APPROVED

Fitchburg State University

Minutes

Board of Trustees Meeting

Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday September 12, 2023 at 8:15 AM

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

Notice of a meeting of the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees on Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 8:15 a.m. in Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center, 291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420

Trustees Present
A. Turner, C. Stimpson (remote), D. Phillips, D. Tiernan, E. Gregoire, K. Spinelli, S. King-Goodwin

Trustees Absent
J. Flanagan, L. Barrieau, M. Fiorentino, Jr.

Ex Officio Members Present
R. Lapidus

Guests Present

A. Tourigny, F. Barricelli, G. Doiron, J. Bry, J. Murdoch, L. Bayless, M. Bruun, N. Robichaud, P. Marshall, P. McCafferty, P. Weizer, R. Toomey, S. Dodd

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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 Sep 12, 2023 at 8:17 AM.

C. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

D. Approve Minutes from the June 6, 2023 Meeting - VOTE (01-23/24)

C. Stimpson made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Trustees Meeting on 06-06-23.
E. Gregoire seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
D. Phillips	Aye
L. Barrieau	Absent
K. Spinelli	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye
C. Stimpson	Aye
D. Tiernan	Aye
J. Flanagan	Absent
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Absent
A. Turner	Aye
S. King-Goodwin	Aye

II. President's Assessment and Goals

A. President's Goals Performance 2022-2023 Academic Year

D. Phillips announced the first part of this exercise is to review the performance of the President’s goals that were approved last fall.

The President indicated that the same format had been used as in prior years. He discussed the comprehensive list of accomplishments that have taken place.

The President stated that COVID numbers were down and that the university had a good year in that regard. The university continued to honor any agreements with bargaining

units related to testing. He next discussed the various annual independent financial audits that took place. All audits were clean with no findings. He next discussed the two state audits. The first involved the operational aspects of pandemic relief funds distribution. There were no findings. The cyber security audit was also discussed. There was one minor finding involving the tracking of participant training. This issue had already been addressed prior to the conclusion of the audit through the adoption of new training software module. He noted that the higher education system is vulnerable to attacks and all are working diligently to avoid any infiltrations. He provided the highlights of last year's efforts that included updates on Institutional Advancement efforts and Technology.

Mr. Stefan Dodd, Chief Information Officer was introduced.

The President next talked about Academic Affairs activity which involved articulation agreements, the early college consortium, and the upcoming fall assessment in the Education Department. He noted that the investment on recruiting students is a priority and getting the message out about the value of higher education is a focus. The university continues to work on diversity, equity and inclusion. Our admissions numbers are up slightly with regard to new freshmen students and undergraduate transfer numbers are slightly down. Graduate students are roughly flat, but international students on campus continue to increase.

The influx and recruitment of international students was discussed.

The President talked about the reworking and improvement of the admissions process, marketing, the digital magazine, alumni events and capital projects.

D. Tiernan asked about the Theater Project. The President responded that it continues to move along but it's going slower than anticipated. Advancement is working to attract higher capacity donors. The President reported on the new restaurant in the store front by the theater. He indicated that there is a reasonable amount of activity around the Theater Block area in general.

C. Phillips reminded the Board of the process for the President's evaluation and compensation.

B. Accept the President's Goals Assessment for AY2022-2023 - VOTE (02-23/24)

D. Tiernan made a motion to accept the performance appraisal summary of the president by the Chair for AY2022-AY2023 in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Commissioner of the Board of Higher Education. And It is requested that the Board of Trustees recommend to the Commissioner of the Board of Higher Education the maximum allowable compensation adjustment.
S. King-Goodwin seconded the motion.

There was a discussion on a recent $1.5m bequest.

E. Gregoire asked how the presented goals assessment lines up with the Commissioner's guidelines. The President suggested that he review the dashboard put in place by the DHE and report information as requested in the Commissioner's evaluation letter. He noted the location of the DHE dashboard for those interested in reviewing longitudinal data.

There was a discussion about the process. The President indicated that he was following prior practice, but is open to other methods should there be suggestions.

D. Phillips, stated that if the process is to be changed, it must be modified prior to the beginning of the next review cycle (fall 2024).
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. King-Goodwin	Aye
A. Turner	Aye
L. Barrieau	Absent
D. Tiernan	Aye
C. Stimpson	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Absent
K. Spinelli	Aye
E. Gregoire	Aye
D. Phillips	Aye
J. Flanagan	Absent

C. President's Goals AY2023-2024

The President presented and discussed his goals for the next year.

D. Accept the President's Goals for AY2023-2024 - VOTE (03-23/24)

D. Tiernan made a motion to accept the President's goals for AY2023-2024.
S. King-Goodwin seconded the motion.
E. Gregoire reiterated that it would be worthwhile to review the evaluation process. He asked when was the last comprehensive review. The President provided background on what is taking place system-wide with regard to a comprehensive review. There was a discussion.

