

Feuchtenberger, Karen

From: Ammerman, Paula <PRA4@psu.edu>
Sent: Thursday, November 17, 2011 9:40 AM
To: Frazier, Kenneth C.; Tomalis, Ronald
Cc: Garban; John P. Surma (jpsurma@uss.com); Guadagnino, Frank T. (FGuadagnino@ReedSmith.com); Baldwin, Cynthia
Subject: FW: Trustee speaks out
Importance: High

Ken and Ron—

Following discussions with Steve Garban and John Surma, it was requested that I share the below information with you. Keith Eckel spoke with media concerning the Board's actions of last week, breaking confidentiality.

Cynthia Baldwin and Frank Guadagnino have been asked to review the information and to provide a recommendation re Keith Eckel's eligibility to serve on the Special Investigations Committee.

Thank you.

Paula

Paula R. Ammerman
 Director, Board of Trustees Office
 The Pennsylvania State University
 205 Old Main
 University Park, PA 16802
 (814) 865-2521; (814) 863-4631 (FAX)
pra4@psu.edu

From: Ammerman, Paula
Sent: Wednesday, November 16, 2011 10:27 PM
To: Garban; 'John P. Surma (jpsurma@uss.com)'
Subject: FW: Trustee speaks out

The confidentiality notice will be timely. See below.

Subject: Trustee speaks out

This interview is on the WNEP-TV web site this evening:

A member of the **Penn State** Board of Trustees talked Wednesday to Newswatch 16, one week after he helped decide the fate of **Joe Paterno** and university president **Graham Spanier**.

Now the trustee is answering all of Newswatch 16's questions about that decision and the situation at Penn State.

One week ago the Penn State Board of Trustees announced it was firing Joe Paterno and Graham Spanier.

Keith Eckel from the Clarks Summit area is a member of the board that made that bombshell decision. He said it had to be done, when it was done.

"It's the most stressful situation I have ever gone through as a board member," Eckel said. "I believed and I believe that our board acted properly and deliberately and it fit my measure of what the proper time was, but I think that could be open to debate by the millions of people who have followed this story."

Newswatch 16 asked Eckel numerous questions about his decisions. He answered every one, first about the firing of a legend, Joe Paterno.

"The best answer I have for that question is his own words, he wished he did more. The board of trustees expected more," Eckel said. "It was very difficult for the trustees to wrestle with the concerns surrounding the lives of the alleged victims, to wrestle with the careers of individuals for a long period of time," added Eckel.

Paterno was notified by a phone call that his long career was over. The board has taken a lot of criticism over that decision.

"The hour didn't allow us the luxury of scheduling those types of meetings," said Eckel.

He said because of the trustees' schedules, the board had to meet that night, had to announce its decision right away and wanted to be sure Paterno didn't hear from the media first.

He said the board couldn't wait until morning to announce its decision for fear it would leak out in the media. He said the board had to take action that evening.

"This absolutely was a tragedy to play out, but quite candidly, I did not focus on the public reaction. I focused on my responsibility as a trustee of Penn State," said Eckel.

The trustee also answered questions about why president Graham Spanier had to go.

"The key thing was to, number one to have confidence in the leadership of the university. So the board of trustees made a decision by employing Rod Erickson to be our president that we would have confidence in the president of our university," Eckel explained.

Riots followed the decision to fire Paterno. Eckel said that was a small group of students reacting badly, but he was disturbed that Paterno's firing was the only one getting a lot of attention, not Spanier's.

"I'm bothered that I haven't had one question until this one, and this is why it bothers me. Not because the football program isn't important, but because the university's work, its research work is so much greater," said Eckel.

He was pleased to see 10,000 students take part in a candlelight vigil Friday.

He was impressed by their pride at the football game Saturday.

He said this university will return to glory, but first the board is doing its own investigation to make sure of that.

"The key now is to get all the information surrounding this incident so that whatever processes need to be changed, whatever cultural changes need to occur will occur after we have all the facts," Eckel said.

"We have a great alumni. We have a great student body. We have a great faculty," concluded Eckel. "I have no doubt in my mind that we will have every reason to be Penn State proud."

He added when the board's investigation is done it will be made public.

He said the board had to act fast last week so the university could move forward, but now it has to take its time making sure it knows all the facts before making other changes.

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