



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD RETREAT ■ MAY 24, 2023 6:15 PM ■ WARREN CONFERENCE CENTER

MINUTES

Trustees in attendance: Nancy Budwig, Beth Casavant, Lino Covarrubias, Diane Finch, Kevin Foley, Mariel Freve, Anthony Hubbard, Claire Ramsbottom, McKenzie Ward

University members in attendance: Jeffrey Coleman, Ann McDonald, President Niemi

The meeting began at 6:15 p.m.

Chair, Kevin Foley and chair-elect Beth Casavant led a discussion regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, allowing trustees to debrief the training sessions (IBIS and REJI) and to discuss the planning of future DEI objectives for the Board.

Conversation held included the following topics:

- Interest in having members of the University Executive Staff, Ann McDonald and Jeffrey Coleman, to assist in the development of training for the Board and to help establish ground rules for future meetings, i.e. addressing micro aggression.
- Ways of creating opportunities for listening and discourse with members of the University campus, i.e. faculty, staff, and student forum.
 - There was clear interest by Trustees in having more interaction with the members of the University Campus, outside of the Board of Trustees meetings, as it would help the trustees know more about and to be better integrated with the community.
- A request was made to Jeffrey Coleman to provide resources and recommended readings as well as recommending other campus specific trainings for the trustees to participate in.
- The need for DEI content to be part of Trustee orientation, meeting ground rules to be established, as well as a commitment statement to be incorporated in the ground rules.

President Niemi led a conversation regarding the development of the new strategic and NECHE plan. She began by outlining that the framework has been established and work will begin in the fall, allowing all members of the University to be part of this important effort.

Trustees were asked to comment on issues they felt should be prioritized. They included:

- Retention and the strategic enrollment plan
- Best practices across all promotional efforts; admissions, counseling, etc.
- Clarity on our identity and where we are in the marketplace; who our constituents are; frame our identity and permeate that identity and everything that comes with it.
- Rightsizing our institution; how to make best use of resources
- Coordinated efforts to bring back alumni, allowing for an active dynamic alumni membership
- Resources for attracting more tenure track BIPOC faculty
- Mentorship programs, modeled on building community

Trustees discussed a variety of topics regarding Executive Staff collaborations, as well as Board meeting operations. Discussions included areas that have been successful, as well as adjustments that trustee would like to suggest for the upcoming academic year.

Comments included:

- The interest in invitations for students to join trustees for dinner to include a wider range of students, i.e. first-generation students, student with disabilities, and non-traditional students.

Conversation was had regarding whether Trustees felt the Vice Presidents were providing them with the kinds of information they are seeking for during committee meetings. Comments included:

- The VP for Student Success may have reporting that will overlap between both Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management and Student Experience committees.
- Trustees voiced interest in establishing a series or theme to address in their committee meetings for the academic year.

In conclusion, the trustees were given the opportunity to address any other issues that were not already introduced. Trustees discussed concerns regarding the number of trustee vacancies and those with terms ending in March 2023. These include Trustees Nancy Budwig, Beth Casavant, and Kevin Foley.

- Trustees suggested, and Ann McDonald agreed, that peer mentoring will be added to the orientation for new Trustees.

The meeting ended at 8:15 p.m.