A few minutes before Wednesday evening’s forum began, MU Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin was working the room like a politician seeking votes. When he stuck out his hand, I shook it and wished him good luck.

He said he didn’t think luck was needed. This was an informational session, after all: a follow-up to the March meeting at which many minority students expressed their anger and dismay with the state of race relations on MU’s campus.

Two hours later, I thought he had read the mood correctly. There were lots of questions and a few criticisms from the students, most of them white, who filled about half the seats of Conservation Auditorium in the School of Natural Resources. But I came away with the sense that serious issues are being tackled in a serious way. The exchanges were more constructive than complaining.

Most of the time was taken up with administrators explaining steps already taken or being considered to improve the recruitment, retention and success of minority students and faculty. (One of those steps, it appears, will be ending the use of the term “minority” itself.)

For perspective, here are a few numbers from the university website:

As of last fall, there were 35,441 students on the Columbia campus and 2,895 full-time faculty. Of those students, 7 percent were black, 3 percent Hispanic and 2 percent Asian. The faculty percentages were 3.2 percent black, 3.1 percent Hispanic and 16.67 percent Asian. Three quarters of both students and faculty were classified as non-Hispanic white.
The population of Missouri, according to the 2010 census, is 11.6 percent black, 3.6 percent Hispanic and 1.6 percent Asian. Non-Hispanic whites total 81 percent.

Those numbers, and 176 years of history, suggest that, as Provost Garnett Stokes said at the forum, “We still have work to do.”

They also underscore Deputy Chancellor Mike Middleton’s conclusion. “I’m sorry,” he said. “That is going to take some time.”

He was referring to the process he and others described as evaluating the university’s existing efforts to strengthen diversity and create what he called “a permanent, accountable structure.”

An important part of that process is going to be led by my Journalism School colleague Berkley Hudson, who has accepted the daunting assignment of chairing the Faculty Council’s new committee on race relations.

Berkley told me as we walked toward the forum that he agreed to lead only after meeting with the chancellor and determining that this next phase of what is called the “Chancellor’s Diversity Initiative” is taken seriously at the top.

In response to a student’s questioning of the make-up of the committee, he made what I took to be an important point. Most of the committee members named so far are white, as is most of the faculty. That makes sense because the committee will have to understand the attitudes and aptitudes of the majority before attempting to alter either.

One change was touched on at the forum and elaborated on the website you can visit to follow this initiative: transparency.missouri.edu.

Angela Speck, who heads the Faculty Council’s diversity committee, hasn’t given up on building a diversity requirement into the curriculum. In a letter on the website, she proposes taking the “writing intensive” requirement as a model. In that case, existing courses have been modified and strengthened. She wants someone to study what other universities have done and how “cultural competency” affects critical thinking skills.

Wednesday’s session was billed as a “progress report.” For me, and I suspect for many of the students, it was really more of an introduction.
After Chancellor Loftin dismissed us with a promise of more to come, I caught up with a black friend outside the hall. He said he found reason for encouragement. So did I.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Take Back the Night returns to MU to raise awareness on sexual assault

Friday, May 1, 2015 | 12:30 a.m. CDT

BY CRYSTAL DUAN

COLUMBIA — "Mizzou, unite! Take back the night!" MU students chanted as they marched down Tiger Avenue on Thursday night.

Attendees of MU’s Take Back the Night event chanted and waved signs in opposition to rape culture as they traveled across campus to Traditions Plaza. The student-led event was held to support survivors of sexual assault and violence.

"Hey hey, ho ho, rape culture has got to go!" attendees shouted. "What do we want? Justice! When do we want it? Now!"

Take Back the Night is an international event and nonprofit organization that raises sexual violence awareness through events, rallies, vigils and marches, according to its official website.

Ten other colleges across the nation held a Take Back the Night event on Thursday. MU has not hosted a Take Back the Night event since 2010, said Hannah Feagan, MU student and planning committee member, because the event must be proposed, planned and executed by students.

"Take Back the Night isn't new," said Danica Wolfe, the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center coordinator, at the event. "This has been going on in the nation for a while. It's been going on on our campus for a while. But students haven't been saying, 'we need this.'"
This year, the MU organization Stronger Together Against Relationship and Sexual Violence, also known as STARS, partnered with educators at the RSVP Center to bring the event back to campus.

After the march, speakers from the RSVP and Women's centers encouraged the crowd gathered at Traditions Plaza to speak out against rape culture.

"Marching through our streets, our campus, our community — that's what empowerment can feel like," Wolfe said. "That feeling shouldn't end tonight. Whatever tonight is for you, cherish that feeling. Honor this space, and get a glimpse of what people on this campus go through every day."

Freshman Landon Jones said he was discouraged by the lack of attendance by men. "We're here to raise awareness, and the way to end rape culture is to stop the patriarchal system," Jones said. "And a lot of men don't think they can be a part of the feminist movement because they don't know what that word means."

The event continued with 107 seconds of silence honoring those who had been victims of sexual violence and to represent that an American is sexually assaulted every 107 seconds, according to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network.

The final hour, called "Speak Out," gave survivors an open mic to speak about their experiences. People who came forward shared written poetry, personal anecdotes and condemnations of the culture that shames them from sharing their experiences. Members of STARS and RSVP educators wore bandanas during the event, designating them as volunteers who could talk to anyone who felt triggered at the event, Feagan said.

Freshman Yasmine Benchaabane said events such as Take Back the Night are conducive to changing campus culture.

"These events don't necessarily bring immediate change to structural problems on campus," Benchaabane said. "But they can hopefully stir up conversation."
Hospital application cites no effect on already-existing Columbia operations

By Jodie Jackson Jr.

Thursday, April 30, 2015 at 1:23 pm

Five other Columbia hospitals are located four miles or less from the proposed site for a 10-bed, $38 million surgical hospital in south Columbia, although the certificate of need filed Tuesday with the Missouri Health Facilities Review Committee says there are no other hospitals in the proposed facility’s geographic service region.

