

**BOARD OF REGENTS and its
ad hoc UNR PRESIDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE
NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

University of Nevada, Reno
Joe Crowley Student Union, Ballrooms A & B
87 West Stadium Way, Reno
Wednesday, September 16, 2020

Members Present: Regents' Committee
Mr. Rick Trachok, Chair
Dr. Jason Geddes
Mrs. Cathy McAdoo
Mr. Kevin J. Page
Ms. Laura E. Perkins

Members Absent: Regents' Committee
Mrs. Carol Del Carlo

Other Regents Present: Dr. Mark W. Doubrava, Board Chair
Ms. Amy J. Carvalho
Mr. Trevor Hayes
Ms. Lisa C. Levine
Mr. Donald Sylvantee McMichael Sr.

Members Present: Institutional Advisory Members
Mr. Will Carrasco, GSA President
Dr. Kristen Clements-Nolle, Faculty Senate Representative
Ms. Maria Doucettperry, Director Equal Opportunity and Title IX
Office (*Ex-officio*)
Dr. Melanie Duckworth, Administrator
Dr. Dana Edberg, Faculty Senate Representative
Dr. Mae Gustin, Faculty Senate Representative
Ms. Dominique Hall, ASUN President
Ms. Jill Short (*sitting in for Mr. Vincent M. Keller, Staff Employee Council Chair*)
Dr. Albert Lee, Faculty Senate Representative
Mr. Keegan Murphy, ASUN Speaker of the Senate
Mr. Joe Nannini, Alumni Association President
Dr. Melissa Piasecki, Administrator
Mr. Chuck Price, Faculty Senate Representative
Mr. Vic Redding, Administrator
Mr. Alfredo Alonso, Community Member
Ms. Carolyn Barbash, Community Member
Dr. Dana Bennett, Community Member
Mr. Paul Bible, Community Member
Mr. Joe Bradley, Community Member
Mr. Randy Brown, Community Member

Members Present: Institutional Advisory Members – *(Continued)*
 Dr. Mick Hitchcock, Community Member/UNR Foundation Chair
 Elect
 Dr. Marsha Read, Community Member
 Mr. Rick Reviglio, Community Member
 Ms. Ann Silver, Community Member
 Ms. Dagny Stapleton, Community Member
 Dr. Angie Taylor, Community Member

Chair Trachok called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. with all members present except Regent Del Carlo.

Chair Trachok announced Ms. Jill Short replaced Mr. Vincent M. Keller as the Staff Employee Council representative.

Chair Trachok disclosed he has known Governor Brian Sandoval for almost 30 years in a professional capacity. He was a law partner with Governor Sandoval for approximately one year at Jones Vargas and contributed to both of his campaigns. His campaign disclosed the contributions to the best of his knowledge. Governor Sandoval appointed him to his 2010 transition team. In August 2011, Governor Sandoval appointed him to fill a vacancy on the Board of Regents. He does not stand to gain any pecuniary interest from Governor Sandoval's candidacy for the President's position. There are no private capacity commitments regarding Governor Sandoval that would affect his judgment in deciding on his candidacy for the President position. He will participate in the discussion and vote on the item. He disclosed the relationship pursuant to NRS Chapter 281A.

1. Information Only – Public Comment

Public Comment from Bradley Combs voiced his support for Governor Brian Sandoval as President of UNR. Governor Sandoval is hard-working, inquisitive, and embodies ethics and integrity in all his work. As a former Governor and current professor, he understands the needs of the higher education institutions. The Governor embodies the traits of great leaders and is ready, willing, and able to step up. Regents should take this opportunity to appoint someone who is so eminently qualified. *(Ref. Combs.Bradley09.16.20 on file in the Board Office.)*

Public Comment from Jonathan Beardsley voiced his concern that Governor Sandoval may, as university president in this time of financial difficulty, make similar decisions to those he made in 2011. He is concerned that Governor Sandoval may feel a suitable response to the state's current economic problems would involve massive and sweeping cuts to higher education. He believed that a robust public system of higher education is essential to Nevada. Any belief to the contrary seems to be entirely antithetical to the entire purpose of higher education in the first place. *(Ref. Beardsley.Jonathan09.16.20 on file in the Board Office.)*

1. Information Only – Public Comment – *(Continued)*

Public Comment from Thomas L. Schwenk supported the candidacy of Governor Sandoval for the position of UNR President. Governor Sandoval has the leadership, political, and business skills needed to address a new business model. Higher education suffers from variable and increasingly weak state support. The next President needs to transform the business model for higher education, strengthen state support, identify new revenue sources, and create a more efficient and effective education model. *(Ref. Schwenk.Thomas09.16.20 on file in the Board Office.)*

