



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ MARCH 24, 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 7:16 p.m.

1.0 Chair's Report

Chair Kevin Foley asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda noting corrections will be made to the January 27, 2021 minutes:

- Minutes (January 27, 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 January 27, 2021 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:

- Open trustee position has now been vacant for two years and five months. The Massachusetts Boards and Commissions committee will meet next week.
- We believe that Trustees Brian Herr and Anthony Hubbard to be reappointed, pending background checks.
- One additional vacancy will be created with Trustee Dana Neshe's term coming to an end; submissions to the Board of Higher Education have been made for her replacement.

2.0 President's Report

President Cevallos reported on the following items:

- Retention and enrollment retreat; a campus wide retention committee will be formed.

*Denotes physical attendance



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ MARCH 24, 2021, 7:15 P.M. ■ ALUMNI ROOM & REMOTE

- Message sent to FSU community regarding the content of the vandalism (stickers) on campus. The University Police, along with Framingham City Police, are conducting an investigation. Dr. Constanza Cabello to report further in her presentation.
- President Cevallos encouraged the university community to get vaccinated once they become eligible, noting this will help with the opening of the campus in the fall.
- Fall 2021: we are anticipating a significant number of courses to meet in-person. We are looking forward to moving on to the “next normal”.
- Retirement Incentive Program: individuals who are eligible were encouraged to apply by the April 1st deadline; the final number of individuals that take the incentive will be presented at our next scheduled board meeting.
- Newman Civic Fellow Recognition by Campus Compact: Campus Compact is a national organization that promotes civic learning and engagement. This organization selects a small group of students to become Newman Fellows.
 - FSU nominated Trustee Ward to be a Newman Fellow, and she became one of 34 people nationwide to be selected. Congratulations Trustee McKenzie Ward.

Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion and Community Engagement Report

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

- Stickers were found on campus posted by the white supremacist group, the Patriot Front. The President sent communication articulating that white supremacy has no place on the FSU campus. An investigation is ongoing.
- Higher Education Innovation Grant from the Department of Higher Education provided \$62,000 to run racial equity policy institute.
- New Black Faculty and Staff Association created, will work with this group to best serve its members.
- Women Making History event; honorees included Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito and District Attorney Rachael Rollins.
- “New Undergraduate Experience Project” (temporary name) will be identifying the next generation of students; student bill of rights to document promises to make to MA state students.
- Patricia Burch will be leaving FSU for a position at Wellesley College; hiring her replacement in the coming months.
- Pathways: 13 students participating and have been placed in internships throughout MetroWest, and doing wonderful work.

Development and Alumni Relations Report

Eric Gustafson highlighted the following from his report:

- Fundraising efforts have raised \$1.7M year to date.
- Notable gifts include, donations to the RAMs Resource Center, and for the Fashion Design and Retailing endowment.
- Successful events held virtually for donor appreciation in February.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ MARCH 24, 2021, 7:15 P.M. ■ ALUMNI ROOM & REMOTE

- “Ask Me Anything” event with Mark Hardie of the Entrepreneur Innovation Center. Alumni shared experiences and asked questions about starting and growing a business.
- Annual networking event in Boston to be held online. Will be using a different platform specific for networking needs. The virtual event will allow engagement and participation from alumni nation-wide.
- Exciting new exhibitions opened this past weekend at the Danforth Art Museum. “Suspended Landscapes” features the paintings of Lori Schouela; and “Wonderscape” features the work of five artists working in a variety of media.
- Gifts of artwork of American, and specifically from New England artists, are coming in. The Museum is being seen as a destination for collectors who want to donate art.
- Art School is currently holding most courses online. We are optimistic that in-person classes may be held in the summer. The summer program is the single largest revenue generator for the School. All efforts will be made to resume in-person programming safely.

Student-in-the-Spotlight

President Cevallos welcomed the Student-in-the-Spotlight Morgan Failla.

Dr. Sarah Pilkenton introduced Morgan Failla, as an excellent student with great potential as a researcher. Ms. Failla is the first student enrolled in the 4 plus 1, Master of Science in Food and Nutrition program, a program which allows students to complete an undergraduate and master’s degree in five years. Ms. Failla embodies the best of both an undergraduate and graduate student. She is conducting her thesis work with Professor Emmanouil Apostolidis and is anticipated to graduate in May of 2022.

Ms. Failla began by expressing her gratitude for the opportunities FSU has provided her. She found that her experience in the many years spent in the chemistry lab, working closely with faculty while serving as a supplemental instructor, played a critical role in her education at FSU. As an instructor, she learned the importance of how information is presented, and found these experience rewarding, especially in her ability to help other students improve their grades.