The certificate of need also says the new hospital would have no impact on other hospitals, a statement that brought a quick response from Jim Sinek, president of Boone Hospital Center.

“If it wasn’t so serious, it would be laughable,” Sinek said. “Clearly this is gerrymandering. It’s an attempt to create a false impression that there’s a large population base that’s not being served.”

The new hospital would be part of the Fulton Medical Center campus, a partnership between University of Missouri Health Care and private health company Nueterra. The new hospital would be built on land where two trailer parks currently stand at 4130-4150 Lenoir St. in southern Columbia. In the application to the state, Fulton Medical Center LLC uses a 15-mile radius around the existing Callaway County Hospital in Fulton to determine the service area for the new hospital. The service area excludes most of the population of Columbia.

MU Health marketing officials directed questions to Nueterra. A Nueterra spokeswoman has not responded to requests for interviews.

The certificate of need says land acquisition costs for the proposed hospital are $4 million. The acquisition will displace residents of Sunset and Ed’s mobile home parks, owned by Whirlwind Properties LLC. Residents have been told the parks will close by Oct. 1 and residents have been given free rent and utilities until then.

The MU Health/Nueterra partnership formed last fall and announced the purchased Callaway County Hospital in Fulton in December.
Other hospitals within four miles or less from the proposed new hospital site are University Hospital (3.4 miles), Truman Memorial Veterans’ Hospital (3.4 miles), Women’s and Children’s Hospital (3.5 miles), Boone Hospital Center (3.5 miles) and Landmark Hospital (4 miles).

Sinek said he didn’t understand how the duplication of medical and surgical services that already exist will help increase the quality or lower the cost of health care.

Sinek, who became Boone Hospital president two years ago, has 25 years experience as a hospital administrator in Iowa, Nebraska and Arizona.

“I’ve never seen a certificate of need so poorly developed,” he said. “I’ve never seen an attempt to gerry-rig the population base in a geographic region to skirt the essence of the entire certificate of need process.”

Sinek said he hopes that the health facilities review committee “will have a lot of questions” about the way the geographic region was determined when the committee considers the certificate of need, probably later this summer.

“I would hope that the process would be one that would certainly flush that out and would try to move the mathematics to what most people would consider to be reasonable and more logical,” he said.

The certificate of need says the new hospital would provide general, urological and orthopedic surgical services. Sinek said the existing hospitals already provide those services.

Proposed Columbia hospital moves forward

Watch story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=019152e3-1302-4347-8fd2-4a808ccac78a

COLUMBIA, Mo. - A proposed Mid-Missouri hospital is one step closer to being built.

ABC 17 News obtained the certificate of need for the close to $40 million project in Columbia.

That certificate is required in Missouri before hospitals are allowed to be built to ensure the healthcare market isn't over-saturated.
The hospital would be built off Highway 63 and Discovery Ridge where Sunset Mobile Home currently is.

Those in the mobile home park do not have to pay rent for the next five months to help with the transition since they are being forced to move.

If the certificate of need gets approved, construction will begin in February.

*Fulton Medical Center LLC, which is a partnership between University of Missouri Health Care and private health care company Nu terra could come to Columbia.*

However, only after a need for it is proven and approved.

Plans show the hospital would be a 10 bed facility with two operating rooms, and an emergency department.

The company said the Fulton Medical Center data proves the need for the hospital.

Reports show the medical center has been financially challenged for years.

The report also said the need is there because there are no other hospitals within a certain range where the proposed site is.

ABC 17 News looked and the closest one is University Hospital which is about 4 miles away, which is also the same for Boone Hospital.

In the report there were letters of support from State Representative Travis Fitzwater, The University of Missouri Healthcare system, Fulton's mayor, and state senator Jeanie Riddle.

Riddle said, "The new facility in Columbia would ensure that the hospital in Fulton has the financial stability needed to serve the community for years to come."

Approval or denial of the certificate of need is set to happen in July.
Rhoades engages plan of attack at Mizzou

COLUMBIA, Mo. • Before Mack Rhoades stepped out of his university-owned town house at 6 a.m. Monday, his wife Amy couldn’t resist snapping a picture.

“It really did feel like the first day of school,” Rhoades said. “It was exciting.”

Monday was seven weeks in the making for the 49-year-old Rhoades, who this week began what he’s described as his destination job, officially taking over as the University of Missouri’s athletics director.

He was hired on March 9 to replace outgoing AD Mike Alden, but Rhoades divided his time the last two months tying up loose ends at the University of Houston, where he’s been AD since 2009, and mapping out his agenda for Mizzou. How did he manage?

“It’s been a lot of Red Bull,” he joked.

Back in Houston, Rhoades fought a sense of “bottled up energy,” he said, because he couldn’t dive head first into the job at Mizzou. Now, he’s got that chance. He arrived Monday armed with a 90-day plan, which he outlined Thursday in his first news conference since moving into Alden’s old office.
But before Rhoades could barrel into the job and uncoil all that energy, he had to tackle … his email.

“Microsoft Outlook didn’t look the way I wanted it to look,” he said. “How the heck do I change this?”

On Monday, Rhoades called on his executive assistant Sandy Matthew at least 50 times between 8-10 a.m. to help get situated. Eventually, he turned attention to a list of core items he wants to address immediately at Mizzou. It starts with sorting out his staff. He has to hire a deputy AD and will start vetting his first candidate this weekend. He wants to evaluate the overall structure, roles and titles within the athletics department and its staff of 200.

“I’ve been transparent with our staff: There’s going to be changes,” he said.

Starting with MU’s ticket sales efforts. He wants a more aggressive approach similar to professional sports teams.

“Right now I think we’re a little bit of an inbound company,” he said, “meaning that we do a really good job of taking phone calls. … We cannot wait for people to come to us.”

