



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ MAY 10, 2023 6:30 PM ■ MCCARTHY CENTER, ALUMNI ROOM & REMOTE

MINUTES

Chair Kevin Foley called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked Counsel Ann McDonald to conduct the roll call for attendance.

Roll Call

Nancy Budwig – present; Beth Casavant – present; Lino Covarrubias – present*; Diane Finch – present*; Kevin Foley – present; Mariel Freve – present*; Anthony Hubbard – present*; Claire Ramsbottom – present; Robert Richards – present; McKenzie Ward – present

1.0 Chair's Report

- A. Consent agenda, pages 4 – 5
 - BOT Meeting Minutes: March 29, 2023, pages 6 – 13
 - Personnel Actions, pages 14 – 18

A motion to approve the consent agenda was moved by Beth Casavant, Nancy Budwig seconded the motion

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Mariel Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; McKenzie Ward – yes

—Motion approved

Chair Foley continued by reporting the following:

- B. Undergraduate and Graduate Commencement Ceremonies
 - Reminder to the trustees that the Graduate Commencement Ceremonies are scheduled to be held on Friday, May 19 and Saturday, May 20. The Undergraduate Commencement will be held at the DCU Center in Worcester, MA on Sunday, May 21.
- C. Trustee Retreat: May 24, 2023
 - The annual Board of Trustees Retreat will be held at the Warren Center, allowing trustees a more informal setting to discuss how the Board is functioning and review the work of the academic year just completed.

*Indicates remote participation.

- D. DEI IBIS Training and Future Plans
 - Trustees completed training in April conducted by IBIS.
 - Further learning opportunities will be planned with the assistance of Jeffrey Coleman, VP of the office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement.
- E. Board Member Vacancies
 - Two vacancies remain, and three terms will be ending in March 2024.
- F. Appreciation was extended to Trustee Ward and Newly Elected Student Trustee, Ryan Mikelis, for 2023–2024 Academic Year was welcomed.
 - This being the second term she has served as Student Trustee, Chair Foley thanked Trustee McKenzie Ward for her commitment to and work on the Board.
 - Student Trustee elect, Ryan Mikelis, introduced himself. He has served as an orientation leader, and an intern at the Dean of Students Office. He added that he is very much looking forward to his role as Student Trustee.
- H. Recognition of Outgoing Trustee Emeritus Richards
 - Chair Foley thanked outgoing Trustee Emeritus Robert Richards.
 - Trustee Richards commented that he has enjoyed the time he has served on the Board– 10 years as trustee, and nearly the same amount of time as trustee emeritus. He has served with four different FSU Presidents, and numerous faculty and staff. He thanked Dale Hamel in particular, for his work with the Finance Committee.

2.0 President's Report

President Nancy Niemi presented the following updates:

- A. Inauguration
 - The President thanked all who were involved in and attended the Presidential Inauguration.
- B. Year One in Review
 - The President will report on her year in the role, and will make it available for the trustees to review in mid-August.
- C. COVID Vaccination Change
 - In alignment with current state and federal policies, the University will no longer require proof of vaccination of faculty, staff, or students, effective July 1, 2023.
- D. Strategic Planning
 - The President and a small team from the University met with Dr. Winnie Hagan, of the Department of Higher Education, to formally begin the strategic planning conversation and process.
 - A kick-off of the initiative with the full University community will begin in the fall 2023.
- E. End of Year Retreat for Faculty and Staff, May 15.
 - Dr. Tia McNair will be speaking at the retreat on the theme of Becoming a Student-Ready College.
- F. Brand and Logo Rollout, pages 19 – 35
 - A presentation of information on the brand platform and Framingham State University logo created by Primacy was made.
 - The new logo was presented, page 28
 - The next phase of the rollout and timeline were outlined, page 35

G. Motion: Approval Honorary Degree – Ayanna Pressley, page 36

A motion to approve the honorary degree to Representative Ayanna Pressley was moved by Diane Finch, Lino Covarrubias seconded the motion

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Mariel Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; McKenzie Ward – yes

—Motion approved

H. Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement (DICE) Report

Jeffrey Coleman reported the following:

- Institutional statements on antiracism and racial equity have been posted on the DICE webpage, pages 37 – 38
- Update on Director of CIE search
 - Two finalists were brought to campus, and an offer was made to a candidate.
- Strategic priorities included collaboration with Academic Affairs to recruit and retain faculty of color. The two following positions have been established: pages 38 – 39
 - Inclusive Excellence Faculty Fellow Program Coordinator
 - Inclusive Excellence Research Grant Program Coordinator
- Implicit Bias Prevention and Education Resources added to DICE webpage.
- Antiracism resources added to DICE webpage.

