

Minutes of the  
**NIU Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University**  
**Special Meeting**  
January 10, 2019

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Vice Chair Dennis Barsema in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Chelsea Duis conducted a roll call. Members present were Trustees Dennis Barsema, John Butler, Nathan Hays, Bob Pritchard, and Tim Struthers. Members absent were Wheeler Coleman, Veronica Herrero, and Eric Wasowicz.

Also present: President Lisa Freeman, Acting General Counsel Greg Brady, Board Liaison Matt Streb, Executive Vice President and Provost Chris McCord, Vice President for Administration and Finance Sarah McGill, Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Jerry Blazey, Vice President for Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications Sol Jensen, Vice President for Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development Anne Kaplan, Executive Director of Extended Learning Jason Rhode, and University Advisory Council (UAC) Representatives Therese Arado, Catherine Doederlein, Holly Nicholson, and Kendall Thu.

**2. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**

Acting General Counsel Brady indicated the appropriate notification of the meeting had been provided pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act and a quorum was present.

**3. MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL**

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Trustee Bob Pritchard so moved and Trustee Tim Struthers seconded. The motion was approved.

**4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2018**

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked for a motion to approve the minutes of November 15, 2018. Trustee Bob Pritchard so moved and Trustee John Butler seconded. The motion was approved.

**5. CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema welcomed the University Advisory Council members for comments.

Cathy Doederlein noted that as we work with outside entities to fulfill functions for the university, we should evaluate current staff to fulfill duties if applicable and ensure current staff are not displaced.

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema thanked the UAC members for attending and noted Chair Coleman sent his regrets for not attending. He wished everyone a happy new year and noted the board looks forward to a productive year and working with students, faculty, and staff.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no timely requests for public comment.

**7. PRESIDENT'S REPORT NO. 130**

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked President Lisa Freeman to present items 7.a. through 7.c.

## **Items Directly from the President**

### **Agenda item 7.a. Constituent Relationship Management System Replacement**

President Lisa Freeman wished everyone a happy new year and presented agenda item 7.a. The Division of Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications requested to replace the current Constituent Relationship Management (CRM) system with an up-to-date CRM that will have updated capabilities. Funding requested was \$2.5 million for an initial two and a half year term plus seven one year renewal terms.

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked for a motion to approve this agenda item. Trustee Bob Pritchard so moved and Trustee John Butler seconded.

Trustee Bob Pritchard asked who would be the lead for this contractual arrangement. Vice President Sol Jensen said the CRM office under the Marketing department would oversee the day to day operations.

Trustee Tim Struthers asked for clarification on the spending per year of this item. Vice President Sol Jensen answered they expect to spend on average \$250,000 per year for the item, noting this is in line with other institutions in Illinois. Trustee Struthers commented that he would like to see additional follow up on the spending amounts for this item, as well as similar items, on a more frequent basis than the length of the contract. President Lisa Freeman noted focusing on a net revenue benchmark would be hard to determine for this item but updating the board on what was spent and what was achieved would be appropriate. Trustee Struthers agreed.

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked where this item is in the RFP process. Vice President Sol Jensen answered the RFP went out a couple months ago, and the submissions are being reviewed with the review process to be completed by the second Friday after the board meeting. The top three scoring vendors will then be brought to campus. After the selection, Procurement and General Counsel will complete the contract. Vice President Jensen noted the goal is to have a vendor in place in the next couple of months and implementation to be completed in about a year. Vice Chair Barsema asked if this would have a negative impact on 2019 financials. Vice President Sarah McGill noted there will be no negative action as the process has been discussed between divisions and planned in future years' financials. President Lisa Freeman commended the members of the Administration and Finance division and the Enrollment Management, Marketing, and Communication division for the coordination on this item. She also recognized Antoinette Bridges, Director of Procurement Services, for her work on this item and the next agenda item. Vice Chairman Barsema thanked those involved as well.

The motion was approved.

### **Agenda item 7.b. Marketing and Support Services for Online Education Programs**

President Lisa Freeman presented agenda item 7.b. During the Program Prioritization process, transformation of the support for online and off-campus students and programs was identified. The university is requesting to enter into an agreement with Wiley Education Services to provide market demand analysis, recruitment lead generation, and concierge services, among other services, to grow enrollment in online programs. The term of the agreement will be from February 1, 2019, to December 31, 2021, with a request to initiate up to two one-year renewals.

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked for a motion to approve this agenda item. Trustee Tim Struthers so moved and Trustee Bob Pritchard seconded.

