



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ NOVEMBER 16, 2022 6:30 P.M. ■ 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.

Roll Call

Nancy Budwig – present; Beth Casavant – present; Lino Covarrubias – present;
Diane Finch – present; Kevin Foley – present; Mariel Freve – present;
Claire Ramsbottom – present; Robert Richards* – present; McKenzie Ward – present;
Anthony Hubbard – absent at the time of roll call.

1.0 Chair's Report

- 1.1 Consent agenda
- BOT Meeting Minutes: September 21, 2022
 - Personnel Actions

Diane Finch moved the motion, Claire Ramsbottom seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Mariel Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; Robert Richards* – yes; McKenzie Ward – yes; Anthony Hubbard – was not present for the vote.

- Motion approved

Chair Foley introduced Dr. Carlos Santiago, former Commissioner of the DHE, who is serving as a special advisor to the new Commissioner, Dr. Noe Ortega.

1.2 Commissioner's Report

Dr. Santiago began by congratulating Dr. Nancy Niemi, in her new role as President of Framingham State University.

Dr. Santiago continued in presenting the following information:

- Previous work conducted by the DHE focused on several key issues, three of which were carried forward by Dr. Santiago. These included: college participation/enrollment; college success; closing of disparities which disproportionately effected students of color.
- Engagement with the campus' state-wide were held: surveys, focus groups and interviews were conducted for feedback to inform the Plan– page 19

*Indicates remote attendance.

- Late in 2018, the BHE moved forward the equity agenda; the vision and mission statements were reviewed – page 20
- Overarching goal of eliminating racial disparities in the Massachusetts public higher education system was reviewed – page 21
- Key initiatives were reviewed – page 22 and 23

In closing Dr. Santiago stressed that institutions must change to provide avenues of success for their students, and equity must be at the heart of the work of the DHE to best serve the institutions of the Commonwealth. He also noted the significant role of local campus boards and their ability to support the racial equity initiative.

The DHE has three seminal documents associated with the work:

- New Undergraduate Experience
- Strategic Plan for Support Services
- The Strategic Plan for Racial Equity

The meeting was opened to questions and comments: Topics included the following:

- Ways in which the Trustees can support the initiatives on the FSU campus.
- Practices that the Board may take on to support and engage in the racial equity initiatives; board engagement and understanding is critical.
- How the Trustees may be better informed to be able to purposefully engage in the work as it relates to the strategic plan, resources, and staff development.
- Assessment tools for racial equity and development of the strategic plan.

1.3 BOT Response: Antiracism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts

Chair Foley noted development of a plan is underway that encompasses ongoing efforts of the Board.

- He has spoken with consultants and will be discussing opportunities for training.

1.4 Nomination for Trustee for Hope Bielat Replacement and Other Vacancy

Chair Foley noted the following:

- A nominee has been put forward to the Boards and Commissions to fill the place formerly held by Hope Bielat.
- It is our hope and expectation that the additional trustee vacancy may be filled by a member of the BIPOC community.
- Future Trustee meetings will include updates of Antiracism and DEI work.

Chair Foley continued by recognizing that November is Native American Heritage Month, and asked Trustee Lino Covarrubias to speak on the subject.

- Trustee Covarrubias began by defining what a land acknowledgment is. He continued in providing further context into why we recognize the land acknowledgement and concluded in reading the [Framingham State University Land acknowledgement](#).*

1.5 Additional Committee Member(s) for Academic Affairs

Chair Foley requested another trustee join the Academic Affairs committee.

* Included as a supplementary document.

2.0 President's Report

President Nancy Niemi, with Chair's permission, adjusted the sequence of her report and asked Claudine Guild, Program Co-Coordinator and Advisor for Master of Healthcare Administration (MHA) Graduate Program, to introduce the Student-in-the-Spotlight, Joanne Brown.

2.1 Student-in-the- Spotlight – Joanne Brown

Claudine Guild introduced Joanne Brown, who began her studies in the MHA program in the fall of 2019 and will be completing her graduate degree in spring 2023.