Rhoades wants to immediately address facilities and develop a five-year plan for various projects, including football coach Gary Pinkel’s pet plan, an all-encompassing football facility to reside just south side of Memorial Stadium. Rhoades and Pinkel met Thursday to talk about the proposed building, which hasn’t moved past “the discussion stage,” Rhoades said.

Rhoades is opposed to adding seating capacity to Memorial Stadium until the team consistently sells out all of its home games, but he’s open to adding premium seating options that would enhance revenue without expanding capacity.

Speaking of Pinkel, Rhoades was kept abreast of his contract extension and raise, announced last Friday, but the terms were negotiated before Rhoades was hired in early March.

Otherwise, another focus for Rhoades is a men’s basketball program coming off a 9-23 season under first-year coach Kim Anderson.

“I never want to point a finger at anybody,” he said. “But we all realize what Kim inherited wasn’t a perfect situation. It just wasn’t. … How do you attack that? How do you fix that? What can I do to be helpful? Kim is more than capable of getting this corrected. I want to him to know that I’m going to be in the trenches with him, sleeves rolled up and we’re going to do this together.”

Rhoades said he’ll work with Anderson to address key areas — staffing, recruiting, scheduling, etc. — but his vision for Mizzou’s program is long-term, not defined by immediate results or quick fixes.
“We need to really work hard these next couple years at building that foundation so that when Kim wins we win now for a long time,” he said. “I think we can do that. There’s no reason we can’t do that here. It’s been done before.”

How long does Rhoades expect that process to take? He wouldn’t bite.

“I appreciate the question, but I don’t know if I can answer that yet,” he said. “I can tell you I know it’s not going to be 10 years, OK? But we’ll begin to think about that and have some conversations.”

In two weeks, Rhoades plans to meet with baseball coach Tim Jamieson, whose contract expires after the current season. The Tigers are having a turnaround year and could qualify for an NCAA regional, but Rhoades hasn’t decided on Jamieson’s future.

With his loaded schedule, Rhoades has already managed to share a conversation with Kansas AD Sheahon Zenger about possibly reviving the Border War rivalry. Mizzou and Kansas haven’t played since the Tigers joined the Southeastern Conference for the 2012-13 school year.

On the job for less than a week, Mizzou’s new boss might have wedged a crack in the impasse.

“I think he’s certainly open to (playing Missouri) down the road,” Rhoades said. “The time’s got to be right for both institutions. There’s got to be a willing spirit for that to happen. Hopefully we can develop that spirit as he and I get to know each other better.”

For now, Mizzou athletes, coaches and fans will get to know their new AD He and Amy will eventually move out of the townhouse and settle into a new home. From there, Rhoades has a plan to attack guided by one question.

“We talk about, ‘Why not Missouri?’” he said. “Why can’t Missouri be the best athletics program in the country? Why can’t it be? I haven’t heard a good answer yet.”

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Mack Rhoades is ready to go as Missouri athletics director
Thursday, April 30, 2015 | 8:50 p.m. CDT
BY MICHAEL MANDELL

COLUMBIA — Mack Rhoades' wife took a picture of the new Missouri athletics director on his first day of school. He then sent it to the couple's daughters.

And oh, isn't Mack growing up so fast?
He's only officially been with the Tigers since Monday, but Rhoades, formerly Houston's AD, is quickly addressing key issues facing his department.

In his first press conference since taking over for Mike Alden, Rhoades on Thursday unveiled a plan for Missouri's athletics department. Between setting up a short-term strategy for success, discussing stadium renovations, addressing the basketball program and answering questions about renewing the school's rivalry with Kansas, Rhoades handled all questions roughly 25 media members sent his way in his first availability on the job.

Here's some of what he discussed Thursday at Mizzou Arena — his new home.

Focusing on the 90-day road map
Before he focuses on his long-term plan, Rhoades wants to keep his sights set on the near future.

To get there, he has created a three-part plan to establish a framework for success. The plan seeks to address personnel, facilities and relationship within the athletics department during the first 90 days.

Getting the right personnel in place will require Rhoades to appoint a new deputy athletics director. Doug Gillin left the position in February to take the head athletics director position at Appalachian State University.

A hire might happen soon. Rhoades said a candidate for the position is set to interview this weekend.

"If I really, really like this first person, I may not go further than that," he said.

The immediate facilities focus will involve discussions about Faurot Field's south end zone expansion. The program plans to put its practice facility, offices and even additional premier seating there.
But Rhoades isn't forgetting about other facilities. He knows Missouri's baseball facilities don't stack up with the schools' rivals in the Southeastern Conference.

"You look at some of the facilities alone in the SEC, some of those ballparks look like Triple-A ballparks," he said.
As for relationships, Rhoades is trying to communicate with each of the 200-plus people in his department. He's also starting conversations with campus leaders and top donors.

**Rhoades high on Kim Anderson, basketball program**
The 2014-15 men's basketball season didn't sit well with some of the Missouri faithful, but Rhoades doesn't want that to define coach Kim Anderson or the program he inherited last year. In fact, Rhoades was strong in his support of the coach who finished 9-23 in his first season at the Division I level.

"I never want to point a figure at anybody, but I think we all realize that what Kim inherited wasn't a perfect situation," Rhoades said.

Last season the Tigers posted their lowest win total since 1966-67 and most losses of any season in school history. They lost a school-record 13 consecutive games in the process. It was Missouri's first last-place conference finish in 48 years.

Instead of dwelling on that, Rhoades is focused on helping his second-year coach.

"Kim is more than capable of getting this corrected," Rhoades said. "I want him to know that I'm going to be in the trenches with him, sleeves rolled up, and we're going to do this together."

**Kansas rivalry not in immediate future**
With Rhoades at the helm, is there any way the Tigers can restart their popular rivalry with Kansas?

For now, the Border War appears to be on the back burner.

