



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ JANUARY 27, 2021, 7:15 P.M. ■ ALUMNI ROOM & REMOTE

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

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

1.0 Chair's Report

Chair Kevin Foley asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda that included the following:

- Minutes (November 18, 2020)
- 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 November 18, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting and the personnel actions report.

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Chair Foley provided an update on the status of open and anticipated Trustee positions:

- No changes to the current status of vacancies. Trustee Dana Neshe will complete her second term, which will end on March 2021.

Chair Foley moved the conversation to Board of Trustees Retreat which was held on January 14, 2021, thanking all of the Trustees for their participation in the remote event. He noted the good discussions and found the session to be educational.

Continuing with his report, Chair Foley informed the Board that earlier in the week, a response from Commissioner Carlos Santiago accepting the Review of President Cevallos was received. The response letter was complimentary of the President and noted his efforts and those of the campus community over the past year, in the most trying of situations. Chair Foley commended Trustee Budwig and the committee's efforts.

*Denotes physical attendance



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2.0 President's Report

President Cevallos reported on the following items:

- COVID-19 mitigations continue, beginning with onboarding testing earlier in the week.
- MASCAC decision for fall & winter sports: winter sports have been canceled, a decision regarding spring sports will be made in February.

Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement Report

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

- Ongoing professional development for faculty and staff, addressing antiracism pedagogy and white privilege. Higher education incentive grant for antiracist policy review has been submitted.
- Employee affinity groups to present results of surveys, responding to ways that promote a better community climate and supportive culture.
- Seal redesign work has continued. Collaboration continues with indigenous groups.
- Beacon Awards given to FSU student, staff and faculty.
- Center for Inclusive Excellence is in full swing. MLK Jr. Day event and space created to process the insurrection and to address the differential response with BLM protests.

Development and Alumni Relations Report

Eric Gustafson highlighted the following from his report:

- Fundraising efforts have raised \$1.473M year to date.
- Commonwealth Endowment funding; 50 cents on the dollar match.
- Notable large gifts include, new scholarships for students studying abroad, majoring in biology, Masters in the Counseling and Psychology program, students from Billerica, MA and an endowment for educational programs at the Danforth Art Museum.
- Small dollar donations have decreased, initiatives to obtain small gift donors will be made.
- Alumni Engagement: Continuing to hold virtual events with some modified in-person events. Planning for some form of reunion week and plans for the golf tournament.
- Danforth Art Museum: virtual tours being conducted; promoting new exhibitions and the museum as a safe place to view art. Currently unable to hold in-person classes, which contributes to the largest means of revenue, particularly over the summer and winter break. Tentatively planning summer youth programs for in-person classes.

Student-in-the-Spotlight

President Cevallos welcomed the Student-in-the-Spotlight Emily Pacheco.

Associate Professor and Coordinator of World Languages, Bruce Bucci began his introduction of Emily Pacheco by thanking the Trustees and alumni for support of the program, which has expanded and has



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helped the development of students into leaders who have become the face of our program. In closing, he asked that the attendees copy him with their hands; that means “love you”, we love FSU.

Ms. Pacheco thanked Professor Bucci for the introduction, and expressed feeling honored and humbled by the invitation to speak to the Board of Trustees about her experience at FSU. She continued by thanking Professor Luce Aubry, who encouraged her to apply to the program. As finances were a challenge FSU offered a program that was both local and affordable.

Although Ms. Pacheco is a commuting student, she wanted a thorough college experience and served as a Black and Gold Orientation Leader, Peer Mentor and Wet Feet Retreat leader. Ms. Pacheco studied abroad for a semester in Scotland to learn British sign language. Learning a new language further broadening her experiences and she hopes to return to the UK to pursue a graduate degree. Upon her return to FSU, Ms. Pacheco helped create an ASL Club. As the Club’s current President, she has been involved in providing various lectures addressing social inequities. In closing she stated that she was grateful for FSU and proud to look back at here experiences at the University.

President Cevallos thanked and congratulated Emily, stating that he looks forward to her future accomplishments.

3.0 Student Trustee Report

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

- December 11, 2020, Governor Baker signed a law changing the student trustee requirement. The new law would allow part-time students the opportunity to serve as a student trustee. This opens up engagement opportunities, especially for community college students, 70% of which are part-time.

Chair Foley asked how is this information communicated on campus to part-time students? Trustee Ward responded that at FSU, a press release was distributed campus wide, that she is hoping the SGA newsletter will include this information to help inform part-time students.

4.0 Academic Affairs Committee

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



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- Enrollment and retention working group: interesting analysis presented by Dr. Ellen Zimmerman regarding the number of students on leave of absence. This could indicate better overall enrollment than originally assessed.
 - Cross-divisional initiatives include means to closely collaborate with transfer students and RAMS program for first-year students. The intention of this program is to create interactions with transfer students at a higher level for better retention.
 - Academic policies are being reviewed for unintended effects that may inhibit student success.
- Becoming a Hispanic serving institution and antiracist university.
 - Focusing on professional development for cross-divisional work.
 - January Day for antiracism efforts.
 - Addressing ways in which we are making sure that FSU is a value to the community.
- Faculty sabbaticals, contractual evaluation.
- Proposal for BFA in Studio Arts and Graphic Design. FSU is regionally situated, and reshaping these majors will benefit the students.

Trustee Bielat added that the BFA program is a professional degree which will prepare students for the job market or for a MFA degree. The program is worth supporting.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the authorization to submit to the Department of Higher Education for the awarding of the Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree.

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5.0 Enrollment and Student Development Committee

Trustee Brian Herr remarked on the following issues discussed by the Enrollment and Student Development Committee:

- The committee received a report from EAB: enrollment and financial aid.
- Dr. Lorretta Holloway provided her report on enrollment and other activities from her departments.