I. Development and Alumni Relations Report

Eric Gustafson reported the following, page 42 – 43

- Development: Year-to-date, \$2.169 M raised in FY 2023
 - Notable new gifts include two gifts to the Danforth Art Museum and new endowed scholarship for Nutrition and Health Sciences.
 - The University will be able to fully claim Endowment Incentive Program funds available through the Commonwealth.
- Alumni Engagement
 - Highlights were presented, page 42
- Grants and Sponsored Programs
 - Year to date have secured \$3.961 M in funding, page 44
- Danforth Art Museum
 - Highlights were presented, page 43
 - Attendance was up 77% in the months of February through April.
 - The *Boston Globe* ran a large article about the current exhibit.
- Danforth Art School, page 43
 - Summer Arts registration is running ahead of last year.
 - The Art School will again be hosting several groups of high school students for classes in Fashion Design, allowing for recruitment opportunities.

J. Student-in-the-Spotlight: Altagracia Daniela Garcia Padilla

Dr. Rachel Avard, Mary Miles Bibb Teaching Fellow and Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology, introduced Altagracia Daniela Garcia Padilla.

- Altagracia is first-generation senior at Framingham State University, studying Biology with a concentration in Biotechnology, and a minor in Public Health.

- Growing up in the Dominican Republic, early in her life Altagracia, developed a strong interest in biology.
- At 14 years of age, she moved to the U.S. and began attending Framingham High School. Although this was a challenging transition, she found solace in her biology classes. With encouragement from her teachers, pursued her education at FSU.
- She thanked several faculty and staff who supported her throughout her time at FSU, noting that her experience at the University has been nothing short of life changing.
- At the University, she has been able to grow through her involvement in both social and academic activities. She also was able to conduct research for the first time and summarized her research on breast cancer cell migration for the group.
- For the future, she intends to continue her education would like to enroll in a Ph.D. program, where she may also continue her work on cancer research.

3.0 Student Trustee Report

Trustee McKenzie Ward reported the following:

A. Student Government Update – Elected Officers

- Evelyn Campbell will be serving as President, Ryan Mikelis will be Student Trustee.

In closing, Trustee Ward thanked the trustees for their support throughout her terms and asked that Student Trustee Elect Mikelis ensure that the student voice is heard and their perspective is well represented.

Diane Finch commented in response to the DICE report that Jeffrey Coleman presented.

- She asked if he would be able to include additional vocabulary to in relation to LGBTQIA+ to better inform her in addressing the community, and added that she hopes that this would be a subject that they could have some conversation about at the BOT retreat.

4.0 Academic Affairs Committee

Trustee Nancy Budwig reported the following from the Academic Affairs Committee meeting on May 2, 2023:

A. Academic Affairs Committee Report

- The committee reviewed a proposal for a new center: The Center for the Digital Humanities
 - A grant funded center, the Center for Digital Humanities would provide students with opportunities to explore vital connections between STEM and the Humanities.
 - Offering students access to tools for data and analysis, i.e. artificial intelligence (AI) and geographic information systems (GIS) tools.
- Committee members discussed the definition of a center and how centers may promote the branding efforts of the University.
- The committee discussed how to determine if the Center for Digital Humanities is successful and further discussion of assessment networks took place.

- Trustee Budwig emphasized the connection that the University's centers have with the strategic enrollment plan.
 - Centers provide unique student learning opportunities, which are relevant to current job markets.
 - Centers provide direct connections to local public high schools as well as to regional and national organizations and businesses.
 - They showcase, to prospective students and their families, the quality of education offered by the University, which is reflected in the overall branding of the University.

Trustee Budwig continued by reviewing the ongoing initiatives of the Academic Affairs Department to review faculty lines and positions, emphasizing the strategic initiatives in reviewing which faculty lines and positions are needed.

- Formative assessments, understanding the context and history behind the positions are thoroughly investigated in this data driven decision-making process.
- Issues addressed by department chairs when requesting a position were highlighted: How the position would address DEI, reviewing the budget impact etc. page 7, *March 21, 2023 Academic Affairs Meeting Book*
- Trustees were encouraged to re-review information detailing this extensive process from the *March 21, 2023 Academic Affairs Committee Meeting Book*, pages 6 – 15.

In conclusion Trustee Budwig commended the reporting provided by students, staff, and faculty for the 2023 CELTSS Conference for Research and Creative Practice Program Report. She highly recommended Trustee to review the information.

