MINUTES

BOARD OF REGENTS’ COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND INNOVATION MEETING

FEBRUARY 9 2017

I. CALL TO ORDER

Committee Chair Eugene Bal, called the meeting to order at 10:53 a.m. on Thursday, February 9, 2017, at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Information Technology Building, 1st Floor Conference Room 105A/B, 2420 Correa Road, Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96822.

Committee members in attendance: Committee Chair Eugene Bal; Committee Vice Chair Benjamin Kudo; Regent Brandon Marc Higa, Regent Wayne Higaki, Regent Lee Putnam.

Others in attendance: Board Chair Jan Sullivan; Board Vice Chair Randy Moore; Regent Simeon Acoba; Regent David Iha; Regent Michael McEnerney; Regent Jeffrey Portnoy; Regent Michelle Tagorda; Regent Stanford Yuen; Regent Ernest Wilson, Jr. (ex officio committee members); President/Interim UH-Mānoa (UHM) Chancellor David Lassner; Vice President for Academic Planning & Policy Risa Dickson; Vice President for Community Colleges John Morton; Vice President for Legal Affairs/University General Counsel Carrie Okinaga; Vice President for Research & Innovation Vassilis Syrmos; Vice President for Information Technology/Chief Information Officer, Garret Yoshimi; Vice President for Budget & Finance and Chief Financial Officer Kalbert Young; UH-Hilo (UHH) Chancellor Donald Straney; UH-West O‘ahu (UHWO) Chancellor Maenette Benham; Executive Administrator and Secretary to the Board Cynthia Quinn; and others as noted.

II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 3, 2016 MEETING

Regent Higa moved to approve the minutes of the November 3, 2016 meeting, seconded by Committee Vice Chair Kudo, and the motion carried unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Executive Administrator and Secretary of the Board Cynthia Quinn confirmed that the Board Office received no written testimony and no individuals had signed up to give oral testimony.

IV. AGENDA ITEMS

A. For Information

2. Update on UH System Research and Innovation Long Range Plan

Agenda items were reordered to provide better context under no objection. VP Syrmos presented to the committee the long range plan to strengthen and nurture the
The plan also provides for innovation workforce and entrepreneurship ecosystem components and strategies for the students, faculty and staff. The plan identifies the challenging funding and regulatory environments, and approaches to increase revenue through increased enrollment, cultivate philanthropic relationships for grants and endowments, increase investments, contain costs and improve efficiencies. Implementation begins with an 18-24 month plan for strategic hiring, research incentives and investments, performance measurements, reassess space and organizational structures utilizing an implementation guide based on peer comparisons that compiles the best practices and metrics on returns on investment, hiring, space management, and grant development to be customized by each campus to fit their respective unique qualities and challenges.

Comments regarded understanding the hubs were not intended as an all-inclusive list of areas of focus; valuing scholarship and non-science fields, such as liberal arts that is the cornerstone for science fields; addressing projected declining budgets and attrition; targeting research grants based on best return on investment and covering salary and overhead; and benefits of an external advisory committee to assess plans including the structure and use of organized research units (ORUs). Strategic hiring was also discussed as to recruitment plans and salary competitiveness enhanced with research training & revolving fund (RTRF) reserves, reallocation of general funds, and challenges with limited housing and start-up funding, and current successful strategic hiring in science, computer science, and high performance computing. Brief discussion was held regarding enrollment of foreign students and the uncertainty regarding impact on international student enrollment and interest in coming to the United States given the recent executive order.

1. Update on Advancing Research at UH Mānoa

VC Bruno presented a status report on the UHM research enterprise, noting that the UH was ranked 11th in the world for earth and environmental science by the renowned journal Nature. He explained the full report is planned for the April committee meeting regarding the UHM strategic planning effort, in five areas and integrated in system long range plan. They are working with UHF on new funding efforts focused on student research and success, which resulted in new $300,000 of donations in the first month.