The new AD isn't counting out the possibility — and even said he's spoken with Kansas athletics director Sheahon Zenger — but it appears nothing is imminent. First of all, the teams' football schedules don't have room for another game just yet. And after that, the question remains whether Kansas wants to continue penalizing Missouri for leaving the Big 12.

Although there's a lot of interest, neither side is making promises.

"Like I am, he's careful in terms of what he can say," Rhoades said of Zenger. "He's certainly open to it. The time has to be right for both institutions."
Q&A with Missouri Athletic Director Mack Rhoades

Thursday, April 30, 2015 at 6:12 pm

New Missouri Athletic Director Mack Rhoades held a news conference Thursday. Here is the full transcript.

Opening statement: I thought I’d share, really, what I’m focused on right now and probably what I will be for the next 90 days. Currently, really focused on personnel. I’ve begun meeting with each staff member, and we have over 200 staff members. I sent out an interview form but really want to get to know the people that make up the Mizzou Athletics family. With 200, I’ll probably finish in about a year. But really hope to finish that sometime by mid-summer. We started on Wednesday. I’m almost 100 hours into this job and I think, of those 100, I’ve slept for maybe 10 of them. It’s been a great experience just beginning to get to know staff, so we’ll continue to do that.

The No. 2 position — Doug Gillin’s position. Doug did such a great job in that position, and so have other previous folks. That’s a really key hire for us. I talked about, in my initial press conference, about Hunter Yurachek. Well, the great news is that Hunter became the director of athletics at the University of Houston today. I certainly wish him well. I’ll begin that process. I’ll actually have somebody in this weekend to begin to vet that position. Not sure it will be exactly structured the way that, maybe, Doug’s was. I think the initial focus will certainly be on our external units, meaning fundraising, communications, marketing, promotions, licensing and merchandise, ticket sales, ticket operations. I really feel like we’ve got to do a better job in terms of the ticket sales piece. Right now, I think we’re a little bit of an inbound company, meaning that we do a really good job of taking phone calls, but we’ve got to get aggressive. We’ve got to have people on the phone and getting people excited and getting people to come out to not just football games, but all of our venues. And really kind of implement a pro model. Professional athletics do a great job in terms of selling tickets, and so we’ll certainly begin to look at that.

As I meet with each staff member, we hire the No. 2 position, then we’ll begin to really look at organizational structure, just in terms of personnel, what units report to certain people. I’ve been transparent with our staff. There’s going to be changes. I certainly need them to be open to those changes. This is never going to be about one individual, their title and what’s best for them. Absolutely, we want to accommodate people as best we can, but this is always going to be about what’s best for Mizzou athletics. What gives us the best chance to win? Probably, right around toward the end of March, I sent out kind of a unit audit to each of our directors of our different
units. When I talk about units, I’m talking about fundraising, or marketing and promotions, or the business office, or compliance. I really asked them in-depth questions, so I could get a handle on what was going on, what were some of the hot buttons, some of the short-term issues, long-term issues, key personnel, all of those. So those have really helped me in terms of hitting the ground running. So personnel and organizational structure is something we’ll really try to tackle immediately.

Next will be facilities. We have the softball stadium underway in terms of design. Tim Hickman and Bryan Maggard are doing a great job with that. There’s been a lot of discussion about football, the end zone facility and what that becomes. We need to really begin the focus on that — but not just that, other facilities — and really put together a five-year plan for facilities and how do we continue to make sure our facilities and ensure that our coaches, student-athletes have the best possible facilities so they can be successful? Again, I’ve said this before, I think we’re in the best conference in the country. The competition is at an extremely high level. And we’ve got to continue to make sure we give our student-athletes and coaches the best chance to do that.

Those will certainly be two of — the personnel and the facilities piece — then finally, I break it down into relationships. Really have to begin to develop really fruitful and positive relationships, certainly, here on campus with other vice presidents, deans, etc. Those are really, really important to me. You don’t build having a successful athletics program by yourself. We need the help of a lot of people. It starts with those folks on campus, beginning to engage them, get to know them and make sure they understand our vision, and that we’re completely in line in terms of the university’s mission. That will be important. Tim Stedman has done a great job of beginning to set up appointments with our top-25 donors. So those will begin to take place. And it goes way beyond our top-25 donors. Those people are obviously really, really special to us, but so is everybody. It doesn’t matter whether or not you give $100,000, $1 million or $10. We need everybody. And so we’ll also, and I’ll also, try to expand that and get out into the different communities. We had an unbelievable event Tuesday night in Sedalia — home of Kim Anderson — and did that at the country club there. It was packed, people were excited and that was a great first caravan for me to attend. Certainly enjoyed that, but we’ll do a lot more of those and really getting out to the state of Missouri.

Finally, it’s just the day-to-day operations I’m still candidly probably not 100 percent engaged in, just trying to do some of these other things. But I’ve got a great team I work with every day and they’re certainly managing a lot of the day-to-day.

Q: The last six weeks, how have you split your time between Houston and Missouri?

A: Well, it’s been a lot of Red Bull. And, really, I was still the vice president of athletics for the University of Houston. So, really, I tried to focus most of my time from 8 to 5 — which I probably cheated Houston out on some hours — but really tried to focus my time there and really tried to make sure we closed up shop the right way. There were certainly some specific items I wanted to complete before I left. But then, really, after hours beginning to work on Mizzou athletics items, whether it was returning emails, reviewing audit reports. Candidly, whether it was reviewing the term sheet for Coach (Gary) Pinkel’s contract. I was involved in a lot of different items. Certainly, we’ve had conversations with a lot of different staff members here. So
I was fairly engaged and it was probably, again, a feeling I didn’t really like much, because I didn’t feel like I could be completely, 100-percent focused on Mizzou athletics. So it’s great to be here. I’m ready to get going, ready to get rolling and get this thing charged up. Start doing some things.

Q: Were you in the loop about Pinkel’s extension, and what were your feelings on Yurachek getting the Houston job?

