**MINUTES**

LOUISIANA UNIVERSITIES MARINE CONSORTIUM

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Claiborne Building, Regents Conference Room, 6th floor, 1201 North Third Street

Baton Rouge, LA

February 29, 2016, 3:00 PM

1. **Call to Order** (Dr. Laura Levy)

Dr. Laura Levy, Chair, LUMCON Executive Board, called the meeting of the Executive Board for the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium to order on February 29, 2016 in the Regents Conference Room of the Claiborne Building, Board of Regents, Baton Rouge, at 3:00 p.m.

1. **Roll Call** (Dr. Nancy Rabalais)

*LUMCON Executive Board members present for the meeting:*

**\* Dr. Kalliat T. Valsaraj,** Louisiana State University and A&M College

Vice Chancellor for Research and Development

**\*Dr. Neal Weaver**, Nicholls State University

Vice President, University Advancement

**\*Dr. Ramesh Kolluru**, University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Vice President for Research

**~~\*~~Dr. Stan Napper**, Louisiana Tech University,

Vice President for Research and Development

**\*Dr. Laura Levy**, Tulane University

Vice President for Research

\***Dr. Emir Jose Macari,** University of New Orleans

Vice President for Research & Economic Development

\***Dr. Eric Pani,** University of Louisiana at Monroe

Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Dr. Christopher D’Elia**, Louisiana State University and A&M College

Dean, School of the Coast & Environment

**Uma Subramanian**, Deputy Commissioner for Legal and External Affairs

Ex-officio for Board of Regents

**Sandy Halloway**

Ex-Officio for Board on Elementary and Secondary Education

**\*Denotes voting members of the LUMCON Executive Board.**

Dr. Rabalais determined that 7 of 8 voting members of the LUMCON Executive Board constituted a quorum, and Dr. Levy called the meeting to order.

*LUMCON Science and Education Advisory Council Members present for the meeting:*

Dr. Gary LaFleur, Nicholls State University

Associate Professor of Biological Sciences

*Guests in attendance:*

Board of Regents: Carrie Robison, Associate Commissioner for Sponsored Programs; LUMCON: Dr. Nancy Rabalais, Dr. Brian Roberts, Dr. Paul Sammarco, Joseph Malbrough, Heidi Boudreaux, John Conover, Jennifer “Murt” Conover, Debbie Cenac; Other guests: Dr. R. Eugene Turner, LSU Boyd Professor, Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences, Louisiana State University

1. **Approval of Prior Minutes**

Dr. Levy called for the approval of the prior minutes.

**MOTION BY DR. RAMESH KOLLURU, SECONDED BY DR. KALLIAT T. VALSARA, to approve the minutes of the Executive Board Meeting held on December 7, 2015.**

**AYE: Valsaraj, Weaver, Kolluru, Napper, Levy, Macari, Pani**

**NAY: None**

**ABSTAINING: None**

**CARRIED: 7-0**

Dr. Levy signed the signature page of the minutes thus certifying them for historical purposes.

1. **Public Comments**

Dr. Levy called for public comments. Dr. Rabalais stated that no one had expressed interest in making public comments but that there must be a call for public comments prior to any vote being taken on any specific agenda item. Dr. Rabalais added that she has submittals to be considered during specific agenda discussion. Dr. Levy stated that she would allow for the opportunity for public comments after an agenda item and she also asked the guests in attendance if they were interested in making a statement.

Dr. Levy called for other public comments; there were none.

1. **Reports and Recommendations of Standing and Special Committees**

**Report from the Director Search Working Group**

Dr. Levy invited Dr. Neil Weaver, lead the Director Search Working Group, to update the Executive Board on the progress of the Director search. Dr. Weaver announced that the working group received 14 applications, of which they identified 5 applicants who were of very good quality. The working group is in the process now of designating times for a preliminary Skype interview on March 11, 2016 for the 5 applicants to further narrow the field. Once the working group has identified the final applicants, they will be brought for a site visit and final in-person interviews. Out of the 5 currently under review, 4 of the applicants live out of state so they will have to be brought in for the final stage of the interview process. The workgroup hopes to have the on-site visit completed between April 10 and April 22. This should allow time for the selection and negotiations that will have to take place in order to meet the July 1, 2016 deadline.

Dr. Levy inquired about the general backgrounds of the applicants. Dr. Weaver responded that there were several Associate/Assistant Directors of research facilities. All of the applicants have a good academic background with experience with governmental agencies and are comfortable in a research setting. Dr. Weaver stated that all were qualified for the Director position. Dr. Macari asked whether the budget could support bringing 5 applicants for interviews. Dr. Weaver stated that he does not anticipate bringing all 5 in. It would most likely be 2 or 3 applicants for the final stage and on-site visits. The final application phase should be approximately 2 days which will include the on-site visit to LUMCON, meeting with the Search Working Group. The Search Working Group will consider all feedback provided by LUMCON staff from the site visit.

Dr. Levy suggested that authority should be designated to the LUMCON Executive Board Chair to proceed with negotiations with the leading candidates. Executive Board members can meet with the candidates on their visit.

Dr. Weaver reminded the Executive Board that the final decision does not have to be made during the final applicant’s visit. The applicants can come in and meet with all appropriate personnel and then leave. The Executive Board can then send their comments along with the feedback from LUMCON staff to the Search Working Group. At that time, the working group will come up with the final selection and make its recommendation. Uma Subramanian stated the Executive Board has to have an open meeting with quorum to determine the final candidate selection. The Board would have to meet, rank the final candidates in an executive session and authorize the Board Chair to negotiate on its behalf.

