



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ MAY 12, 2021, 7:15 P.M. ■ ALUMNI ROOM & REMOTE

In Attendance: Nancy Budwig, Hope Lozano Bielat, Beth Casavant, Kevin Foley*, Mike Grilli*, Brian Herr, Anthony Hubbard, Richard Logan, Robert Richards, and McKenzie Ward*

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

Chair's Report

Chair Kevin Foley welcomed the Trustees and University guests to the final official meeting of the 2020-2021 academic year.

Chair Foley asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda:

- Minutes (March 27, 2021)
- Executive Session Minutes (March 27, 2021)
- Personnel Actions Report

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the consent agenda including the minutes from the March 27, 2021 Board of Trustees meeting and executive session, and the personnel actions report.

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Chair Foley continued in recognizing two Trustees who will not be serving on the Board of Trustees in the next academic year: Trustee McKenzie Ward and Trustee Dana Neshe.

- Chair Foley thanked Trustee Ward for her perspective and congratulated her for being elected the next president of the FSU SGA.
- Trustee Neshe, a great Trustee who has served on the Board for the past 10 years, has seen many of the changes the University has undergone, and has always brought the highest level of professionalism and a unique perspective to the Board. Chair Foley thanked Trustee Neshe for all of her contributions throughout the years and hopes that she will remain connected to the University.

Chair Foley took the opportunity to introduce Student Trustee elect, Hilary Nna.

*Denotes physical attendance



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- Student Trustee Elect, Hillary Nna, is a senior at FSU, majoring in Biology. She began as a senator on the SGA, and is excited to be a Student Trustee in the coming year.

Chair Foley informed the Board that he had spoken with Matt Noyes regarding the two open trustee positions. A recommendation was made to fill one of the vacancies. While no definitive date was conveyed of when the Board of Commissions will be reconvening, Chair Foley reported that he would notify the Board of any updates via email.

Appointment of Presidential Review Committee: Chair Foley thanked Beth Casavant, Mike Grilli, and Hope Bielat for taking on this important work during the summer and anticipates them bringing the report forward to the Board in September.

Chair Foley concluded his report with an update on the Presidential Search.

Since President Cevallos informed the Board of his intent to retire in 2022, the following actions have been taken:

- Commissioner Santiago was informed of the open position.
 - A conversation with the Commissioner included the importance of conducting the presidential search and will focus on equity initiative of the BHE in our considerations.
- Chair Foley has spoken with his counterpart at Westfield State University, and spoke to other members of the search committee that were involved in the hiring of President Cevallos.
- Reviewed candidates/constituents for the presidential search committee. Chair Foley will chair the search committee and thanked Trustee Nancy Budwig and Trustee Anthony Hubbard for agreeing to serve on the committee.
 - Once the committee members have been determined, an announcement will be made to update campus community on the FSU website.
 - Process for quotes from search firms to be returned by May 14; Governance committee to meet on May 24th to interview search firms and make the selection.
 - Will be following the DHE guideline as published in 2013.

2.0 President's Report

President Cevallos reported on the following items:

- Echoing comments made by Chair Foley, he thanked Trustee Neshe and Trustee Ward for all of their work and contributions to the University.
- Welcomed Hillary Nna, looking forward to working with her next year in the fall.



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- Softball: the FSU team has been very successful this season. This weekend FSU will be hosting Bridgewater State University for the MASCAC Softball Championship.
- Covid-19 University Response: Vaccination Requirement
 - Continue to uphold all current mitigations, although the Commonwealth has loosened some of its regulations, we have not made changes due to our successful results; 0 positives test results occurred last week.
 - Off-boarding testing currently taking place for students prior to returning home. This is an effort to control community spread of the virus.
 - The Council of Presidents (COP) has decided to require vaccines; working with our unions, as we continue to strongly encourage our faculty and staff to get vaccinated. With the vaccines we must allow medical and religious exemptions, but are hoping to have most of our community vaccinated by September.
- Student Retention Committee Reconstituted:
 - As presented during the Academic Affairs and Enrollment and Student Development Committee meetings; it is critical to take a holistic review of enrollment. The President quoted Dr. Lorretta Holloway's allegory, of a bucket with a hole in it. No matter how much water you continue to place in the bucket, you will not be able to hold water. Retention is the "hole in the bucket" that we must focus on addressing.
- Commencement, Rams Walk and Other End of Year Activities
 - May 23rd, 10 a.m. for the class of 2020; 2 p.m. for the class of 2021; June 2nd, 3rd, and 5th RAMs Walk; hoping to provide a feeling of some semblance of commencement.
- Trustee Action Item:
 - Last year's approved of honorary degrees will be given to Lyndia Downie and Jonathan Lemier.
 - This year the President requested the Trustees to consider the recommendation of giving an honorary degree to Congresswoman Katherine Clark, asking Chair Foley to consider and present the motion.

