APPROVED

Fitchburg State University

Minutes

Board of Trustees

Date and Time
Tuesday September 15, 2020 at 8:00 AM

Location
This meeting will be held remotely.

Notice of a meeting of the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 8:00 a.m.

This meeting will be held via teleconference as approved by Governor Baker.

For public comments dial (when announced in the meeting): 978.665.3698
Public streaming: https://stream.meet.google.com/stream/b45ca7d0-e6cb-4632-9ca8-3fe81638a9fb

Trustees Present
A. Clementi (remote), C. Stimpson (remote), D. Irving (remote), D. Phillips (remote), D. Tiernan (remote), F. O'Donnell (remote), L. Barrieau (remote), M. Nicholson (remote), S. Olson (remote)

Trustees Absent
D. Nieto

Ex Officio Members Present
R. Lapidus (remote)

Guests Present

A. Cardelle (remote), C. Canney (remote), Campus Community (remote), G. Doiron (remote), J. Bry (remote), J. Murdoch (remote), J. Wolfman (remote), L. Bayless (remote), M. McKenzie (remote), M. Siderwicz (remote), P. McCafferty (remote), S. Swartz (remote)

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 Sep 15, 2020 at 8:05 AM.

C. Public Comments

There were none.

D. Approve Minutes from the June 29, 2020 Meeting - VOTE (01-20/21)

D. Phillips made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees on 06-29-20.
A. Clementi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
D. Phillips	Aye
C. Stimpson	Aye
D. Irving	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
A. Clementi	Aye
M. Nicholson	Aye
F. O'Donnell	Aye
S. Olson	Abstain
D. Tiernan	Aye
D. Nieto	Absent

II. President's Assessment and Goals

A. President's Goal Performance 2019-2020 Academic Year

The president reviewed his goals and reflected the highlights of the past academic year. He. highlighted the clean financial audit, and the tremendous amount of time spent on the budget by the finance team. He explained the balancing of resources and CARES act money. He discussed the Foundation’s work with private gifts and grants. On the technology side, the university switched to Google suite which has turned out to have been extremely important given the change in teaching modalities. He discussed the new telephone system and improvements in cyber security. He discussed curricular changes which included the increase in online course offerings and a move toward more certificate

programs. The university had three accreditation reviews that were all positive. Additionally, the university had a successful renewal of the Honors Program. The university spent a fair amount of time on transfer pathways, which links community colleges to higher education. He emphasized that working on the Strategic Plan was a big part of last year. He discussed student enrollment and that we continue to reach out to diverse and underserved populations.

He noted the demographic decline and emphasized the need to continue to be aggressive. He stated that enrollment management is not just about getting students to come to Fitchburg State, but it's also about retaining students through graduation. Capital projects this year were mostly deferred maintenance and ADA compliance projects. The new website is almost complete, and it looks quite good. The community relations pieces are coming together, and the Alumni Office is working to getting people more engaged. He stated that he was proud all the work the campus was doing prior to COVID and the work that was being done during the health crisis.

There was a discussion regarding social media platforms, direct marketing to students and the recent Police Academy graduating class.

D. Irving spoke of the high-quality work the university was doing and thanked him for his leadership.

B. Accept the President's Goal Assessment for AY2019-2020- VOTE (02-20/21)

D. Phillips made a motion to accept the performance appraisal summary of the president by the Chairman for AY2019-AY2020 in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Commissioner of the Board of Higher Education and recommend to the Commissioner of the Board of Higher Education the maximum allowable compensation adjustment.
C. Stimpson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

F. O'Donnell	Aye
D. Tiernan	Aye
D. Nieto	Absent
S. Olson	Aye
D. Irving	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
M. Nicholson	Aye
C. Stimpson	Aye
A. Clementi	Aye

C. President's Goals AY2020-2021

The president presented and discussed his next year's goals. Managing the pandemic was cited as a goal and will be a central focus of the year. The NECHE accreditation will also be a significant portion of the coming years work. He noted that Drs. Cathy Canney and Daneen Deptula will lead and co-chair the process and work with campus-wide committees. He briefly explained the process of accreditation.

