APPROVED

Fitchburg State University

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday May 3, 2022 at 4:00 PM

Location
Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center
291 Highland Ave.
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Notice of a meeting of the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees, Tuesday, May 3, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.
The meeting will take place in Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

Public comments only:
978-665-3846

Live stream
stream.meet.google.com/stream/8730b5ba-af8b-484a-8c9a-026817d4cf83

Trustees Present
D. Phillips, D. Tiernan, E. Gregoire, J. Cautela III, J. Flanagan, K. Spinelli, L. Barrieau, M. Fiorentino, Jr., M. Nicholson (remote)

Trustees Absent
C. Stimpson

Guests Present

A. Tourigny, A. Turner, C. Bullis, C. Canney, C. Estrella, F. Barricelli, G. Doiron, G. Doiron, J. Bry, J. Murdoch, J. Wolfman, M. McKenzie, P. McCafferty, R. Lapidus, R. Toomey, S. Swartz

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I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

D. Phillips called a meeting of the board of trustees of Fitchburg State University to order on Tuesday May 3, 2022 at 4:02 PM.

C. Public Comments

There were none.

D. Approve Minutes from the Board of Trustees March 29, 2022 - VOTE (23-21/22)

M. Fiorentino, Jr. made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 03-29-22.
J. Flanagan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Stimpson	Absent
L. Barrieau	Aye
D. Tiernan	Aye
M. Nicholson	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye
J. Flanagan	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye
K. Spinelli	Aye
J. Cautela III	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye

II. Finance and Administration Committee

A. FY2023 Budget Narrative

D. Phillips provided the report from the Finance & Administration Committee. She stated they had an informative meeting and as a committee they recommended the budget proposed with the fee increases as suggested.

The president spoke broadly about the budget relative to the changing higher education environment. He noted that on the revenue side of the equation there was an increase in state appropriations that included an increase in Mass Grant Plus. This will positively impact students through their financial aid packages. He indicated that the budget was

based on using 2600 FTE as an estimate of fall student enrollment. Additionally, a fee increase is recommended. The university is seeing some growth in online programs. The online programs have been doing well. He stated that the budget assumes that residence hall occupancy will remain level.

The goal of the university is to try and repurpose some of the unused residence hall space. He reported that employee salary increases are to be awarded. The Governor has provided those funds, which include retro money plus a 2% increase for the coming year. He also indicated that the operating account budget cuts of 3% implemented across the divisions in the prior year would be returned. Finally, he discussed the allocation of innovation funds that are being made available.

J. Bry noted that as SGOCE growth continues there are also associated increases in expenses.

M. Fiorentino asked what is the focus with repurposing some of the residence halls? The president responded that two strategic plans ago, there was a reasonably strong interest by the campus community for day care. That interest still remains. We are exploring a day care option for campus members and the broader community. Also, there have been requests by organizations for us to consider housing for the homeless.

B. FY2023 BOT Budget Summary

The document was discussed.

C. FY2023 BOT Fund Summary

The document was discussed.

III. FY2023 Budget Votes

A. Undergraduate University Fee Increase - VOTE (25-21/22)

D. Phillips stated that for the first time in five years the university is proposing raising this fee which will still result in our fees being below of our sister institutions.

J. Bry discussed the comparisons to the schools in our system. We still remain next to the lowest with the exception of Mass Maritime.
L. Barrieau made a motion to approve a three and a half percent (3.5%) DAY Undergraduate University Fee increase of $133.00 per semester effective for the fall semester 2022.
K. Spinelli seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Stimpson	Absent

Roll Call

J. Cautela III	No
J. Flanagan	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
K. Spinelli	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye
D. Tiernan	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye
M. Nicholson	Aye

B. GCE Ed. Service Fee Increase - VOTE (26-21/22)

J. Flanagan made a motion to approve an increase of $8.00 per credit for the graduate program ed service fee, effective for the fall semester 2022. The new total is $123.00 per credit.
D. Tiernan seconded the motion.
J. Bry noted that this fee has not had an increase in 15 years.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

E. Gregoire	Aye
M. Nicholson	Aye
K. Spinelli	Aye
J. Cautela III	No
J. Flanagan	Aye
C. Stimpson	Absent
L. Barrieau	Aye
D. Tiernan	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye

C. GCE Tuition Increase - VOTE(27-21/22)

E. Gregoire made a motion to approve the following GCE tuition increases, effective for the fall semester 2022: • An increase of $5.00 per credit for the graduate GCE program for FY23, for a new total of $195.00 per credit; and • An increase of $6.00 per credit for the undergraduate GCE program for FY23, for a new total of $150.00 per credit.
J. Flanagan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye
J. Cautela III	No
K. Spinelli	Aye
M. Nicholson	Aye