Public Comment from Keith L. Lee voiced his support for Governor Sandoval as the next UNR President. The COVID-19 crisis and deteriorating funding sources for UNR dictates that it be led by a Nevadan and a graduate of UNR. Governor Sandoval has served the state in all three branches of government and the private sector. He understands and respects people of all ethnicities, beliefs, value systems, and philosophies. Governor Sandoval knows the value of collaboration, team-building, and problem-solving. He is the right choice to lead UNR into the future. *(Ref. Lee.Keith09.16.20 on file in the Board Office.)*

Public Comment from Thomas Barnes stated that the Nevada Beef Industry's future depends on an advanced education curriculum focused on agriculture and provided the Nevada Cattlemen's Association's vision of what that should look like. *(Ref. Barnes.Thomas09.16.20 on file in the Board Office.)*

Public Comment from Elliot Parker voiced his support for Governor Sandoval. He usually would prefer to hire an academic and someone that came from out of state, in the hope they would bring new ideas. Governor Sandoval understands the external environment, the funding issues, and the legislative tradeoffs that UNR must make. He loves Nevada and UNR and will be an excellent person to represent the University. *(Ref. Parker.Elliot09.16.20 on file in the Board Office.)*

Public Comment from Deena Behnke voiced her support for Governor Sandoval. His in-depth knowledge and connections will be critical in guiding the University through this time with the least damage. Governor Sandoval is well-respected and liked by the constituency. He will select strong people to compliment his deficiencies in academia. After hearing all four candidates, she believed a bold choice would be Jonathan Koppel. Given the high stakes, this is likely a time to choose conservatively. *(Ref. Behnke.Deena09.16.20 on file in the Board Office.)*

2. Approved – Minutes – The Committee recommended approval of the January 31, 2020, meeting minutes. *(Ref. UNR PSC-2 on file in the Board Office.)*

Regent McAdoo moved approval of the January 31, 2020, meeting minutes. Regent Page seconded. Motion carried. Regent Del Carlo was absent.

3. Information Only – Chancellor's Report – Chancellor Melody Rose reported on the search and interview process and announced the final candidates:

- Chaden Djalali, Ph.D. (*Ref. UNR PSC-3a on file in the Board Office.*)
- Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D. (*Ref. UNR PSC-3b on file in the Board Office.*)
- Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D. (*Ref. UNR PSC-3c on file in the Board Office.*)
- Brian Sandoval, J.D. (*Ref. UNR PSC-3d on file in the Board Office.*)

Chair Trachok requested Items 4 (Chair's Report) and 5 (Discussion of Interview Questions) be taken together.

4. Information Only – Chair's Report – Chair Trachok provided a report regarding the final interview process and related matters.
5. Information Only – Discussion of Interview Questions – Chair Trachok provided the interview questions. (*Handout on file in the Board Office.*)

The questions are as follows.

1. As a land grant university, UNR is responsible for the many aspects of that designation that benefit all Nevadans. Can you share your philosophy or understanding of land grant universities, including the Cooperative Extension program, along with your approach to strengthening land grant in Nevada? (*Dagny Stapleton asked each candidate the question.*)
2. What should the new President do to ensure that UNR is an important part of the upward economic mobility of Nevada children from low-income families? Research shows that mid-tier colleges and universities have a great impact on the upward economic mobility of children and families. As UNR strives to enhance its national reputation as a research institution, will those young Nevadans – especially rural Nevadans – have a place here? (*Dana Bennett asked each candidate the question.*)
3. As the opportunity for state appropriated funding becomes more and more limited over time, please discuss your approach to strategic revenue generation from non-state sources and how that impacts or influences the institutional mission. (*Vic Redding asked each candidate the question.*)
4. What do you want UNR to look like in 5 years? 10 years? How will you accomplish and coordinate the success of such a large strategic plan? (*Keegan Murphy asked each candidate the question.*)
5. There are significant fiscal challenges facing State of Nevada, NSHE, and our University that may lead to administrative and curricular cuts and/or merging of services/campuses. How have you addressed similar fiscal challenges in the past, and how would you approach them on this campus? (*Chuck Price asked each candidate the question.*)

4. Information Only – Chair's Report – *(Continued)*
5. Information Only – Discussion of Interview Questions – *(Continued)*