Joanne's experience at FSU began when she enrolled in the Strategic Planning course taught by Professor Stephen Lemire. In spring of 2020, at the height of the pandemic, Joanne had the unique experience of working at Lawrence General Hospital while enrolled at FSU. The real-world experiences of her job coupled with her education at FSU provided an opportunity to make an immediate connection between what she was learning in the classroom with experiences in the workplace. Joanne concluded that the education she is receiving, the experience and the diverse perspective brought to the program by her classmates, are key in the development of strategies to improve patient care and equity in the healthcare system.

2.2 Updates

90-Day Report

The 90-Day Report has been distributed to the Trustees and Executive Staff for review.

- The President and the Executive Staff have been working on the Board's 6 goals: presence in the community, filling open positions, the NECHE reaccreditation, development of the new strategic plan, work with state initiatives, and to create a deeper campus structure and culture for DEI work.
- Progress will be reviewed after the next six months.

NECHE Accreditation Update

President Niemi invited Mark Nicholas, Assistant Vice President Institutional Strategic Planning, Assessment and Accreditation, to present the Board with an update on the NECHE accreditation.

Mark Nicholas presented the following to inform and to assist in the active engagement of the Board in the accreditation process:

- Overview of who NECHE is – page 28
- NECHE Standards for Accreditation and Schedule of NECHE events – page 29
 - Comprehensive report, 100 page narrative; 9 chapters mirroring NECHE standards and sub-headings; culminating in a site visit in April, 2024.
- Review of the FSU NECHE 2024 Team – page 33
 - Steering Committee
 - NECHE 2024 Standards Writing Committee
- Five Phases for Writing – page 35

- Currently in the data collection phase; scheduled to conduct appraisal and projections in the spring.
- Will move forward in December with the description and appraisal with the intention having a document to edit in the summer; fall 2023 to begin reviewed by committees and campus community for input.
- How students are being involvement – page 38
- Role for the Board of Trustees – page 39

A conversation developed from Trustee Anthony Hubbard asking what questions may be presented to the Board regarding graduation rates and retention, during the NECHE site visit. Mark Nicholas noted the following:

- Benchmarks made and trends observed will be included through a contextualized conversation made by each school.
- Learning and performance will be demonstrated through evidence; each undergraduate and graduate program has an assessment plan, as well as through an external assessment.

President Niemi continued with her report:

Strategic Plan Timeline

- President Niemi updated the board that the strategic planning will be postponed until the completion of the NECHE reaccreditation. Work on the new Strategic Plan will resume in the fall 2023.

Future Planning Considerations

Four factors that affect the fiscal health of the University to be considered:

- Make a case to receive Fair Share Amendment funding; continue to promote alternative uses for unused residence halls; continuing to seek qualified candidates for open positions; continue to develop enrollment.

Final/Comparative Enrollment Numbers for Fall 2022

- Final comparative enrollment numbers for the past five years were reviewed – page 43

Homecoming Weekend Recap

- Homecoming Weekend was held on October 28 and 29. The event was a success.

2.3 Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement (DICE) Report

Highlights from the report from Dr. Wardell Powell included the following:

- Students were interviewed to determine the factors that influenced students of color to enroll in the University.
 - Questions asked of the students and responses were reviewed – page 44
 - The full report will be available at the January Board of Trustees meeting.
- CIE collaboration and events including Historians of Color Lecture Series, two Hispanic Heritage Month events; CIE Racial Equity Mini-grant from the Sudbury Foundation – page 45

- In honor of Native American Heritage Month an event with guest speaker Kristin Wyman of the Natick-Nipmuc tribe will be hosted.

2.4 Development and Alumni Relations Report

Eric Gustafson presented the following highlights from the Development and Alumni Relations Report:

- Year-to-date, \$726,517 has been raised – page 47
 - Notable gifts were highlighted.
 - Focus has been on endowment funds to fully leverage the Endowment Initiative Program funds available through the Commonwealth.
- Alumni Engagement – page 47
 - Events include: Swiacki Children’s Literature Festival; Homecoming and Family Weekend, highlighted the 50th anniversary of the FSU football program with 175 alumni in attendance.
 - Upcoming events were highlighted.
 - Alumni Association Board of Directors had their first meeting of the year.
 - Alumni will be assisting with recruitment and enrollment efforts.
- Grants and Sponsored Programs have secured \$2,174,560 in funding with an additional \$1,541,019 applications pending – page 47
- Danforth Art Museum: three excellent new exhibits opening this fall- page 47
- Danforth Art School: very successful fall enrollment reported – page 48
 - Scholarship funding now allows for adults, as well as youth and children to enroll in courses.
 - Newly hired Learning and Engagement Coordinator.

