APPROVED

Fitchburg State University

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday May 7, 2019 at 4:00 PM

Location
Room 106, Percival Hall, 254 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

Notice of a meeting of the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees
Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. in Percival Hall, Room 106, 254 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

Trustees Present
A. Clementi, A. Ramos, Jr., C. Stimpson, D. Irving, D. Phillips, D. Tiernan, F. O'Donnell, L. Barrieau, M. Nicholson

Trustees Absent
D. Nieto

Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened
F. O'Donnell

Ex Officio Members Present
R. Lapidus

Guests Present
Campus Community, Cathy Canney, Chris Picone, Christian Estrella, Crystal Aneke, G. Doiron, Heather Urbanski, Heidi Swift, Jay Bry, Jessica Murdoch, Laura Bayless, Marilyn Siderwicz, Mary Beth McKenzie, Shaina Cruel-Reynoso, Steve Swartz, Yvonne Malcolm, Zoe Frati

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

D. Irving called a meeting of the board of trustees of Fitchburg State University to order on Tuesday May 7, 2019 at 4:00 PM.

C. Public Comments

MSCA Union faculty members from various departments expressed their concerns urging the board to support the CHERISH act.

Current students, Zoe Frati and Shaina Cruel-Reynoso, each read a statement regarding the rising cost of tuition and fees. Matthew Murphy, current student, read a prepared statement on behalf of the new SGA president stating how important it is to fully support the CHERISH Act. He also reiterated his support for the legislation. Crystal Aneke, the new student trustee for the next academic year, encouraged the board to support not just the spirit of the act, but the CHERISH act itself. She expressed her opposition to the proposed fee increases for the next year.

Chairman Irving provided background on the past state funding process and the way the institution is currently funded by the state. He stated in his opinion, the university is no longer financially state supported, but state assisted. He indicated that the money the school receives from the state does not cover all the costs to operate the institution. He emphasized that the board does not want to increase fees and that tuition is fixed. He provided background on the budget process, endowments, and talked about how contracts are funded. He reminded those present that the campus currently operates with a structural deficit and that the difference must be closed with money from reserves. He emphasized that to keep the institution financially healthy is a difficult balancing act. He applauded the students for their cause and indicated respect with what the faculty and students were saying. He concluded by stating that the board has a fiscal responsibility to protect the institution and thanked them for expressing their concerns.

D. Approve Minutes from the Board of Trustees April 2, 2019 - VOTE (31-18/19)

D. Phillips made a motion to approve minutes from the Board of Trustees on 04-02-19 Board of Trustees on 04-02-19.
D. Tiernan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

E. Approve minutes from Executive Session on April 2, 2019 - VOTE (40-18/19)

F. O'Donnell arrived.
D. Phillips made a motion to approve.

M. Nicholson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Finance and Administration Committee

A. FY2020 Budget Narrative

The Chairman of the Finance Committee, D. Phillips provided the Finance Committee report. She stated the committee met and the budget was discussed in great detail. The decision to raise fees is always heartbreaking she stated, but it was determined that it must be done.

The president reiterated many of the points presented by both D. Phillips and D. Irving. He indicated that the university instituted a 5% reduction on operating for every unit on campus. The president said that all units were contributing to cost reduction. Additionally, other revenue generating initiatives were underway. The institutional goal is to contain fee increases and overall student debt.

F. O'Donnell asked if there were any staff reductions. The president responded that no occupied positions had been retrenched, but that in some cases vacant positions had been eliminated.

F. O'Donnell asked about any retirement packages. The president responded that there are currently no state retirement packages. He reminded that board that recently an early retirement package was offered and administered at the local level.

The president said that fully online graduate programs were doing well and served as a good source of revenue to balance declining undergraduate enrollment. A new MBA concentration is scheduled to launch in summer and should be a popular alternative.

There was a discussion. The consensus was that the board felt it needed to raise fees.

B. Budget Narrative Appendix

The budget narrative appendix was discussed in detail.

C. Annual Operating Budgets FY17-FY20

The annual operating budget was discussed in detail.

D. University Fee Increase - VOTE (32-18/19)

A. Clementi made a motion to approve the following annual student fee effective for the fall semester 2019: Day School Student Fee Increase University Fee: $150.00 increase for FY2020. The new fee total will be $7,624.00.
D. Phillips seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

A. Ramos voted no.

E. Course Fee - VOTE (33-18/19)

The president discussed the courses that have higher lab fees. There are currently three levels of course fees and he recommend add a fourth level at $325.00. The fee is targeted at one program (policing). This increase would be instituted next year. The fee will address high levels of equipment and resources necessary to run the police academy portion of the program
A. Clementi made a motion to approve the addition of a fourth tier to the course fee structure of $325/course, as amended, effective beginning with the summer term 2020.
C. Stimpson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
A. Ramos voted no.