Chair Foley brought forth the motion.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the motion to award the following honorary degree at the upcoming undergraduate and graduate commencement ceremonies on May 23, 2021.



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- *Katherine Clark*

RATIONALE: Honorary degrees are awarded to those who have made special contributions through their lives. Recipients generally fall into two categories, first, people who have been closely associated with the University, its students, faculty, or alumni; and second, people who have made outstanding contributions to education to our community, and to humanity.

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Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement Report

Dr. Constanza Cabello highlighted the following items from her report:

- Continued focus on antiracist efforts: \$62K DHE Innovation Fund Grant to host multi-day policy review institute. Planning is under way for the institute to be held on August 3rd and 4th.
 - Policy review plans to be executed in the upcoming academic year.
 - Yearlong learning will be the next steps. The institute to train leaders and policy review plan.
 - Dr. Sumun Pendakur to lead the institute; grant will also allow external assessment to the institute as well as to work on action plans for next steps.
 - Funding has been granted for additional external consultant to offer individual coaching sessions for departments that may want to further investigate what a policy review would look like in their specific areas.
- Training on campus; focus on responses to the Chauvin trial and more recently, Mikayla Miller as investigation is underway. Addressing ways to continue to support students.
- Eric Nguyen will join FSU as the Director of the CIE. Mr. Nguyen previously worked at Northeastern University, where he served as the Senior Assistant Director of Opportunity Scholarship and Outreach Programs.
- Pathways internship program: worked with 16 students throughout the year, with the generous support of the Jacobs Foundation. The program will be transitioning to Career Services and Employer Relations under the guidance of Richard Davino.
- Council on Diversity and Inclusion (CDI): thanked the group's co-chairs for work done throughout the year.
- Annual reports to include a review of antiracism efforts. The report will be shared with the full community.

Development and Alumni Relations Report

Eric Gustafson highlighted the following from his report:

- Fundraising is going well, upwards of over \$2.1M raised.



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- Notable gifts include: \$50k for Danforth operating fund. Allowed to be a “challenge gift” for other donor. \$25k gift, split between existing endowment and the Library.
- Large gifts pending; \$100K scholarships.
- Alumni engagement virtual event: networking event online using AirMeet. Good turn out; good connections made; in attendance was Wendy Davis and Richard Davino from Career Services, who met with many alumni that were excited to offer internships and jobs to FSU students.
- In-person events:
 - Annual golf tournament.
 - Annual reunion weekend event celebrating 50th anniversary class reunions for classes of 1970 and 1971; Alumni Achievement Awards for last year and this year.
 - August 14th to hold Cape Cod Lobster Bake event.
- Danforth: new exhibits are open; attendance numbers are picking up; membership numbers are also up.
- Art School: summer enrollment is looking good; some completely full with waitlists.
 - Adding a ceramics program this summer, paint nights, and other innovative programming.

Student-in-the-Spotlight

President Cevallos welcomed the Student-in-the-Spotlight

Chair of the Accounting, Economics, and Finance department, Dr. Lori Lavigne, introduce Aline Dropsy, a senior accounting major with a 3.94 GPA. Ms. Dropsy was recently awarded the Outstanding Accounting Award, and though she had a unique path to FSU, has made the most of her time at the University and epitomizes the kind of student the program seeks to enroll and graduate.

Aline Dropsy introduced herself as an international student from Brazil who transferred to FSU through a cultural exchange program after having enrolled in a Continuing Education course at FSU.

Although she had originally intended to become an engineer, at FSU, she changed her focus to accounting, embracing her new goal to become a businesswoman. She said that being a Latina-Black woman, she felt welcomed by the diverse student body, campus size, and easy to access campus. At FSU Ms. Dropsy had great interaction with FSU community, and gained both personal and professional growth.

