

Bridgewater State University
Board of Trustees Meeting
December 14, 2021
Virtual Zoom Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustees Alexander, Durgin, Caulfield, Kopellas, Giles, Longo, Oliari, MacCormack and Turchon

MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustee Prince

ALSO PRESENT: President Clark; EVP and Provost Ismaili; Chief of Staff Leuenberger; Vice Presidents Gentlewarrior, Jason, Jean, Molife, Powers, Oravec, Shropshire, Zuromski; Special Advisor deMacedo

Under the order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, as declared on March 12, 2020 by Governor Baker, having been complied with, and a quorum of the Board virtually present, the Board of Trustees held a zoom meeting on December 14, 2021 with Chairman Durgin presiding.

Chairman Durgin called the meeting to order at 5:10pm. He asked the Trustees if it would be acceptable to dispense with a roll call after each action item as long as the vote is unanimous.

On motion duly made and seconded via a roll call vote, Trustee MacCormack-yes, Trustee Caulfield-yes, Trustee Giles-yes, Trustee Kopellas-yes, Trustee Alexander-yes, Trustee Longo-yes, Trustee Oliari-yes, Trustee Turchon-yes, Trustee Durgin-yes, it was that the Board of Trustees dispense with a roll call vote for each unanimous vote for the duration of this meeting due to the length of the agenda.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (MacCormack, Alexander) it was to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on October 20, 2021.
(Attachment)

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

**Chairman's
Report**

Chairman Durgin had the pleasure of attending and participating in the annual BSU Holiday Chorale. The musicians and faculty are astounding.

Student Voice

Trustee Kopellas noted the students are finishing with their finals. They appreciate the many communications throughout the semester.

Also, SGA is working with several departments to attend meetings where there is an opportunity to discuss any issues. SGA is working on the statewide meeting day.

President's Report

President Clark thanked the Trustees for their dedication, compassion and support during the most challenging period of this university. He appreciates Chairman Durgin's weekly conversations. President Clark acknowledged the honor for Trustee MacCormack who was recognized for her valued service in establishing the UMass Dartmouth Law School.

President Clark acknowledged the passing of Joe Martin, Tim Mitchell, Jean Fitzpatrick and Dennis Bicknell who each shared a dedication to our students.

Highlights:

*Division of Operations was recognized at UMass Lowell where Vice President Jason and her team were honored with the Leading by Example award. BSU was recognized for their work in energy efficiency and effective stewardship of our resources.

*BSU has had an extremely successful semester having a low positivity rate and he appreciates our students, faculty and staff for the hard work throughout the semester. Spring public health protocols will be announced soon.

*Joe Farroba, men's basketball coach, secured his 400th win which makes him the most winningest coach in BSU's history.

*Faculty and staff labor contracts are resolved and working to secure funding. The Governor signed the ARPA federal stimulus spending bill. \$5M in this bill is allocated for deferred maintenance at BSU (some monies will go towards HVAC improvements in the Library). \$2M in this bill for cyber security.

*Foundation private assets have crossed \$70M.

*Commencement will be held at Gillette Stadium in June.

*MRISJ will be located at 161 Summer Street which was purchased through the Foundation. Construction has begun (paid for through private funding).

*Master of Science in Mathematics has been fast tracked by the BHE.

*Work is ongoing for NECHE Accreditation, Strategic Plan 2.0 and racial justice and equity.

President Clark thanked everyone for their resilience here on campus.

ACTION/ INFORMATION ITEMS

EXECUTIVE

Debt Financing for Burnell Project

Vice President Shropshire stated the project cost for Burnell renovations are \$39M; therefore, seeking Board approval to finance \$14M. They are meeting with Mass Development on the financing plans.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Caulfield, MacCormack) it was that the Board of Trustees approves borrowing up to \$14 million for the Burnell Renovation Project based upon the \$25 million already provided in state funding for the project as recommended by the Executive Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated December 1, 2021.
(Attachment)

Debt Prepay for Tinsley Center

Vice President Shropshire noted the request is to prepay this amount to better position ourselves for future borrowing for Burnell and it will also save on our operating budget for next year.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Turchon, Alexander) it was that the Board of Trustees approves paying the remaining unbudgeted balance (\$492,534) on the Massachusetts Health and Education Finance Authority Tinsley Center bond financing as recommended by the Executive Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated December 1, 2021.
(Attachment)