Roll Call

D. Phillips	Aye
D. Tiernan	Aye
J. Flanagan	Aye
C. Stimpson	Absent
L. Barrieau	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye

D. Accelerated Online Program Tuition and Fee Structure - VOTE (28-21/22)

K. Spinelli made a motion to vote to recommend the following accelerated online program tuition and fee structure: • An increase of $19 per credit for the accelerated online MBA, for a new total of $436 per credit hour, consisting of $284 tuition and $152 of fees; and • An increase of $13 per credit for the Accelerated Online Masters of Education, for a new total of $385 per credit hour, consisting of $233 tuition and $152 of fees.
L. Barrieau seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Nicholson	Aye
K. Spinelli	Aye
J. Cautela III	No
L. Barrieau	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye
J. Flanagan	Aye
C. Stimpson	Absent
E. Gregoire	Aye
D. Tiernan	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye

E. FY2023 Budget - VOTE (24-21/22)

J. Flanagan made a motion to vote to recommend the FY2023 Budget as presented by the President.
D. Tiernan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Barrieau	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye
D. Tiernan	Aye
K. Spinelli	Aye
C. Stimpson	Absent
J. Cautela III	Aye
J. Flanagan	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye
M. Nicholson	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye

F. Roll Forward of Funds to FY2023 Budget - VOTE (29-21/22)

K. Spinelli made a motion to vote to recommend that ongoing capital projects roll forward into the FY2023 University Budget.
J. Flanagan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Stimpson	Absent
D. Tiernan	Aye
K. Spinelli	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye
M. Nicholson	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye
J. Flanagan	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
J. Cautela III	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye

IV. Finance Dashboard

A. Current Finance Dashboard

D. Phillips indicated the finance dashboard was included for discussion.

J. Bry provided a quick review. Enrollments have been going down and trying to maintain the faculty/staff ratios is always at the forefront. He discussed the appropriations and percentages. We have been averaging around $21million and assets have increased. J. Bry suggested other data can be included in the future if that is the Board's preference.

There was a discussion regarding getting the institution right sized given the past few years and looking at the dashboard more frequently.

The board thanked J. Bry for the information.

V. Slate of Officers

A. VOTE (32-21/22)

E. Gregoire made a motion to approve the following slate of officers effective July 1, 2022: Chair– C. Deborah Phillips Vice Chair – Lynn Barrieau Clerk – David Tiernan.
J. Flanagan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Nicholson	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
D. Tiernan	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye
K. Spinelli	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye
J. Cautela III	Aye
C. Stimpson	Absent
J. Flanagan	Aye

VI. Auditing Services

A. VOTE (33-21/22)

J. Flanagan made a motion to approve the President's recommendation to name Bollus Lynch, LLP as the new auditing firm for the University, the Foundation, and the Supporting Organization.
M. Nicholson seconded the motion.
E. Gregoire asked out of the two firms' presentations, what was the distinguishing factor?

The president responded that both had the credentials to do the job and both provided good presentations. He indicated that the finance team preferred Bollus Lynch, LLP, and thought that they would provide more guidance and hands-on services. He also expressed that some concern had been voiced regarding a firm that services so many other state institutions and if that might lend itself to a cookie-cutter approach to handling our audit. It was felt that Bollus Lynch LLP, being a smaller firm, would provide more customized services and attention that matched the needs of our institution. Again, it was reiterated that both firms were qualified.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

D. Tiernan	No
K. Spinelli	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye
M. Nicholson	Aye
L. Barrieau	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye
J. Flanagan	Aye
C. Stimpson	Absent
J. Cautela III	Aye

VII. Notifications

A.

Personnel Actions (N10-21/22)

The personnel actions were submitted for informational purposes.

B. Financial Statements (N11-21/22))

The financial statements were submitted for informational purposes.

VIII. Student Trustee Report

A. Joseph Cautela will provide the Student Trustee Report

J. Cautela provided a few updates since the last meeting regarding communication to Theater students. He met with Dr. Cathy Canney, Interim Provost and Vice-President, Academic Affairs to discuss some of these concerns. They had a productive meeting.

J. Cautela proudly announced that he and former Student Trustee, Steve Olson led the charge to vote against the Masspirg $9.00 charge to all students. Many students were unaware that they were being billed for this. The students voted to eliminate the Masspirg charge.

He next introduced Ms. Allison Turner, who was recently elected as the new student trustee.

He expressed his appreciation to the Board. He has learned so much by developing a new perspective on how the institution operates. He thanked everyone and has enjoyed working closely with the administration. He commended Dr. Laura Bayless and Dr. Cathy Canney for going out of their way to meet and attend student events such as the Student Government Association meetings. He concluded his remarks by asking the Board to continue to listen to
student voices.

