

Minutes of the
Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University
Regular Meeting
March 5, 2020

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Board Chair Dennis Barsema in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Liz Wright conducted a roll call. Members present were Trustees John Butler, Montel Gayles, Madalynn Mershon, Bob Pritchard, Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz, and Board Chair Dennis Barsema. Trustees Rita Athas and Veronica Herrero were absent.

Also present: President Lisa Freeman; General Counsel Bryan Perry; Board Liaison Matt Streb; Executive Vice President and Provost Beth Ingram; Vice President for Administration and Finance Sarah Chinniah; Vice President for Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications Sol Jensen; Associate Vice President of Information Technology Matt Parks; Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Kelly Wesener-Michael; Associate Vice President of Facilities Management and Campus Services John Heckmann; and University Advisory Council (UAC) Representatives Kendall Thu, Cathy Doederlein, and Sarah Marsh.

VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

General Counsel Perry indicated that appropriate notification of the meeting has been provided pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Mr. Perry also advised that a quorum was present.

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Trustee Wasowicz so moved and Trustee Gayles seconded.

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to amend that motion, in order to approve a consent agenda as follows: Action items 8.a.1., 8.a.2., 8.a.4., 8.a.5., 8.a.6., 8.a.7., 8.a.8., 8.a.10., 8.a.11., 8.a.13., 8.a.14., 8.a.15., and 8.a.16. Trustee Wasowicz so moved and Trustee Butler seconded.

The motion was approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 13, 2020

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve the minutes of February 13, 2020. Trustee Gayles so moved and Trustee Butler seconded. The motion was approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Dennis Barsema welcomed the University Advisory Committee (UAC) members present and asked for their comments.

UAC Representative Thu voiced support for proposed changes to the BoT regulations for academic approvals.

UAC Representative Doederlein spoke on the proposed amendment to administrative employees' vacation and expressed her support of the item in order to create equity for SPS employees related to vacation time.

Chair Barsema made brief comments. He noted the NIU men's basketball team played for the West MAC conference champions and that NIU hosted wrestling MAC championship. He further congratulated Dr. Anne Britt on receiving the BOT Professorship. He commented on the outstanding bond refinance and looked forward to the update later in the meeting. Finally, he noted the NIU Today story on the release of the IL Report Card by congratulating the team that worked on it and quoting Lima Chatterjee from the article "What we're contributing is going to make a difference in students' lives, and that was one of my motivations when I decided to join NIU four years ago. This is very different from a for-profit company that revolves around profit and loss. Here, what we're doing as part of our day-to-day jobs is going to make a difference in somebody's life."

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Barsema introduced the public comment portion of the meeting.

General Counsel Perry indicated that there was one public comment request by Mr. Roderick Moyer. Mr. Moyer was not present.

REPORTS OF THE BOARD COMMITTEES AND BOARD LIAISONS

Chair Barsema reminded everyone that the reports of the Board Committees and the Board Liaisons are information only.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT NO. 140

Chair Barsema asked President Freeman to present the President's Report No. 140.

President Freeman presented the items that we moved to consent agenda including:

Agenda Item 8.a.1 – Request for New Certificate of Graduate Study in Environmental Health and Safety

Agenda Item 8.a.2. – Request for Deletion of the Certificate of Graduate Study in Applied Mechanics

Request for Deletion of the Certificate of Graduate Study in CAD/CAM/CAE

Request for Deletion of the Certificate of Graduate Study in Simulation, Modeling and Data Analysis

Request for Deletion of the Certificate of Graduate Study in Thermal, Fluid, and Energy Systems

Request for Deletion of the Certificate of Graduate Study in Vibration, Robots, and Control Systems

Agenda Item 8.a.4. – Request for Deletion of the Certificate of Graduate Study in Integrated Systems Engineering

Agenda Item 8.a.5. – Request for Specialization in Behavior Analysis within the Ph.D. in Educational Psychology

Agenda Item 8.a.6. – Request for Specialization in Teacher Leader with Endorsement within the M.S.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction

Request for Specialization in Curriculum and Culture Pedagogies in Social Justice within the M.S.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction

Request for Specialization in Academic Literacies, Language, and Culture within the M.S.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction

Agenda Item 8.a.7. – Request for Specialization in Reading within the M.S.Ed. in Literacy Education

Request for Specialization in English as a Second Language/Bilingual Education within the M.S.Ed. in Literacy Education

Agenda Item 8.a.8. – Request for New Certificate of Graduate Study in Instructional Coaching

Agenda Item 8.a.10. – Request for Deletion of the Certificate of Undergraduate Study in Culturally Relevant Teaching

Agenda Item 8.a.11. – Request for Deletion of the Certificate of Graduate Study in Children’s and Young Adult Literature/Media

