

Minutes of the  
**Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University**  
**Regular Meeting**  
June 16, 2022

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Board Chair Eric Wasowicz in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. This meeting is being conducted in person and through videoconferencing communications pursuant to Public Act 101-0640, enacted June 12, 2020, and section 7(e) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, allowing for virtual board meetings during a disaster declaration relating to public health concerns. As Chair of the Board, I have determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent because of the disaster. As such, trustees may attend today's meeting by audio and visual conferencing and not by physical presence.

Recording Secretary Crystal Doyle conducted a roll call.

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Absent	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Present
Trustee John Butler: Present	Trustee Montel Gayles: Present
Trustee Veronica Herrero: Absent	Trustee Bob Pritchard: Present
Trustee Jacob Sommer: Present	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; Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Financial Officer Jim Cofer; Vice President for Student Affairs Clint-Michael Reneau; 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 Business Balaji Rajagopalan; Vice President for University Advancement Catherine Squires; Chief of Police Darren Mitchell; Senior Associate Vice President for Outreach Engagement and Regional Development and Chief Engagement Officer Rena Cotsones; Deputy General Counsel Greg Brady; and University Advisory Council (UAC) Representatives Felicia Bohanon, and Peter Chomentowski.

**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.

*Trustee Athas joined the meeting at 9:01 a.m.*

**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: Yes	Trustee Dennis Barsema: Yes
Trustee John Butler: Yes	Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Absent

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Jacob Sommer: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to amend that motion, in order to approve a consent agenda for action items 8.a.2. through 8.a.7. Trustee Pritchard 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: Absent

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Jacob Sommer: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

#### **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 12, 2022**

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the minutes of May 12, 2022. Trustee Gayles 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: Absent

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Jacob Sommer: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

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

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

UAC Representative Chomentowski thanked the trustees and President Freeman for the opportunity and experience he has gained while serving on this committee and attending the Board of Trustee meetings. Representative Chomentowski also introduced the Faculty Senate President Elect for the 2022-2023 academic year Dr. Ismael Montana from the Department of History.

Chair Wasowicz thanked the staff and faculty for a wonderful year and for all their hard work. He congratulated the students that recently graduated and welcomed the new students that will be joining the Huskie family in August. Chair Wasowicz recognized the group of students from the College of Business that won the World Championship for the Charter Financial Analyst Research Challenge. Congratulations to College of Business Dean Balaji Rajagopalan, Department of Finance Chair Gina Nicolosi, and students Paula Veyhle, Nicholas Stone and Nolan O'Rear.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Wasowicz introduced the public comment portion of the meeting. General Counsel Perry stated that there was one public comment and invited Ms. Rave Meyer to the podium.

## **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, introduced Jack Tierney, Chair of the NIU Foundation to provide a verbal report for item 7.h.

The Trustees thanked Chair Tierney for his report and all his hard work.

*Trustee Herrero joined the meeting at 9:25 a.m.*

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT NO. 161**

Chair Wasowicz asked President Freeman to present the President's Report No. 161.

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

### **Agenda Item 8.a.1. Recommendation for Faculty Tenure and/or Promotion Effective 2022-2023**

President Freeman stated that agenda item 8.a.1. is superseded by agenda item 8.c.6. A Revision of Recommendation for Faculty Tenure and/or Promotion Effective 2022-2023.

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

### **Agenda Item 8.a.2. Laundry Services Contract Extension**

### **Agenda Item 8.a.3. Secondary Student Health Insurance Contract Renewal**

### **Agenda Item 8.a.4. NIU Foundation Professional Services Contract**

### **Agenda Item 8.a.5. Campus Printer/Copier Program Renewal**

### **Agenda Item 8.a.6. Cisco Maintenance Contract**

### **Agenda Item 8.a.7. Oracle ERP Hardwar/Software Contract**

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda items. Vice Chair Athas 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: Yes

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. Proposed Naming of the Campus Life Building After President John G. Peters**

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 Barsema seconded.

The Trustees all expressed how thrilled they are to have the Campus Life Building named after President John G. Peters.

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: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

#### **Agenda Item 8.c.2. Proposed Naming of New Residence Hall After Fanny Ruth Patterson**

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

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

The Trustees all expressed how wonderful it will be to have New Hall named after Fanny Ruth Patterson and what an honor it is for her and her family.

