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Board of Regents Meeting Materials, July 17, 1979

Eastern Michigan University

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EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF REGENTS

Official Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Regents on July 17, 1979

Board members present:

Richard N. Robb, Chairman
Linda D. Bernard, Warren L. Board, Timothy J. Dyer, Beth W. Milford,
Carleton K. Rush and John F. Ullrich

Board member absent:

Dolores A. Kinzel

Administration present: ,

Acting President Anthony H. Evans
Vice-Presidents: Gary D. Hawks, Robert J. Romkema and Laurence N. Smith
Interim Vice-President Donald F. Drummond
Associate Vice-President Raymond LaBounty

Chairman Robb called the Special Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. The Chairman stated that this meeting had been called in accordance with the provisions of the Board of Regents Bylaws.

He said there was only one item on the agenda; the sole purpose of this meeting was to elect a new president for Eastern Michigan University.

.2111 M APPOINTMENT OF PRESIDENT PORTER

Chairman Robb moved and Regents Bernard and Dyer seconded that Dr. John W. Porter be appointed President of Eastern Michigan University effective September 4, 1979, at an annual salary of \$60,000 and that the Chairman of the Board be authorized to enter into a formal agreement with Dr. Porter on behalf of the Board.

Chairman Robb explained the last portion of the motion noting that he and Dr. Porter thought it would be beneficial to put some of their thoughts and discussions into writing. He said he would share the proposed agreement with the members of the Board and ask for their input before concluding any formal agreement with Dr. Porter. He said the content would be very similar to the letter of agreement the Board had with former President Brickley.

Chairman Robb continued that he thought the whole selection process had been an open procedure; the screening and interviewing of the candidates had involved all segments of the University. Personally, he said, he felt it was a compliment to Dr. Porter that all of those various groups that interviewed him either rated him as preferred or acceptable, and no other candidate received such an outstanding rating.

Chairman Robb stated he is personally very comfortable with the procedures used and he is also comfortable with the selection of Dr. Porter as the next president of Eastern Michigan University.

Regent Dyer said he would like to echo the remarks made by Chairman Robb. He continued that he has been privileged to know Dr. Porter for several years. He said Dr. Porter had headed the state system of education which is respected as being one of the very top systems in the country. Its excellent reputation was developed solely because of the leadership provided by Dr. Porter. Regent Dyer continued that Dr. Porter had served four Presidents of the United States and is currently serving in a position appointed by the President. Of course, he said, there are probably hundreds of fine educators in this country, but he personally felt Dr. Porter was one of the top five educators in the entire United States; and as an alumnus he was honored to be able to vote for Dr. Porter. Regent Dyer said he was happy for the University because he felt that under Dr. Porter's stellar leadership the University will make the progress it needs to make it a truly great University. He said this is a very happy day for all of us who have a special love for this institution.

Regent Bernard said she would like to partially echo Regent Dyer's sentiments. She said the selection process has been a long hard process and in many ways it divided the Board members and left many people in a vacuum for over a year. She said she personally has great confidence in the process and is very satisfied with the results. She said Dr. Porter has exhibited very capably the fact that he can successfully deal with problems. She said she felt, as Regent Emeritus McCormick once said, that one of the problems of the institution was a lack of esprit de corps. Regent Bernard continued that she felt confident that with Dr. Porter's record and proven leadership ability, he will unite this campus and re-establish the esprit de corps that is so desperately needed at this University. She continued that she feels the Board has found a tireless leader to address the many problems confronting the University and Dr. Porter is the man who can bring us all together. Regent Bernard said Dr. Porter has her unqualified recommendation to be the next President of Eastern Michigan University.

Regent Ullrich said he too would like to speak in support of Dr. Porter, and he would like to share with everyone his personal feelings on the selection process and the recommendation just made by Chairman Robb.

Regent Ullrich said that because of the diverse backgrounds of the Board members, they started out with various views about what the process should be; the one thing that everyone did agree to was that they wanted a person whom they could wholeheartedly support and respect. He said he feels Dr. John W. Porter is that person. However, he said, he didn't always feel that way.

Regent Ullrich said he had three concerns about Dr. Porter becoming a candidate. First he was concerned about the way he submitted his application. Secondly, there were concerns expressed about cronyism and politics entering into his candidacy; and thirdly, during the first round of interviews of the candidates he was not all that impressed with any of the four presidential candidates and felt possibly it would be advisable to start the process all over again.

But, he said, since that time he has grown to admire Dr. Porter's qualities and the talent he could bring to the University. He said he appreciated Dr. Porter's views on the problems that confront higher education. He continued that he and Regent Board had gone to Lansing prior to Dr. Porter's appointment and met with various state officials to get their impressions and views of the candidate. He said they talked with the Governor, several legislators as well as staff people and all said they were supportive and had great respect for Dr. Porter. Dr. Porter is a leader recognized throughout the country as well as a planner which is something needed at this University. He agreed that Dr. Porter was extremely well qualified for the President's post and it behooves the Board to unite behind him. Quite frankly, Regent Ullrich said, he wanted to be around for Dr. Porter's presidency.