F. Accelerated On Line Program Trust Fund- VOTE (34-18/19)

The president presented the accelerated online program trust fund. The establishment of this new trust fund is to assist with better understanding the contribution and cost associated with online programs relative to other GCE programs in general.
D. Phillips made a motion to in accordance to the provisions stated in Chapter 15A, Section 26 of the General Laws, hereby establishing a trust fund entitled “Accelerated Online Programs Trust Fund”. The trust is established to receive and disburse funds. This fund is established to provide for the operations of accelerated online degree programs, including receipt of tuition, fees, and to disburse expenditures, including instruction and administrative expenses. This fund is designed to be self-supporting. This trust fund shall be administered by the President of Fitchburg State University and proper records and accounts shall be maintained under his control. The receipt and disbursement of funds and necessary accounting shall be maintained in a manner consistent with proper accounting procedures for an enterprise of this kind and will be subject to audit and inspection by the Department of State Auditors and other agencies with such responsibilities.
F. O'Donnell seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

G. FY2020 Budget - VOTE (35-18/19)

D. Phillips made a motion to approve the FY2020 Budget as presented by the President.
A. Clementi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
A. Ramos voted no.

There was a discussion on endowments, the dashboard and the impact of raising online fees.

H.

Roll Forward of Funds to FY2020 Budget - VOTE (36-18/19)

D. Phillips made a motion to approve that ongoing capital projects roll forward into the FY2020 University Budget.
A. Clementi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
The president extended his praise and appreciation to Jay Bry and everyone in Financial Services for their hard work in putting together such a complicated budget.

III. Letter of Support of Increased Higher Education Funding

A. Letter of Support - VOTE (39-18/19)

Chairman Irving discussed the letter of support for increased higher education funding to be sent to the local legislative delegation.
A. Clementi made a motion to approve the attached letter of support.
D. Phillips seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan - VOTE (37-18/19)

A. Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan

President reviewed the Equal Opportunity, Diversity and Affirmative Action Plan approved by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. Discussion regarding the plan ensued and questions were answered.
D. Phillips made a motion to approve.
A. Clementi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Slate of Officers

A. Slate of Officers - VOTE (38-18/19)

D. Phillips made a motion to approve the following slate of officers effective July 1, 2019: Chairman – Donald R. Irving, Vice Chairman – C. Deborah Phillips, Clerk – Lynn M. Barrieau.
D. Tiernan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Notifications

A. Personnel Actions (N08-18/19)

The personnel actions were presented for informational purposes.

B. Financial Statements (N09-18/19)

The financial statements were presented for informational purposes.

VII. Chair's Report

A. Recognition of Service

The Chairman acknowledged the tremendous job Anna Maria Clementi preformed as a trustee. He stated that her contributions to the board and the university were invaluable.

A. Clementi stated that it has been a pleasure serving on the board. She has worked with many great people over the years. She is very proud of everything we do here for the benefit of the students and the community. She is proud of the Center for Italian Culture, and the collaborative work the university is doing in conjunction with the Fitchburg Art Museum. She intends to still be involved with the university.

VIII. President's Report

A. Fall Enrollment

The president reported that enrollment continues to be a moving target, but that he expected enrollment to be down relative to last year. Applications and deposits continue to trickle in and he will be better able to report the outcome of enrollment efforts in the fall. The university continues to reach out to underserved students to see how to better serve them. He briefly shared the Commissioner’s Equity Agenda.

B. Vice President of Institutional Advancement Jeffrey Wolfman

The president introduced Mr. Jeffrey Wolfman, Vice President of Institutional Advancement. He reported that the search committee interviewed a large diverse pool and that the campus was excited to welcome Jeffrey onboard. J. Wolfman responded that he is delighted to join the team and be part of the leadership. He provided the board with some of his past experience.

C. Undergraduate Research Conference and Convocation

The president informed the Board of the successful Convocation and Undergraduate Research Conference which were both well attended. There were a significant number of presentations at the conference. It is a great opportunity for faculty and students to work together in the academic community. At the Convocation, many scholarships and awards were presented to a diverse group of students.

D. Graduate and Undergraduate Commencements

The Graduate Commencement will be held on Thursday, May 16 at 6:30 p.m. and the Undergraduate Commencement is scheduled for Saturday, May 18 at 10:00 a.m. All

board members are invited to attend these events. The graduate ceremony will award the largest number of degrees in the institution's history.

E. Nursing Pinning

The Nursing Pinning Ceremony will be held on May 15 at 6 p.m. There are a record number of nurses graduating this year.

F. End-of-the-year Activities

The president reported on the many end-of-year activities which included the Athletic Banquet, induction ceremonies, Special Olympics, and a Naturalization Ceremony.

G. Board of Registration in Nursing

The Nursing Department received notice that the program maintains full approval status. This was presented for informational purposes.

H. News Articles

The news articles were presented for informational purposes.

The Chairman commended Alex Ramos for his service and stated Alex did a tremendous job representing students. The board wished Alex well in all his future endeavors. He is sure to accomplish great things in the future. The president announced that Alex was recognized as one of The 29 Who Shine at the State House recently.

IX. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 5:43 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Phillips