The External Affairs committee met yesterday. Mark Lanier, assistant to the chancellor, provided a legislative update. At the state level, proposals for distribution of enrollment increase funding for 2017-18 have gone through multiple versions. It looks like UNCW may receive just under $11 million. This is $2.7 million more than originally requested for UNCW, but it is $1.2 million less than what our actual growth would have provided. Final approval is still pending. The enrollment growth formula task force, of which Chancellor Sartarelli is a member, will meet again in early February and review a new proposal for distributing enrollment growth funding, in arrears, based on completed student credit hours.

In preparation for the 2018 legislative session, the university continues meeting with members of the regional delegation to assist with our priorities. The priorities include planning funds for capital projects such as the library and a new STEM building, each with total project costs of approximately $50-60 million. UNCW priorities will also include self-liquidating authority for the parking project. Also, there may be a system-level request for funding for lab schools. From a federal perspective, Mr. Lanier stated the final tax reform package was better than expected in respect that it did not treat graduate student tuition remissions or employee educational benefits as taxable income, but it did create some challenges in terms of deduction for charitable giving and treatment of advance refunding.

Eddie Stuart, vice chancellor for university advancement, reported that more than $8.4 million has been raised in gifts, new commitments and planned gifts as of Dec. 31. This is a 12 percent increase over last year at this time.

Next, Lindsay LeRoy, director of alumni relations, provided an overview of the alumni engagement plan. The office works with alumni to engage them back into the life of the university and the students. UNCW has almost 80,000 alumni with 72 percent of those alumni living in North Carolina. With a young alumni base, 55 percent under the age of 40, the office is busy finding new ways to engage alumni including virtual events and alumni in training events to engage the current students. There are active alumni chapters and groups organized by region, academic interest and affinity. Last year, 6 percent of alumni gave back to UNCW which is on track with the national average however the office is working hard with annual giving and development to increase the number of alumni donors. She also announced 2018 homecoming will be February 9-11 with a variety of events for everyone in the Seahawk family.