A: I had a moment there where I wasn’t really happy (for Yurachek). I kind of lost perspective. I’m supposed to be happy for a dear friend, and I wasn’t. Then quickly said, “You know what? Things happen for a reason.” That’s an attractive position. We’re going to hire somebody there that is very, very good. I’m not worried about that. Maybe take us a little bit more time now, but I think certainly the individual we’ll begin to meet with this weekend is of high character, great quality. So we’ll do that.

The second part of your question was Coach Pinkel’s contract. First, I want to say thank you to President (Tim) Wolfe and Chancellor (R. Bowen) Loftin and Mike Alden. They did a great job. That negotiation, in terms of the terms, the elements of the contract happened before, or were happening right as I was introduced as director of athletics. So I had nothing to do in terms of what the actual terms were. But absolutely in the loop in terms of what they were. Was asked how I felt about them, whether or not I supported them. Mike did a great job of sharing that with me as we moved forward through that process.”

Q: How will you daily schedule change at Missouri from what it was at Houston? Is it a more demanding job?

A: I don’t know that it’s more demanding. I like to work. I don’t like idle time. I didn’t have idle time at Houston. I’m certainly not going to have idle time here at the University of Missouri. There’s going to need to be a balance, and I can’t answer that yet, in terms of how much time do I spend in the office in terms of getting the team organized in a fashion that I think gives us the best chance to be successful versus being out and developing relationships and raising money and doing all those things. I’m a very detailed person. I like to know what’s going on. I certainly don’t think I’m a micro-manager. I think the people that worked for me will tell you that I’m not. And if I have to be, that’s probably not good news for that person. We’ll try to find that right balance as I move forward. There will be a lot of both, just internal and external.

Q: What are the qualities that you personally bring to Mizzou athletics vs. what anyone else might?

A: I don’t know, in terms of opposed to others. I’m never going to compare myself to somebody else. I don’t know if it separates me. I can talk about some of the qualities, which I’m not very comfortable doing. I do think I’m high-energy. We talk about patience. I have patience for some things. I’m not patient for others. Integrity. One of my strengths is developing relationships. Genuinely, I enjoy people. I think the X’s and O’s of an athletic department and how it should be structured, I really believe you have your external units, your internal units, your student-athlete well-being units. I think the love for our student-athletes is a strength of mine. I’ll tell you the
one thing I haven’t enjoyed to date is I’m in this beautiful arena, great office, gorgeous. But our student-athletes aren’t around. So I’m going to have to be intentional and, at some point in time, sneak in a satellite office over at the MATC so I can see our student-athletes. That’s really, really important that I see them, know them and they understand they have a director of athletics and a team that’s really behind them. Not that previous administration wasn’t, because they did a great job with that as well. I think those are some of the things. My ability to maybe raise money and some of the external areas as well.”

Q: For the Deputy AD spot, ideally, would you be looking for somebody you’d worked with in the past or would you be open to taking recommendations on people or just what’s your profile for that?

A: Both. Both. I mean, true story, I didn’t know Hunter Yurachek when I hired him. He was one of three, and I knew the two other people very well. Somebody, a mutual friend, called and said, “Look, I think you’d really like this guy.” So I think it’s both. Preferably, I think you’d always like to hire somebody that you know. I think most important is going to be fit. There’s a lot of people out there that have got great capabilities, but what’s their fit? It’s like building a basketball team. You have to have great chemistry, and we have to have great chemistry amongst our staff, and so that will really, really be important moving forward. I certainly liked the first person, and to be candid again, if I really, really like this first person, I might not go further than that. We’ll see. Some of it is certainly a gut feel, as well.

Q: When you were going through the interim talks and exploring Missouri, were there one or two things that you kind of mentally went through and said, “I’ve got to address this right away,” after you get done hiring and meeting people, whether it’s program or a compliance issue or something along that line?

A: I don’t know that there was any really particularly one thing. Look, I’ve watched Missouri in terms of sports programs. I knew that basketball, men’s basketball, they didn’t have a good year. I also knew that Kim Anderson is a heck of a person and a heck of a basketball coach, so thoughts begin to formulate: “All right, how do I got in there and help Kim?” Not that he needs my help, but how can I go in there and be supportive? Because he’s extremely capable but, how do we make sure that what he inherited, we can take that up to a level that certainly Kim expects, I expect and our fans expect? So that was maybe one. And I think the facility piece, too, because there was some talk about an end zone facility and just getting a better handle on that. So those would probably be the two.

Q: How much studying up have you done on the history of athletics here at Mizzou and the legacy of this athletic program?

A: Probably some, not as much as I what I need to do.

Q: I know you’ve heard Bob Stull’s version of the fifth down …

A: Yeah, 10 times. (Laughs). But certainly, going into the interview process, you try to learn as much as you can about everything — or at least I do. And it wasn’t just limited to the athletics
program. It was certainly about the university itself. It was about Dr. Loftin. Who he was as a leader and a chancellor, and just the academic reputation of this institution and what a great institution in terms of its research and being a land-grant university for the state of Missouri. So all of those things I read up on, and as time comes, too, I’ll become more familiar with them. I’ve mentioned this before, when I get up in front of and talk to people, I don’t want to just talk about athletics. That’s certainly important, but that’s just a very small piece of this university, and this is an unbelievable university, and everybody here should be really, really proud of it and proud to wear the logo on their chest.

Q: You mentioned increasing attendance for athletic events. Obviously, the basketball program struggled last year and so did the student attendance. How do you plan on increasing attendance from students?

A: Win games. That’s part of it. You’ve got to win, and people, that’s just human nature, people want to be associated with a winning program. They do. They want to be associated with the next best thing or next great thing, so we’ve got to win games, and that will happen. But we also have to get out and engage students and make it fun for them to come. Get out to the different student organizations, develop those relationships — who are the key people? Work with student government association, and we’ll work hard at doing that in terms of getting out and getting to know them and getting them engaged. Again, we cannot wait for people to come to us. We’ve got to get out to people, and we’ll work. I won’t say that we’ll be perfect at it, but I promise you this, we’ll work really, really hard at it.

