

Minutes of the  
**Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University**  
**Regular Meeting**  
December 7, 2021

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. by Board Chair Eric Wasowicz in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall.

Recording Secretary Crystal Doyle conducted a roll call.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Absent	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Present
Trustee John Butler: Absent	Trustee Montel Gayles: Present
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Present	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Present
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Present

Also present: President Lisa Freeman; Vice President and General Counsel and Board Parliamentarian Bryan Perry; Chief of Staff and Board Liaison Matt Streb; Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Financial Officer Sarah Chinniah; Interim Vice President for Student Affairs Charlie Fey; Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Jerry Blazey; Vice President for Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Vernese Edghill-Walden; Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences Lynda Ransdell; Vice President for University Advancement Catherine Squires; Associate Vice President John Heckmann; Dean of the College of Liberal and Arts Sciences Robert Brinkmann Director of Employee and Labor Relations Jesse Perez and University Advisory Council (UAC) Representatives Peter Chomentowski and Holly Nicholson.

**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 Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Trustee Pritchard seconded.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Absent	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes
Trustee John Butler: Absent	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

## **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 18, 2021**

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the minutes of November 18, 2021. Trustee Pritchard so moved, and Trustee Barsema seconded.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Absent

Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Absent

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

## **CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chair Wasowicz welcomed the members of the University Advisory Council who were present and asked if any of the UAC members had any comments.

UAC Representative Nicholson thanked President Freeman for her positive and encouraging response to some of the issues that have affected NIU. UAC Representative Nicholson showed appreciation for President Freeman's leadership.

Chair Wasowicz congratulated all the sports teams for their hard work and the football team who won the MAC Championship in Detroit. He also congratulated all the graduates who will be graduating this weekend.

*Trustee Rita Athas joined the meeting at 9:10 a.m.*

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Wasowicz introduced the public comment portion of the meeting. General Counsel Perry indicated that there were no registered public comments.

## **REPORTS OF THE BOARD COMMITTEES AND BOARD LIAISONS**

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

Catherine Squires, Vice President for Advancement and President & CEO of the NIU Foundation, provided a verbal report for item 7.h.

The trustees thanked Vice President Squires for her report and all she has done over the year with alumni events, dinners, and fundraising.

*Trustee John Butler joined the meeting at 9:34 a.m.*

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT NO. 156**

Chair Wasowicz asked President Freeman to present the President's Report No. 156.

## **UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS FORWARDED BY THE BOARD COMMITTEES**

**Agenda Item 8.a.1. Request to Merge the Department of Geology and Environmental Geosciences and the Department of Geography and Atmospheric Sciences into the Department of Earth, Atmosphere, and Environment**

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.1. for approval.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 8.a.1. Trustee Pritchard so moved, and Trustee Barsema seconded.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Yes	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes
Trustee John Butler: Yes	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

**Agenda Item 8.a.2. Fiscal Year 2023 Budget Request**

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.a.2. for approval.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 8.a.2. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Vice Chair Rita Athas seconded.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Yes	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes
Trustee John Butler: Yes	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

**Agenda Item 8.a.3. Fiscal Year 2023 IBHE Capital Budget Request**

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

CFO Chinniah spoke about a mistake that was in the item when it was presented at the November 18, 2021 FACFO meeting. The tables on page 13 of the board report were referenced as FY22 IBHE Budget Submissions, but they should have been referenced as FY23 IBHE Budget Submissions. The lists are correct and do represent our FY23 priorities.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to amend the item to correct the tables to FY23. Trustee Herrero so moved, and Trustee Pritchard seconded.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Yes	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes
Trustee John Butler: Yes	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve amended item 8.a.3. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Trustee Barsema seconded.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

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.

President Freeman continued to the items directly from the President.

### **ITEMS DIRECTLY FROM THE PRESIDENT**

#### **Agenda Item 8.c.1. Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Metropolitan Alliance of Police #675 Police Telecommunicator**

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.c.1. for approval.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 8.c.1. Trustee Butler so moved, and Trustee Herrero seconded.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

#### **Agenda Item 8.c.2. College of Health and Human Sciences Overview**

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.c.2. Lynda Ransdell, Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences presented an overview of the College of Health and Human Sciences.

The trustees thanked Dean Ransdell for the presentation. The trustees are all very excited to see what Dean Ransdell will do with the College of Health and Human Sciences and are very happy to have her as a part of the Huskie family.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT NO. 100**

Chair Wasowicz presented the Chair's report No. 100.

#### **Agenda Item 9.a. 2021 Annual Performance Review of President Freeman**

Chair Wasowicz presented agenda item 9.a.

**Agenda Item 9.b. 2021 Presidential Evaluation Performance Incentive Pay**

Chair Wasowicz presented agenda item 9.b. for approval.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 9.b. Trustee Pritchard so moved, and Trustee Barsema seconded.

The trustees all commented that they are very happy with how President Freeman has led NIU over the past year. President Freeman loves and cares about NIU and it shows in all that she does. All the trustees have enjoyed working with her and are looking forward to working with her more in the future.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Yes	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes
Trustee John Butler: Yes	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

President Freeman said she considers it a great honor and privilege to lead this amazing institution. She thanked the trustees and everyone on campus for helping to make NIU so successful.

**Agenda Item 9.c. Closed Session Minutes Review and Release**

Chair Wasowicz presented agenda item 9.c. for approval.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 9.c. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Vice Chair Athas seconded.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Yes	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes
Trustee John Butler: Yes	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

**OTHER MATTERS**

There were no other matters.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Chair Wasowicz announced that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held March 24, 2022, at 9 a.m.

**CLOSED SESSION**

Chair Wasowicz 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 Pritchard so moved, and Trustee Barsema seconded.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Yes	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes
Trustee John Butler: Yes	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

The Board closed the public meeting at 10:57 a.m.

The meeting reconvened from closed session at 12:38 p.m.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Present	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Present
Trustee John Butler: Present	Trustee Montel Gayles: Present
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Present	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Present
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Present

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Barsema so moved, and Trustee Herrero seconded.

Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Yes	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes
Trustee John Butler: Yes	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Absent	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Crystal Doyle  
Recording Secretary

*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.*