

Minutes of the
NIU Board of Trustees
**LEGISLATION AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE MEETING**
August 29, 2013

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cherilyn Murer at 10:00 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, Wheeler Coleman, Anthony Iosco, Robert Marshall, Marc Strauss, Student Trustee Elliot Echols, BOT Chair John Butler and Chair Murer. Also present were President Douglas Baker, Committee Liaison Kathryn Buettner and Board General Counsel Jerry Blakemore. With a quorum present, the meeting proceeded.

VERIFICATION OF APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

In accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act, as amended, timely notices of this committee meeting for the NIU Board of Trustees were timely posted and distributed.

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Trustee Strauss made a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Trustee Boey. The motion was approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Trustee Strauss and seconded by Trustee Iosco to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2013 meeting. The motion was approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

Chair Murer welcomed University Advisory Committee representatives Deborah Haliczzer, President of the Supportive Professional Staff Council, and Dr. Rosita Lopez, Faculty Senate and University Advisory Committee.

Every September, it is a new beginning, the Chair said, whether we have children in preschool, in grade school, high school, college or whether we participate in higher education, it is always a new start and a new opportunity. We are so delighted to have President Baker here at his first Legislation and External Affairs Committee meeting. In two months, your message, vision and energy have been felt on this campus. We want to continue to focus on being student centered and the student career success that you speak of certainly should be at the heart of everything we do. I made a comment in the Academic Affairs meeting that, in many fields, this really is like the Wild West, new things, reformed things, new thinking, new opportunities, and what better place to be than a university.

We have some serious matters before us relating to legislation, government affairs and external affairs. On the positive side, when we talk about internships, how we relate to the community, and how we present ourselves in marketing and branding, that is external affairs. But the legislative side is very serious and less predictable at this time in our history. In particular, Illinois has moved forward with some new legislation that will significantly affect us. Now we will have to see how this legislation is applied and how we will continue to modify our behaviors in response to the new laws. In particular, I

speak of the Conceal/Carry provisions within the Illinois statute. We now must adopt new policies and procedures and ensure compliance.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair asked Board General Counsel Jerry Blakemore if any members of the public had registered a written request to address the Board in accordance with state law and the Board of Trustees *Bylaws*. Mr. Blakemore noted that no timely requests had been received to address this Board Committee meeting.

UNIVERSITY REPORT

Agenda Item 7.a. – Concealed Carry – University Policy

Chair Murer asked Vice President and General Counsel Jerry Blakemore, to present the Board with a brief summary of the new Conceal/Carry statute along with a description of the university policy that this committee has been requested to recommend to the full Board for approval during the Special Board Meeting this afternoon.

In the PowerPoint I just distributed to you is a timeline that lays out the actions taken by the Supreme Court, the State of Illinois, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals and the General Assembly, Mr. Blakemore said. Those actions now require consideration of a Conceal and Carry Policy on the part of the Board. There are two critical points, consideration of a policy by the Board today, and consideration by the State of actual regulations for implementation of the State's new Conceal and Carry Statute. The timeline covers what has happened over the past 25 years.

Legislation for Conceal and Carry began in the United States in 1986. In 2011, Illinois became the only state that did not have some form of conceal and carry as part of its law. There were 37 states that had what is referred to as "shall issue" state licenses, eight states with "may issue" under particular circumstances and four states had "unrestricted" Conceal and Carry as part of the law. Because of the mandate of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, Illinois has now passed a Conceal and Carry Statute.