Through her internship at Bay State Milling, Ms. Failla participated in research and development projects, which provided real world work experiences. Ms. Failla is also a member of Food Science Club and has been a member of the IFT (Institute of Food Technologists) since her sophomore year.

As someone who strives for good grades, she explained that her work in the lab has taught her how to fail, and to learn from her mistakes. In the future, she would like to explore options of becoming a researcher in the food industry or a product developer. Ms. Failla expressed that she is extremely grateful of the faculty who have guided her. At the University, she has made lasting relationships that will go far beyond her years as a student.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ MARCH 24, 2021, 7:15 P.M. ■ ALUMNI ROOM & REMOTE

3.0 Student Trustee Report

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

- Spring Administrators Forum
 - Concerns surrounded how student involvement and how classes will be structured in the upcoming academic year were addressed.
 - Inquiries regarding antiracist work happening on campus, as well as what is happening departmentally in academic department.
 - COVID procedures and vaccination information; the Health Center to provide more information on eligibility in April.
- SGA elections: logistics to be determined.
- Student involvement in Student Admissions Meetings: this has been a good experience. Trustee Ward thanked Dr. Lorretta Holloway and Jeremy Spencer for the opportunity to tell prospective students about her experiences at FSU.

4.0 Academic Affairs Committee

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

- Fall academic planning: 84% of classes will be held with in-person component; 96% of faculty will teach at least partially on campus.
- New Undergraduate Experience: exciting Board of Higher Education initiative with Dr. Cabello, co-chair and Dr. LaDonna Bridges, subcommittee member, to participate in creating a blue print for the next generation of students.
 - Shift in approach, not to focus on student preparation for college, but rather how institutions can be ready for the student.
- Antiracism work: focus is on faculty hiring and initiatives that promote the diversity of faculty to reflect the diversity of the FSU student body.
 - There is work to be done but initiatives are being made; deans attending conferences, recruiting faculty, diversity anchors to look for best candidates.
 - Dr. Lina Rincón, assistant director CELTSS, mentoring programs to help with antiracist pedagogy.
 - HMMI grant, continuation of work through mentoring group with faculty of color, focusing on the retention of faculty of color. Mentoring program to show a greater sense of community and empowerment.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ MARCH 24, 2021, 7:15 P.M. ■ ALUMNI ROOM & REMOTE

5.0 Enrollment and Student Development Committee

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

- Committee presentations were focused on marketing efforts and the outreach to prospective students.
- Conversations addressed what we can do to assist in reversing the current downward enrollment trend. The group is considering a thorough review, with the possibility of bring in external consultants to see what we may do differently to help enrollment. The meeting included excellent presentations, all are working very hard, but enrollment numbers are still down.

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

Dr. Holloway informed the Trustees that in preparation for the full Board meeting, she and Trustee Herr were able to address some of the concerns that other Trustees had voiced during the January 27th Board meeting. They also agreed that using an outside firm to look further into marketing effectiveness and the public perception of FSU would be helpful and would coincide with the department's strategic plan for a brand refresh.

Dr. Holloway continued in presenting the following highlights from the Committee's meeting:

- Dan Magazu, reported on FSU's competitors as well as news and information generated by FSU to the general public; Jeremy Spencer reported on admissions, and Averil Capers on marketing efforts.
 - Contract with Meltwater provided metrics on FSU generated news and social media posts. Mr. Magazu shared a report demonstrating where FSU is being "seen" as well as a review of the top number of schools that prospective students chose to attend instead of FSU.
 - Top three competitors: UMass Boston, UMass Lowell, and Bridgewater State University.
 - Mr. Magazu ascertained that FSU is losing students to larger institutions.
 - Ms. Capers' presentation reviewed new initiatives for marketing:
 - New landing pages, virtual tours, as well as TikTok advertising.
 - Tracking budget allocations: over time allocations have grown and changed based on the review of the marketing by firms contracted by the University.
 - Growth in digital advertising due to the ability to customize and target audiences.
 - Jeremy Spencer's focus on admissions efforts included:
 - Personalized videos for accepted students; digital view books and financial aid flip books (translated in several languages including Brazilian/Portuguese and Spanish).
 - Family targeted email outreach.
 - Postcard series: connections to share career opportunities; showcased postcards from individual departments. All brochures offer snapshots of students from specific departments obtaining jobs/internships after graduation.

Chair Foley commended Dr. Holloway and her team, and thanked her for the presentation.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ MARCH 24, 2021, 7:15 P.M. ■ ALUMNI ROOM & REMOTE

In conclusion, Trustee Herr added, one of the outstanding questions to be addressed is the amount (\$382K) allocated for our marketing efforts. Regardless of our efforts and good work, enrollment is still low, and will require a more detailed review of the budget to determine the funds needed to be allocated for the future.