3.0 Student Trustee Report

Trustee McKenzie Ward reported on the following:

3.1 Administrator’s Forum – Response & Communications

- Successful and well attended seminar style forum was conducted.
- Focus on parking and accessibility to classroom space outside of classes.

3.2 Safety Walk

- Productive safety walk; thanked the new Director of Facilities, Daniel (Danny) Giard for his assistance and responsiveness to students and their concerns.

3.3 Accessibility Update

- Will be working on creating an “accessibility map”.

3.4 Proposed Student Forum with BOT – Coffee & Conversations – Spring 2023 (February)

4.0 Academic Affairs Committee

Trustee Nancy Budwig reported the following from the Academic Affairs Committee meeting.

4.1 Academic Affairs Committee Report

- Faculty tenure evaluation processes – pages 17 – 31, *November 8, 2022 Academic Affairs* meeting book.
 - Metrics for tenure and promotion were reviewed. These included:
 - Teaching/advising and scholarship
 - Evaluations of the service for departmental and institutional, but also for the community, regional, and beyond.
 - DEI contributions: percent of BIPOC faculty with tenure and on the tenure track.
 - Future meeting to discuss disaggregated data.
 - Timeline of the evaluation processes
 - Role of department chairs, Peer Evaluation Committee (PEC), deans and faculty elected committees on tenure, and the Provost, all leading to the President making a recommendation to the Board.
- Sabbatical – page 32, *November 8, 2022 Academic Affairs* meeting book
 - The significance in supporting the scholarship of faculty was emphasized as well as the importance for faculty to be professionally engaged in their fields.
 - There is a clear benefit to students and to the reputation of the University.
 - A presentation was made by Professor Nelson Peterman about a recent sabbatical that she undertook.
 - Full review of upcoming faculty sabbaticals detailing timeline and research being conducted by the faculty – page 32, *November 8, 2022 Academic Affairs November 8, 2022* meeting book
- New faculty hiring process
 - This subject will be included for discussion at a future subcommittee meeting.

In closing, Trustee Budwig applauded the work being done by the academic affairs team and advocated the trustees support of the committee, by encouraging them to joining the committee membership.

- Student Trustee McKenzie Ward commented that she appreciated the focus made on the FSU faculty and would be more than happy to serve on the Academic Affairs committee.

5.0 Enrollment and Student Development Committee

Trustee Claire Ramsbottom updated the Board with the following from the Enrollment and Student Development Committee meeting. In the interest of time, she included an update on Academic Enhancement.

- Student Affairs, at the Homecoming event, set up tables to promote voter registration, for National Voter Registration Day.
 - 117 individuals registered to vote.
- Career Development
 - Recently hired a new associate director; currently interviewing for other openings in the office.

- Working to improve coordination and outreach for internships.
 - The administration of a national post-graduation survey is underway.
- Health and counseling services – pages 7 – 8, *November 9, 2022 Enrollment and Student Development*, meeting book.
 - 676 visits were recorded between August and October 2022; the Center has noted an increase in male and Hispanic students using services.
 - The Director of the Health and Counseling Center is retiring at the end of the semester.
 - Fewer numbers of COVID reported on campus.
 - 71 cases of COVID were reported among students this fall.
 - 2 vaccine clinics were held:
 - 119 COVID vaccines and 161 flu vaccines were administered at the clinics.
- Residence Life – page 9, *November 9, 2022 Enrollment and Student Development* meeting book
 - 70% occupancy level in residence halls; 34 MassBay students residing on campus as part of a partnership with the community college.
 - Christine Denaro, newly hired Coordinator of Veterans Services.
 - 100 students attended the Celtics game and the FSU Dance Team performed at the game.
- Academic Enhancement – pages 3 – 6, *November 9, 2022 Enrollment and Student Development* meeting book
 - Dr. Holloway is working with administrators and is actively engaging with students to determine roadblocks to student success.
 - Log set by All University Committee (AUC) for submissions to Academic Policy Committee (APC) to review deadline submissions to the catalog, in support of the the student process of enrolling in classes.
 - This is critical for transfer student registration.
 - Increasing support for students: academic warnings and better onboarding for transfer students.