Questions – *(Continued)*

6. Please share your plans for enhancing the research productivity of faculty and students at the University of Nevada, Reno and your vision for the ongoing maintenance of research R1 status. *(Kristen Clements-Nolle asked each candidate the question.)*
 7. What is your approach to shared governance, transparency, and accountability? What mechanisms do you support for shared governance at the University? *(Dana Edberg asked each candidate the question.)*
 8. What do diversity and inclusion mean to you, and what is your vision of diversity and inclusion at the University of Nevada, Reno? *(Maria Doucettperry asked each candidate the question.)*
 9. You would be embarking on your career as President during the middle of a global health pandemic, an unanticipated recession, and a national racial crisis, what do you think are the biggest challenges our campus community will face in the next 18 months, and how do you plan to approach them? *(Cathy McAdoo asked each candidate the question.)*
 10. How will the future President improve the connectivity between the University of Nevada, Reno, and the Reno/Sparks business community? *(Ann Silver asked each candidate the question.)*
 11. As we find ourselves in very difficult and unprecedented times, we have seen catastrophic cuts to state funding, I believe the ability to fundraise is more important than any other time in the history of this great institution. How will you, as the President of the University of Nevada, approach this topic? *(Rick Reviglio asked each candidate the question.)*
 12. What is the role of a university president and what do you see that role being at the University of Nevada Reno? *(Rick Trachok asked each candidate the question.)*
 13. Do you have any questions for us?
6. Information Only – Final Candidate Campus Visit Reports and Final Candidate Interviews – Search Consultants Zachary Smith and Suzanne Teer reported on the campus visits and campus forums held with each final candidate, the input received from the forums, and the results from the surveys received from each final candidate's campus forums. The Search Consultants reviewed each final candidate's curriculum vitae and background information before each final candidate's interview. The Committee interviewed the final candidates for the position of University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) President. *(Handout on file in the Board Office.)*

Search Consultants Zachary Smith and Suzanne Teer reviewed the strengths and concerns from the feedback surveys for Dr. Chaden Djalali.

6. Information Only – Final Candidate Campus Visit Reports and Final Candidate Interviews – *(Continued)*

Chair Trachok welcomed Dr. Djalali. Dr. Djalali provided an opening statement and responded to the interview questions.

The meeting recessed at 12:21 p.m. and reconvened at 12:40 p.m. with all members present except Regent Del Carlo.

Search Consultants Zachary Smith and Suzanne Teer reviewed the strengths and concerns from the feedback surveys for Dr. Jennifer Evans-Cowley.

Chair Trachok welcomed Dr. Evans-Cowley. Dr. Evans-Cowley provided an opening statement and responded to the interview questions.

The meeting recessed at 2:21 p.m. and reconvened at 2:35 p.m. with all members present except Regent Del Carlo.

Search Consultants Zachary Smith and Suzanne Teer reviewed the strengths and concerns from the feedback surveys for Dr. Jonathan Koppell.

Chair Trachok welcomed Dr. Koppell. Dr. Koppell provided an opening statement and responded to the interview questions.

The meeting recessed at 4:19 p.m. and reconvened at 4:36 p.m. with all members present except Regent Del Carlo.

Search Consultants Zachary Smith and Suzanne Teer reviewed the strengths and concerns from the feedback surveys for Mr. Brian Sandoval.

Chair Trachok welcomed Mr. Sandoval. Mr. Sandoval provided an opening statement and responded to the interview questions.

The meeting recessed at 6:18 p.m. and reconvened at 6:35 p.m. with all members present except Regent Del Carlo.

1. Information Only – Public Comment – *(Continued)*

Public Comment from Katy Simon Holland stated education and the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), are at a pivotal crossroads. The learning models will be vastly different going forward, and initiatives and solutions that served the students, faculty, and community will need to be re-evaluated for this future economy. UNR needs a transformational, visionary, experienced higher education leader. She encouraged support for Jonathan Koppell. Initiatives he directed helped achieve ASU's designation as the Most Innovative University in America. He is highly valued and respected in Arizona and has a national reputation as an exceptionally innovative leader in connecting the University to the public interest to accelerate solutions to difficult economic and social problems. The challenges facing higher education today call for someone who has already excelled at meeting those specific challenges.

Dr. Dana Bennett disclosed she has known Governor Sandoval since he was an Assemblyman, and she was the legislative staff. In 2010, Governor Sandoval hired her to serve as Senior Researcher on his first gubernatorial staff, and in 2012 she was employed in the Governor's Office of Economic Development. While President of the Nevada Mining Association, Governor Sandoval appointed her to serve Nevada in various capacities. Despite a long association, she stated she would evaluate his candidacy with impartiality and objectivity.

Mr. Vic Redding disclosed he had met with Governor Sandoval last month at his request and as Vice President of Administration and Finance to discuss the Special Session's budget actions related to funding reductions and UNR's response. The discussion was limited to the University finances. Mr. Redding advised Governor Sandoval that he would make this disclosure if he were interviewed as a finalist.