A. Turner asked a question about position control. The President responded that it is both software and a process designed to automate and organize positions on campus and to pull related data about them together.

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

Roll Call

D. Tiernan	Aye
C. Stimpson	Aye
L. Barrieau	Absent
D. Phillips	Aye
M. Fiorentino, Jr.	Absent
E. Gregoire	No
A. Turner	Aye
K. Spinelli	Aye
J. Flanagan	Absent
S. King-Goodwin	Aye

III. Notifications

A. Personnel Actions (N01-23/24)

The personnel actions were submitted for informational purposes.

A. Turner commented on the high number of resignations this year and last year. The President addressed the challenges of the current marketplace. There are restrictions regarding salary adjustments and advancement. We can not compete with the private sector and are confronted with trying to meet high salary demands.

E. Gregoire asked what planned changes does the administration have in place to investigate the high number of resignations.

J. Murdoch commented that the university is constantly evaluating salaries and assessing marketplace changes. Post COVID, people have readjusted their lives and the university is trying to piece together why people are leaving and what new benefits might be available to assist with retention.

IV. Student Trustee Report

A. Allison Turner will provide the Student Trustee Report

A. Turner reminded the Board of the invitation to attend Rock the Block which has been postponed to Thursday, September 14 because of inclement weather. She hopes that the Trustees will be able to attend. It is her goal to have Board members interact with students on a more informal level. The way to bridge that gap is to have Board members spend time on campus. Students are unaware of what the Board does.

V. Chair's Report

A.

Debbie Phillips will provide the Chair's Report.

D. Phillips informed the Board of the meeting with all the state university and community college Board chairs with the Commissioner. They talked about presidential evaluations and compensation, strategic planning and the equity agenda. It was a productive meeting and they will be meeting again in the future and address issues more like a system. She next talked about Trustee appointments and the challenge of filling vacancies within the system. Also discussed was the DHE Trustee Convening tentatively scheduled for Nov. 9, 2023. She encouraged Board members to attend and stated that the organizers seek input from the Trustees. If there are topics of interest, please send them to her or the President.

B. Board Retreat date - June 4,5 or 6 2024

A doodle poll will be sent to the Board to solicit feedback on the best date for the university retreat this summer.

C. Board Effectiveness Retreat per NECHE

The President reminded the Board that one of NECHE's directives is to schedule a board governance retreat facilitated by a third party. This is an opportunity for the Board to weigh in on what is requested of them as it relates to best practices. The timeline was discussed.

The President offered to reach out to an expert from Harvard to conduct this necessary work.

D. Student Life Sub Committee Meeting on 9/19 at 8:15 a.m. (need to appoint a Chair)

The President reminded the Board of the Student Life Committee meeting that is scheduled on September 19. D. Phillips will appoint a Chair prior to the meeting.

E. Conflict of Interest

The annual form will be distributed to the Board for completion.

VI. President's Report

A. Opening of the university

The President reported that the opening of the fall semester went smoothly and there were no real issues. The move-in to the Residence Halls went well. Many of the Residence Halls had upgrades with new carpeting and paint. The doubles and triples in many rooms were converted to premium singles. The students are happy with private rooms. He also noted that there are more comfort pets on campus.

B. Enrollment Data

This was discussed previously.

C. Admissions/Financial Aid/Marketing

This was discussed previously.

D. Student Equity

The President informed the Board of the recent changes for undocumented students who are now eligible for Financial Aid. They will need to provide evidence of three years of residency in Massachusetts to be eligible for financial assistance.

E. Budget Updates

The President discussed the state budget and the money that the campuses might receive.

F. State Audits

The President discussed the audits previously.

G. Institutional Advancement

This was discussed previously.

H. Financial Sustainability Task Force

The President discussed the task force and their work. The current results of their work are posted on the webpage. Round three begins this fall and working groups will be repopulated as necessary as there are some vacancies. Recommendations from the five working groups are due by December.

I. Infrastructure/Technology

The President discussed this previously.

J. Revisit Chartwell's Proposal

The President asked the board for an opportunity to revisit the Dining Hall renovation and mandatory meal plan proposal that was not approved in the spring. He noted that more

data from students is being collected and that he would like to present a more detailed plan at a future meeting. There were no objections to his request.

VII. 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 10:13 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Tiernan

Documents used during the meeting

- VOTE Minutes.doc.pdf
- Presidential Evaluation Summary Document 2022-23 RSL (1).pdf
- VOTE Accept the President's Goal Performance for 2022-2023.pdf
- President’s - Goals 2023-24 RSL .pdf
- VOTE President's 2023-2024 Goals.pdf
- Personnel Actions Sept. 12, 2023.pdf
- Welcome Back - Fall 2023 - FINAL RSL.pdf
- BYLAWS Adopted as of Feb. 7, 2023.pdf
- Financial Aid Eligibility.pdf
- Cyber Security Training.pdf
- Clips for September 2023.pdf