5.1 Enrollment Management

Jessica Mireles of JMPartner Solutions presented the following report:

- Review of the fall 2023 Admissions Funnel Report as of November 16 – page 58
- New student recruitment strategy map – page 59
 - Developing “demand generation” and “nurture inquiries/leads” is an 18-month to 2-year process.
- FSU freshmen enrollment funnel – page 60
 - Inquires, application rates, deposit rates and enrolled yield-admit to enrolled rates are areas that require attention.
- Broad categories of recommendations from October visit – page 61
 - Staffing levels need to be addressed.
 - Develop a pro-active yield and melt strategy
 - Enhance the financial aid awarding process
 - Develop a parent engagement strategy
 - Develop a pro-active transfer recruitment strategy and faculty engagement plan

- Build the necessary data structures to support the enrollment planning process and monitoring of progress

Trustee Diane Finch asked how the alumni can engage with the recruitment efforts, which led to a broader conversation regarding strategies currently in place, as well as collaborations and overall recruitment strategies that are being explored. Other topics included:

- How DEI efforts may be incorporated in the recruitment strategy.
- Who are the target groups of students that require more attention.
- Ways in which affordability plays into our strategy.

In closing Trustee Ramsbottom noted that the Academic Affairs and Enrollment and Student Development Committees will schedule a joint meeting in January to hear a report from RNL relating to both committees.

6.0 Compliance, Audit, and Risk (CAR) Committee

Trustee Anthony Hubbard reported the following from the Compliance, Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

6.1 FY '22 Audit Report

- Joint CAR and Finance Committee met October 11, to review the FY'2022 Audit Report.
 - The reports were approved.

7.0 Governance Committee

Trustee Beth Casavant reported the following from the Governance Committee meeting.

7.1 By Laws Review

- Formatting will be addressed to be consistent throughout the document.
- Review of each committee and what information would be most beneficial to bring forth to the full Board of Trustee; this information should be clearly reflected in the by-laws.

8.0 Administration, Finance, and Information Technology Committee

Trustee Hubbard reported that the Finance Committee met on November 9 where Dr. Dale Hamel reviewed the Management Discussion and Analysis, which accompanied the Financial Statements of FY'22.

8.1 FY 2022 Financial Statements Update

- Competing demands for finances will require challenging decisions to be made in the future.
- Dr. Hamel added at the time of the meeting the Fair-share Amendment had not passed. With its passing, we will begin moving forward with a base-

scenario without the funding, as well as making some assumptions of what it might look like with funding from the amendment.

8.2 Trustee Hubbard presented a motion for the approval of tuition and fee waivers for the AmeriCorp Program.

Dr. Hamel provided context for the motion.

- Funding for the waiver was received after the approval of the FY22 tuition and fees schedule. The \$725 (per courses) waiver would allow 20 students to participate in two courses this spring. Moving forward, the waiver will be included in the annual budget for the University.

The motion was moved by Diane Finch; seconded by McKenzie Ward

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

In closing Trustee Hubbard stated that board meetings are noticed and hopes that attending faculty, staff, and students feel welcome to engage with, and hear from all stakeholders.

Finally, Trustee Hubbard stated, as a native Seattleite, he wanted to point out that there is a graduate of FSU, currently playing for the Seattle Seahawks football team, and to have the University mentioned on two different occasions on national television, was great publicity for the University.

9.0 New Business

Trustee Diane Finch asked that the DEI conversation continue with the trustees in commitment to the work. Chair Foley assured that it would, and that plans are being made for future training and conversation.

10.0 Public Comment

Public comment was made by FSU student, Samuel Hoile.

11.0 Adjourn Open Meeting

A motion to adjourn the public meeting was made by; seconded by

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 adjourned at 9:34 p.m.