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Board of Trustees Executive Committee January 26, 1981

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UNIVERSITY OF MAINE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

January 26, 1981
Bangor Civic Center

Executive Committee

PRESENT: Chairman Stanley Evans, Francis Brown, Thomas Monaghan, Richard Morin, Joseph Hakanson, John Robinson. Faculty Representatives: Christina Baker, Doris Baker, Rebecca Herrick, Ralph Jans, John Zaner, Sharon Zimmer-Boucher. Student Representatives: Jeffrey Ellis, Cheryl Keep, Dana Murch, Elaine Nadeau, William Parenteau, Maxelle Smith, David Spellman. Staff: Chancellor McCarthy, Robert Binswanger, William Sullivan, Mary Ann Haas, Sumner Bernstein. Press and Public.

Chairman Evans convened the meeting which was scheduled to brief the faculty and student representatives on the agenda.

At the December Board meeting a resolution concerning assessment of student activity fees proposed by Trustee Robinson, was tabled until the January meeting. Mr. Ellis reported that a number of the student and faculty representatives had subsequently discussed the resolution informally with Mr. Robinson, who said that he would be offering an amendment to the original resolution which would propose that activity fees be collected on a voluntary "positive check-off" basis. Mr. Ellis requested that this amendment be referred to the Student Affairs Committee at the next session of the Board to allow time for student representatives to prepare for and participate in the discussion. Other student and faculty representatives supported the request for referral. Mr. Murch reported that he had served on a task force appointed by the Chancellor to review student activity fees, and he inquired about the status of a report from that study. Mr. Sullivan responded that the review had focused on the question of extending assessment of the activity fees to part-time students, and that the question had been superceded by Mr. Robinson's proposal. Mr. Sullivan indicated that the findings would still be available for consideration, when appropriate. Professor Zaner read a statement from the faculty at USM conveying opposition to the original resolution and he recommended that, if the resolution was to be changed, the representatives have time to discuss the revision with their constituencies. Mr. Spellman reported that the Orono Student Senate had taken the position that the original resolution restricts freedom of speech and therefore is unconstitutional. He also supported the request to send the amendment to committee. Professor Christina Baker said that activity fee revenue constituted the largest fund available for cultural events on the Orono Campus and suggested that there should be a mechanism for consultation with the faculty and administration on disbursement of these funds. Mr. Ellis said that activity fee monies belong to the students. Chairman Evans noted that the issue is very complex and he hoped

the Board would allow more time for discussion among the faculty, students and Administrative Council; but he pointed out that any decision to postpone action would have to be made by the Trustees. Dr. Evans noted that the Board's recently established practice of considering their agenda as a Committee of the Whole has been highly satisfactory for Trustees although they recognize that this has reduced opportunities for faculty and student representatives to participate in discussion of agenda items at the committee level. Mr. Brown suggested that any Chairman of a standing committee could schedule meetings for general but in-depth discussions of topics within the Committee's purview, which would give representatives a chance to present their views. Dr. Evans said he would encourage such meetings and requested that the representatives submit their preferences for committee assignments to the Clerk. It was understood that all representatives would be welcome to attend any meeting of standing committees, regardless of assignment.

There was discussion of a recommendation on the agenda to provide paid health coverage for University retirees and Mr. Sullivan responded to questions on specific details. Professor Herrick said inequities existed between the present University retirement plan and the State plan in which some former State College employees are still enrolled.

Referring to a scheduled presentation on campus fire safety, Professor Zaner said he hoped concern for fire safety would go beyond housing units. Ms. Keep urged that fire safety be stressed more, particularly with students, and recommended that presentations be made more widely available to campus RA's, students and staff. Chancellor McCarthy asked Mr. Eustis to take note of the need for extending the safety education program. There was general discussion of alarm systems and Mr. Eustis responded to questions of interest concerning the University's coverage for loss by fire and theft.

Adjournment.

JoAnne R. Magill
Clerk, Board of Trustees