JD: During your first couple of weeks together with him, did he lay out some things and priority that he thought you might want to take a look at or did you discuss with him, certain things that you perceived after being there a month or two that really needed to be looked at?

TR: I think it was more the latter. Early on, I talked with broad sections of the college's constituent groups including the board. I had my list of goals. He would comment on those goals, giving me his opinions and adding historical perspective. He would give advice and council but he never tried to preempt the president. But, as different as we were, we actually got along very well. I got the sense that Ben knew change was coming, embraced much of the change but sometimes differed on the rate of change and the process.

JD: Can you comment on openness and sharing with the faculty information regarding enrollment, budgets, and all of that. For example, I guess it may not be incorrect to say there was not a whole a lot of transparency before. Did you discuss that kind of thing with him?

TR: Certainly he would have known what I was going to do in faculty meetings, because we had cabinet meetings every week.

JD: That was with him and who else?

TR: The senior management team including Ben, the CFO, Director of admissions, VP of development, athletic director, Dean of students, and the Chaplin. In the group, Ben was the first among equals.

I am sure I got advice, but there were certain things that made me think that he really agreed that some of this needed to happen because he would say, “This isn’t something the old generation, would have done,”

but he didn't say it in a sense that it was a bad thing. He would say it as a contrast. I trusted what he said if I disagree with him, but he would give me some information on faculty but he wasn't damning of any faculty; he might tell me about somebody's eccentricities but he was not unduly critical of any faculty members .

He did come in and see me occasionally to discuss a faculty member or faculty issue. If he wanted to talk about somebody's strengths and weaknesses, we would have that conversation and think of how we could help that faculty be a more productive member of the college community.

JD: Walk me through his retirement and the process by which you selected another VP or successor for him. What were you looking for in that position?

TR: Well, standard criteria. We wanted somebody who would be comfortable working collegiality, with good credibility in their discipline and a strong history of managing in a participative way. Nancy Aumann and Susan Conner had those strengths.

JD: What was your relationship, how did you and Nancy Aumann work together? Were there ups and downs, conflicts?

TR: Nancy and I worked well together. I do not remember any significant conflict. Nancy was brought in because she had worked in participative settings. She had worked in environments that were truly collegial.

She could be tough. She would say no. She was a happy, friendly and a bit eccentric woman but there was real substance. She could make the hard decisions.

JD: She was tasked with overseeing the creation of faculty governance. Prior to that, there had not been much at all. Would you say that was one of her agenda items?

TR: Yes. She would have known the process of change we had experienced my first two years, and the goals for the next 3-5 years. We had a very representative search committee that was open and candid with her.

JD: That was another eye-opening, amazing thing, was to have faculty involved in that process.

TR: You may remember that Nancy was not on our radar. We went through the process. We selected a young man and made an offer, but he took another position. I said, “gee , that school chose well. I wonder who else was a finalist there.”

I called the President of the institution that hired our first choice. I asked him, “Is there someone in your candidate pool that you would recommend we interview”. He gave me Nancy's name. We checked her credentials and brought her to campus.

She impressed us with her candor and energy. Hiring Nancy was a good decision and we avoided going through a second search.

JD: So she never really applied on her own?

TR: No

JD:

challenged. I quickly joined in lobbying efforts with the other private college presidents. We could usually get in to see the reps within the districts where our schools were located. The man who ran the Independent Colleges and Universities Association was in the legislature. I questioned the ethics of the arrangement but it seemed to work.

I did have one personal confrontation the ICUF manager. I came to a meeting to find that he had removed me from chair of the Finance committee without telling me and with no input from anyone else that I could tell. I did not care if I was chair of the committee but I did not like the surprise or lack of c (i)-3.1 (a)( )0.5 (m)1 (e)05s (i)9a.iTjEMC /P &MCID 2 3BDC -0.0

Southeastern, was struggling when I got here. I contacted the President and had lunch with him. I also talked to his successor and suggested some joint undertakings. He was not responsive.

I also got to know the presidents at Warner and Webber and let them know I would be happy to work with them. So I tried to build bridges and connections.

JD:One of the building additions to campus we are still enjoying today was the Wellness Center. Obviously we know your enthusiastic about

TR:Faculty are very good idea people and you try to support them in bringing the ideas to fruition.

So often the best initiatives come from outside the administration. We didn't have a lot of money to but we tried to support them.

The board was also supportive of new initiatives. They knew we had a very good faculty and they were happy to support them.

JD: Let's go through the Athletic Program, obviously Florida Southern College has a very rich tradition of athletics. One of the great coaches and also college Administrators in the history of division II you had right here, Hal Smeltzy. So what was it like to work with him your first couple of years, what were some of your reflections of him?