Although 2020 was an exceptionally challenging year for her, she was offered support and had the opportunity to intern at MERC (MetroWest Economic Research Center) on campus, re-started the Investment Club, worked at a CPA firm in Marlborough, and was a volunteer for the IRS in the VITA Program. In addition to all of her work, Ms. Dropsy was also invited to join four honors societies and



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awarded the Accounting Student of the Year award, something her family in Brazil was very proud of. Most recently, she received an internship with Deloitte LLP in Boston for 2022.

She thanked all of FSU professors, staff, and other students that supported her and helped guide her to success and thanked Professor Yaying Yeh, her academic advisor, who always encouraged her to dream big. In closing Ms. Dropsy stated that she was grateful that FSU has so many women who are great role models and examples of successful individuals.

3.0 Student Trustee Report

Trustee McKenzie Ward reported on the following items to the Board of Trustees.

- SGA Election Results for the Academic Year 2021-2022
 - McKenzie Ward President-elect; Emma Sullivan, Vice President-elect; Hillary Nna, Student Trustee-elect, Emily Rosenberg Outreach and Events Coordinator-elect.
 - There are some vacancies on the SGA Board and only two Senators, due to low engagement.
- Initiative for the next academic year will be for SGA to work collaboratively with others student organizations on campus.

Chair Foley congratulated Trustee Ward again on her election to become President of SGA.

4.0 Academic Affairs Committee

The Academic Affairs committee report was given by Trustee Nancy Budwig, who remarked on the following items:

- Position updates
 - Yaser Najjar will be retiring.
 - Interim position has transitioned to a permanent position, for Patricia Thomas, dean of the College of Business and continuation of Millie Gonzalez's role as interim Library Dean.
- Retention initiatives: formation of a campus-wide initiative
 - Deans outreach to students using Starfish; personal connection is essential.
 - Summer math retention program.
 - Circle-in pilot program through the National Science Foundation.



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- Antiracism efforts
 - Deans attended conference for networking and to improve diversity in the faculty.
 - Efforts to retain faculty of color; mentoring program for new faculty; post-doctoral teaching program for BIPOC 2022 will come in with new approaches to teaching and scholarship.
- Strategic initiatives:
 - The Library Open Educational Resources offering no cost textbook content.
 - New program to mentor athletes and help them with their learning.
 - Civic engagement program to offer scholarships to incentivize civic engagement.

In summary of the discussions held during the Academic Affairs Committee meeting, Trustee Budwig concluded that the core strategic initiatives are being well met, regardless of this year’s challenges.

Trustee Budwig continued in presenting the Board with Marc Cote’s request for Board approval of a new major in fashion merchandising.

Dr. Ellen Zimmerman emphasized the new major would be very important strategically for marketing purposes.

Trustee Bielat stated the focus on real-world applicability helps promote FSU in the metropolitan area where internships and jobs may be available.

Trustee Budwig added that the major is not currently offered in the Massachusetts public system, and that the Academic Affairs Committee is in full support of the new major.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the creation of the new major: fashion merchandising under the existing Bachelors of Science degree.

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5.0 Compliance, Audit, and Risk (CAR) Committee

Counsel Ann McDonald reported on the following items from the May 3rd, CAR Committee meeting:

- IT consultant Kevin Leggit of Integral Partners



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- Information Access Management (IAM) review is currently underway to determine who within the University has access to controls and data systems, and assess the system for granting and removal of access.
- Assessment to continue through summer months; currently in stage 2 of a 5 stage process, to culminate in road map and executive presentation.
- Covid-19 Update:
 - Vaccine requirement, beginning to prepare for the transition or practices and restrictions that have been in place for the past year as the Commonwealth begins to relax requirements.
 - A recent COVID testing draft report was released for higher education and these recommendations are being reviewed.
- Policies and procedures are continuing to be reviewed and developed including, the policy institute for racial equity scheduled for August.
 - An ongoing concern includes the effective transmission of policies and procedures for compliance.
 - Enterprise risk management; survey is underway; assessment of risk to be surveyed by leadership and management.
- Ms. Tammy Till's presentation on risk assessments that have been performed recently including: fixed asset inventory; P-card and NSLDS follow up slated for the fall.

Counsel McDonald concluded with an update on the DHE Trustee Training:

- Final live training session of cycle 2: Public Records
- Beginning in June, Cycle 3 sessions will be offered in an asynchronous format. Additional information will be forwarded to the Trustees as it becomes available.
- DHE training tracking chart included on FSU Trustee iPads.

