AGENDA
Board of Trustees
Athletics Committee Meeting
July 19, 2005

I. Approval of May 6, 2005 Minutes

II. Financial Report Update -- Nick Floyd
(updates will be distributed at meeting)

III. Athletics Program Update – Terry Holland

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7/6/05
The Board of Trustees Athletics Committee met in regular session in Mendenhall Student Center Great Room on Friday, May 6, 2005. In attendance were committee members Fielding Miller (Chair), Bill Bodenhamer, Bob Greczyn, Cole Jones, Mike Kelly, David Redwine and Margaret Ward. Other Trustees in attendance included: David Brody, Joel Butler, Robbie Hill, Dan Kinlaw, Steve Showfety and Jim Talton. Other University participants and guests included: Dr. Steve Ballard, Nick Floyd, Terry Holland, Kevin Seitz, and Jim Smith. Various other attendees were present.

Mr. Miller called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM.

I. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Greczyn moved the Minutes of December 10, 2004 be approved as submitted; seconded by Mr. Bodenhamer, the motion passed unanimously.

II. Guest Speaker – Coach Ricky Stokes, Head Men’s Basketball Coach

Mr. Holland introduced Ricky Stokes and asked that Coach Stokes bring his entire staff up with him.

Coach Stokes said we want to bring in young men that we can all be proud of. To have success on the court, you must have success off the court. We are demanding excellence off the court, doing well academically, athletically and also socially but we have to have those three things because as we all know this is a great time in a young individual’s life. East Carolina can be a great experience and we want them to be productive, we want them to have a great experience and go out and spread the gospel of the Pirates. So it gives me great pleasure to be able to do that. We have a lot of great things to sell but more importantly I just welcome the opportunity, welcome the chance to get to do that, and to get the chance to know you and to thank you for all you do for not only our program but for the university.

One advantage of hiring a staff is to bring in some guys with regional ties and the first guy that I hired is Mack McCarthy, our Associate Head Coach. Coach McCarthy introduced himself and gave a little of his background. Coach Stokes continued that his recruiting coordinator is Chris Ferguson who has been a friend for years and comes from the University of Tennessee. Chris is a native North Carolinian. Next is another good friend, Larry Dixon from Salisbury, another North Carolina guy. Lastly is a young man who has spent the last two years with me at the University of South Carolina, Jeremy Shyatt. Jeremy is a Clemson grad and will be our Director of Operations.
This is your staff and we look forward to having the opportunity to represent East Carolina. We hope to see you at many games in Minges and are looking forward to getting to meet you personally and lead your basketball program.

Mr. Holland asked if there were any questions for Ricky or his staff. He explained that his coach, Lefty Driesell taught him very early that you have to recruit the mothers first, and every staff has to be huggable. When I met Larry I said, “I want to hug him!” I think we have not only experience but we have hugability and all of that is important. When my wife met Jeremy, she said, “that’s who the little sisters are going to hug.” So we have it covered, I believe.

III  Financial Report Update

Nick Floyd referred to the Financial Report which closed March 31 of this year. As you can see from the report the current year operating revenues and expenses are pretty much on line with budget and at this point we are projecting a small surplus for the end of the year. We also have football and men’s basketball coaching staff transition expenses that we have undertaken. Those charges are going to be noted as charges against the fund balance and carried forward at this point in time. We will take care of those with a combination of future operating earnings or some one-time revenues that we have in the works at this point in time.

The past couple of years as you know have had their challenges for us but we feel that at this point in time we have put in place the foundation to move forward in a very positive manner and we are very excited about the future as you can see from the quality of men that we have leading our men’s basketball program. Back in December you met our football coaching staff as well and we feel that great things are in store for the Pirates. With that I will be happy to answer any questions you may have in regard to the financial report.

Mr. Showfety stated he is not a committee member but would like to ask a question that may be on other people’s minds as well. He was proud to see that ECU will reappear on television with that very first game. I think a lot of people are excited about the prospects of being on television. Can you share with us whether there is any direct impact, financially of an appearance on television or is it all rolled up at the conference level for disbursement back to all of the schools.

Mr. Floyd responded that the conference athletic directors are in the process now, Mr. Showfety, of determining what the revenue distribution is going to be on the new television contract. The consensus around the league is for there to be more of an equal sharing concept whereas if you are on television or not on television, every member would directly benefit from the package. That has not been the case in the past where it had been tilted more towards an appearance concept but most of the major conferences such as the ACC, Southeastern Conference and others gravitate more to a revenue sharing concept that is equally based. So the only thing that would be a little different in our league is because of some of the midweek games—there would be a possible supplement for teams that
participate in the midweek games because at times there is an adverse impact on gate receipts with midweek games.

Mr. Redwine asked if conference realignment has sort of settled down now or is that still all blowing in the wind? I know we just got our situation with Conference USA settled, but do you have any crystal ball or thoughts where that might be headed in the future?

