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From left: Wendel Johnson (a retired professor and a member of the steering committee); Amy Schwaba (UW-Marquette Foundation president); UW-Green Bay Chancellor Gary Miller and Joe Lauer (UW-Marquette Foundation vice-president) discuss the reorganization of the UW-System Wednesday night at UW-Marquette.

UWGB chancellor discusses change

■ Miller meets with community members at UW-Marquette

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MARINETTE — More than 100 people packed the cafeteria Wednesday night at UW-Marquette to hear and ask questions of UW-Green Bay Chancellor Gary Miller regarding the reorganization plans of the UW-System.

The UW-Marquette Foundation conducted a meeting for community members in order to gain a better grasp at what the consolidation truly means for the community.

“The purpose of this meeting is to express the hopes and concerns of our community to Chancellor Gary Miller and begin the conversation of addressing the importance of our UW-Marquette campus to our students, businesses and local area in general,” said UW-Marquette Foundation President Amy Schwaba. “This campus is a gem in our community and the input from the people tonight will hopefully help guide decisions being made about the future of our campus.”

Those who attended included a wide range of community members including: area business leaders, education officials, professors and emeritus, and State Sen. Dave Hansen, D-Green Bay, and State Rep. John Nygren, R-Marquette.

After hearing from University of

Wisconsin System President Ray Cross on Nov. 9 in Madison, Wis., about the necessity of reorganization, the Board of Regents approved the restructuring of the colleges and extension.

Cross’ plan includes merging two-year schools with the four-year campuses. The 13 two-year schools will become regional branches of the seven four-year campuses.

UW-Marquette, along with UW-Manitowoc and UW-Sheboygan, will join UW-Green Bay in July.

Identity

One of the main issues concerning the community was the potential loss of identity for UW-Marquette.

“One of the questions, I think everyone would like to know is, how are you — through this reorganiza-

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tion — going to maintain the identity of the University of Wisconsin-Marquette,” asked Mark Anderson, Marinette County Board chairman. “Everything is in a name.”

Miller said loss of identity is one of the major concerns at UW-Manitowoc and UW-Sheboygan.

“It is our intention to keep the Marinette name in the campus identity,” he said. “You have a brand that will be added to ours. It diminishes our capacity to leverage this if we do away with these brands. We’re working under the assumption that this campus will be identified some way with both Marinette and UW-GB.”

“The president (Cross) has said that we need to retain these regional identities in this consolidation. So the new four-year campus institution has got to align with this region. What we do here may not be the same as they do at Sevens Point or Eau Claire.”

Access

Since the campuses will be accredited as a four-year university, it means students will have wider access.

“That means the goal has to be a student entering UW-Marquette will have access to every degree program that we have in the university,” Miller said. “The other thing is that the faculty in this four-campus university will be a unified faculty.”

“We will have our own departments. A student entering UW-Marquette will have the access to that entire faculty and its offerings.”

Athletics

While students have opportunities to access, athletic programs will remain the same due to the fact UW-GB is a Division I university in the NCAA.

“We want to keep the athletic programs here on these campuses,” he said. “Due to rules in the NCAA, right now we are building a fire wall between our one NCAA

and our three athletic programs here. We want to keep these athletic programs, we just have to insulate them from Division I.”



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UW-Green Bay Chancellor Gary Miller answers questions to more than 100 community members Wednesday night at UW-Marquette.

Tuition and Admission

Miller said the access models in the form of admission and tuition at the three universities are very valuable to UW-Green Bay.

“Our philosophy in admissions match,” he said. “What you bring to the table is a much more mature process of dealing with students who are less prepared. What we’re trying to do is leverage that. That’s something the main campus will benefit from because we want to give people opportunities.”

According to Miller, the tuition will continue to remain the same.

“That’s very actively being studied right now,” he said. “We’re

studied right now,” he said. “We’re working with the analytics on that. Now we have the opportunity to help students increase affordability by the way we manage them through these four cam-

pus. That’s an advantage.”

Transferability

Miller said nothing will be changed to the ability to transfer.

“In fact, we hope it will enhance the transferability,” he said. “We’re going to see some convergence with associate degrees because we offer them, too. One of the things the president (Cross) said is to make transfer easier. We don’t discourage anyone from transferring anywhere to get a degree. What we want to do is to make the experience so good that they want to stay and work in this region. That’s our goal.”

Buildings and Facilities

Hansen said one of the biggest questions in the room was what

can the community do to maintain the facility.

“It provides so much good,” he said. “I don’t want to see it go away in two or four years. I want it to be

here forever.”

Miller said the UW-System wants the facility to continue to stay in the area.

“It’s not a four-year university if we don’t have this facility,” he said. “Our assumption is that these campuses will be here forever and that’s what we’re working on.”

Is UW-Marquette losing anything?

“What is it that we’re going to lose because all of this sounds like nothing much is changing,” said Jeanne Harper of St. Vincent de Paul.

Miller said in fact, he doesn’t believe UW-Marquette is truly losing anything.

“I think the opportunity is to gain leverage that comes from having a four-year campus system and the communities that surround it,” he said. “Right now you’re in a university that’s everywhere in the state. Your particular needs in Marinette are not the same as Baraga County. We’re trying to move northeast Wisconsin to the floor.”

“We’re going to be more cohesive, more strategic in the way we think. I think this is a gain for you. We certainly feel like it’s a gain for us in Green Bay. One of the main gains is all of you. This region of Wisconsin has one of the lowest college attainment rates in the country. It’s also one of the areas that’s going to change the most in 20 years.”

“It’s one of the two counties in Wisconsin that is going to get younger, which is in this region. There’s a huge opportunity for all of us working together.”

Marquette School District Superintendent Wendy Dzurick said, regarding the deficit of college graduates in the two or four years institutions, “we’re working diligently to assist our students in achieving those goals.”

“With a lot of first generation families in this area, this campus gives them the confidence and security they need to take that leap,” she said. “We’re excited that

we will have the opportunity to partner with the four-year university and I think it will allow the students to accomplish their goals.”