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Minutes of the Eleventh Annual General Meeting of the University of KwaZulu-Natal Convocation held on Thursday, 14 May 2015 at 18h00 in the Comsa Lounge, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus.

**1. ATTENDANCE**

**Present:** 53 graduates and 13 non-graduates

(as per the Attendance Register)

**In Attendance:** Mr F Christensen (Alumni Relations Manager)

Ms N Msweli (Alumni Relations)

Mr K Rampartab (Committee Officer)

**Apologies:**  36 Apologies were recorded

**2. WELCOME**

The Vice-President of Convocation, Ms B Hlongwa welcomed members and those in attendance and declared the meeting open.

**ADDRESS BY: DR A VAN JAARSVELD**

Dr van Jaarsveld’s address highlighted “UKZN’s past, the present and the prospects/focus areas for the institution into the future”.

**3. CONFIRMATION OF NOTICE OF MEETING AND AGENDA**

Mr VW Sibisi (Chair) confirmed the notice convening the meeting and declared it properly constituted.

The agenda was confirmed as circulated.

**4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 22 MAY 2014**

On a proposal by Mr R Bulman and seconded by Mr L Seshoka, the minutes of the previous meeting held on 22 May 2014 were confirmed as circulated.

Mr Sibisi brought to the attention of Dr van Jaarsveld the last paragraph of item 6 which read “Mr Sibisi requested Executive Management to regard Convocation seriously and attend their Annual General Meetings”.

Convocation noted that the Annual General Meeting was once again poorly attended by Executive Management.

Mr Sibisi requested Dr van Jaarsveld to consider the issue of attendance of Executive Management at Convocation Annual General Meetings as a very serious concern of Convex.

**5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES**

None

**6. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF CONVOCATION**

Mr Sibisi presented his report, a copy of which was included in the agenda papers.

The report was **adopted**.

Members were given the opportunity to raise questions seeking clarity on the report or make contributions to it and raise questions on Dr van Jaarsveld’s address. The following were recorded:

**College of Law and Management Studies**

A concern was raised regarding students leaving UKZN to go to study at other Universities, especially students who wanted to pursue qualifications to become chartered accountants. The member enquired about what was wrong at UKZN and what could be done to correct the situation.

Dr van Jaarsveld informed the meeting that the UKZN School of Accounting was known as one of the top Schools of Accounting nationally for many years. It was unfortunate that the profile of the School had decline drastically over the past 10 to 15 years.

The University was engaging with the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA) as well as the local accounting firms to reverse the trend.

The number of graduates produced had increased.

There is a problem with leadership in the School of Accounting which the University is attending to.

**Assistance to the University**

A question was raised as to what Convocation members could do to constructively assist the University.

Dr van Jaarsveld informed members that they could make donations to the UKZN Foundation.

Members should share the positive aspects of the University to as many people as possible to ensure that the University grows.

Convocation requested that the University should provide them with consistent, positive and honest reports so that they could market the University.

**Action: Mr Seshoka**

Members requested that more good reports about the University should be published in the media so that the University could market itself.

**Action: Mr Seshoka**

**Non South African Doctoral Graduates**

A reference was made to the President’s observation that more non South Africans are graduating with Doctoral degrees from the University.

Members inquired about the solutions to ensure that more South Africans graduate with Doctoral degrees.

Dr van Jaarsveld informed members that many students from the rest of the continent are streaming into South Africa to study for higher degrees and obtain qualifications. The reasons could be that they do not have the opportunity in their own countries and it is relatively cheaper to come to study in South Africa as compared to going to the European countries.

Convocation requested Dr van Jaarsveld to increase the number of supervisors for Doctoral degrees taking into account the transformation agenda of the University. **Action: Registrar**

**Programme of Action**

An enquiry was made about the programme of action of Convex to follow up the various issues raised by the President in his report so that they could be held accountable.

Mr Sibisi informed the meeting that the manner in which Dr van Jaarsveld responded to questions raised by members was because it was part of the plan of action of Convex to alert him of all the issues. Convex also alerted Council and all other Committees of the issues.

The programme of action is to raise all the issues mentioned in the President’s report and raised by members at all the Committees on which Convex members serve.

Convex is also supporting the UKZN Foundation in fundraising for the University.

**Funding**

The concerns raised by members regarding the lack of funding for post-doctoral studies and that the University was not providing solutions were noted.

Dr van Jaarsveld assured Convocation that the University regarded funding for post-doctoral studies as serious. The University supported a large number of post-doctoral students financially.

**Racism**

The concern raised regarding racism still being prevalent at the University was noted. The Department of Geology was cited as a School where racism was still prevalent.

Dr van Jaarsveld under took to investigate the matter.

**Action: Dr van Jaarsveld**

**UKZN Academics participation in Industry**

A member, who was representing the Chamber of Commerce, enquired about what the University could do to ensure enhanced participation of the academics at UKZN in industry. The Chamber of Commerce anticipated that UKZN will take the lead in policy issues that impacted on industry. Research at the University should be driven by the concerns of industry. Very few academics from UKZN participated in the various Forums of the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber of Commerce encouraged UKZN academics to participate in their Forums.

Dr van Jaarsveld informed Convocation that he is going to make sure that UKZN becomes more accessible to industry during his tenure. He intended creating and stimulating an engaging relationship with industry. The University will work with the Chamber of Commerce to foster a good relationship with industry.

**7. ADOPTION OF THE 2014 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Financial Statements for 2014 were presented by the treasurer of Convocation, Ms T Dlungwane.

The 2014 Financial Statements were **adopted**.

Ms Dlungwane encouraged members to contribute to the UKZN Alumni Bursary Fund.

**8. MOTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

Ms Hlongwa informed members that one motion had been lodged with the Registrar.

Dr B Dumisa read the motion into the record “Growing own timber: Prioritisation of acceleration of empowerment of South African born black academics at UKZN”

The motion was seconded by Mr R Bulman. Thereafter, it was considered and unanimously **adopted**.

Convocation requested the University to pursue the matter.

**Action: Executive Director: Human Resources**

**9. General**

**9.1. Proposed amendments to the Constitution of Convocation of the UKZN**

The proposed amendments were noted.

It was **agreed** that the amendments should be considered either, at a Special meeting of Convocation or the next Annual General Meeting before the next elections are held.

**10. VOTE OF THANKS**

Mr Hlongwa expressed appreciation to Convex members and the Alumni Relations Office for the work that they had done during the year. She expressed thanks to members for availing themselves to attend the Convocation Annual General Meeting.

**11. CLOSURE**

The meeting was closed at 20h00.

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President

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Date