5.0 Enrollment and Student Development Committee

Trustee Claire Ramsbottom highlighted the following from the Enrollment and Student Development Committee meeting held on May 3, 2023:

A. Enrollment and Student Development Committee Report

- An update on Admissions was provided, page 48
 - There has been an increase of 25 additional deposits since the previous week
 - The goal is to obtain 603 deposits to meet a target of 520 entering students.
 - Focus continues to be on strategy to keep students engaged throughout the entire admissions process.
- Transfer student deposits are at 123 deposits; an increase of 13 deposits from the previous week, page 49

Trustee Ramsbottom asked Jessica Mireles to present the information regarding the admissions strategic plan, page 50

- Jessica Mireles noted with the limited staff and resources, focus has been placed on student engagement and personalizing the contact with students and parents.
 - Focus on obtain new applications will not be as effective as engaging with current applicants in yielding students and building the 2024 class.
 - A junior campaign was launched recently with 1,200 respondents requesting more information from FSU.

Trustee Ramsbottom continued her report on the following:

- Summary of the timeline for the Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEP), page 51
 - Data reports are being compiled to support strategic planning.
 - Financial Aid Strategy was presented.
 - Action Planning Templates used to build strategies, pages 14 – 15, *May 3, 2023 Enrollment and Student Development Committee Meeting Book*
- Restructuring will take place to create a single Office of Marketing and Communication, and creating a new Chief Marketing role.
- Student Success: individual campus work has begun, and special initiatives were outlined, page 52
 - Five Pathways: priorities for FSU, Page 53
 - The project scope and timeline were reviewed, page 54

In closing, Trustee Ramsbottom highlighted Athletic Department facts and upcoming projects, page 59

- Athletics recruited 19.8% of first-year students in the fall 2023.
 - These students are retained at a higher rate, due in part to a built-in community and support, i.e. fellow team mates and coaches.

6.0 Compliance, Audit and Risk (CAR) Committee

With the consent of the Board Chair, Trustee Anthony Hubbard, reported on the Compliance, Audit and Risk (CAR) Committee, out of sequence with the agenda, to allow more time if needed for the Finance Committee Report and FY2024 Budget Discussion.

Trustee Hubbard reported the following:

A. Compliance, Audit, and Risk (CAR) Committee Report

- Internal Assessments:
 - On-going assessments were presented: Cash management assessment led to a campus-wide review of cash management processes. This assessment resulted in the establishment of a policy for cash handling and ultimately will lead to better cash handling processes.
 - Future assessments were presented: More than 20 proposed assessments were presented. Impacts and possible risks were addressed, and an assessment schedule will be developed for the Academic Year 2023 – 2024.
- Information Technology
 - A new Chief Information Security Officer has been hired, Corey Hobbs. Corey was promoted internally from his previous position, Manager of Networking and Telecommunications.

7.0 Administration, Finance, and Information Technology Committee

Trustee Hubbard provided context to the information about to be presented by Dale Hamel, noting that at the end of the presentation, trustees will be asked to approve the FY2024 budget.

- In previous years, delegation was given to the Finance Committee to approve the upcoming year's Trust Fund Budget and Fees in the summer. This year the Finance Committee will be asking the Board to vote on the approval of the FY 2024 Trust Fund Budgets and Fees based on conservative assumptions made for the budget, along with a general idea of State funding, and an assumption that reserve funds, in the amount of \$2.5M, will be used.

Dale Hamel took the opportunity to thank those that were involved with the budget development process including Jeanne Deree, other members of the Business Office, and trust fund managers. He added that the FY 2024 Budget Request document is available for review on Board of Trustees materials portal*.

Dale Hamel continued, providing the following information:

A. Administration, Finance, and Information Technology Report

- State Funding reviewed, page 61 (3b)
 - Aggregate Fair Share Funding Allocations:
 - Governor's, House, and Senate Ways and Means Budget proposals were reviewed.
 - In the Governor's budget allocations (a third to each) were made for transportation, higher education, and K-12. A significant amount was allocated to financial aid and additional base funding and grant support.
 - The House budget roughly split allocation to transportation and education (K-12 and Higher Education).
 - \$174M allocated to higher education: \$154M in student aid, \$20M for the Endowment Incentive Program.
 - \$9.8M for State University's Performance Funding Program: 2.9% increase to the base budget for Framingham State University.
 - Funding for anticipated cost of collective bargaining contracts: \$2.1M; Executive Office of Administration and Finance (ANF) Reserve of 6%.
 - Senate Ways and Means Budget allocated funding for Transportation and Education (K-12 and Higher Education).
 - In addition to allocated funding for Performance Funding and Collective Bargaining, \$50M was allocated in student support programs.
 - \$125M for capital projects; Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) for deferred maintenance.
- "All Funds" Budget Key Parameters
 - State appropriations \$37.1M current FY2024 level of appropriations, \$9.8M to the State University segment of performance funding; supplemental funding once contracts have been ratified, page 72
 - Assumption of student revenue is \$23.8M, a decline of 6.3%, page 75
 - Increase in tuition and fees, residence halls, and dining fee were outlined: a comprehensive undergraduate increase in costs (tuition/fees, room, and board) of \$720, or 2.9%.
 - DGCE rate increase of \$30, 1.8% increase.

