

Minutes of the
Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University
Research and Innovation, Legal and Legislative Affairs
Committee Meeting
February 18, 2021

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 9:46 a.m. by Committee Chair Rita Athas. The Committee meeting was conducted through video conferencing communications and was conducted pursuant to Section 6 of Executive Order 2020-7 (Suspending OMA requirements of in person attendance by members of a public body). Recording Secretary Crystal Doyle conducted a roll call of the Trustees.

Trustee John Butler: Absent	Trustee Montel Gayles: Present
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Absent	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Present
Trustee Aidan Shields: Present	Trustee Eric Wasowicz: Present
Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Present	Committee Chair Rita Athas: Present

Also present were President Lisa Freeman; Committee Liaison and Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Gerald Blazey; Vice President and General Counsel and Parliamentarian Bryan Perry; Chief of Staff and Liaison to the Board of Trustees Matt Streb; Assistant Vice President for Federal Relations Anna Quider; and Director of Innovation Luke Sebby.

Trustee John Butler joined the meeting at 10:07 a.m.

VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

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

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Committee Chair Athas asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Trustee Pritchard seconded. The motion was approved.

Committee Chair Athas asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee John Butler: Absent	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Absent	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes
Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes	Trustee Eric Wasowicz: Yes
Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes	Committee Chair Rita Athas: Yes

The motion was approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee Chair Athas asked for a motion to approve the minutes of November 12, 2020. Trustee Pritchard so moved, and Trustee Wasowicz seconded. The motion was approved.

Committee Chair Athas asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee John Butler: Absent	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes
-----------------------------	----------------------------

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Absent

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Trustee Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

Committee Chair Rita Athas: Yes

The motion was approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Chair Athas reported that the Committee would be receiving a report on the foundation of the Strategic Development Team and its status. Committee Chair Athas noted that NIU's status as a research institution is continually being affirmed through national benchmark rankings. Committee Chair Athas welcomed the members of the University Advisory Committee and requested comments. No comments were submitted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

General Counsel Bryan Perry noted that one public comment was register but was later withdrawn. There were no further public comments.

UNIVERSITY REPORTS

Committee Chair Athas asked Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Dr. Gerald Blazey, to provide an update from the Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships. Dr. Blazey congratulated faculty for continuing to steadily increase their scholarly capacity and the reputation of the university. Dr. Blazey provided an overview of the quarterly SPA report, noting that in the second quarter, NIU handled almost 100 awards totaling \$11 million that were not related to COVID-19 relief. SPA handled an additional \$3.4 million in COVID-19 relief funds. He noted that to the total award activity for the first two quarters totaled \$14.4 million.

Agenda Item 7.a. State Legislative Report

Chief of Staff and Liaison to the Board of Trustees Dr. Matt Streb, reported that Governor Pritzker recently gave an encouraging budget address that showed a strong commitment to higher education. The governor proposed a flat budget for higher education, which for NIU would mean \$87.8 million in appropriations. The governor's office also put forward a \$28 million investment in the Monetary Award Program (MAP) program as well as reappropriation of all capital projects and deferred maintenance. The governor called for a \$35 million allocation for Aspirational Institutional Match Helping Illinois Grow Higher Education (AIM HIGH). The governor's address also called for a \$1 million appropriation for the implementation of common applications. Dr. Streb noted that the address shows the governor's priorities, but the budget still needs to go through the legislative process. He further noted that the bipartisan NIU caucus met and there is a strong commitment to higher education from the group.

Agenda Item 7.b. – Federal Legislative Report

Assistant Vice President for Federal Relations Dr. Anna Quider reported that Joe Biden has won the presidency, democrats hold a slim 10 vote majority in the U.S. House of Representatives, and democrats control the evenly split U.S. Senate. Dr. Quider noted that committee assignments for the House and Senate are still being finalized. However, new assignments that are related to NIU's portfolio for the Illinois delegation include Senator Durbin as Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee and Congresswoman Underwood as a member of the House Appropriations Committee. Dr Quider reported that on December 27, 2020 the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) became law. The bipartisan legislation provided \$22.9 billion for higher education and \$1.3 billion for the Governors Education Emergency Relief (GEER) fund. She noted that NIU's CRRSAA allocation is \$23.7 million, broken down into \$7.4

million for aid to students and \$16.3 million for institutional aid. The state of Illinois was allocated \$47.9 million through the GEER fund and the state will decide how to distribute those funds. Dr. Quider reported that President Biden has nominated Dr. Miguel Cardona as Secretary of Education. She noted that Dr. Cardona received overwhelming bipartisan support from the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pension. Dr. Quider reported that during his first week in office President Biden signed several executive actions aimed at revoking the “divisive concepts” Executive Order from the Trump Administration while launching a whole-of-government initiative to advance racial equity.

Agenda Item 7.c. – Sponsored Programs Administration Quarterly Report

The Committee reviewed the sponsored program administration quarterly written report submitted by Assistant Vice President Dara Little. No questions were raised.

Agenda Item 7.d. – Strategic Development Team Report

Director of Innovation Luke Seby reported that at the beginning of the fiscal year, NIU launched the Strategic Development Team (SDT), an initiative comprised of members of the Divisions of Research and Innovation Partnerships (RIPS), Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development (OERD), University Advancement (UA) and the NIU Foundation (NIUF). The vision of the SDT is to create a culture of strategic development through new, interdivisional approaches. The team mission is to develop “game-changing” opportunities that crosscut the NIU ecosystem, match donor, investor, and partner interests with NIU priorities, and drive enduring value to the University.

OTHER MATTERS

Committee Chair Athas asked if there were other matters to come before the Committee. The Committee confirmed that there were no other matters to be discussed.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Committee Chair Athas noted that the next meeting will be held on May 13, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

Committee Chair Athas asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Shields so moved, and Trustee Wasowicz seconded. The motion was approved.

Committee Chair Athas asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Absent

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Trustee Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

Committee Chair Rita Athas: Yes

The motion was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Jessica Cima/Crystal Doyle

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.