D. Accept the President's Goals for AY2020-2021 - VOTE (03-20/21)

D. Phillips made a motion to accept the President's goals for AY2020-AY2021.
C. Stimpson seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Stimpson	Aye
S. Olson	Aye
D. Nieto	Absent
D. Tiernan	Aye
M. Nicholson	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
D. Irving	Aye
A. Clementi	Aye
F. O'Donnell	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye

III. Investment Account Balances

A. University Investment Market Value

The president said while working on the budget in early spring it seemed like an appropriate time to provide a presentation on university investments and reserves.

J. Bry explained the history of university investments that were originally held with the Commonfund, but were moved to local financial institutions years ago. There are two portfolios, one held by the university and the other held by the foundation. He explained the investments in detail. He indicated that by investing locally, it demonstrates a commitment to the community. They are doing well and have improved over time. He strongly cautioned that by taking cash out each year over the coming years to cover budget shortfalls, that by FY2023, the university could find its accounts significantly depleted.

There was a discussion on the account restrictions. There was a discussion on the rationale of moving to local investment firms. D. Irving requested the finance committee get more involved and do a deeper dive into the investments.

IV. Notifications

A.

Personnel Actions (N01-20/21)

The personnel actions were submitted for informational purposes.

V. Student Trustee Reprort

A. Steven Olson will provide the Student Trustee Report

S. Olson stated that classes have started and it's different and difficult. He expressed that some students have expressed concern with moving health services off campus. He explained the new plan did not include student involvement and that the Student Government Association was not consulted. He also reported that student activity fees were not charged this year and that has resulted in various clubs having budget problems. He announced the virtual event regarding the cost of books. He invited all board members to attend the weekly Tuesday evening SGA meetings. He will send the link to the board.

The president will provide information regarding Health Services when he gives his report.

VI. Chair's Report

A. Committee Assignments

D. Irving discussed committee assignments. He reported that we are still waiting for new trustee appointments. The governor appoints trustees to the universities and community colleges. There was a discussion.

There was a discussion on the Dean of Business and Technology position. Dr. Keith Williamson will be departing at the end of the semester. He accepted a position at the Maine Maritime Academy. The president stated that he did an outstanding job and that the university was sorry to see him go. He went on to say that Dr. Williamson is a marine engineer and that this was a job he just could not pass up. A. Clementi asked if the university was actively looking for a replacement. President Lapidus responded that given the budget a variety of options were being considered.

President Lapidus discussed faculty "leave without pay." He explained that it is an opportunity for faculty to pursue short term activities which when they return to the university enriches the classroom experience for students.

M. Nicholson asked about the equity agenda in regards to the President's Goals. The president said the equity agenda is incorporated into all aspects of the university. D. Phillips noted that the new strategic plan was built around the equity agenda.

VII. President's Report

A.

Opening of the university

The president stated that the university started the year very differently. The entire summer was spent planning for COVID-19. Unlike prior years, students moved into the residence halls over an extended period of time. There were no picnics or social events but, instead a virtual orientation. The incoming class size is approximately 850 students. The numbers are flat for freshman and down for transfer students. Our community colleges enrollment is considerably down thus impacting our feeder institutions. Overall the university is down 300 students and will most likely see the tradition of further reduction in spring. There has been a slight increase in Graduate and Continuing Education primarily resulting from online courses. This increase in enrollment does not offset losses in the day program. F. O'Donnell suggested advertising dollars be spent on social media platforms. There was a discussion.

The president discussed the demographic makeup of the incoming class. He also indicated that the campus has been de-densified and the faculty chose the modality that they wanted to teach. Classes are being taught online, in person and hybrid. The residence halls are at 60% occupancy and we have about 1050 students living on campus. Most rooms on campus were converted to singles and three of the Mara units are offline to be used for quarantine or isolation of students. Chartwells food services are operating differently this semester using a grab and go format. The president indicated that students are being respectful of the rules put in place and doing a good job of self-policing.

The president reported on the COVID testing plan and that faculty, staff, and students received formal campus repopulation plans. All documents can be found on the website and signage is everywhere to reinforce state guidelines. There are visitor logs in offices and hours of operation are posted on the website. He noted that many staff members are not on campus and continue to telework. Baseline testing was conducted as students entered campus and students from high risk states were tested and quarantined until they received a negative result. A dashboard on the website with all testing results will be continually updated and used to make health decisions moving forward. He explained that a highly regarded testing service, the Broad Institute, will be processing testing and providing results typically within 24 hours. To date, the university has been fortunate that in its first 1700 tests have been all negative. There were four students' that tested positive whose results came from community health agency reports. Each of these students live off campus. He explained the testing process and what happens if someone tests positive. He explained the contact tracing process. Students that are quarantined or isolated are provided meals and academic accommodations so they can continue classes if possible. There will be weekly testing. This will be involved process. There was a vigorous discussion on logistics, equipment, mask wearing, signage, classroom setups and the attitude on campus.

