

Minutes of a
Special Meeting of the
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
April 29, 2010

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chair Marc Strauss at 11:32 a.m. in the Board of Trustees room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Sharon Banks-Wilkins conducted a roll call of Trustees. Members present were Trustees Robert Boey, John Butler, Cherilyn Murer, Manuel Sanchez, Barbara Giorgi Vella, Student Trustees Matthew Venaas and Chair Strauss. Not present was Trustee Myron Siegel. Also present were Board Parliamentarian Kenneth Davidson and President John Peters. With a quorum present, the meeting proceeded.

VERIFICATION OF APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Confirmation of Open Meetings Act public notice compliance was provided by Board Parliamentarian Kenneth Davidson.

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Trustee Vella made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Student Trustee Venaas seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Strauss asked for a motion to close the public meeting to conduct an executive session to discuss the following subjects authorized by the Illinois Open Meetings Act: personnel matters as generally described under §2(c)(1) and (3) of the Open Meetings Act, collective bargaining matters as generally described under §2(c)(2) of the Open Meetings Act and property matters as generally described under §2(c)(5) and (6) of the Open Meetings Act. Trustee Vella so moved, seconded by Trustee Boey.

A roll call vote of the Trustees to recess to Executive Session was as follows:

Trustee Boey	Yes	Trustee Butler	Yes
Trustee Murer	Yes	Trustee Sanchez	Yes
Trustee Vella	Yes	Student Trustee Venaas	Yes
Chair Strauss	Yes		

A roll call vote of the Trustees to recess to Executive Session was unanimous.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING RECONVENED

Chair Strauss reconvened the public meeting of the Board of Trustees at approximately 1:18 p.m.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

We have two exciting items on our agenda for Board review today, Chair Strauss said, the awarding of the university's most prestigious honor, that of an honorary doctorate to a worthy individual you will hear more about in a few minutes, as well as Board approval for the concept of a public-private partnership arrangement to construct new single room, clustered residence halls for first year students at NIU. Several of my colleagues on this Board toured existing university residence halls in March and encouraged President Peters and NIU senior administrators to develop plans to replace and renovate our

existing on-campus housing for NIU students while keeping with our historical capacity standard of 6,000 on-campus beds. Today represents the first of a series of steps that NIU will be taking in 2010 as part of an effort to bring our on-campus housing options for students up to current standards and codes. Other public universities in the Midwest and in Illinois are taking steps similar to those NIU will take this year, and it is important that NIU do so in order to remain competitive and meet the demands by new students for clustered, community-based, on-campus living.

The Chair then recognized the University Advisory Committee representatives: Dr. Alan Rosenbaum, Dr. Ferald Bryan, Dr. Gregory Waas, Dr. Joseph Buck Stephen, Dr. Bobbie Cesarek and Mr. Jay Monteiro.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Strauss asked Board Parliamentarian Kenneth Davidson if any members of the public had registered a written request to address the Board in accordance with state law and Board of Trustees *Bylaws*. Mr. Davidson noted that he had received one timely request to address this meeting. He recommended that Mr. Khaled Ismail, Prism Activist Committee Chair, be recognized for remarks not to exceed five minutes in duration.

Before we receive this presentation, the Chair said, I want to remind the Trustees and the members of the public who are present today that these presentations are mainly for providing special information to the Board concerning its pending business, and the Chair will take under advisement any follow-up presentations, if any, that may be appropriate. The Chair then recognized Kahled Ismail for a presentation of no more than five minutes.

A summary of Mr. Ismail's presentation follows:

Mr. Ismail stated that he was speaking as a concerned member of the NIU community and on behalf of the NIU Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community on campus in order to shed light on the need to add gender identity and expression to the university's nondiscrimination policy. He stated that NIU is ranked among the top 100 LGBT friendly schools in the nation. The resources and protections provided for lesbian, gay and bisexual students and community members emphasize the university's continuing efforts to create an inclusive campus for students, faculty and staff. As a gay student, he said that he is protected by the university's nondiscrimination policy, but his transgender peers are not. Mr. Ismail named nine public universities and community colleges in Illinois that have gender identity and expression in their affirmative action nondiscrimination policy. He also stated that the Illinois Safe Schools Alliance published a Visibility Matters report, which grades institutions "A" through "F," in the summer of 2008, grading NIU "F" because its nondiscrimination policy did not include gender identity. Mr. Ismail said that he had 270 letters signed by people advocating the addition of gender identity and expression to the university's nondiscrimination policy.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT NO. 68

I know I am not alone in eagerly anticipating the renewal and energy that the spring season brings us each year, President Peters said. Around campus, spring, warmer temperatures, sunshine, spring break trips for students, pick-up games on our recreation fields, students gathered in groups relaxing near the lagoon and throughout the MLK Commons, final exams and, for many of our students, the ultimate goal they have worked towards, and that is commencement.

So, before I present my report this morning, I want to take an opportunity to congratulate Trustee Cheryl Murer and NIU's First Lady, Barbara Cole Peters, for their outstanding accomplishments, which will be celebrated by the NIU Alumni Association tonight at its annual spring awards ceremony. Trustee Murer has been selected to receive the Distinguished Alumni Award for her dedicated service to the university. And Barbara Cole Peters will receive the F.R. Geigle Service Award from the Alumni Association.

I also want to offer our own Media Services staffer, Tony Del Fiacco, my heartiest congratulations on receipt of his baccalaureate degree from NIU College of Business next weekend, and of course, our

Student Trustee Matt Venaas, who will receive his degree in political science. Spring truly provides a time for celebrating, refreshment and renewal.

