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Board of Trustees Subcommittee on Intercollegiate Athletics

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UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM
Board of Trustees

Conference Room
Maine Public Broadcasting Network
December 12, 1988

Subcommittee on Intercollegiate Athletics

PRESENT: Richard Marshall, Chair; George Wood. Staff: from University of Maine: President Dale Lick, Vice president Thomas Aceto, Athletic Director, Kevin White. Mary Ann Haas. Other Trustees: Thomas Dukes, Robert Dunfey, Robert Foster, Bennett Katz, Harrison Richardson and Stewart Smith. Others: Chancellor Woodbury, Patricia Plante, Michael Orenduff, James Roach, Barbara Leondar and Frederic Reynolds. Press and public.

Mr. Marshall convened the meeting which was scheduled to discuss with the University of Maine administration the campus process for effecting a change in program status. Specifically, the Committee was interested in the process which culminated in the reclassification of wrestling from intercollegiate status to a club sport, a decision which had been protested by advocates of the wrestling program. Mr. Kevin White, University of Maine Director of Athletics, briefed the Committee on the recent history of the wrestling program at Orono, noting that the program was reviewed initially four years ago when the Athletic Advisory Board seriously considered recommending termination. He reported that at the time of his own appointment in 1987, all undergraduate programs were evaluated with the assistance of three outside consultants to help the Campus determine where good experiences could be provided for athletes. During the course of this evaluation, wrestling was identified as a problem program which had neither full-time coaching staff nor funding adequate to enable the program to be truly competitive. Mr. White indicated that the wrestling program was kept under review through the winter season last year and the decision to reclassify was announced at the end of March, 1988. Following his remarks, Mr. White responded to questions from the Trustees and there was extensive discussion of the problems with the wrestling program, which is summarized below.

- . The wrestling program at Orono was started in the 1970's by two assistant football coaches to provide a winter sport for football players. Some highly successful seasons for wrestling participants occurred between 1983 and 1986 when an extraordinary student served as coach, and the program declined after his graduation.
- . The entire budget for wrestling in 1987/88 was about \$9,000 compared to operating budgets of about \$100,000 for other non-competitive programs such as soccer and field hockey. A commitment of as much as \$100,000 to wrestling would not necessarily produce a competitive program.
- . It is not possible for the Campus to fund all sports for which there may be a demand. The resources are not available to fund a competitive wrestling program.

- . If additional resources were available, other urgent program needs would be considered a higher priority for funding. Among these are programs to meet Title IX requirements, and to address the imbalance between men's and women's sports.
- . Concerning objections that the decision to reclassify wrestling was precipitous, Mr. White reported that there was state-wide publicity about the decision and notices were sent to the Registrar's Office. Further, the Athletics Department offered to help any students who wanted to relocate to another school where wrestling was available.
- . President Lick reported that a wrestling program at the Division Three level would be a realistic goal for the State at the present time. At this level, participants would have a formal, organized program which would provide national recognition and competition and the program would be one for which most Maine aspirants could qualify. He indicated that another Campus in the System is interested in establishing a wrestling program at that level and he recommended that interest be developed. He said that in the foreseeable future, wrestling does not have a future at the University of Maine, beyond that as a club sport.

After further discussion, the Committee concurred that the Campus process for evaluation and decision-making on the reclassification of the status of the wrestling program was appropriate and satisfactory and that the Chairman would report the Committee's conclusions to the Board at its next meeting.

JoAnne R. Magill
Clerk of the Board