Agenda Item 8.a.13. – Request for New Certificate of Undergraduate Study in Illinois Family Specialist Credential Certificate-Level 5

Agenda Item 8.a.14. – Request for New Certificate of Undergraduate Study in Black Studies

Agenda Item 8.a.15. – Request for Emphasis 6: Sustainable Food Systems within the B.A./B.S. in Environmental Studies

Agenda Item 8.a.16. – Request for Deletion of Emphasis 2: Geomatics (B.S.) within the B.A./B.S. in Geography

President Freeman further noted that information items 8.b.1. through 8.b.13. were discussed at the February 13, 2020 committee meetings and will not be revisited unless Trustees request to do so following university recommendations forwarded by committees.

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Trustee Prichard so moved and Trustee Mershon seconded. The motion was approved.

UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS FORWARDED BY THE BOARD COMMITTEES

Agenda Item 8.a.3. Request for Deletion of the Master of Science in Integrated Systems Engineering

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.3. for approval.

Trustee Gayles so moved and Trustee Wasowicz seconded. The motion was approved.

8.a.9. Request for New Minor in Esports Industry Professionals

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.9.

Trustee Gayles so moved and Trustee Mershon seconded. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.12. Request for New Minor in Rehabilitation Counseling

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.12.

Trustee Pritchard so moved and Trustee Gayles seconded. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.17. Request for New Minor in Music

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.17.

Trustee Prichard so moved and Trustee Butler seconded. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.18. Change to Full-Time Tenure Requirement

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.18. She summarized the item and highlighted the need to be more flexible.

Trustee Gayles so moved and Trustee Pritchard seconded. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.19. Recommendations for Faculty and Supportive Professional Staff Sabbatical Leaves for the 2020-2021 Academic Year

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.19.

Trustee Butler so moved and Trustee Mershon seconded. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.20. College of Business New Creativity and Empathy Lab

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.20.

Trustee Pritchard so moved and Trustee Gayles seconded.

Chair Barsema asked what the timeline was for the construction.

Vice President Chinniah said that construction will start later this year and to open by Fall 2020.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.21. Stevenson Towers A, B, C & D – Roof Replacement Capital Project Approval (Revised)

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.21.

Trustee Wasowicz so moved and Trustee Pritchard seconded.

Chair Barsema revisited Trustee Pritchard's question from the committee presentation regarding damage to the top floor.

Vice President Chinniah stated that there has been damage to the top floor, but this request only includes the roof. Facilities will be managing the occupancy of the residence hall without using those floors. The repair of the roof will address the structural integrity of the building.

Trustee Gayles asked whether there is any idea of the cost of repairing those units.

Vice President Chinniah it is not known at this time.

President Freeman shared that in the interest of efficiency estimates are typically performed when a timeline is known for the repair.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.22. Chicago-Based Office Leases for The Education Systems Center and College of Business MBA Programs

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.22.

Trustee Pritchard so moved and Trustee Gayles seconded.

Chair Barsema asked whether we have an idea of whether we are at or above market for lease rates.

Vice President Chinniah that the space is at market and it is a competitive rate.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.23. FY21 Master Agreement Facility Contract Renewals

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.23.

Trustee Gayles so moved and Trustee Butler seconded.

The motion passed.

Following agenda item 8.a.26., Trustee Butler asked to go back and do a roll call vote for this item.

A roll call vote was taken, and Trustee Butler abstained. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.24. Fiscal Year 2021 Open Order Agreements for Consumable Commodities

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.24.

Trustee Gayles so moved and Trustee Wasowicz seconded.

Trustee Pritchard asked what the increase is for.

President Freeman noted the increase is for material costs and that the request is for an amount “up to” or “not to exceed”, so they may not need to utilize the entire amount.

Vice President Chinniah noted that they university is also proposing a new vender in the amount of \$250,000 in order to provide flexibility, which adds to the total amount of the item.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.25. FY21 Student Health Insurance

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.25.

President Freeman thanked those that worked to get a reduced rate.

Trustee Wasowicz so moved and Trustee Pritchard seconded.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.26. FY21 Division of Information Technology Microsoft Enrollment Contract Renewal

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.26.

Trustee Gayles so moved and Trustee Pritchard seconded.

Trustee Wasowicz clarified whether it was up to \$400,000. President Freeman replied that was correct.

Trustee Gayles requested that they review how they can use small businesses owned by women and minority vendors for these types of procurement purchases. President Freeman confirmed the commitment to diversifying the vendor base and pursuing that goal.

The motion was approved.

UNIVERSITY REPORTS FORWARDED BY THE BOARD COMMITTEES

President Freeman asked whether any Trustees wanted to revisit information items forwarded from the committees. Hearing none, she continued to Items Directly from the President.