Regent Ullrich told the Board members that he had set some standards for the quality and the type of individual he wanted to lead Eastern Michigan University which were:

- #1 He felt the University needed a leader. Dr. John Porter has definitely demonstrated that he is a leader by running one of the largest departments of state.
- #2 He felt the University needed someone with management skills. Dr. Porter has been responsible for the operation of the State Department of Education for ten years and has an excellent reputation for being a skilled leader and manager.
- #3 He said he felt we needed a scholar. Dr. Porter's record will reflect the fact that he has many publications to his credit as well as speeches around the state, nation, and the world.
- #4 He said we needed someone that was people oriented. After visiting in Lansing with the Governor and others he found that Dr. Porter was a very respected and admired leader who was very people oriented.
- #5 He felt we needed someone dynamic. Dr. Porter qualifies.
- #6 He felt we needed someone with a good reputation. Dr. Porter's reputation is impeccable.
- #7 He felt we needed a good planner. Dr. Porter is very goal oriented and a good planner.

Regent Ullrich continued that one of Dr. Porter's goals was to become President of Eastern Michigan University. He said he stated earlier that one of his concerns was the way Dr. Porter became a presidential candidate. This concern was eradicated when he found out that this was a goal Dr. Porter had set for himself and that he worked very hard to make sure he would be able to obtain that goal. Regent Ullrich said he now understood and appreciates his ideals. As he reflected back to the interviews with Dr. Porter, he said he thought in many cases Dr. Porter was more knowledgeable about the problems confronting the University than the Board was itself.

Regent Ullrich continued that as to the comments about politics and cronyism, he wanted to set the record straight. All Board members received a copy of a letter of recommendation from Governor Milliken which was only one of probably a hundred letters of recommendation that came on behalf of Dr. Porter.

He said he received only four telephone calls concerning the presidential search since the start of the process, and those calls came from faculty, alumni, and one Board member. None of the calls came from the Governor or his staff.

He continued that he wanted the record to show that he and Regent Board met with Governor Milliken (at the request of the Board), as a part of the selection process to get an assessment of Dr. Porter's performance. He said the Governor was almost apologetic for not being more involved in his recommendation of Dr. Porter, saying he was a very strong leader, but he would need Board support. Regent Ullrich agreed that the Board must support Dr. Porter and all must work together; and he wants to be a part of it. He said he feels the University has a great future with Dr. Porter as President.

Regent Board said he entered the selection process after it was well on its way and some stumbling had occurred. He said the only thing he knew about the selection process was what he had read in the newspapers and it did cause him some concern. He said he wanted to go on record at this point that he found his colleagues very professional in their conduct during the search process. He said it appeared to him that it was a good process and he was glad to be a part of it. Regent Board said he was pleased to vote for Dr. Porter to be the next President of Eastern Michigan University.

Regent Rush said the presidential search had been a long hard process and there had been many difficulties along the way. He said that tonight is the time for the Board to get together and support the new President. He said he wanted to go on record that he is pleased to be a part of the action being taken tonight.

Regent Milford said she wanted to remind everyone that she felt the presidential search process did not really give them the number of well qualified candidates that it should have because the original advertisements were placed prior to the election of Mr. Brickley. She said she felt some good people were probably hesitant to apply not knowing whether or not an actual vacancy was going to exist. She said that back in January she stated that she hoped the Board would go into a new search for that very reason. She said it was nothing against Dr. Porter because she felt he was qualified from the very beginning, but she said she had publically stated on several occasions that she felt the Board should open a new search. She said she did not make those statements because she felt the candidates being considered were not good, well qualified people, but rather, because she felt the pool of finalists should have been broadened. Regent Milford continued that she has been associated with Eastern Michigan University in various capacities for many years and has always been supportive of the University and its leadership, and she will continue to be; and it is to that end that she is voting for Dr. John W. Porter.

Chairman Robb said he wanted to make just a few final comments before they voted. He wanted to thank all members of the screening committee and the total University community for being so patient during this long hard process. He said he hoped it was a worthwhile experience for everyone. He said he also wanted to thank the administration and staff for their support and hard work to move this University forward during this long period of the presidential search. He complimented Acting President Evans and his staff on a job well done.

Regent Dyer said Regent Kinzel could not attend this special meeting, but she had asked him to make some comments on her behalf. She indicated to him that she was very supportive of Dr. Porter being the next President of Eastern Michigan University as she felt he is an excellent choice and she will be very supportive of him in his efforts to lead the University.

Chairman Robb called for the question.
The vote was taken. A unanimous vote was cast for Dr. John W. Porter to be the next President of Eastern Michigan University.

Motion carried.

Regent Dyer moved and Regent Ullrich seconded the meeting be adjourned.

The Chairman declared the meeting adjourned at 7:26 p.m. and advised all present that a press conference would take place at the President's Residence at 7:30 P.M. He said Dr. Porter and his family would be formally introduced at the press conference and invited everyone to attend.

Respectfully submitted:

Gary D. Hawks, Secretary