The External Affairs committee met Thursday, July 19. Mark Lanier, assistant to the chancellor, provided a legislative update. The budget bill for FY19 became law on June 12. UNCW received funding for priorities that included enrollment growth funding; $5.5 million in planning funds for the Randall Library expansion/renovation; additional funding for D.C. Virgo Preparatory Academy; innovation in biopharma manufacturing matching funds; and some funding for faculty recruitment and retention. He also reported the UNC system received a pool of $20 million which will be allocated to the campuses and then to employees based on forthcoming guidance from the system office. The General Assembly also provided five bonus vacation days and made significant contributions to state health plan and the state retirement system. There were several items from the UNC policy such as expansion of carryforward and authority for small capital projects which were not included in the bill.

Eddie Stuart, vice chancellor for university advancement, provided a fiscal year end giving update. As of June 30, the university received $15,406,124 in gifts, pledges and planned gifts. The university received 17,510 gifts during the year and over 80% were less than $250, which is a testament to the fact that gifts of all sizes matter greatly to UNCW. The number of alumni donors increased for the 5th year in a row and the division saw an increase in membership in the Clocktower Society, the E.L. White Society, and the Wilmington Society.

Jimmy Bass, director of athletics, reported the Learfield Director’s cup ranked UNCW 123rd out of 351 NCAA Division 1 schools overall and 10th among non-football universities. UNCW also finished 2nd among our CAA peers. Adrienne Swinney, deputy director of athletics, presented the new athletic strategic plan Giving Flight to Excellence. The plan outlines the 7 strategic priorities. The plan was created by a diverse committee and intended to be fluid in order to adapt to changes. Priorities include attracting and retaining student-athletes, staff and coaches; enhancing diversity, inclusion and equity; promote competitive, academic and service excellence; providing a high quality experience; engaging partners; enabling fiscal sustainability; and fund and build facilities. In addition to the priorities, metrics and action steps have been created and developed to meet standards set by the committee.

Lastly, the committee did vote on a closed session action item and we would like to bring that item before the board in closed session.