Mr. Holland responded that he would answer that because that is certainly something that concerns everyone…making sure that we are prepared for any eventuality that occurs. We are committed to being loyal to Conference USA but again, we attended a meeting back in December and there were fifteen ADs representing the fifteen Conference USA institutions at the morning meeting and when we came back for the afternoon nine of those ADs disappeared, went to other conference meetings and six new people came into the room. Conference USA institutions are committed to being financially sound and financially responsible. In terms of what East Carolina does athletically, we will continue to operate in that mode but it is always going to be a tight fit.

Mr. Showfety said he would just ask you to offer some general comments on Conference USA’s realignment divisionally and your personal observations about entering in – on a football basis – to a championship game and just an overview of how that might affect the Conference first, and then how that might affect East Carolina.

Mr. Holland said the conference is still feeling its way in terms of revenue distribution, which is obviously a critical piece of how we operate and the kind of foundation that you put in place for future decisions. It is a cooperative effort---I believe we are operating with people who care about the same things East Carolina University cares about but it’s going to take us a while to sort of wade through all of the different pieces of it. We have some unique problems since we are on the far eastern perimeter of the geographic area covered by the Conference. We’re going to have a tough time convincing others to come here for championship events. We have a tremendous baseball stadium that obviously can host any type of Conference or NCAA event but again, it is very expensive for all of those teams to travel to ECU so it would be easy for them to vote for sites which are in the middle of the Conference. We can appreciate that since we’re the ones that have to travel during the regular season and we certainly ask for and expect our due in terms of hosting events whenever possible. But I do believe it is a very cooperative group of institutions, that we will make some things happen in the next few years and that we will be very conscious of how we address the missed class issues particularly for those schools that are on the perimeter. Texas El Paso on one extreme and ECU at the other extreme in the east. And again, the tougher part is developing those rivalries that conferences have traditionally brought to every institution. Normally you played every institution at least once in football in your conference – that’s what we are all accustomed to and you played everybody in your conference twice in basketball –home and away – and that kind of close contact has built great regional rivalries. But we are seeing every conference expand so that they are no longer geographically intact. Four teams in a twelve team conference obviously will not play each other when you play eight conference games. So, all those are things every other conference is experiencing just as every institution is experiencing the same budget crunch – not crisis – that ECU faces. Our problems are common to conferences as well as institutions
across the board. They may seem like crises to us and we take them very seriously. We also have to look at it and say this is part of doing business today and you have to be able to address these issues on a regular basis.

Mr. Showfety asked if the 12th game creates the opportunity to achieve your goal to play regionally?

Mr. Holland responded that yes, it does give us another chance, and that’s why – since your conferences don’t give you that regional competition as much anymore I think – particularly in our case – we have to seek that with our out-of-conference schedule and we are working very hard to secure games that mean something to our fans, obviously all of us want to participate in games that have significance – nationally as well as locally. Our Conference rivalries are important but the schools that we compete with every day are the SEC, the ACC and the Big East. We compete with those schools obviously for student-athletes but we also compete with those schools for students – for the very best students in the area. And we compete with those institutions for media coverage in every aspect and that is our competition and we have to be aware of that.

Mr. Redwine asked Mr. Holland about student-athlete behavior. You read so much about our friends in the south which have had quite a problem here recently. In terms of that, I know you can’t predict student-athlete individual circumstantial behavior but is there a strategy in place among the Department and Coaches for some sort of counseling, or understanding of rules and regulations, or whatever the word might be, for our student-athletes in terms of conduct on and off campus? I hate to see us in the newspapers like I have seen some of our friends down south who have gotten in trouble with some folks who have done some pretty awful things, actually.

Obviously we depend on Student Life here at ECU to help us a great deal with that, Mr. Holland continued. In other words, our students are students and they are going to do some of the same dumb things as well as some of the same great things that other students do. How we respond to those situations I think is absolutely critical and what I have been able to tell is that the Athletics Department operates as a family with high expectations for our young people and this University does as well. In other words that is one of the great things about ECU. Somehow, in spite of our size, we’ve managed to maintain a real interest in the individual student and I think that every student feels that. I know that our student-athletes feel that and individual accountability and responsibility come with it. I know our coaches are committed to seeing that their athletes do what’s right. When Skip Holtz speaks to the Pirate Club, he says if there is any doubt about doing what’s right, read the Bible, if there’s still doubt about it, picture Jesus Christ on one side and your mother on the other side and if you’d still to it…it’s the right thing do to. We are not quite to that point yet but that’s where we’d like to go as a department. Certainly that is a concern always and we do have throughout the NCAA a great deal of interest in taking care of those problems. Different people have different approaches. I remember one institution that seemed to think that the best way to solve the problem of athletes getting their name in the newspaper was to buy your own 7-11 so that the athletes could rob it anytime they wanted to but I don’t think we want to take that approach.
Mr. Holland said that he had also distributed to the Committee Members the Athletics Report so that you can see some of the things that our athletes are involved with.

Following review of some of the highlights by Mr. Holland, Mr. Miller adjourned the meeting at 10:34 AM.

Submitted by Brenda Swain, 6/2805