Agenda Item 7.a. – Honorary Doctorate Recommendation – L. Tammy Duckworth

An Honorary Degree, the university's highest honor, which in this case is the Doctorate of Humane Letters, is being conferred upon L. Tammy Duckworth, Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. She is a decorated Blackhawk helicopter pilot who served in Iraq. Secretary Duckworth's nomination for this honor was put forth by NIU's Department of Political Science. During the 1990s, Secretary Duckworth began pursuit of her doctoral degree in NIU's Department of Political Science in Comparative Politics and International Relations with an Emphasis on Southeast Asia, a university-wide area of specialization. She is fluent in both Thai and Indonesian languages. During her studies at NIU, Secretary Duckworth was a recipient of the highly competitive Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship offered by the NIU Center for Southeast Asia Studies. She also spent time working as a research assistant in the Center for Governmental Studies and coordinated a university project to measure radon levels in DeKalb County homes. Her study was the first ever radon measurement program of more than 500 homes in a single U.S. county.

Secretary Duckworth's doctoral studies at NIU were cut short when her Illinois Army National Guard unit was deployed to Iraq. During a mission north of Baghdad in 2004, her aircraft was ambushed and a rocket-propelled grenade struck the helicopter she was co-piloting. She continued to attempt to pilot the aircraft until losing consciousness from blood loss. As a result of the attack, Secretary Duckworth lost the use of both of her legs and partial use of one arm. She has received many decorations for her actions, including the Purple Heart, the Air Medal and the Combat Action Badge.

Following her recovery, Secretary Duckworth dedicated her life to public service and emerged as a national hero and role model, advocating on behalf of veterans and disability rights. She has subsequently served as Director of the State of Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs and was appointed by President Obama to serve in her current capacity. She was confirmed by the U.S. Senate and sworn into office on April 24, 2009. But her story does not end there. A Major in the Illinois Army National Guard, Secretary Duckworth declined medical retirement to continue her service. In 2008 and 2009, she completed the Chicago Marathon on a hand-cranked bicycle, and she also resumed flying as a civilian pilot. NIU Department of Political Science Chair Dr. Chris Jones said it best, "Tammy Duckworth is an inspiration to millions of Americans." And I would add that she is a true American hero who has served her country with valor and distinction. We look forward to welcoming her home to NIU to present her with the honorary doctorate degree she so richly deserves. Chair Strauss asked for a motion to approve the conferring of the Doctorate of Humane Letters upon L. Tammy Duckworth, Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Trustee Sanchez so moved, seconded by Trustee Murer. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 7.b. – First Year Residence Hall Project

This is the first part of an exciting and under development comprehensive replacement and renovation plan for on-campus university residence halls, the President said. Today's item requests Board approval to develop a potential partnership arrangement with a private sector developer to build new, state-of-the-art, single room on-campus residence halls for up to 1,000 students in an effort to meet the needs of new, first year students. NIU opened its last undergraduate residence hall more than 40 years ago. Our on-campus residential housing options are aging and in need of replacement or renovation. The university is currently developing a comprehensive plan for most of our older residence halls to meet changes in student residence hall expectations. All accommodations in this new complex would be single rooms with a private bath or two single rooms sharing a private bath, reflecting the greater level of independence and privacy preferred by today's students. The overall setting, however, will retain the most desirable features of on-campus housing, including convenience, security, community and peer support, strong ties to the university and availability of food service.

The buildings in this new "clustered" housing complex will be built using the same sort of partnership that allowed NIU to build Northern View apartments in 2007. Under that arrangement, a private company assumed the cost of construction, with the actual facilities managed by the university. At the end of a

predetermined period of time, the university will take ownership of the facilities. This is an affordable way for us to address what has developed into one of the greatest needs on our campus. Competition for students is becoming increasingly intense and our aging housing stock simply cannot compete with the newer, more modern options offered at other universities. Simply put, to continue to properly serve the northern Illinois region, replacing and renovating our on-campus housing to reflect the needs and interests of today's students is an issue that we must address.

As part of the university's comprehensive plan to replace and/or renovate existing residence halls, we will continue to maintain our historic on-campus housing capacity at 6,000 beds. Most of the Board toured the residence halls recently and saw firsthand the importance of and urgent need for renovation and/or replacement of our on-campus housing stock. I want to thank the Board for its support of this important issue and for your encouragement in urging the expeditious development of a comprehensive plan to renovate our older halls.

Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Brian Hemphill, Provost Alden, Dr. Williams and I are working diligently to bring back a final recommendation to the Board on this first phase of a comprehensive plan, a partnership with a private sector developer to construct a new single room housing complex that could open to incoming students as early as 2012. We plan to return to the Board with further details at the Board's May 13 meeting.

Student Trustee Venaas stated that he was very much in support of this measure. It is critical that we move forward on this project, he said. This has been a big issue for students who live on campus since I came here in 2006 and was a part of the Residence Hall Association.

Chair Strauss asked for a motion to approve the First Year Residence Hall Project. Trustee Vella so moved, seconded by Trustee Boey. The motion was approved.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The Chair announced that the next regular meeting of the full Board is scheduled for Thursday, May 13, 2010, on the main campus in DeKalb.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Strauss asked for a motion to adjourn. Student Trustee Venaas so moved, seconded by Trustee Vella. The motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Banks-Wilkins
Recording Secretary