



Board Notes

September, 2017

Board Notes is a new form of communication designed to keep the trustees informed about and engaged in current seminary events, decisions and actions that affect the work of the Board. It is prepared by President Blair and Board Chair Parmely. We welcome your feedback as we work to increase the flow of important information during the periods between board meetings that may not be captured by other forms of communication.

Ongoing Work with our Accreditors

We encourage you to read the regular *Responding Well* communications coming from the Saint Paul Response Team led by Board Chair-Elect Tex Sample and our consultant, President Greg Henson. Other vehicles for keeping informed are the President's Monthly Update Meetings with faculty and staff, which are held the second Thursday of each month. You can join these meetings in person at the Fox Hill office complex or through Zoom or teleconference connections by contacting Melissa Whalen. The most recent update meeting was held on September 14, 2017 and reviewed the ATS focused site visit and recent enrollment and financial data.

On September 7, 2018, a site visit team from the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) visited Saint Paul. A number of trustees joined the site visit team over lunch to discuss our progress in responding to HLC probation. Three major topics were discussed at this meeting: (1) progress on developing more effective leadership and planning practices; (2) the status of a specific plan to guide our educational, operational and financial alignment; and (3) systems of communication between the board and administration. A written report from ATS is expected soon and will likely urge Saint Paul to place a greater urgency on developing a written plan to guide our work related to HLC probation. Expect a draft of that plan to be presented at our Fall Board Meeting.

Executive Committee Actions

The Executive Committee recommended adoption of the FYE18 budget, which was subsequently approved by the full board. This budget holds the draw on our investment portfolio to below 6% and positions us well to reduce that draw further in FYE19. The committee also approved all submitted annual COI declarations and is working with President Blair to finalize his annual goals and streamline the presidential review process.

Financial Matters

The Church of the Resurrection Board approved our one-time request to forgive over \$80,000 in occupancy and shared infrastructure fees for the current fiscal year. Thanks to all who have worked hard to achieve significant cost savings in seminary operations during the previous and current fiscal years.

Enrollment Update

Twenty-six new students enrolled at Saint Paul School of Theology this Fall, reflecting an acceptance rate relative to applications of 63%. Two thirds of these new students will be pursuing MDiv degrees on the Leawood campus. The Fall semester will see a total head count of 116 enrolled students, one quarter of whom study on the Oklahoma City campus.

Looking Ahead to the April, 2018 Meeting

Melissa Whalen will soon be surveying board members about a possible change in the date of our April, 2018 meeting to avoid a conflict that currently exists with the Annual HLC Conference in Chicago. Please watch for this survey and try to be flexible in your scheduling.

October Meeting of the Board

President Blair, Chair-Elect Tex Sample and Chair Parmely have invited Dr. Douglass Lewis, former President of Wesley Theological Seminary, to join the Board at our October 9-10 meeting. Dr. Lewis will lead a workshop on optimizing governance structures for effective leadership. He plans to facilitate a series of conversations around issues of shared governance and the effective forms of communication that support good governance structures and practices.

Welcome New Trustees

The Board voted to approve for membership new trustees Susanne Teel and David Hutchison. Congratulations to Susanne and David. We look forward to working with you during this exciting time in the history of Saint Paul School of Theology.

If you have joined the Board since April, 2017, you need new member training. We typically hold a training session the Sunday afternoon prior to the full meeting, in this case on the afternoon of October 8. Tex Sample, our new Chair-Elect, will be leading this training session. Be watching for details and a schedule in your pre-meeting materials. In the meantime, place a hold on your calendar for that afternoon beginning at 3:00 PM. Current members who feel they might benefit from an update are always welcome.

Good Governance

Your Governance Committee continues to work hard filling vacancies on the board, including leadership positions. Tex Sample was recently elected as Chair-Elect and Twila Glenn was elected as Chair of the Academic Committee. The Board also elected Susan Lindahl and Arden Borgen to serve as at-large members of the Executive Committee. Congratulations to you all!

The Governance Committee is seeking nominations for new trustees with business, governing board and higher education experience. If you have suggestions of talented, committed individuals who you feel might fit the Saint Paul Board, contact Glenn Grove.

Dashboards and Committee Reports

Many of you have asked questions about the use of dashboards for receiving information and data from the staff and conveying the work of your standing committees to the full board. The Saint Paul Response Team has created a standardized data dashboard for regularly reporting on resources, enrollment, development and measurements of student learning. A link to this report was embedded in the August 31 *Responding Well* report.

The standing committees of the Board are also working with a standard form for reporting to the full board the analysis, recommendations and proposed actions derived from their committee deliberations. You should be seeing this form implemented at our October board meeting. Please share your thoughts on the

usefulness of this form of reporting and how we might improve any of our governance processes.

We look forward to working with each of you at our Fall Board Meeting on October 9-10, 2017 (October 8 for new member training).