Bender, Patty

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Sent: Monday, September 24, 2007 7:19 PM
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Subject: Further deliberations r.e. director position

To the Observatory Committee,

The committee met today for two hours to discuss the remaining seven observatory director applicants. The purpose of this message is to summarize our progress and solicit input from any committee members who were not present or could not stay until the end of the meeting.

WHAT WE DID

After much deliberation, we eventually settled on four criteria upon which we rated the applicants. These are as follows (not in order of priority):

* Technical expertise with small telescopes and related instruments

* Managerial expertise

* Experience in lower division undergraduate teaching and laboratories

* Experience in upper division undergraduate teaching and research

* Experience with outreach programs

We discussed each candidate, rating them in each criterion on a scale of 0, 1, 2 (higher numbers are better). Then we added up the numbers to create a total rating for each applicant. Of course, these ratings are subject to all the uncertainties that befall human judgments!

Here are the results, for what they are worth:

Gaskell 8
Flesch 7
Knauer 5
Sykes 5
Black 4
Nelson 4
Quinn 4

Next we decided to eliminate any candidate who received a 0 for two criteria (eliminating Black and Quinn). We also had significant misgivings about Flesch because he lives at least an hour and a quarter from Lexington, and he would not consider moving. We questioned whether it would be wise to have a director so far from the observatory, especially because the job involves night work and could, under some circumstances, require that the director be able to reach the observatory on a short time scale. Finally, Nelson, while he certainly has some good points, did not score a 2 in any category, and he does not seem competitive with the more highly ranked candidates.

Therefore, in the opinions of the committee members present at the end of today's meeting, we are left with Gaskell, Knauer and Sykes. Note that only Gaskell of this group has a Ph.D. Mike Cavagnero noted that an observatory director with a Ph.D. would be in a position to be a PI on an outreach grant. However, the committee was unable to decide how important this advantage might be.

WHAT IS NEXT

If any committee member has comments upon the above procedure, please let me know.

DEFENDANT'S EXHIBIT 25

Troland will call references for Sykes. We already know Knauer, and we already have telephone comments about Gaskell. These comments, from a knowledgeable individual, suggest that Gaskell is an excellent teacher, and he interacts well with students and the public. However, as a rather senior individual (or for whatever reason), he is described as less n willing to abide by decisions made by others. It is possible that he might not fit in well as a non-faculty member under ɜ direction of the faculty. But this comment is mostly speculation, to be balanced against his very considerable experience with virtually all aspects of the director's job.

I will report to the committee what I learn about Sykes. Then I will offer the committee several options about how to proceed and seek your advice.

Tom