Overview:

In 2014-2015, Denise Taaffe ‘78 represented the University of Southern Maine's Board of Visitors (BOV) as chair, with Anthony Payne as the vice-chair. The BOV focused its attention on the following areas:

Supporting USM in the Community – Advocating for USM as it works to create a balanced budget through close scrutiny and examination, and a number of cost-saving, proactive activities.

Presidential Search – Participating in the process of securing a permanent president to provide stable ongoing leadership for USM.

Metropolitan University – Helping to establish and promote the University of Southern Maine as a place where students can extend their academic experience beyond classroom walls and into their communities.

Membership

The USM Board of Visitors currently has 16 members with 4 vacancies. There are 10 men and 6 women. 15 members reside in Portland or its surrounding southern Maine communities; 1 resides in Lewiston/Auburn; 1 resides in the mid-coast region.

Members’ professional backgrounds:
Technology and Manufacturing (3)
Government/State (2)
Financial (2)
Arts (2)
Education (1)
Accounting (1)
Health care (1)
Real Estate (1)
Insurance (1)
Architecture (1)
Management (1)
Officers
Chair: Denise Taaffe
Vice-Chair: Anthony Payne

Schedule
The USM Board of Visitors meets six times annually.
The Annual meeting is scheduled in June of each year.

Meetings and Agenda Items

Tuesday, August 26, 2014 (12 voting members attended, 2 Ex-Officio, 1 guests, and 7 staff)

Denise Taaffe welcomed the group and introduced the new members. President David Flanagan then discussed his leadership team and the work that would be the focus of his presidency: Balancing the budget; student enrollment and retention; advancing the Metropolitan University vision. Guest John Rebar from U Maine presented information on an upcoming bond referendum to support Maine agriculture through the Cooperative Extension. Susan Campbell gave an update on enrollment. Cecile Aitchison gave an update on Fundraising efforts. Tony Payne informed the board about the USM Presidential Search, and concluded by giving an overview of the Communications Task Force which was formed to help USM effectively communicate with the community.

Friday, October 30, 2014 – (13 voting members attended, 3 Ex-Officio, 7 staff)

After Chair Denise Taaffe’s welcome, President Flanagan gave an extensive report on progress toward goals, including budgeting, enrollment and communication. Vice-Chair Tony Payne briefed the board on the ongoing search for a permanent president for USM, and on the activities of the volunteers for the communication project. The closing presentation was from Dick Barringer on the advancing movement of the Metropolitan University project, which included input from both faculty and staff of USM, as well as the community at large.

Thursday, December 4, 2014 (15 voting members attended, 1 Ex-Officio, 1 guest, and 6 staff)
Denise Taaffe delivered the opening remarks. President Flanagan’s report touched on the budget, the restructuring, including layoffs and retirements, and next steps toward making USM stronger. Vice-Chair Tony Payne updated the board on the presidential search and shared a portion of a presentation given to the Board of Trustees which illustrated the reality of the fiscal situation faced by USM. Chris Quint gave a brief legislative update. Dick Barringer introduced members of the Metropolitan University team, as well as guest Barbara Holland of the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities. All attendees participated in an extensive discussion about the metropolitan university concept and its components. Final thoughts included the conviction that USM is in the process of transformational change.

**Friday, February 6, 2015** (10 voting members attended, 4 Ex-Officio and 7 staff)

Denise Taaffe opened the meeting with a report on board membership and the upcoming activities of the membership committee. President Flanagan’s report included the introduction of interim CFO Buster Neel, and updates on the presidential search and ongoing budget work at USM. Provost Joseph McDonnell provided an academic update, including retirements and retrenchments, the expansion of career opportunities for liberal arts students through new minors, and efforts to enhance the first-year experience for students. Chris Quint provided a brief legislative report. Professor Martin Zanghi, MSW gave a presentation on the Youth and Community Engagement Team at the Muskie School of Public Service, and their work with Portland Empowered and other groups to provide a bridge and support for students from high school through to college and careers. Finally, Chris Quint also reported on the communications plan for the rollout of the Metropolitan University concept.

**Friday, April 10, 2014** (14 voting members attended, 2 Ex-Officio, 2 Guests and 7 staff)

Denise Taaffe welcomed Chancellor James Page. President David Flanagan gave a brief update on new curriculum at the Muskie School and the new Law School and Business Center. Buster Neel reported on system assets and the University of Southern Maine’s financial status. Chancellor Page gave a system-level update, including legislative issues, and then gave an overview of the three points of the One University for Maine initiative: commitment to the multi-
campus structure; right-sized administration; coordination and distribution of academic programs across the system. The meeting concluded with time for questions from the board members to the Chancellor.

Friday, June 5, 2014 (12 voting members attended, 2 Ex-Officio, 1 guest, and 6 staff)

Denise Taaffe gave brief opening remarks. President David Flanagan updated the board on several initiatives, including the balanced budget, academic enrollment and capital expenditure challenges. Denise thanked David for his work and introduced incoming president Glenn Cummings, who outlined some of his plans in enrollment management, transfer agreements with the community colleges and the attraction of out-of-state and international students to USM. Buster Neel gave a brief financial report. Chris Quint gave a legislative update. Cecile Aitchison reported on fundraising results, highlighting a new $1M gift to endowed need-based scholarships. Denise outlined the process of the nominations committee, including the plan to select and recruit new members. The nominating committee recommended Tony Payne for Chair and Clif Greim for Vice-Chair of the USM Board of Visitors. The board voted unanimously to accept the slate of officers as presented. Tony Payne gave a brief statement about the role of the board in the community.