ITEMS DIRECTLY FROM THE PRESIDENT

Agenda Item 8.c.1. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Overview

President Freeman asked Acting Dean Ledgerwood to present the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Overview.

Trustee Mershon stepped out (9:40)

Acting Dean Ledgerwood presented an overview on the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Trustee Mershon returned (9:42)

Following Acting Dean Ledgerwood's presentation, discussion ensued.

Chair Barsema thanked Acting Dean Ledgerwood for her service and for moving the college forward over the last three years.

Agenda Item 8.c.2. Division of Administration and Finance Refinancing of Series 2010 and 2011 AFS Revenue Bonds

President Freeman made a few introductory comments before she asked Vice President Chinniah to present this report.

President Freeman stressed that this refinance provides an opportunity to bridge to the university's future that should not be used to avoid the changes that we need to make us the best and most sustainable university.

Vice President Chinniah highlighted the shared success and thanks members of the budget, finance, and legal team. She summarized that there were \$175MIL to refinance. The first part was \$30MIL that was done with variable rate financing with PNC for a 7-year term that allows the opportunity to refinance. That left \$126MIL in bonds that were successful refinanced. Savings were improved to add a \$3MIL incremental savings in FY20, FY21, and FY23 and total overall savings is about \$52 MIL, which exceed \$27MIL estimated savings. The overall borrowing amount is about \$19MIL less than initially \$175MIL. In addition to savings, this allowed us to add flexibilities that had been introduced in the market including adjusting covenants to create an open system, which will allow flexibility throughout the financial enterprise for the university.

Chair Barsema commented that this refinance is a great indication of the confidence that the investors have in NIU and in the leadership of NIU. He echoed President Freeman's comment regarding the tough decisions that have to be made university-wide and his expectation that NIU will continue to become more efficient with all leaders held accountable to make strategic decisions.

Agenda Item 8.c.3. Draft Strategic Action Planning Framework

President Freeman presented a draft of the imperative. She reminded the Board of the work already done to revise the Vision, Mission, and Values of NIU, and identify six strategic themes. She explained that the framework was a work in progress to fulfil the presidential goals. Board discussion ensued.

Agenda Item 8.c.4. Proposed Amendments to Board of Trustees Regulations Related to Academic Program Approvals

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.c.4. for approval.

Trustee Gales so moved and Trustee Wasowicz seconded.

Trustee Butler asked whether it was correct that they would be notified of a list of academic changes at the May Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee meeting.

President Freeman said, yes, as that is in advance of the IBHE meeting.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.c.5. Proposed Amendments to Board of Trustees Regulations Related to Administrative Employees Vacation

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.c.5. for approval.

Trustee Pritchard so moved and Trustee Butler seconded.

Vice Chair Wasowicz asked for clarification regarding administrative employees' current accrued vacation.

Chief of Staff Streb stated that with the change time of service would be applied the same way to Civil Service exempt and SPS.

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.c.6. Real Estate Property Sale – President House

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.c.6. for approval.

Trustee Pritchard so moved and Trustee Gayles seconded.

President Freeman stated that the advertised price of the president's residence is \$295,000. The buyer has proposed an offer deemed to be competitive and has the latitude to negotiate based on maintenance needed for the home.

General Counsel Perry stated that home maintenance would be negotiated either in payment or purchase price.

Trustee Barsema said it was important to note that under ordinary circumstances this would not come before the board a second time.

General Counsel Perry stated that the main reason that it is before the board is that the street address in the first item was incorrect.

The motion was approved.

OTHER MATTERS

No other matters were discussed.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Chair Dennis Barsema announced that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held June 18, 2020.

CLOSED SESSION

Chair Barsema stated that the Board needed to go into closed session and would not take up new business following the closed session. He asked for a motion to close the public meeting to conduct closed session to discuss the following subjects as authorized by the Open Meetings Act: personnel matters as generally described under sections 2(c)(1)(2)(3) and (21) of the open meetings act; collective bargaining matters as generally described under section 2(c)(2) of the open meetings act; litigation and risk management matters as generally described under sections 2(c)(11) and (12) of the open meetings act; and closed session minutes matters as generally described under section 2(c)(21) of the open meetings act.

Trustee Wasowicz so moved and Trustee Gayles seconded. The motion was approved.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Wright to take a roll call vote to close the meeting. Ms. Wright read the roll call and the meeting closed.

At 11:45 a.m. the Board returned from closed session. Chair Barsema asked Ms. Wright to call the roll to reopen the public meeting. Ms. Wright read the roll call.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Butler so moved and Trustee Gayles seconded. The motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Wright
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.