Dr. Mick Hitchcock disclosed he was a moderator for two campus forum sessions related to the UNR President Search. It will not impact his decision-making process associated with a new president.

Mr. Randy Brown disclosed he has known Governor Sandoval for two decades. Governor Sandoval appointed him to the Nevada Tax Commission in 2017. The appointment has no impact on his ability to be impartial in this matter.

Mr. Rick Reviglio disclosed he has known Governor Sandoval since high school. He served as a finance member when he ran for Governor, but it will not impact his decision to find the best President for the University.

Dr. Angie Taylor disclosed she has known Governor Sandoval since college. She has worked indirectly with him in her role as a Washoe County School District Board of Trustee. Both affiliations will have no impact on her decision-making process.

Regent McAdoo disclosed each year the Board of Regents nominates a Regent to serve as a representative on the State Board of Education as a non-voting member. She disclosed under NRS Chapter 281A, as recommended by the Nevada Commission on Ethics, that Governor Sandoval approved the State Board of Education appointment. She did not receive any remuneration for holding the position, and the appointment does not and will not interfere with her ability to vote objectively. She will vote.

7. Information Only – Advisory Members' Open Session Regarding Final Candidates for UNR President – An open session for the advisory members was held to discuss the final candidates for the position of UNR President.

Chair Trachok asked each advisory member to provide their first and second choice.

Advisory Member	1 st choice	2 nd choice
Mr. Will Carrasco	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.
Dr. Kristen Clements-Nolle	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.	Brian Sandoval, J.D.
Ms. Maria Doucettperry	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.
Dr. Melanie Duckworth	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.	Brian Sandoval, J.D.
Dr. Dana Edberg	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Dr. Mae Gustin	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.

7. Information Only – Advisory Members' Open Session Regarding Final Candidates for UNR President – (Continued)

Advisory Member	1 st choice	2 nd choice
Ms. Dominique Hall	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.
Ms. Jill Short	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.
Dr. Albert Lee	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.	Brian Sandoval, J.D.
Mr. Keegan Murphy	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Mr. Joe Nannini	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Dr. Melissa Piasecki	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.
Mr. Chuck Price	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Mr. Vic Redding	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.
Ms. Carolyn Barbash	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.
Dr. Dana Bennett	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.
Mr. Alfredo Alonso	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Mr. Paul Bible	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Mr. Joe Bradley	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Dr. Mick Hitchcock	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Mr. Randy Brown	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	
Dr. Marsha Read	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.
Mr. Rick Reviglio	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Ms. Ann Silver	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.	Brian Sandoval, J.D.
Ms. Dagny Stapleton	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jennifer Evans-Cowley, Ph.D.
Dr. Angie Taylor	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.

Chair Trachok thanked the advisory members for their participation and commitment to the search process.

Regent Carvalho thanked the advisory members for their dedication to the University and the search process.

Board Chair Doubrava thanked the advisory members for their time and effort. He also thanked Committee Chair Trachok and the Regents' Committee.

8. Approved – Decision by the Regents' ad hoc UNR President Search Committee – The Committee recommended Mr. Brian Sandoval, J.D. as the next President of UNR for consideration by the full Board of Regents on September 17, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.

The Regents' ad hoc UNR President Search Committee discussed and assessed the final candidates.

Regent	1 st choice	2 nd choice
Regent Geddes	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Regent Page	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Regent McAdoo	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.
Regent Perkins	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.	Brian Sandoval, J.D.
Chair Trachok	Brian Sandoval, J.D.	Jonathan Koppell, Ph.D.

8. Approved – Decision by the Regents' ad hoc UNR President Search Committee –
(Continued)

Regent Page recommended Mr. Brian Sandoval, J.D. as the next President of UNR for consideration by the full Board of Regents on September 17, 2020, at 1:00 p.m. Regent Geddes seconded. Motion carried. Regent Perkins voted no. Regent Del Carlo was absent.

9. Information Only – New Business – None.

10. Information Only – Public Comment

Public Comment from Bernard Carter noted his support for Governor Sandoval. His dedication to the community and knowledge of the state makes him the best candidate. *(Ref. Carter.Bernard09.16.20 on file in the Board Office.)*

Public Comment from Terri Rodefer stated she was disappointed that Provost Kevin Carman was not selected as a finalist. She said Dr. Jennifer Evans-Cowley is a rising star and the most qualified candidate to be UNR President. *(Ref. Rodefer.Terri09.16.20 on file in the Board Office.)*

The meeting adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Prepared by:

Angela R. Palmer
Special Assistant and Coordinator
to the Board of Regents

Submitted for approval by:

Dean J. Gould
Chief of Staff and Special Counsel
to the Board of Regents

Approved by the Board of Regents at its January 15, 2021, meeting.