The Illinois General Assembly, both the House and the Senate, were full partners with higher education in establishing a prohibited area, or an exemption, to Conceal and Carry, and they provided support in both the House and the Senate of the language on which higher education, public as well as private, and community colleges worked diligently. We came to consensus on language and the General Assembly did two major things for us. They provided us an explicit exemption, and they provided us the authority to provide rules and regulations. In accordance, the Board has received this policy, and because of that, we are protected, as many other states were not, from actions which would have questioned whether we had the authority to regulate and actually restrict guns. We have gone a step further in our proposal. We are proposing that we not only provide prohibitions with respect to the definition of firearms in the Firearms Act, but that we extend that definition to those weapons that we traditionally have banned from campus. We also propose that we provide a basis for regulating issues with respect to intimidation, bullying and threatening. It is not merely our intent to comply with the Firearms Act, which has a provision for the carrying of guns, for example, in particular places. They can be stored, for example, in the trunk of a car. We also wanted to make it a violation of our policy to threaten to use those guns. So we have a broad view of the prohibition, and it is consistent with the practice of this and many other universities throughout the country in terms of prohibitions.

The critical questions for us will be the development of protocols and the development of training. Our revised proposal to you delegates to the President the ability to provide additional policy in this area, and report to the Board within 30 days of any additional policy. What we have already started, and will gear up to do even more, is help with the State's effort, particularly the State Police, to actually write the rules and regulations for implementation.

Chair Murer asked for a motion approve the Concealed Carry-University Policy. Trustee Strauss so moved, seconded by Trustee Boey. The Board had a lengthy discussion of the policy. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 7.b. – Fiscal Year 2013 Communication Initiatives and Fall 2013 Marketing Recruitment Activities

On August 15, this Board had a retreat led by our new President, Chair Murer said, and we spoke of many issues. To reiterate Dr. Baker’s six areas of focus, they are: Growing a vibrant and diverse student population; strategically growing our academic and research capabilities; responsibly managing our fiscal resources; ethically inspired leadership; growing community partnerships; and, engaging alumni and involving them actively with our students. These are great pillars for us to move toward. But it did strike me that in order to be responsive to these mandates we need to know how to communicate that, both internally and externally. I have asked Ms. Buettner to give us a benchmark to know where we are on a status quo relative to communication effort, as well as an idea of some of our objectives from a marketing, a partnership and a communications perspective for calendar year 2014.

Ms. Buettner handed out to Board members a copy of a PowerPoint presentation summarizing the extensive work of the University Relations team, as a division, for the last year and the direction they are heading in the fall with their involvement in the recruitment and marketing campaigns. She gave a brief summary of the most recent Noel-Levitz report, which is prepared annually. Noel-Levitz is the foremost marketing, student marketing, student recruitment consulting company in the country. The report contains data on 2,000 college bound high school juniors and seniors, and shows that in the last week approximately 65 percent of high school seniors, and 54 percent of high school juniors have visited a college website. It also showed that students place the most emphasis on electronic media sources for researching information on universities. Due to the number of different devices, a great deal of time is being spent on responsive design so that the website is compatible with the many types of devices accessing it. Instagram and Pinterest accounts are being added to the website in addition to Facebook and Twitter. Finally, Ms. Buettner said, the creative team working over the summer came up with two recruitment and marketing campaigns, focused around data received from student surveys not only nationally, but also through focus groups with our students, orientation leaders and such, and we will be presenting that to the President’s Cabinet next week.

In the interest of time, the Chair suggested that the planned presentation on pension reform be placed on the agenda for the November meeting.

OTHER MATTERS

I would be remiss if I did not mention that NIU hosted its first Research Roundtable in Washington, D.C. in July, Chair Murer said, which Board Chair Butler and I attended with President Baker, Vice President Freeman, Vice President Buettner, Dean Vohra and others representing the university. It was well attended and well received. While there, we met with our senators and congressmen, and with NIU students serving internships in those offices.

Vice President Buettner distributed a summary of the 98th General Assembly session to the committee.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The Chair announced that the next meeting of the Legislation and External Affairs Committee was scheduled for Thursday, November 7, in DeKalb.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Murer asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Strauss so moved, seconded by Trustee Boey. The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon M. Banks-Wilkins
Recording Secretary

In compliance with Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/1, et seq, a verbatim record of all Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees meetings is maintained by the Board Recording Secretary and is available for review upon request. The minutes contained herein represent a true and accurate summary of the Board proceedings.