6.0 Governance

Trustee Anthony Hubbard reported the following from the April 27th Governance Committee meeting:

- Trustee vacancies reported and reviewed.
- New requirement for accreditation standard.
 - The University will be required to have external assessment; how and when is to be determined.
- University Community Club (UCC):



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- Previously presented the Board with a model that would include the establishment of a supporting organization of the Foundation. The model has changed; Dr. Dale Hamel to discuss this further during the Finance Report.
- The UCC to be set up as a traditional University cost center.

Trustee Hubbard presented a motion to approve the delegation to the Governance Committee to evaluate and choose a search firm for the presidential search. An invitation was made to the Trustees to attending the special Governance meeting to review the prospective search firms.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the delegation of authority to its Governance Committee to review quotes and presentations by executive search firms and then select the firm best suited to conduct the Presidential Search for Framingham State University.

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Trustee Hubbard concluded in presenting a motion to appoint Robert Richards to the position of Trustee Emeritus for another year.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the nomination and appointment of Robert Richards for the position of Trustee Emeritus for a period of one year commencing on July 1, 2021.

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Chair Foley congratulated Trustee Richards; Trustee Richards thanked all, stating that he is looking forward to another year.



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7.0 Enrollment and Student Development

Trustee Brian Herr reported the following two topics were of primary focus during the Enrollment and Student Development Committee meeting: The retention presentation and the perception and brand awareness RFQ which will assess the brand awareness of FSU and its competitors.

He invited Dr. Lorretta Holloway to elaborate and continue the report.

Dr. Holloway reported on the following:

- Retention Enrollment Report presented by Dr. Vincent Ferraro:
 - Study on retention reviewing enrollment models by cohorts, as well as race, first generation students, and degree progression.
 - Metrics for thorough review by the Retention Committee.
- Antiracism initiatives:
 - Truth to Action Anti-Racism podcast
 - All division departments completed the Anti-Racism Guidework
- MOU with Becker College for MA in Counseling
- Perception and Brand Awareness report
 - The development of the RFQ: Jeremy Spencer, Averil Capers, and Dr. Holloway to review the state approved list.
 - Scope of work, image and perception study, to include competitor audit.
 - Vendor deadline is June 2nd. Goal is to have presentation at September BOT meeting. Hoping to have complete results for the November meeting.
- Covid-19 testing summary:
 - Spring semester numbers pending, still testing this week
 - Number of tests and positives: annual (AY) 0.4% positivity rate.

Dr. Holloway concluded her report in thanking all of those that volunteered their time to staff the testing center. She also thanked the nursing staff and Meg Nowak for setting up and organizing the testing site. Noting that is a perfect example of the FSU community coming together.

8.0 Administration, Finance, and Technology Committee

Chair Foley reported on the following from the May 3rd, Finance Committee meeting:



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- FSU budget, with a recommendation for a motion to approve the FY2022 budget.
- UCC survey results

Chair Foley invited Dr. Hamel to present the budget report.

Dr. Hamel began by noting the Budget booklet, is included for review as a PDF file accessible on your FSU iPads.

- Approval of the FY2022 trust fund and associated fees.

Summary of key parameters:

- State appropriation level funding of line item.
 - Senate budget mimics the House budget- level funded line item for the University plus formula funding at 2% level, with anticipation of collective bargaining to be settled.
 - Anticipate a match or excess supplemental funding (3%).
- Student fees: maintained level fees
 - Only fee to increase is the dining plan rate. With fewer students and fixed costs, there will be a \$120 increase; aggregate (tuition fees, room and board) would increase 0.5% over current levels.

Budget for personnel reductions:

- We have budgeted a reduction of 6 faculty members and 1 staff (full-time).
 - Enrollment continues to fall, while student-faculty ratio is still high. Currently at a 16.5 to 1 faculty to student ration; next AY, will be closer to 12.5 to 1 ratio.
 - Bottom line, reflected in the last two figures of the Key Parameters slide, reflects a balanced budget.

All Funds Budget:

- All funds budget, projects a continued deficit in FY22 due to reduced occupancy of residence halls and associated to dining fees. Federal relief funding will assist in covering some of the deficit.
- Projected \$1.7M deficit.