Q: When we last talked to Mike Alden, he said he’d been in communication with you these last few weeks or so. In your conversations with him, what had you kind of taken away? What was kind of the big takeaway from your chats with Mike Alden as he leaves?

A: That I have big shoes to fill. No, that Mike’s a professional and he’s really made the transition go well for me. Again, I think there were some things that Mike wrapped up and worked hard to do that. Coach Pinkel’s contract was one of those, and then certainly we talked about maybe some staffing areas and some things that he was thinking about for the future and just wanted to share those with me, so those are probably the items we talked about most.

Q: Just curious about Monday morning, what it was like to just get in the office and just take a look around, sort of your first thoughts, what time you got there, and as kind of an extension of that, how do you go about putting together this first-three-month plan, first-year plan? I can’t imagine how complicated that is to know how you’re going to come out and attack.

A: The first part of your question … I felt like it was the first day of school, really. I mean my wife, Amy, made the trip. She wanted to see the first couple days, and she actually took a picture of me as I’m leaving the townhome at 6 a.m. and texted it daughters, so it really did feel like the first day of school. But it was exciting. As you can imagine, I didn’t get much sleep, ready to go. I felt like I’ve had this bottled-up energy and really couldn’t commit 100 percent to Mizzou athletics and finally the time came. Because I’d been … here for the press conference and I came back for maybe three days, I already knew some of the staff, and so that was great to know some
of the executive team and then Sandy Matthew, who is my administrative professional — who truth be told is really my boss; I’m not her boss. So those things were all part of the process. It was exciting. It was. The first time you have to figure out, format your computer, which you never thought about for five years, and Microsoft Outlook didn’t look like the way I wanted it to look and, “All right, now, how in the heck do I change this?” I’m calling Sandy, “Sandy, can you come in here?” So Sandy probably made 50 trips into my office the first two hours — from about 8 to 10. But that was part of it.

Then how do I attack these first (three months)? Again, it’s just one day at a time, meeting with a variety of people, beginning to formulate my thoughts, meeting with executive staff. “What do you think about this?” in terms of responsibilities. “How do we organize this?” We’ll get some different people engaged in terms of the facility plan. But there’s a plan for every day.

Q: How did you form that, though? There must have been a lot of work just to get that to come together.

A: I have, just through the years, developed my first-90-day plan, and you tweak it for each institution, and that’s kind of my guide. But you’ll tweak that. I’ll tweak that as I go, too. If I get bored with something, I’m going to maybe go on to something else and come back to that. But I use that as kind of my framework and outline.

Q: Back to basketball, what kind of sense have you gotten of the situation that Kim inherited — it was a year ago today, really — and how important is knowing that, having full knowledge of what that was like a year ago?

A: You know, again, I never want to point a finger at anybody, but I think we all realize that what Kim inherited wasn’t a perfect situation, and it just wasn’t, and I think we all can call it what it is. And that’s exactly what it was. “Why?” is No. 1, and then, 2, “How do you attack that? How do you fix it? What can I do to be helpful?” Kim is — again, I mentioned this earlier — Kim is more than capable of getting this corrected, but I want him to know that I’m going to be in the trenches with him, sleeves rolled up, and we’re going to do this, we’re going to do this together. So now you talk about all the different areas. You talk about staffing. You talk about the recruiting piece and skill development and the scheduling piece and team chemistry and how do we bring that all together? Again, I keep saying this. I’ve said this before. I’m not interested in building a winning team, but I’m very interested in building a winning program. We need to really work hard these next couple years of building that foundation so that when Kim wins, we win now for a long time. And I think we can do that. There’s no reason why we can’t do that here. It’s been done before. It absolutely has been done before, and we’re going to do it again.

Q: So what’s a reasonable timetable then for him to get that program established?

A: I appreciate the question, but I don’t know that I can answer that right now. I don’t. I can tell you it’s not 10 years, OK? But we’ll begin to think about that and have some conversation.

Q: You’ve talked earlier about fundraising. In what you’ve been able to learn so far, whether it was talking to the donors — the big guys or the $10 or $20 a month people —
and talking about the economy in the state, where the program is, how much growth potential do you feel like there is for fundraising for the program?

A: Again, after what is it, 96 hours into it, I think there is some growth and some potential. At least that’s what I’m hoping. But I do. I think again, it’s about that vision in terms of next level and, ‘Here are the things that we need to do to really, really continue to be competitive and even maybe compete at a higher level.’ I think there’s current people that have been really, really generous, and we need to ask them to be more generous, and then there’s people that we don’t know yet that we need to meet and get engaged and get them excited about our student-athletes, about our coaches, about our athletics program, about our university. And then hopefully, they’ll invest in the program. Again, I’m confident we can do that. I really am. This is again a great university, a great athletics program, and I think we can get some people excited about it. There’s already a lot of people excited about it.

Q: I understand it’s Week 1, but you’ve got a baseball coach whose season’s going to be done in the next month who doesn’t have a contract. Where do you stand on that situation and meetings with Tim Jamieson?

A: I think I’m meeting with Tim maybe the second week of May. And we’ll sit down and, again, as you can imagine, I’m not going to disclose here at this point in time, but we’ll sit down and talk about the program and him as it relates in terms of his future. It is, it’s a unique situation that you have a coach, his last year of the contract. They’ve played really, really well up to this point in time, and we’ll have that conversation, and Tim Hickman will be involved with that since he’s the sports program administrator and he’s got some historical maybe better perspective historically. No decision has been reached or formulated in my mind. Again, I think I will know better once Coach and I are able to sit down and visit.

Q: A few weeks ago, Chancellor Loftin mentioned his desire to add men’s tennis.