6.0 Administration, Finance and Information Technology Committee

Trustee Mike Grilli reported the following:

- The economic challenges of the past year were reflected in our portfolio, however, portfolios have rebounded, as have our investments; managers are reporting a return back to where we hoped to be before the pandemic.

Trustee Grilli invited Dr. Dale Hamel to provide a report.

Dr. Hamel reviewed the previous fiscal year budgets, current financial status of the institution, and projected sources of funding to build into our future plans.

- Two factors to consider: the short term challenges brought on by the pandemic, and longer term trend in enrollment.
- In response to the short term factors:
 - FY' 20 reacting to the challenges presented by the pandemic; FSU received federal relief funding of \$1.9M. Ended with a \$3.2M deficit.
 - In FY'21, projected \$4.4M deficit.
 - Bond restructuring in a high interest rate environment, allowed \$6.5M in saving.
 - \$3M in savings from cuts to expenditures; the State provide level funding to our budget.
 - \$4.4M aligns with federal funding for student and institutional aid.
 - The DOE has updated guidance to permit reimbursement of costs to the date of issuance (March 2020), to include COVID related expenditures and also loss. With a review of gross revenues compared to current revenues, we will be able to claim the \$4.4M for a balanced FY'21 budget.
 - Formula funding reserves have not yet been received, but he hopes to receive that shortly to be included in FY'22 budget deliberation.
 - FY'22, \$2M deficit, after number of reductions have been implemented.
 - Anticipates being able to submit for a third round of COVID relief funding.
 - Level funded budget for FY'22, \$3.2M loss to be claimed for FY'20 proforma analysis.
- Addressing longer term trends in enrollment:
 - Taking funds to cover structural deficit of the FY'23 budget offers time to ease out of a structural deficit situation.
 - Adjusting to being a different sized institution than we have been in the past; trying to realign revenues with our expenditures.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ MARCH 24, 2021, 7:15 P.M. ■ ALUMNI ROOM & REMOTE

- Lowest number of participants in retirement incentive amongst the state universities.
- Currently have a plan in place to address the deficits identified through FY'23.

Trustee Grilli concluded by stating that it should be noted that we were the leaders in the freeze tuition, other state universities followed this initiative.

8.0 Governance

Trustee Anthony Hubbard reported on the following:

- Governance held a meeting on Feb 16th, and covered several topics. The first is the proposed Board of Trustees meeting schedule for the 2021 – 2022 academic year.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the following meeting dates:

- *September 22, 2021*
- *November 17, 2021*
- *January 26, 2022*
- *March 23, 2022*
- *May 11, 2022*

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- The Committee recommends the Slate of Officers for the 2021 2022 academic year.

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On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the recommendation of the Governance committee to approve the following slate of officers for the AY' 2021-2022:

*Chairperson: Kevin Foley
Vice Chairperson: Richard C. Logan*

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- Proposed amendments to the by laws of the University.

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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*On a motion duly made and seconded, it was voted to approve the recommendation of the Governance committee to approve the following changes to its by laws with an effective date of July 1, 2021 as follows:
(see Attachment A)*

ARTICLE I, section 3: Chairperson of the Board of Trustees

ARTICLE III, section 3: Executive Committee

ARTICLE IV, section 1: The Seal of the University

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9.0 Chief of Staff and General Counsel's Report

General Counsel Ann McDonald reported on the following:

- Board of Trustee training: Cycle 3 sessions have been published, the schedule for summer trainings are yet to be determined.
- Legal updates: federal level executive orders impacting the University:
 - 1) Executive order on the *Guaranteeing an Educational Environment Free from Discrimination on the Basis of Sex, Including Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity*: This Order will require a review of the administrative law that outlines the requirements of what is commonly referred to as our Title IX requirements. Changes were made by the last administration through the official rule making processes, resulting in a change of our policy in August 2020 to remain compliant. This executive order does not reverse these changes, but may result in future changes.
 - 2) Executive Order on *Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*: September 22, 2020 this new executive order revokes the prior executive order. New recommendations to come.



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ MARCH 24, 2021, 7:15 P.M. ■ ALUMNI ROOM & REMOTE

10.0 New Business

Presidential Review

- Chair Foley spoke to publicly thank Trustee Budwig for doing such a great job as chair of the Presidential Review Committee, thanking her for all of her efforts.
- Seeking for a volunteer to take on the responsibility for next year.

Trustee Logan also took the opportunity to thank Trustee Dana Neshe for all of the work she has done for the University during her ten years as a Trustee, adding that she will be missed.

11.0 Public Comments: There was no public comment.

Chair Foley informed the attendees that the Board will be going into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing personnel matters.

Motion to adjourn the public meeting to go into Executive Session was approved at 8:38 p.m.

12.0 Adjourn Open Meeting

The Executive Session returned to the open meeting, which adjourned at 8:48 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