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- Conversation surrounding the brand and the marketing of the University addressed some initiatives that may help move us forward.

Trustee Herr invited Dr. Lorretta Holloway to provide further highlights.

Dr. Holloway presented on the following:

- Review and discussion of the report from EAB, including the work they've been doing with FSU's enrollment team.
- Applications from students of color have dropped, particularly from Black students, while on the whole, admissions of students of color has increased.
- FASFA filing, marketing materials and offering financial aid to more students. Using modeling to monitor behavior of prospective students and expanding application deadlines.
 - Carla Minchello, director of Financial Aid, reported on the previous academic year. Noting the cost of attendance and housing has decreased.
- Summary of the COVID-19 testing center for the fall semester: 450 to 800 tests administered per week; a semester total of 12,000 tests; a total of 55 students tested positive during the fall term for a 0.4% positivity rate.
- Overall enrollment numbers reviewed show a rise in graduate enrollment and decline in undergraduate enrollment.
- The admissions report for fall 2020:
 - Applications compared to last year to date. Deposits are up because of deferrals from fall 2020.
 - Concerns regarding branding and marketing efforts were discussed. It was requested that at the next Enrollment and Student Development Committee meeting the University departments(s) share marketing efforts in admissions.
 - Focus on brand; recruiting new students and their families.

Trustee Herr asked Trustee Mike Grilli to share his thoughts regarding marketing and the University brand, which he had brought up during the committee meeting.

Trustee Grilli emphasized the need to create some buzz around the University. He conveyed that the branding and marketing needed to be addressed and changed as they are not resulting in an increase in enrollment. Because enrollment is declining, we cannot continue along the same trend. We have to do something different in order to better market ourselves.



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Trustee Logan asked how the tuition freeze had been received by applicants. Dr. Holloway responded that she believed the news was well received, confirming that the notification of the tuition freeze was included in award letters and that the press release has been distributed.

Jeremy Spencer, Dean of Enrollment Management, noted having received positive feedback from prospective students. He also commended the alumni engagement conducted by Eric Gustafson and his team, stating that the marketing team came up with a “refer a RAM program” in which postcards were mailed to solicit alumni to refer prospective students – 29 referrals have already been received.

Trustee Herr asked if the University has used or considered the use of a public relations firm. Dr. Holloway responded with examples of the marketing efforts used, finding that public relations may be more focused on the overall reputation of a university.

Trustee Herr explained that a PR firm may also be utilized to create a stronger brand, and would like to have this topic discussed in next committee meeting. The University motto may be a good place to begin.

Trustee Anthony Hubbard asked if the EAB reporting on African American applicants and acceptances was pre-COVID, asking why the drop in enrollment was occurring.

Dr. Holloway acknowledged that declines were seen across the board, but for FSU they are down about 20%. Much of which, she suspects, has to do with the demographics of the populations. She noted that students are not getting the same kind of personal support while learning in a remote environment.

6.0 Compliance, Audit and Risk Committee (CAR)

Trustee Neshe reported on the following from the January 19th CAR meeting:

- Policy and procedures were reviewed.
 - Work is underway to create a standard and template for policies/procedures.
 - Training will be conducted for consistency within department.
- Commonwealth Commitment audit.
 - State level audit, 13-month final report issued in December 2020 with no findings.
- Roy Galang provided a Blackbaud update, confirming that there was no exposure. Social Security numbers were removed as a precaution.
- SolarWinds: Mr. Galang was asked if we had exposures. We did not.



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- October was cyber awareness month; training provided to the University on PCI, phishing techniques. Reported good response to phishing exercises.
- Projects: new automated security event manager to track all threat alerts in a more holistic fashion.

7.0 Administration, Finance and Information Technology Committee

Trustee Mike Grilli reported the following:

- Portfolio manager reported that our investment portfolios are doing well.
 - Goal has been to hit the average; proposal of fee freeze; fall 2021 and spring 2022.
 - During discussions the Finance Committee discussed the freeze to be extended to another year with an initial favorable reaction.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the directive of the FSU Budget Committee to develop a FY2022 budget with day undergraduate fees and room charge rates to be level with the FY2021 budget.

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- Resolution to assist with the offer of a voluntary retirement incentive for certain employees.

Trustee Bielat commented that although she agrees with the resolution, the negative is the potential loss of years of experience. Trustee Bielat sought assurance that the University will be bringing on excellent young professors and not overloading senior faculty members.

President Cevallos responded that there is a limit to the number of adjunct faculty the University may have. We are asking the union to waive that requirement for one year.

Trustee Bielat continued in asking if this was a mandatory initiative, to which the President confirmed that it was not, that it is completely voluntary.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve Framingham State University's participation in the proposed Retirement Incentive Program.

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- A proposal for the Warren Conference Center was brought forward for a University Club at the Warren Conference Center to be established.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve a resolution to consider the Framingham State University Foundation's creation of a Supporting Organization as the governance structure for a proposed "University Community Club".

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Chief of Staff, General Counsel and Secretary to the Board of Trustees, Ann McDonald, Esq. updated the Trustees on the following:

- Training for Trustees: content for DHE is included in a new folder on the Trustee's iPads. Included are directions for logging in, tracking training participation and the newest schedule for cycle 2 and 2A training.
- Training to be completed by November 2021 for current Trustees. New members have 12 months after date of appointment to complete the training. Third round of training is to wrap up before May.
- A Request from the Retreat, previous BOT materials are now available on your FSU iPads.

8.0 New Business: There was no new business.

9.0 Public Comments: There was no public comment.

10.0 Adjourn Open Meeting

The open meeting adjourned at 8:40 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