Dr. Rabalais recommended that the final candidates be given the Five-Year Master Plan, the Business Plan, the Legislation and the By-Laws that govern the position, as well as the full advertisement for the position posted. She will put together a packet of information and forward to Dr. Weaver. She offered a reminder that the position is the Executive Director of the Consortium and not the Executive Director of the Marine Center.

Dr. Levy reiterated that the Search Working Group will identify up to 3 finalists, participate in the concluding interview of the 3 finalists, and send their recommendations to the Executive Board along with the feedback from the staff and faculty of LUMCON. The Board will meet the finalists and convene an Executive Board meeting to rank the candidates in an Executive Session.

**MOTION BY DR. LEVY, SECONDED BY DR. KOLLURU, to authorize the Search Working Group to identify approximately 3 final candidates. At that point the candidates will become part of the public record and be identified as such. Dr. Weaver will coordinate with the Executive Board Chair on an interview schedule in which the finalists will meet with the faculty and staff at LUMCON and the Search Working Group. Those groups will forward their feedback to the Executive Board who will meet as a group in a formal meeting on the last day of the interviews to meet the finalists and evaluate and discuss each of the candidates.**

**AYE: Valsaraj, Weaver, Kolluru, Napper, Levy, Macari, Pani**

**NAY: None**

**ABSTAINING: None**

**CARRIED: 7-0**

Dr. Levy will work with the Executive Board members to identify a date for an Executive Board meeting to further discuss, if necessary, and select a candidate for Director.

1. **Reports and Recommendations of the Chair of the Executive Board**

**Disposition of Authority to the Board Chair Concerning the Director Search**

Dr. Levy stated that she anticipates the search for a new Executive Director to be a successful process. However in the unlikely scenario that the search fails, an interim director will need to be appointed.

**MOTION BY DR. LEVY, SECONDED BY DR. PANI, to designate authority to the LUMCON Executive Board Chair to appoint an interim director, effective July 1, 2016, if it becomes necessary.**

**AYE: Valsaraj, Weaver, Kolluru, Napper, Levy, Macari, Pani**

**NAY: None**

**ABSTAINING: None**

**CARRIED: 7-0**

Dr. Levy stated she is also recommending the Executive Board consider designation of further authority to the LUMCON Executive Board Chair to negotiate with the leading Executive Director candidate identified by the Director Search Working Group.

**MOTION BY DR. LEVY, SECONDED BY DR. MACARI, to designate authority to the LUMCON Executive Board Chair to negotiate with the leading Executive Director candidate identified by the Director Search Working Group.**

**AYE: Valsaraj, Weaver, Kolluru, Napper, Levy, Macari, Pani**

**NAY: None**

**ABSTAINING: None**

**CARRIED: 7-0**

1. **Reports and Recommendations of the Executive Director**

**Report from the Executive Director on FY17 Budge**

Dr. Rabalais stated that Heidi Boudreaux, Susan Testroet-Bergeron and Murt Conover attended the House Appropriations Committee meeting on February 16, 2016. LUMCON is facing a 24% budget cut from FY16 levels to FY17 levels. That takes the state support from 2.2 million to 1.7 million which means LUMCONS 23% state funding is reduced to 16% state funding. LUMCON will have to design a mechanism to absorb this budget cut. Some of these mechanisms may include: the Board may be asked to consider financial exigency for LUMCON; possible furloughing or layoff of state employees. This budget cut puts services in jeopardy due to a possible day of closure. It also puts BTNEP in jeopardy because their state match is based on the LUMCON budget. Their match would go down to $300,000 and they need $800,000 to operate. Grant monies will also be affected due to the inability to hire. There are many mandated costs that LUMCON has regardless of state money. The percentage of the mandated costs for LUMCON is about 14%. Certain programs are essential to maintaining LUMCON’s designation as a marine science institution to operate a UNOLS (NSF-funded) research vessel.

1. **Other Business**

 **Election of Board Chair and Vice-Chair**

Dr. Levy stated that the by-laws provide for an election of a Chair and a Vice-Chair to serve a one year term in accordance with the state law. No member may serve more than two consecutive terms as chair or vice-chair. Dr. Levy furthered that the February 29 meeting is when to elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair. Dr. Levy asked the Executive Board to offer nominations for the Chair. Dr. Macari recommended that the Executive Board keep the current Chair and Vice-Chair for one more year.

**MOTION BY DR. KOLLURU, SECONDED BY DR. MACARI, to reappoint Dr. Laura Levy as Executive Board Chair and Dr. Kalliat T. Valsaraj as Executive Board Vice-Chair.**

**AYE: Valsaraj, Weaver, Kolluru, Napper, Levy, Macari, Pani**

**NAY: None**

**ABSTAINING: None**

**CARRIED: 7-0**

1. **Adjournment**

Dr. Levy stated that the Executive Board had reached their final agenda item and asked for any further business. Sandy Holloway, the new Ex-Officio member from BESE, introduced herself. She announced that she felt privileged to be able to serve on the Executive Board. She shared her experiences that she had at LUMCON as a teacher and education provider and how she feels it should be an instrumental part of any science program. Dr. Levy reiterated that LUMCON has a deep commitment to elementary and secondary education.

**MOTION BY DR. LEVY, SECONDED BY DR. PANI, to adjourn the Executive Board Meeting.**

**AYE: Valsaraj, Weaver, Kolluru, Napper, Levy, Macari, Pani**

**NAY: None**

**ABSTAINING: None**

**CARRIED: 7-0**

**Dr. Laura Levy announced adjournment of the meeting at 4:30 pm.**

Respectfully submitted:

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Dr. Laura Levy\*, Chair

LUMCON Executive Board

\*Transcribed and edited by Debbie Cenac, LUMCON Executive Assistant, audio tapes archived.

\*Further edited by Dr. Nancy Rabalais, Secretary to the Executive Board.