Contingent Debt Financing for Moakley Communication Studies Capital Grant

Vice President Shropshire noted the request is to approve contingent financing to fund \$5M in the renovation project for the Communication Studies program.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Caulfield, Alexander) it was that the Board of Trustees approves borrowing \$3 million for the Moakley Communication Studies Capital Fund Project contingent upon receipt of \$5 million in DCAMM funding for the project as recommended by the Executive Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated December 1, 2021.
(Attachment)

Contract with Capeway Roofing Systems, Inc. (Moakley Center Roof Replacement)

Vice President Shropshire noted this contract is for the replacement of the Moakley roof.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Caulfield, MacCormack) it was that the Board of Trustees approves a contract with Capeway Roofing Systems, Inc. as recommended by the Executive Committee and described in the memorandum from President Clark dated December 1, 2021.
(Attachment)

Interdivisional Initiatives

Chief of Staff Leuenberger noted the areas of focus for interdivisional initiatives are tied to the Racial Justice Task Force and enrollment management. There is also a lot of focus on the retention and recruitment of students. There is continued work with gateway cities, early college and ensuring students have direct access from community colleges to BSU.

(Attachment)

President's Expenses and Upcoming Travel (August-October 2021)

The president's expenses were provided as an information item.

(Attachment)

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRSSabbatical Leave Requests

Trustee MacCormack stated there were 32 applicants for sabbaticals: 14 for Fall, 16 for Spring and 2 for a full-year sabbatical. The sabbatical applications represent a wide range of topics.

On motion duly made and seconded (MacCormack, Caulfield) it was that the Board of Trustees accepts the Sabbatical Leave Requests as recommended by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and as described in the memorandum from President Clark dated November 12, 2021.

(Attachment)

Faculty and Librarian Hiring Update

Trustee MacCormack noted due to a hiring freeze during the pandemic, hiring has been limited. Many people have also retired during this past year.

Financial Aid Report

Trustee MacCormack noted 8,268 students receive some form of financial aid. Federal emergency assistance was very valuable to our students. Loans decreased as a result of this funding.

(Attachment)

University Fact Sheet, Five-Year Trends

The report was provided as an information item. The trend data provided is very helpful and important.

(Attachment)

Strategic Enrollment Planning Update

Trustee MacCormack noted there are various phases of planning and staff are currently working on the implementation phase. We are in a very competitive environment which requires everyone to be engaged.

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIED

Divisional Priorities (AY21-22 Ismaili/Oravec)

Provost Ismaili noted there are 10 priorities in his division and mentioned a few: NECHE, continuation of adapting to COVID implications, Racial Justice Task Force recommendations, strategic enrollment and academic innovation.

Vice President Oravec noted one of his top priorities is student mental health and wellbeing. Other priorities are: advancing racial justice and equity, supporting staff and students, promoting student engagement, preparing for post-pandemic organizational health, and continuing strategic planning efforts in his division.

(Attachment)

FINANCE AND OPERATIONSFY2022/Q1 Trust Funds Report

Committee Chair Longo stated the trust funds are in line. The Resident Life Trust Fund is \$140K under budget.

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Longo, MacCormack) it was that the Board of Trustees accepts and approves the FY2022/Q1 Trust Funds Report as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee and as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated November 12, 2021.

(Attachment)

Meal Plan Rates for AY2022-23

Trustee Longo stated there is a recommendation to increase the meal plan rate and recognized student feedback is important. Vice President Jason noted fees have not been raised for the past few years. A number of changes and improvements have been implemented and feedback has been received from three areas: NICHE (BSU ranked within the top 200 nationally for our dining program; ranked #1 among the state universities); an annual survey which is used to inform changes; and every 3-years a sky factor survey is completed and this will be implemented again soon.

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Longo, Caulfield) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the Meal Plan Rates for AY2022-23 as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated November 12, 2021.

(Attachment)

FY2022/Q1 Budget Report

Vice President Shropshire stated the budget is tracking better and savings are rolling into the overall budget. He noted they will complete a better projection for the second quarter based on enrolled credits and occupancy.

(Attachment)

FY2022/Q1 Contracts Report

The quarterly contracts report was provided as an information item.
(Attachment)

Capital Projects Update

The capital projects update was provided as an information item.
(Attachment)

STUDENT SUCCESS AND DIVERSITYProactive Data-Informed Strategies Advancing Retention and Equity at BSU and Retention and Graduation Rates Trends for First-time and Transfer Students

Trustee MacCormack noted the committee reviewed data from the Summer Bears program, student navigators' initiative, student academic engagement and student retention which shows where we are doing well and where we can do better.