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- Most of the savings addressed deficit in FY21, even with restructuring savings in FY22, we are assuming a 75% occupancy in residence halls.
- An update from Glenn Cochran verifies that we are achieving a 73% occupancy with more doubles than singles occupied. From a revenue prospective, we are close to projections in the budget. Hope to continue marketing housing throughout the summer.
- Dining services deficit correlates with housing deficit; \$500K deficit.
- Smaller deficits; trust funds may have up to 5% of revenue but no more than 10% of reserve balances: accounts noted. Exception; Health Services with a 13% of reserve.
- \$125M budget with \$1.7M deficit with plans for the deficit to be covered by COVID relief funding.
- Operations, Capital, and Aid Budget:
 - Updated figures since May 3rd Finance Committee meeting: State announced small repair program for FY22 with allocation of \$450K.
 - \$3.2M total capital budget for FY22, which is significantly lower than normal.
 - Financial Aid; allocating \$41M in Financial Aid.
- In total, the All Funds Budget is approximately \$165M.

Pro Forma Budget:

- Provides context to All Funds Budget and demonstrates fiscal status over a projected period of time (General Operations).
 - Projected annual net income: demonstrates a balanced budget over a 5-year period. Achieved only through use of federal relief funding.
 - Federal relief received in:
 - FY20 (HEERF 1): \$1.9M to cover portion of reimbursement for the Spring semester (beginning of COVID crisis).
 - \$4.4M allocated by end of FY21 (HEERF 2).
 - FY22 (HEERF 3), a portion of which is allocated for FY23 and FY24.
 - Guidance for HEERF 3 indicates expenditure deadline of December 2024 to be obligated. HEERF funding in guidelines will have approximately 12 months from approval for HEERF 3 funds.
 - Strong likelihood that we will not be able to use funds in FY24, requiring the use of remnant funds to be applied in FY23, therein forcing us to close a structural deficit a year earlier.



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- FY25, Targeted Expenditure Reductions; approximately \$500K structural deficit in the next 3 years.
- We have a balanced budget for the 5-years of the Pro Forma Budget using HEERF funds.

Trustee Herr commented that there are a lot of municipalities in the Commonwealth that would be envious of deficit that FSU has to address in the next 5 years. He continued in saying, given everything you've had to contend with, we're on a good path at the moment.

Dr. Hamel agreed and noted that we will manage the \$500k deficit.

Chair Foley commented, given the challenges the University has faced, the balanced budget demonstrated the stewardship of the University and its leaders. He continued by noting the tuition freeze for students, it's been one of the biggest asks, that we are leveling the fees.

Dr. Hamel agreed that in closing the gap, according to the information included in the Pro Forma Budget, we are assuming level fees for next year.

Continuing with his presentation Dr. Hamel presented information on the Federal COVID Relief Bills' details:

- In total we're planning on spending \$11.9M in allocated funds; impact is \$41M.
- Additional details on three HEERF Funds; \$11.9M in institutional aid and \$9.4M in student aid, allocations through FY24 to support students.
- Last column demonstrates other government funding to seek: Governors Education Emergency Relief Fund \$255K for costs related to testing (actual costs are much higher). Will be seeking funds from other programs to address remaining deficit, but all to be determined.

Trustee Herr posed a question to Dr. Hamel, noting that in previous meetings there were discussions of using attrition of personnel to address the budget shortfalls. He continued by asking, if attrition was a factor that was included in this budget and if it has helped.

Dr. Hamel noted that a Separation Incentive Program was offered; anticipated figures from the staff ranks were met, but not in the faculty line. There was some reduction in the number of faculty positions, but not through the separation program. The budget presented, has reduced the number of faculty positions for the fiscal year. However, the result will require the reductions in out years to meet target numbers.



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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the attached Framingham State University Fiscal Year 2022 Trust Fund Budgets and associated fees schedules.

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- University Community Club (UCC) Update and Survey
 - The original intention to set up a supporting organization was reconsidered due to concerns regarding unrelated income tax, which may be applied to the University through Warren Center operations.
 - Shifting the programming to be offered through the management firm operating the Warren Conference Center (Flik) will work more effectively. FSU will create an advisory board to recommend programming that we would like to have offered. We will have avoided any potential tax implication through this approach but will be able to request amenities as originally hoped.
 - Aiming for a July 1, 2021 opening.

9.0 New Business

Chair Foley brought forth the motion to delegate powers of the Board to the President for the summer months when the Board does not meet.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the delegation of Board powers to President Cevallos for June – August 2021 inclusive.

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10.0 Public Comments: There was no public comment.

11.0 Adjourn Open Meeting

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.



Framingham State University

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Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin Foley
Chair
Framingham State University, Board of Trustees

Dr. F. Javier Cevallos
President
Framingham State University