B. Courageous Conversations/Social Justice

The president reported on the Courageous Conversations sessions held this summer that revolved around black lives matter and social justice. They were well attended and good conversations came out of it. He explained the programming taking place and future plans. He informed the board of the Unity Rally taking place on September 22.

There was a discussion regarding the Center for Diversity and Inclusiveness, and restructuring of the Leading for Change Committee. The president noted the continued focus on hiring practices designed to attract more diverse candidates to campus. There was a discussion.

C. Health Services

The president discussed the closing of the on-campus Health Services Office and moving services to Community Health Connections (CHC). CHC is a federally qualified health provider that provides enhanced services that the university was not able to provide. With more students coming to campus with health issues the university sought to provide more comprehensive services. CHC has two locations both within a mile of the campus. They provide not only medical care, but dental, eye care, behavioral health and podiatry. Additionally, they will provide extending hours multiple days during the week and Saturday hours thus expanding opportunity for students to schedule appointments. They also provide lab work should those services be needed. MART bus service is available to both locations at no cost to students. Clinics will remain on campus. The university is in the process of hiring a NP or PA to serve as a liaison between the university and CHC and provide priority services to students. That person will be located at CHC. Mental health services are also being enhanced and will remain on-campus along with coordination with CHC services. F. O'Donnell stated that he understands the student frustration regarding having to leave campus for health services and did not like the idea. S. Olsen expressed the desire to have someone on campus to act as a liaison to assist students. He also stated that students will not like to travel off campus to receive health services.

D. Strategic Planning

The strategic plan went to the Department of Higher Education for review the beginning of the summer. They were complimentary of the work and then it was sent off to a subcommittee. The president said that at this point, he is not sure where it is at the moment but it seems to be at a standstill. When the plan is returned, we will provide the campus community an opportunity to review the document before it goes before the Board of Trustees for approval. The final step is to send it to the Board of Higher Education for final approval.

F. O'Donnell stated that he understands the students' frustration and that he would not want to trek a mile off campus while sick. He expressed his displeasure of a student jumping on a MART bus while sick especially during a pandemic. The president responded that by going off campus we are broadening our services. The chair asked the

number of students that used Health Services and the response was that we don't have an exact number. S. Olsen expressed the desire to have someone on campus to act as a liaison to assist students. He said it will not sit well for students to go a mile off campus to receive health services. F. O'Donnell said this was not a well out discussion and this does not seem like a great idea.

E. Conflict of Interest

The board members need to complete the annual Conflict of Interest forms.

F. News Articles

The news articles are presented for informational purposes.

VIII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

D. Tiernan asked about the new training protocols taking place in between the change of classes and other areas. The president explained what was taking place. M. Nicholson wished everyone a safe semester and thanked the administration and staff for getting the campus ready. C. Stimpson appreciated everyone's effort including the students to make everything happen and to keep up the good work. D. Phillips echoed what everyone said she has had a taste of what the administration is going through given that she was invited to be on her high school COVID team. She thanked Steve Swartz, Chief Information Officer, for all his work. S. Olson thanked everyone for being open to student concerns. A. Clementi requested to continue to discuss the closing of the Health Services Office and asked if nursing faculty can be utilized for students to see on campus. The president responded that is not their role and there would be a Fitchburg State nurse practitioner at CHC.

There was a contentious discussion.

The chair thanked everyone for what they are doing and glad that things seemed to be going well. He appreciated the work that the administration, faculty, staff and especially students are doing.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
L. Barrieau

Documents used during the meeting

- VOTE Minutes.pdf
- President's - Goals 2019-20 Assessment.pdf
- VOTE Accept the President's Goal Performance for 2019-2020.pdf
- President’s - Goals 2020-21.pdf
- VOTE President's 2020-2021 Goals.pdf
- University & Foundation Investment Balances FY19 FY20.pdf
- BOT Notifications 09152020.pdf
- Standing Committee List FY2021.pdf
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement.pdf
- Conflict of Interest Policy.pdf
- September 2020 News Clips (1).pdf