IX. Chair's Report

A. C. Deborah Phillips will provide the Chair's Report

D. Phillips thanked J. Cautela for his perspective and great reports. She stated that the Board expects to hear from him in the future on all the numerous things that he has accomplished.

The president asked about the initiatives that Masspirg had in place and how those plans would continue, especially around green initiatives?

J. Cautela responded that SGA has been taking on that charge to complete the open initiatives. SGA communicated to the students that there was a position to be filled to spearhead the green proposals moving forward. They have a sustainability committee

which has implemented recycling bins around student campus living. He said, that the work that Masspirg should have been doing will now be completed by the SGA.

D. Phillips officially welcomed the newest trustees.

Mr. Eric Gregoire is the alumni representative to the board. He lives in Western Massachusetts where his family owns and operates a small farm. He also works at UMASS as a senior budget analyst in the President's Office. E. Gregoire stated that he was also a student trustee during his time at Fitchburg State and is very happy to return to the Board.

Ms. Jennifer Flanagan provided information on her background. She graduated with her masters from Fitchburg State in 2004 while running for state office for the first time. She was elected State Representative for two terms. She was elected to the Massachusetts State Senate in 2008 and served until 2017. She later went on to serve on the Governor's Cannabis Commission and now is the Director of Regulatory Policy at Vicente Sederberg LLP. She noted while going to school here, she loved the faculty and staff, and indicated that her time at Fitchburg State was rewarding.

D. Phillips announced that M. Nicholson will be resigning as of July 1. We are sorry to see her go. She has made wonderful contributions to the board and her questions were always student focused. She will be missed.

The president next presented certificates of appreciation to J. Cautela and M. Nicholson and thanked them both for their service and contributions. D. Phillips acknowledged M. Nicholson's role on the Provost search.

D. Phillips next asked for a volunteer to serve on the Steering Committee for the Theater Block project. The president said the seat to be filled would provide guidance with regard to philanthropic donors and an extra set of eyes on grant proposals, and fundraising.

M. Fiorentino stated that he would be pleased to serve. D. Phillips expressed her appreciation, and accepted his willingness to serve on the committee.

L. Barrieau wanted to inform the Board that the president was highlighted in the Worcester Business Journal as one of the Central MA Power 50. This distinction is so well deserved. She extended her congratulations.

X. President's Report

A. COVID-19 Update

The president said we are two weeks until the end of the academic year and in the past 2.5 years we have really weathered the storm regarding the health crisis. We have not had any major COVID-19 outbreaks and we continue to have conversations as a system

on the subject. We will have to decide for the incoming new students and staff whether or not to mandate vaccines. We know it's on top of everyone's minds and he will keep the board posted on next steps.

B. Commencement

The president said we are excited about holding our two in person commencements. All Board members are invited to be members of the platform party. He noted the dates and times.

C. Enrollment Update

The president provided an enrollment update. We continue to work aggressively on enrollment. Students are making decisions slower. He noted that in the Honors Program, there is a significant increase in interest and enrollment. He explained the Honors Program. He indicated that we will find the resources necessary to keep this program moving forward as enrollment grows. He stated that we are seeing healthy-sized campus tour groups around campus. Our biggest feeders are the Community Colleges and their current enrollment is down.

There was a discussion on the Honors Program, 3-year degree, and early college students.

D. Nursing Pinning - May 11 at 6 p.m. Weston Auditorium

The president extended an invitation to the Board to attend the nursing pinning.

E. Academic Calendar 2022-2023

The academic calendar was presented for planning purposes.

F. News Articles

The news articles were submitted for informational purposes.

There was a brief discussion on the Dean search.

The president formally thanked Dr. Catherine Canney for her stellar performance this past year as the Interim Provost, and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

XI. 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 5:06 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Tiernan

Documents used during the meeting

- VOTE Minutes.pdf
- Budget Narrative FY2023 4.25.2022.pdf
- FY23 BOT Budget Summary.pdf
- FY23 BOT Fund Summary.pdf
- VOTE - DAY Undergraduate University Fee Increase.pdf
- VOTE - GCE Ed Service Fee Increase.pdf
- VOTE - GCE Tuition Increase.pdf
- VOTE - Accelerated Online Program Tuition and Fee Structure.pdf
- VOTE Budget FY2023.pdf
- VOTE Roll forward of funds to FY2023 budget.pdf
- FY23-Master Data Sheet-Dashboard-BoT 4.21.2022.pdf
- VOTE Slate of Officers.pdf
- VOTE Auditing Services.pdf
- BOT Notifications 05032022.pdf
- FSU_MAR 31 2022-Financial Statement with Executive Summary.pdf
- 2022-2023 Academic Calendar.pdf
- Clips for May 2022.pdf