for external constituencies to access the University.

For the next meeting, the Office of Federal, State and Community Relations will draft a set of proposed action steps for both the Board and the Administration to address each of these areas.

**Review of Fall Admissions Data**

Interim Dean of Admissions Susan Wertheimer reported on fall admissions data for Vermont residents and highlighted recent trends in numbers of applications, admit rates, and academic profiles of applicants and admitted students. The Board discussed the challenges presented by declining numbers of Vermont high school students and efforts underway to raise the numbers of college-bound high school graduates. Dean Wertheimer also pointed out that the admit rate of Vermont applicants had risen to 72% in 2007 and has been consistently higher than for out-of-state students. She also cited the University’s flexible transfer student admission process and its role in helping to retain Vermonters in the state.

**Legislative Outlook**

Vice President Karen Meyer reported on the activities of the Commission on Higher Education Funding (CHEF) and how it arrived at its FY 2009 recommendation for an 8% increase in base budget funding for higher education. In addition, CHEF has recommended $2 million in supplemental, one-time appropriations for each of the state’s institutions, and the University will request its supplemental appropriation for research and development of innovative and sustainable technologies, as it has the last several years. The University also will request a $4 million capital appropriation, with the first $1 million to be used for the Plant Sciences Building and any additional funding to be used for other construction, renovation, and major maintenance.

The Board requested that legislative trustees be given notice of the time and place of a presentation to the Legislature being planned by the higher education presidents highlighting the societal value of higher education.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edwin Amidon, Jr., Secretary