

Dear Dr. Reiter,

I talked with our Board Chair, Joe Cooper, at length on Monday morning about the Finished Friday Group Report. I sent him the draft report last spring before the May board meeting and then forwarded the “finished” version to him on March 4, 2019. Although we have talked about the draft report a number of times over the last year, the most recent “finished” version has been the subject of many conversations over the last four weeks. It is the Chair’s position that the responsibility and authority for any response to the report are squarely within the domain of the president and administration. Accordingly, he has decided that the report will not be forwarded to the Board in the May materials.

I have also forwarded to and reviewed the “finished” document multiple times with both Executive Vice President and Provost Noel Painter and Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Bob Huth. As I noted in my email to you last week, we appreciate the work that was done to develop the report, although we believe that recommendations such as those proposed are best arrived at together, rather than by any group working in isolation.

There are important points of substance raised throughout the document. Because of the thread in the report questioning the role, recruitment and financing of Stetson’s Division I athletics program (point 1 and elsewhere), I suggested to Chair Cooper that the Board’s Athletics Committee review our current classification. He has agreed and that will be part of the committee’s May agenda.

Other points that I believe are worth focused attention over the next year and before a new president arrives are points 3, 4, 5 (faculty recruitment) and 7. We would most certainly want to have conversations about these points in an effort to come to joint agreement on how Stetson might proceed.

We remain open to developing consensus on important concerns that reflects consideration of multiple viewpoints and represents a coming together of our shared interest in the success of Stetson University. In fact, it would be a great attraction for any new president to come to a university where the faculty and administration are demonstrating the beneficial outcomes of working together in a true collegial fashion.

Regards,
Wendy B. Libby, Ph.D.
President

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