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: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

#### **Agenda Item 8.c.3. Fiscal Year 2023 Non-Represented Staff Salary Increment Allocation Guidelines**

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

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 8.c.3. Trustee Gayles 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: Yes	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

#### **Agenda Item 8.c.4. Fiscal Year 2022 All Faculty and Staff One-Time Payment (OTP) Allocation Guidelines**

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

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 8.c.4. Trustee Pritchard 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: Yes	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

#### **Agenda Item 8.c.5. Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Metropolitan Alliance of Police NIU Chapter #291**

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

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 8.c.5. Trustee Pritchard so moved, and Trustee Gayles 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: Yes	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

#### **Agenda Item 8.c.6. On- and Off-Campus Unarmed Security Patrol**

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

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 8.c.6. Vice Chair Athas 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
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Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Jacob Sommer: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

**Agenda Item 8.c.7. Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications Mobile Messaging**

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.c.7. for approval.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 8.c.7. Trustee Pritchard 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: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

**Agenda Item 8.c.8. Revision – Recommendations for Faculty Tenure and/or Promotion Effective 2022-2023**

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

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 8.c.8. 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: Abstain

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

**Agenda Item 8.c.9. Fiscal Year 2023 University Internal Budget**

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.c.9. for approval.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 8.c.9. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Trustee Pritchard seconded.

*Trustee Sommer stepped out at 10:43 a.m.*

*Trustee Sommer returned to the meeting at 10:47 a.m.*

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: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

*Break at 10:50 a.m.*

*Returned from break at 11:03 a.m.*

### **Agenda Item 8.c.10. Driving Impact Through Engagement**

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.c.10. Chief Engagement Officer and Senior Associate Vice President Division of Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development Dr. Rena Cotsones presented on Driving Impact Through Engagement.

The Trustees thanked Dr. Cotsones for a wonderful presentation.

### **Agenda Item 8.c.11. College of Business Overview**

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.c.11. Balaji Rajagopalan, Dean of the College of Business presented an overview of the College of Business.

The Trustees thanked Dean Rajagopalan for his presentation and loved hearing about all that is happening in the College of Business. They also congratulated him on the World Championship for the Charter Financial Analyst Research Challenge.

## **CHAIR'S REPORT NO. 102**

Chair Wasowicz presented the Chair's report No. 102.

Chair Wasowicz stated that he would like to switch the order of agenda items 9.b. and 9.c. so agenda item 9.b. would be presented last.

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the switching of the order of items 9.b. and 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: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

### **Agenda Item 9.a. Fiscal Year 2023 Election of Board Officers and Civil Service Merit Board Representatives**

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

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

Mr. Perry explained the process for the fiscal year 2023 elections and announced the results. Eric Wasowicz was elected as Chair for FY23, Rita Athas was elected Vice Chair for FY23, Montel Gayles was elected as Secretary for FY23, Bob Pritchard was elected 5<sup>th</sup> Member for FY23, and John Butler was elected the Civil Service Merit Board Representative for FY23.

**Agenda Item 9.c. Board of Trustees Bylaws Periodic Review**

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

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve item 9.c. Trustee Pritchard 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: Yes	Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

**Agenda Item 9.b. Resolution Honoring Student Trustee Jacob Sommer for Distinguished Service to the Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees**

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 Gayles seconded.

Trustee Sommer thanked the other trustees for the opportunity to serve as student trustee for NIU.

The Trustees thanked Trustee Sommer for his service on the Board of Trustees and wish him luck while he completes his degree at NIU and continues on to start his career.

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: Yes	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 September 15, 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: 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; real estate matters as generally described under section 2(c)(5)&(6) of the open meetings act; personnel matters as generally described under sections 2(c)(1)(2)(3) and (21) of the open meetings act; and closed session minutes matters as generally described under section 2(c)(21) of the open meetings act.

Trustee Butler 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: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

The Board closed the public meeting at 12:43 p.m.

The meeting reconvened from closed session at 2:10 p.m.

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

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Present

Trustee Dennis Barsema: Absent

Trustee John Butler: Present

Trustee Montel Gayles: Present

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Absent

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Present

Trustee Jacob Sommer: Present

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Present

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Vice Chair Athas seconded.

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

Vice Chair Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee Dennis Barsema: Absent

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Absent

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Jacob Sommer: Yes

Board Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

The motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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.*