Trustee John Butler noted he would like follow up on this item over the term of the contract as he believes it is a critical piece for the university. He asked for more information on the existing programs that will be marketed and the return on investment. President Lisa Freeman noted it will begin with six existing programs, identified based on market demand and current state of the

programs. In Fiscal Year 2020, the anticipated return on investment will be \$2.1 million, a \$1.2 million revenue increase. Net revenue is expected to increase to \$7.1 million in year two and \$11.4 million in year three. Trustee Tim Struthers asked if these projections include an expansion of offered programs. President Freeman noted those numbers are for the six initial programs. Trustee Struthers asked how many additional students would need to enroll to meet these numbers. President Freeman noted the projection is to increase from 235 students to 332 students. Trustee Struthers asked if the University is confident in a breakeven number to cover the cost. President Freeman noted a lot of effort went into the projections, and they have a lot of confidence. Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked if there is a percentage on the return on investment. Acting Executive Vice President and Provost Chris McCord noted the forecast would be a return of \$2 for every \$1 invested for year one of the contract with an increase in return of \$5 return for every \$1 invested by year three. He noted these numbers are for the six programs in the initial phase. The University plans to increase the number of programs marketed with other existing programs and new programs approved by the Board in subsequent years of the contract. Programs will be evaluated for a solid ROI before advancement to marketing with Wiley.

Trustee Bob Pritchard asked for additional background on Wiley. President Lisa Freeman noted they do not share a complete list of clients, but their clients include Purdue University, Indiana University, Seton Hall University, Benedictine University, The State University of New York, St. Mary's, University of Minnesota, the University of Delaware, the University of Scranton and Utica College. Trustee Pritchard asked if we are confident based on their track record. President Freeman noted based on their flexible financial model, their collaborative approach, their time in the market, and their history of success as well as their Chicagoland location, determined during the state procurement process, Wiley would be a good partner.

Trustee John Butler asked if there is a component to this agreement that will allow these NIU programs to be better captured when a person does a general internet search for these types of programs. President Lisa Freeman agreed with this, noting follow-up will happen based on data analytics and how interested the person was that conducted the search. NIU is not capable of a functionality like this, so the partnership is attractive. Trustee Butler asked if the course facilitation would happen with this contract. President Freeman noted NIU will maintain control over the course facilitation to remain consistent with other NIU programs not involved in the marketing plan. Director of Extended Learning Jason Rhode was invited to speak on the contract. He noted when the RFP was extended, NIU asked interested vendors to inform us of the market demand for the existing programs included as well as informing the vendors what portion of the services would remain in house. Services named in the contract to remain in house are faculty development and instructional design services, as NIU has instructional designers who work with faculty to develop online courses and programs. Wiley recommends being in the market nine months before a program will begin so the February 1 contract start date will be a push to affect Fall 2019 enrollment, but that is the focus. Discussion will be held beginning in March to discuss the next phase of programs marketed.

Trustee Tim Struthers noted he is pleased with the focus on this and the potential incremental net revenue associated with the item. President Lisa Freeman noted there are specific goals and objectives related to online program growth that will be released in the strategic enrollment management plan the following week. Trustee Struthers asked if it will be noted in financial statements and President Freeman noted they would be shared.

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked who is responsible for the program. President Lisa Freeman noted Director of Extended Learning Jason Rhode will be responsible.

The motion was approved.

## **Agenda item 7.c. Request for Delegated Authority Regarding Purchase of High Performance Computing**

President Lisa Freeman presented agenda item 7.c. This item authorizes the purchase of high performance computing as the current system is beyond repair and needs to be updated to meet the needs of the university faculty and scientists. A task force has been charged to make recommendations regarding the purchase with the president having delegated authority for the final purchase if within the terms outlined in the item.

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked for a motion to approve this agenda item. Trustee John Butler so moved and Trustee Bob Pritchard seconded.

Trustee John Butler asked Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Jerry Blazey to give more details of what this type of equipment is used for. Vice President Blazey noted it is used most frequently in the STEM fields with examples given for the areas of Physics, Engineering, and Chemistry. More recently, it is used in the Humanities for textual analysis and in the Arts for data visualization. This upgrade will also make NIU a better partner for national labs.

Trustee Bob Pritchard asked if a 60 node CPU GPU hybrid cluster will be adequate for growth in research efforts. Vice President Jerry Blazey noted while it is the same size of the current system and adequate for research, the current system needs to be replaced as parts are no longer available for the current equipment. Trustee Pritchard asked if additional facilities are required. Vice President Blazey noted no additional space or equipment will be needed in the current facility for the new computing machine.

Trustee Tim Struthers asked if high performance computing is available in the cloud. Vice President Jerry Blazey noted the task force is looking at the options involving the cloud, including hybrid options.

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked about the timeline for the project. Vice President Jerry Blazey answered the plan is to have a recommendation from the task force sometime this spring. The RFP process will take about three months and the installation could start in the summer or fall. Vice Chair Barsema asked if this is a Fiscal Year 2020 expense and Vice President Blazey confirmed this.

Trustee Tim Struthers asked about the structure of the recommendation. President Lisa Freeman noted the item is an enabling item so the cycle of board meetings does not interfere with the progress of purchasing the equipment. Information regarding the item will be reported back to the Board in future meetings. Trustee Struthers asked if the amount was adequate. Vice President Jerry Blazey assured him the research was done before submitting the amount included in the item.

The motion was approved.

## **8. OTHER MATTERS**

No other matters were discussed.

## **9. NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held March 7, 2019.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Vice Chair Dennis Barsema asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee John Butler so moved and Trustee Bob Pritchard seconded. The motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chelsea Duis

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.*