

Heitman, Lucille

From: Big Ten - Barbara Greenbaum <bgreenbaum@bigten.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 03, 2010 10:11 AM
To: Athletic Directors; COP/C
Cc: Big Ten - Brad Traviolia; Big Ten - Mark Rudner
Attachments: Media.pdf

. Fyi - I appreciate Gordon and Barry being unavailable for this story per my request as we move our process forward. I made myself unavailable also and it had the consequence of making me a focus of the story. To reiterate as a collective we have no conference stake in contributing either on or off the record or via background on these stories. These comments can 1) do some brand damage because they tend to focus on the pecuniary side 2) they do not accurately reflect the complexity or the political challenges both internal and external associated with expansion execution 3) they tend to complicate and confuse the messages with respect to process that we painstakingly crafted in order to insulate ourselves re charges of insensitivity to others 4) are an affront to those who are practicing discipline by refraining from commenting 5) are inconsistent w the protocols of collegiality and trust which are the foundational elements of moving big and meaningful issues thru a governance system such as our own. Again we are moving into substantive analysis and I would appreciate being able to count on all participants on this issue. Please accept this request in the proper spirit because I do not know if we are the source(s) and I have worked w both groups on other important issues and we were able to allow the media to do its job while we do ours w/o providing "guidance" to them.

At the end of the process the conference will expand or not because of what our board wants to do in the best interests of the conference and for no other reason. I will try to guide the process so that you have the opportunity to make that judgment in an appropriate environment with the appropriate information. We are moving into a substantive phase and the challenges in the media will become greater.

Jim Delany

Big Ten told it's safe to expand horizons

Teddy Greenstein

ON COLLEGES, ON GOLF

9:59 PM CST, March 1, 2010

An initial report commissioned by the Big Ten offered this suggestion to conference officials: Just say yes to expansion.

A source inside the league told the Tribune that the report, prepared by the Chicago-based investment firm William Blair & Company, analyzed whether five different schools would add enough revenue to justify expanding the league beyond 11 teams.

"The point was: We can all get richer if we bring in the right team or teams," the source said.

The five analyzed were Missouri, Notre Dame, Pittsburgh, Syracuse and Rutgers. The source, though, called those five "the obvious suspects" and cautioned that other universities could earn consideration.

It's also widely assumed that Notre Dame, which came within a whisker of joining the league in 2003, is not ready to give up its football independence, with Irish athletic director Jack Swarbrick saying in December: "Our strong preference is to remain the way we are."

The report got to the crux of the decision that will face Big Ten chancellors and presidents: If they expand to 12 or 14 schools, would they increase the current \$21 million-\$22 million a year each school receives from the league's revenue pie?

If the Big Ten decides it wants to expand, one plausible scenario would have the conference negotiate specific terms for entry.

It's also worth noting that a Big East school opting to join would have to pay a \$5 million "loyalty clause" fee, according to sources.

"You just don't jump into the league and get a full share of what everyone else in this league has established over time," Wisconsin athletic director Barry Alvarez told the Associated Press. "I think someone has to buy their way into the league."

Alvarez declined to be interviewed for this story, as did Ohio State President Gordon Gee, another outspoken proponent of expansion.

Gee did tell Ohio State's student newspaper, The Lantern, that the two main motivations for expanding would be financing and "an inelegance in having 11 teams. We can't play each other quite like we want."

A 12th team would allow the league to split into two divisions and create a Big Ten title football game that would generate an estimated \$15 million a year. That game would also address Penn State coach Joe Paterno's complaint that the league "goes into hiding for six weeks" after the regular season.

Two sources told the Tribune that they believe the Big Ten will expand largely because Commissioner Jim Delany, who in 2008 signed a five-year contract extension, wants to add another accomplishment to his legacy.

Since taking the helm in 1989, Delany has added Penn State, helped form the highly profitable Big Ten Network and grown revenue from about \$20 million a year to \$220 million.

"What gets Jim going," said a source with ties to Delany, "is doing something bold."

Other than submitting to a prearranged radio interview with WSCR-AM 670 last month, during which he shot down speculation that the league had contacted schools such as Texas and Pittsburgh, Delany has declined nearly all interview requests.

Reached Monday, he said: "This is not a quiet phase; this is a silent phase."

At times, Alvarez has been the public voice on the issue. He told Wisconsin's athletic board on Feb. 19 that the league had hired a firm to research 15 potential candidates.

As quoted by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Alvarez said: "They talked about academics. They talked about size. They talked about size of their arenas. They talked about attendance. They talked about the populace in that specific area."

Alvarez said he didn't believe Texas was on the list of 15, and Texas athletic director DeLoss Dodds has since told AP that the school's relationship with the Big Ten "is working. I like it ... We're always going to be looked at. I don't think that's a bad thing. That's a good thing."

If the Big Ten expands, especially to 14 or 16 schools, the ramifications could affect several major conferences.

As Gee pointed out, Penn State's decision to join the Big Ten in 1989 played a role in the collapse of the Southwest Conference, the Big Eight becoming the Big 12 and the Southeastern Conference adding Arkansas and South Carolina.

"Schools are concerned with what's coming," said an athletic director from a big-six conference school. "They'd rather be talked about than ignored."

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