A: I know he did. (Laughs)

Q: What are your thoughts on that?

A: Let me first say that I love men’s tennis. But it’s probably not a priority of mine yet. Dr. Loftin and I have since had that conversation. We have 20 sports programs right now. I want to make sure that we are taking care of those 20 sports programs first and foremost, that every one of those student-athletes, every one of those coaches, assistant coaches has a real opportunity to win and be successful. Once I feel comfortable with that, then we’ll start to think about, “Do we add any other sports?”

We’re never going to add a sport just to add a sport. If we add a sport, it’s so we can compete right away. University of Houston, we added women’s golf. First year, and they may be going to an NCAA Regional. If we’re going to add, it’s going to be well thought out so we have infrastructure, facilities, budget, coach, all of that in place so we can be successful right off the bat.
Q: You mentioned with Tim Jamieson it’s a little bit unique. Is it your policy to not let a coach go into that lame-duck year?

A: I don’t know that it’s my policy. I just think it’s unique. I’m not blaming anybody for that circumstance. They had a great reason to do what they did. I’m sure they did. I don’t know that in today’s world, if you look at it, I just don’t know that there’s a lot of head coaches working their last year with one-year left on their contract.

Q: Back to the south end zone facility, is there a time frame for that or what stage is it in right now?

A: I would say it’s in discussion stage. I talked to Coach Pinkel. We met this morning. That was just a small portion of our conversation. What we have to grasp is, “How does that impact our total facilities?” Now you move football out of the MATC, and now they truly become separated. Moving forward, how can we make sure we still have engagement between football student-athletes and the rest of our student-athlete population? That’s really important to me. That’s part of the overall student-athlete experience, and I bet if you talked to our football players, they would tell you that was really cool to know our tennis players or our soccer players or softball players. There are certainly ways you can still do that. But, really, it’s much broader than just the end zone facility. It really impacts our whole operation.

We’ll begin doing some historical research on some other end zone facilities, what they’ve done, talking to some other schools. I would anticipate we’ll take the next month do that and then lay everything out on the table, get everybody around it and say, “What’s the direction, at least the first direction, we need to proceed.”

Q: On that south end zone complex, has there been some consideration of building an indoor complex for football specifically if that’s the route you go?

A: I think that’s where it started, talking about an indoor facility and can we accommodate the facility needs for football? Then, somehow, it moved into an end zone facility. There are a lot of considerations when you’re talking about an end zone facility. Is there an opportunity for some premium seating that can generate revenue? That, to me, would be really, really important. I’m not looking to increase the capacity of the stadium significantly. I don’t think we need to do that. I really don’t. Let’s make sure we sell out every home game, and then we’ll think about maybe adding more seats. It’s one step at a time.

Q: You talked about getting the local community more excited about Mizzou athletics. Do you have a vision of what you’d like Mizzou athletics’ identity to be on a national scale and what steps do you take toward reaching that?

A: If you get outside the state of Missouri, I think Mizzou athletics has a great reputation in terms of its brand, and I think the SEC has helped that tremendously, I really, really do. We’ve got to continue to capitalize on that. There’s no better way to do that in terms of your football program being successful, men’s and women’s basketball being successful, your other sports programs being successful. We’ll continue to do that. Here within the Columbia community and
within the state of Missouri, just making sure we reach out to people. Do we change any price points with our tickets? TV is your best friend, but it also impacts your attendance. How do we make sure that people really want to come to the stadium or really want to come to a women’s basketball game and have a great experience and that experience outweighs staying at home and watching it on TV?

Q: Mike touched on this a couple of weeks ago, expressing concerns about escalating salaries in college athletics, especially with football coaches. Do you see a tipping point or is it just market-driven?

A: I would echo Mike’s concerns. In my mind, I’m thinking, “There has to be an end game. Can we really sustain this model?” The NCAA has been under attack, particularly the last year, and that’s really unfortunate, in my opinion. We, as an industry, are not doing a good enough job of telling our story, because for every student-athlete that says, “Look, I didn’t get enough to eat,” or “I didn’t have any spending money,” there’s a bunch of student-athletes that have had an unbelievable experience. Student-athletes, young people that would have no opportunity to go to college, and they’ve been given this great opportunity and they’ve graduated and they’ve changed their family and the direction of their family. So that’s something that we really have to do a better job of getting our story out. Even here, with Mizzou athletics, we’ve got some unbelievable stories.

I worry about the salaries. And this is kind of a double-edged sword: There’s no patience anymore. There’s no patience for success. And, hey, maybe I’m part of that problem. You see football coaches being fired middle of the season. That certainly is different. I have great patience if I really believe we have the right person and they’re doing it the right way. If I don’t, then I probably have very little patience.

Q: How challenging do you think it is with two fan bases two hours away with St. Louis and (Kansas City), how big of a challenge is that for attendance, and what can you do to draw those fans from those urban centers where so many of your fans are at?

A: I don’t look at it as a challenge. I look at it as a great opportunity. I really do. A lot of places just have one. We have two. Now we have to do a great job of getting into the Kansas City community and St. Louis community and we need to figure out how we do that. Again, don’t hold me to this, but do we set up some type of satellite office in Kansas City in terms of reaching out there and being really engaged? Do we do the same in St. Louis? Again, just having a presence and selling tickets and so forth. We’ve got to think outside the box.

Q: Is it a priority to revive the rivalry with Kansas?

A: Great question. We would certainly like to play them again. The people that really are impacted by it most are our student-athletes, our coaches and our fans. They’re the biggest losers in all of this. I’ve had one discussion already with Sheahon (Zenger, the Kansas athletic director). He’s a great person, great director of athletics. But it’s a lot more complicated than just saying, “We want to play again.” They’ve gone on and have done their scheduling. We certainly
have done the same. If we can ever play again, I don’t know that it can be in the immediate future because of current obligations. But certainly down the road I would love to play again.