*A digital copy may also be obtained by request.

- Staffing levels: faculty positions show a decline of less than 1%; net increase of staff positions of 4.5%.
- Reserve funds of approximately \$2.5M will be utilized.
- Review of FY2024 All Funds Budget – Trust Fund Net Income Detail, page 78
 - College operating budget includes revenues and expenditures by trust funds.
 - Trust funds with deficits are highlighted in red: \$1.9M, College Operations; \$1.234M, Residence Life; \$336,000, Continuing Education; \$164,000, Academic Support; \$17,000, Arts and Ideas
 - Capital projects plan (highlighted in blue) display an \$8M expenditure, page 79
 - Financial Aid (highlighted in green), page 79
 - \$38M in Financial Aid; the percentage for grant aid has increased.

Trustee Lino Covarrubias asked Dale Hamel how confident he was that the state appropriations funding would be obtained as outlined in his presentation, and what percent the \$2.5M is of the total funds in reserves.

- Dale Hamel responded that he was very confident for the performance funding. The collective bargaining funding will be determined by the contracts. The funding will be required to ratify the first year.
- Investment analysis identifies liquidity funds, contingency funds, and core investment funds; liquidity funds are required to operate, but the contingency and core investment funds, a total approximately \$80M; so, \$2.5M is approximately 3% of reserve balances.
 - Too much of a reduction of the \$80M would impact the interest gained and would not benefit the University in the outyears, as a percentage of the gains (actually a percent of rolling-three-year fund balances) are applied to the operating budget.

Dale Hamel continued his report with the following:

- Five-year Summary, page 81
 - Details a deficit in FY24, smaller deficit in FY25, and balanced budget in FY26.

In conclusion, Trustee Hubbard noted the following:

- Capital projects expenses are primarily covered by state funding.
- After two years of no increases to tuition or fees, the proposed increases are in line with those previously made.
- The annual cost for an education at Framingham State University is \$37,000 per student; the actual average cost for the student with state appropriation and financial aid is less than \$4,000 per year, page 79

Trustee Hubbard added that in FY 2024, the amount of aid offered to the students is higher in grant funding than in student loans.

B. Approval of the FY2024 Trust Fund Budget and Fees, page 83

A motion to approve the FY2024 Trust Fund Budgets and Fees was made by Beth Casavant, Mariel Freve seconded the motion

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes;

Marisol Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; McKenzie Ward – yes
—Motion approved

8.0 Governance Committee

Trustee Beth Casavant presented the following:

A. Governance Committee Report

- Slate of Officers
 - The slate of officers for the 2023 – 2024 Academic Year was presented.

Claire Ramsbottom brought forth a motion to approve the slate of officers as stated in the Board materials, page 67

A motion to approve the slate of officers was made by Claire Ramsbottom, McKenzie Ward seconded the motion

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Marisol Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; McKenzie Ward – yes
—Motion approved

- Trustee Casavant presented the proposed dates for 2023 – 2024 Academic Year Board of Meeting schedule, page 68

A motion to approve the proposed meeting dates was made by Beth Casavant, Diane Finch seconded the motion

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Marisol Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; McKenzie Ward – yes
—Motion approved

- Approval of Amended By-Laws, pages 69 – 77
 - Changes to the Board of Trustee By-laws were reviewed and discussion ensued.

A motion to approve the amended Board By-Laws was made by Beth Casavant, McKenzie Ward seconded the motion

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Marisol Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; McKenzie Ward – yes
—Motion approved

9.0 New Business

A. Approval of the Delegation of Authority – Summer 2023, page 78

A motion to approve the summer delegation of authority to President Niemi was made by Kevin Foley, McKenzie Ward seconded the motion

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Mariel Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes;

McKenzie Ward– yes

—Motion approved

10.0 Public Comment

There was no public comment.

11.0 Adjourn Open Meeting

A motion to adjourn the public meeting was moved by McKenzie Ward, Diane Finch seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Mariel Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; McKenzie

Ward– yes

—Motion approved

The meeting ended at 8:52 p.m.