It's important to scale up those strategies which are working and identify external resources to support these programs. Focus will begin on second year students and transfer students. Encourage faculty to identify students who are not engaged. Look at interventions and strategies for racial justice and equity. Vice President Gentlewarrior's handbook is getting attention nationally as well as regionally. The first institution from Arizona recently joined the consortium.

(Attachment)

AY21-22 Divisional Priorities (Gentlewarrior)

Vice President Gentlewarrior highlighted some of her priorities: admissions strategies, veterans, latinx population, racial justice and equity, and her work with the consortium. She acknowledged the work of Vice President Zuromski and Asst. Vice President Pacheco for the work of ERM (BSU may be the first institution integrating racial equity into our work).

(Attachment)

UNIVERSITY SAFETY AND SECURITYTitle IX Sexual Harassment Policy

Committee Chair Caulfield noted the policy removes the requirement that individuals attend a live hearing which makes the process less intimidating. Also, the written response deadline has been changed – notified within 7 days vs. 10 days.

On motion duly made and seconded (Caulfield, MacCormack) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the new Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy as recommended by the University Safety and Security Committee and described in the memorandum from President Clark dated November 24, 2021.

(Attachment)

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIED

Equal Opportunity/Title IX Data

Committee Chair Caulfield noted the formal statistics for the past five years were provided. There was an obvious dip due to the pandemic.

A member in Director Frawley's team offers awareness training which can be reported on at a future meeting.

(Attachment)

Clery Report

The overall safety data on campus was provided. Racial Justice and policing changes have been made. Campus Police is close to hiring a police community liaison and community health clinician. Student mental health is a concern, and the role of police has expanded over time.

(Attachment)

ALUMNI AND DEVELOPMENTFY2022\Q1 Alumni and Development Dashboard Report

Committee Chair Turchon stated there is over-performance of the endowment for the first quarter and experienced increased giving. Endowment quarter ended with combined portfolio of \$59.3M. CDO Oliver stated with net assets at \$17M, this represents a great year and she is expecting good news at the end of the next quarter.

On motion duly made and seconded (Turchon, MacCormack) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the FY2022/Q1 Alumni and Development Dashboard Report as recommended by the Alumni and Development Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated November 24, 2021.

(Attachment)

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIEDAlumni Update

Trustee Turchon noted the Alumni Foundation has been very active in establishing many goals and working on fundraising events and bringing back traditions. An Admission event for Alumni will be held on January 14 with the goal of encouraging their children/grandchildren to enroll at BSU. The Crimson Pride Golf Tournament will be held in June. Leadership Dinner is under consideration for June.

Foundation Update

Trustee Turchon noted they are working on deferred maintenance for properties owned by the Foundation. Also under construction is the property at 161 Summer Street, which will be the new home for the MRISJ. The goal is to open the doors in September 2022.

RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

Committee Report

Chairman Durgin noted the Board created this committee in response to the RJTF report and it will meet frequently. The committee members reviewed the mission and organization of the committee which will be under Provost Ismaili's leadership.

Provost Ismaili stated there are 4 groups on campus that are focused on racial justice and equity: the Board, the Cabinet, RJ Council and a student advisory group which will be created soon.

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Cyber Security

Vinny DeMacedo spoke about a cyber security consortium and the creation a cyber security range at BSU. They were able to assist the commonwealth in putting together a consortium in 4 different regions in Massachusetts. \$16.5M funding is secured for this consortium which will serve as a national model.

(Attachment)

Martin Richard Institute for Social Justice

Vice President Molife spoke about what has been accomplished over the fall semester. The Foundation purchased the building on Summer Street which will house the MRISJ next fall. All funds for the purchase and renovation are tied to donations. The Martin Richard scholarship is for eligible students who attend the Neighborhood House Charter School and are interested in attending BSU.

(Attachment)

BSU Website

Vice President Jean provided an overview of the website and the implementation of a continuous model in updating the website and the improvement of organic google searches.

AY21 Divisional Initiatives (Molife, Jean, DeMacedo)

Vice Presidents Molife and Jean and Special Advisor DeMacedo each reviewed their divisional initiatives.

(Attachment)

OTHER BUSINESS

The meeting concluded with Chairman Durgin acknowledging the leadership, faculty, staff and students for guiding the university through the most difficult challenges in its history with a focus on the safety of our students and the campus.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (MacCormack, Turchon) it was that the meeting be adjourned (6:45 pm).

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret A. Caulfield

Margaret A. Caulfield, Esq.
Secretary

Minutes prepared by:
Tracey Keif