TR: Well let's start with the fact that I knew he had been very successful, particularly in baseball, basketball, softball and golf. I tried to get him a little more resource.

The first year, baseball won the national championship. I went up to the championship game. It was so much fun. The team was on the field celebrating and Hal came up into the stands and led me down to the field so I could get my picture taken with the team and give them my congratulations.

Hal was a strong personality and he got things done. He found the outside funding for the small addition to the gym and had it underway before I knew about it. I called him in and said, "this is not the way things work." I was not chastising him for his energy or initiative, but I

folders and decided that we had reason to get rid of Coach Gordon Gibbons.

Gordon was a very successful coach and well-liked by his players and fans. We were nationally ranked at #1 in preseason polls. His son played for him.

In any case, Mike Roberts felt it was time to part company with Coach Gibbons. Basketball fans and players loved him and were furious.

We lost an all American in the process. He refused to return to school. Some avid fans never came to another game. I heard plenty about the firing from players and fans. Even Dotty was pulled into the emotion. Player reps came to the house one evening to see me and would not believe her when she said I was not home. She was verbally accosted by an ardent fan at half time of a game.

JD: So, Hal has retired. But Hal was Gordon's friend. Hal hired Gordon, so that would have been an awkward situation. What was Hal's response to all of this?

TR: He knew Gordon's strengths and weaknesses. He never was publicly critical of the decisio

JD: Did Roberts ever come before the board to make his charges or allegations?

TR: He did share his intent at a meeting with several board members.

JD: Do you remember the time-frame? Was it before the season started in the fall?

TR: Yes, during the fall, we had a great team and they would be expected to be very good.

JD:Did you feel like you had to support the new AD?

TR:Yes, I tried to support all of my senior colleagues. But as the year proceeded, I realized that he was not a good fit for us. My sense was that he was very hierarchical in his management style. He would say, "I'll handle this," and then proceed to give directives without significant input or collaboration.

JD: And I'm sure you, started to really hear it.

TR:Yeah! Students came by and indicated how they felt verbally assaulted at a basketball game. He was not good at listening and negotiating. The CEO of our conference told me one day that he had heard that the whole team was going to come over and confront me before a game. He said he discouraged them and it never happened.

As an aside, Gordon's son was on the team, which made it more difficult for Gordon but also made it very difficult for Mike Roberts and the new coach, Tony Longa. Gordon landed on his feet. He went to Clayton State for several years and had a good record. I saw him later at a funeral. His son was with him at the funeral and both were cordial to me.

JD:So, if we follow through from that, what happened to Mike Roberts? Did he voluntarily resign or did you let him go?

TR: I let him go after one year. It just seemed to be best for him and FSC given his management style and strained relationship with coaches and students. I was also told by reliable sources that he was job hunting.

JD: Cause, he got a lot of flak, didn't he, from the boosters and all that, right.

TR: Yes, but also I don't think he was ever a good fit at FSC. I never talked with Mike after he left. I do know he coached a team of college players in a New England summer league. At one point, I saw a press release reporting he was going to coach at a division III school but I do not know what happened.

JE: One of the most dramatic things that happened during your tenure

was the same way. I quickly learned to trust both of them and value their counsel.

Terrell was very cautious about liberalizing student life policies. His caution came from his personal beliefs as well his concern that the Methodist Church might not accept the changes. He let the issue of coed Visitation come before the board. The board approved the changes. He accepted the decision. Terrell's faith was important to him was and he was a bit conservative, theologically.

Terrell was a remarkable guy in so many ways. He often did my evaluations and salary reviews. They were positive evaluations but always included a couple of things I could do better. So he was wonderful in so many ways.

He is not a guy that would stand at the podium and get everyone excited. But in spite of that, his influence was just amazing. Board members respected him so much. When he spoke, they listened-- not because of his rhetorical skills or enthusiasm but because they trusted that he had done his homework and his only motivation was to help FSC become a better school.

JD: Yeah, Relations with the board, ah, reflect a little bit about your relations with the board. Obviously, Terrell Sessums was the leader, but what were some of your other experiences with the board. Were there instances where you got push back on certain things you wanted to do or you got put input out in left field from some of the board members who said " now you ought to be doing this or that." Do you remember any of those things?

TR: Each board member had their personal perspective but all were good listeners. Once issues had been decided, we moved ahead without rancor or second-guessing. We kept the board informed and

The board benefited from some lighter moments. Frank Furman succeeded Bob Trinkle as Vice Chairman of the Board. He was a great