Regarding the launch of the external advisory review committee for research at UHM with seven members with outstanding international knowledge, experience and expertise, including former director of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA); a three day site visit is planned to review the UHM research portfolio in 18 areas, including the 10 organized research units, with directors and deans regarding concerns and challenges to inform their assessment and evaluation of the structure and balance among the research faculty and organizations to recommend best practices or other models, e.g.,
interdisciplinary institutes, and optimize on strengths, opportunities, and investments. The outcome is expected to also include hiring assessments and strategies, and available for an update at the end April on the findings and a report to be shared online and with faculty.

Regarding strategic hiring, uniform templates for deans and directors is underway, to ensure appointments originating from the deans and directors follow a template that contains specified requirements in the offer letter expectations regarding level of external funding and teaching. It was confirmed that all research faculty do engage in some level of teaching across the board. Approved workload policies for all faculty have been put on the web with specified requirements for minimum level of teaching or showing other service activities, teaching or advising activities, or external funding in lieu of teaching requirements. Other strategies shared include shifting focus hiring around problems to address in education and research, needs of the state, and hiring across disciplines; and cost containment by targetting a critical mass to deliver research and education by joint recruitment versus by individual school to share resources and costly advanced technology spaces versus a cost prohibitive approach in owning individual spaces. To date proposals and awards are currently looking strong, though low for the second quarter, but expected to level out over the remaining year, and remain on track for the target of over $400 million in extramural awards.

5. UH-RCUH Internal Agreement Update

Due to time constraints, the report on UH-Research Corporation of the University of Hawai‘i (RCUH) agreement was taken out of order under no objections. VP Syrmos explained the housekeeping changes made to align with statute, and amendments that reflect current practice and definitions. Substantive changes were made to identify roles and responsibilities between UH and RCUH, and improve reporting requirements for clarity, transparency, and accountability.

Comments and concerns raised regarded clarifying roles of the president and chair of the RCUH board, ensuring proper oversight while encouraging collaboration and shared purposes in promoting the research enterprise; confirming that management fees are paid through RTRF funds; and status of funding and level of service provided to UH. Administration confirmed that the current structure is collaborative, with UH as RCUH’s largest customer bringing 90% of the work for human resources and procurement services. Funding levels are projected to remain strong, and the reported slight decrease is expected to level out over the remaining year. A comment raised regarded that, although contrary to statute, a prior state audit recommended greater control by considering making RCUH a subordinate unit structure within UH. Administration referenced mainland peer universities with similar management structures, and RCUH Executive Director Sylvia Yuen added that the current structure complies with current statute, and the most recent 2015 audit raised no concerns regarding the present structure, focusing only on other concerns such as need for an updated strategic plan and other management improvements.

3. FY17 Q2 Extramural Awards Report and R&I Performance Metrics
VP Syrmos reported that the first quarter is typically the best quarter because it is the federal government’s fourth quarter, and had confidence that, although the projections are down, overall the funding levels are on track to exceed $400 million. The trends by quarter are provided, and levels by campuses, highlighting a $2.6 million award for the Cancer Center, 40% of funding is from non-federal sources, a big portion being state agencies, and some of these state agencies receive federal funding which they contract out for services. UHF is becoming increasingly a bigger sponsor of funding and contracts with UH to support specific research or instruction programs.

The R&I metrics were deferred in the interest of time, although it was noted that good progress is being made, and the chair encouraged the committee members to provide questions directly to the chair or VP Syrmos.

4. Update on University of Hawai‘i Patent and Copyright Policies

In the interest of time, VP Syrmos indicated that positive progress is being made in technology transfer amendments, and offered the committee to submit any questions. The repeal and amendments to the patent and copyright policies have drawn no concerns, the comment period expired, and a request to the Governor for approval is being prepared, and will be effective upon approval. The board may expect revised regents policies to be presented simultaneously for approval.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Committee Chair Bal adjourned the meeting with no objections. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/S/

Cynthia Quinn
Executive Administrator and
Secretary of the Board of Regents