Q: Your contract, has it been finalized and not released or are you still working under a term sheet?

A: It is not finalized. There are no issues whatsoever. It’s a work in progress. The ball is in my court. I need to respond back. Life’s been a little crazy the last two or three weeks, and for whatever reason it just hasn’t been at the top of the priority list for me. It’s probably been at the bottom of the list, and that’s just because I want to hit the ground running here and that will take care of itself.

Q: When you say that about Sheahon, is it for a specific sport?

A: No, just in general.

Q: A few years ago they unveiled a $200 million master plan for facilities. Are you following that, or how much will it be adjusted based on what you think is most important?

A: It’s there in the background certainly as an awareness. Some of those pieces will be incorporated. But things change, as you know, and we’ll really focus on now, present, and what we need to do over the next five years.

Q: Is the south end zone project still at the top of the list?

A: Yeah, absolutely. But at the end of the day we might have three things at the top of the list. I don’t know yet. We do need to enhance our facilities. We’ve got great facilities, but there are certainly some areas that we can enhance.

Q: Back to baseball, Mike Alden was saying that when Missouri made the move to the SEC, the biggest adjustment across the board looking at all the programs was going to be baseball as Missouri was adjusting to their new conference. What are some of the things that Mizzou has to do to reach that level where they’re on par with other SEC programs.

A: It’s probably the best baseball conference. That jump, I agree 100 percent with Mike, that was a tough jump for Tim and for the program. I think you look at facility alone in terms of baseball in the SEC, some of those ballparks look like Triple-A ballparks. That’s certainly one area we would have to address, our facility. I haven’t been here long enough to address operational budget, how do we stand in terms of recruiting dollars? How do we travel vs. other teams? What are we paying our assistant coaches? Those are all part of the formula that I’ll need to take a look at and really need to sit down with Coach. And, again, candidly, getting a better feel for the roster. Are we a young team or an older team? My sense is we’re a young team, and he’s done a really good job recruiting. How does that impact the future, etc.?

Q: The most common question most of us in this room have gotten from fans is what’s going to be the first thing Mack Rhoades does that puts his stamp on this program. Can
you address the idea of coming in here and making it your program vs. kind of coming in here and continuing what’s gone on?

A: I guess I don’t worry about it. I’m not sitting here thinking about, “How can I put my stamp on the program?” I’m worried about how can I come in here and be a great leader for this program and develop a staff, a team that can take us to the next level. Then work from there. You all, and our fans, will determine what that stamp is. I’m not thinking about that at all. Maybe it’s a facility, maybe it’s a coaching hire, who knows? All I’m worried about is this program has room for growth, that we maximize that growth.

We talk about, “Why not Missouri? Why can’t Missouri be the best athletics program in the country? Why can’t it be?” I haven’t heard a good answer yet. So we’re going to work hard at doing that.

Q: How would you characterize those conversations with Zenger? Was he open to the idea of restarting the Border War?

A: Like I am, he’s careful in terms of what he can say. I think he’s open to it down the road. The time has to be right for both institutions. There’s got to be obviously a willing spirit for it to happen. Hopefully we can continue to develop that spirit as him and I get to know each other better. I certainly don’t want to put him in a bad position or put words in his mouth. But it was a good first conversation, and I hope to have a good second, third, fourth, fifth, whatever it takes.

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

MU law professor highlights Missouri's legislative response to Ferguson

Thursday, April 30, 2015 | 10:35 p.m. CDT

BY KYLE BROWN

COLUMBIA — About 20 MU students gathered at the Hulston Hall courtroom Thursday night to hear a discussion on the Missouri legislature’s response to Ferguson.

The MU student group Tigers Advancing Political Participation asked MU law professor Chuck Henson to speak about how legal action and legislation could bring change in police conduct, due process and use of deadly force by police officers.
"We could spend more than a day because there are some very large issues that Ferguson has brought to the surface," Henson said. "Ferguson has highlighted the existence of these issues, but Ferguson is not the only place."

Henson pointed to the problems a Department of Justice report found with Ferguson's police and municipal courts, which he said highlight racial tensions that have been there and will continue as time goes forward.

"Read the report," Henson advised. "It should shock you and make you mad as hell."

There have been 45 bills sponsored in the Missouri General Assembly related to Ferguson this year, Henson said, and almost all of them have come from the "East Coast" of Missouri, particularly St. Louis County and the surrounding areas.

Henson presented the Macks Creek Law, SB 5 and SB 199 as the three pieces of legislation related to Ferguson that are most likely to pass through the legislature and have an effect on the Missouri justice system.

The Macks Creek Law limits the amount of revenue generated from tickets in municipalities' coffers to 30 percent of their operating budgets, Henson said. This puts less pressure on law enforcement to write "bogus" tickets simply for the purpose of generating revenue, Henson said. There was a lawsuit filed against 13 municipalities in December under this law.

SB 5 would force municipal judges to conform to the same rules governing the state judiciary system set forth by the Missouri Supreme Court. Currently, the Missouri Constitution does not govern municipal judges. This bill would hold judges of all levels to the same standard, Henson said.

Henson said this bill upholds the same due process at all levels of the courts and would work to keep an impartial relationship between judges and prosecutors, hopefully keeping court procedures fair and more transparent.

SB 199 would govern the use of deadly force by police officers. Currently, officers can use deadly force if they feel that their lives are in danger, Henson said. If passed, police could only use an objectively reasonable amount of force. In other words, the action has to fit the situation.
"There are two things we can all agree upon," Henson said. "Darren Wilson had a gun and Mike Brown didn't have a gun."

Helen Bass, an MU student and Tigers Advancing Political Participation member, organized the event as a way to show students that political participation can have positive results. She wanted the talk to center around Ferguson because that was a situation that has drawn a large student response.

"It's really difficult to get students interested in politics," Bass said. "If you do participate in politics, there are changes that do happen."