

Bridgewater State University  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
June 18, 2020  
Virtual Meeting

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustees Durgin, Alexander, Caulfield, Benson, Denterlein, Longo, Murphy, MacCormack, Oliari, Turchon

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

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

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 conference call meeting on June 18, 2020 with Chairman Durgin presiding.

Chairman Durgin called the meeting to order at 4:05pm.

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (MacCormack, Benson) it was to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on June 1, 2020.  
(Attachment)

**Chairman's  
Report**

Chairman Durgin applauded the social justice forum. This was a highly successful gathering where 250 people participated. BSU is intensively aware of each other and its roots for each other's success. Several years ago the Board adopted a statement of values to ensure others are keenly aware of what the university stands for. If you have not already signed this statement, please feel free to do so. Trustee Alexander, who is cochairing the Racial Justice Task Force, commented on the feeling and the context of these events, and he applauds the seriousness of President Clark and his team in hearing our students and the citizens of Bridgewater. He is honored and humbled to join this task force. He was clear that this is very difficult work. There is a lot of truth telling to take place and realizations to be had. BSU can accomplish this task, but it won't be easy.

**President's  
Report**

President Clark thanked Trustee Alexander for his willingness to serve and to lead this Task Force. This is a big undertaking and we are committed to make change. He also thanked Drs. Mary Grant and Carolyn Petrosino for their roles in chairing this. Every day going forward we will continue the work of racial justice. The goal is to listen, be introspective and gather information from across the world to make change. He will soon announce 4 vice chairs to serve on the task force and it will be populated with 25 people.

President Clark noted funding for major capital projects has been suspended for one year, therefore, the Burnell School proposal is delayed. He reported BSU's Cape Cod campus has a 'virtual handshake' with Cape Cod Collaborative (they provide instructional support and student services for K-12). They will co-locate in this building, take over the operation and cost of the building and put \$2M of capital into the building. The Town of Yarmouth is pleased about this. We have received \$974,000 for a capital project (fire protection); \$277,000 for endowment incentive money; \$100,000 from the Lumina Foundation (BSU is 1 of 6 institutions in MA to be known as equity focused); and a grant from the United Way. BSU was designated as a Massachusetts early college program where we partner with a high school offering college classes in a high school (Fall River). We will continue to focus on gateway cities and at-risk populations (Durfee High School).

UMass Dartmouth chancellor is stepping down and he wished him well. Because of our efforts with BCC (President Douglas), many students are transferring to BSU.

The presidents agreed to have an institute to focus on women leaders in higher education, which will offer mentorship. BSU is organizing this effort and there will be 19 participates; there are 3 from BSU.

Next week at the BHE meeting, the Parthenon Group will present the financial stress test results. Vice President Shropshire has been leading the CFOs. As of today, none of the state universities failed the stress test, however, not all community colleges passed.

**Continuation Budget for FY2021**

Trustee Murphy commented the current fiscal year is ending better than anticipated and attributes this to administration. Going forward, there are some uncertainties. Efforts have to continue regarding enrollment. The state has not yet passed a budget.

Vice President Shropshire noted 98% of revenue comes from enrollment and the state. As of right now, we are down 11.1% in registered credits. Registrations are still coming in. Vice President

Oravec and his team are working hard with students who have gone through orientation. Currently experiencing a delay with freshmen coming in. They plan on single rooms only for the fall (43% of our occupancy). Room deposits are close to full occupancy. There will be some savings due to a hiring pause. MSCBA has been working on a refinancing plan which projects reducing our debt service requirement; BSU will save \$12.4M. The refinancing has an impact on FY22. This will have to be paid back and spans over the time period from 2029 to 2041. Operating expense reductions have been realized through the hard work of administration.

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Denterlein, Murphy) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the Continuation Budget for FY2021 in the amount of \$53,122,608 (prorated expenditure level for 3.5 months) as recommended and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated June 12, 2020.  
(Attachment)

#### FY2020/Q3 Trust Funds Report

Vice President Shropshire noted on March 31 trust funds were tracking ahead. Resident, dining and parking trust funds have been affected. Through the work of Vice President Jason, significant dollars were saved with the Sodexo contract. Overall, there was a surplus in trust funds. The only two deficits were residence hall and aviation as we lost flight hours. Occupancy in residence halls was far ahead of what was budgeted for prior to the pandemic.

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Longo, Caulfield) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the FY2020/Q3 Trust Fund Report as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated June 12, 2020.  
(Attachment)

#### Dining Services Contract Update

President Clark commented this is our largest contract which has been rewritten. The current contract expires on June 30, 2020. Legal counsels are working on the language. Vice President Jason summarized the process in selecting and negotiating the contract. She is hopeful it will be complete in a few weeks. Sodexo completed a 360 review with their management team. The contract includes \$22M in capital investments. Each installment is over 5-year increments.  
(Attachment)

Trustee Benson noted the students spent a lot of time talking about the contract. There were a lot of complaints from the students. Students who eat the food 3 times a day, it wasn't always good. There will be improvements in offering better, healthier food. Hopeful for a better quality.

Trustee Caulfield asked what the backup plan would be if Sodexo were to leave the contract. Vice President Jason noted there are vendors who would step right in (Aramark or Chartwells).

Delegation of Authority – Dining Services Contract

On motion duly made and seconded (Benson, Caulfield) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the Delegation of Authority for the Executive Committee to approve the Dining Services Contract as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated June 12, 2020.

(Attachment)

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIED

FY2020/Q3 Alumni and Development Dashboard Report

Trustee Longo noted the endowment performance was down (18%) the last quarter due to the unusual financial times. Giving for the last quarter was \$1.5M. The dashboard contains information on the student emergency fund, engagement with alums, virtual events taking place, etc. Joe St. Laurent commented the endowment is tracking better. As of May 31, down 7.7% which is better. Assuming the market continues to track better, he is hopeful for a better return. Seventeen foundation members participated in the Student Emergency Fund. The board continues to be engaged and meet frequently via zoom. One of the Plymouth properties is in the final stages of a close (possibly complete by end of July). There is continued interest on the other property as well and they may have an offer soon.

On motion duly made and seconded (Alexander, Denterlein) it was that the Board of Trustees approve the FY2020/Q3 Alumni and Development Dashboard Report as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated June 12, 2020.

(Attachment)

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIED

Recommendation for Tenure

Provost Ismaili noted the portfolio for Dr. Heather Pacheco-Guffrey was delayed as she was on leave last semester. The committee, dean and provost agree this is a stellar recommendation.

On motion duly made and seconded (Caulfield, Alexander) it was that the Board of Trustees approve the Tenure Recommendation as described in the memorandum from President Clark dated June 12, 2020.

(Attachment)

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIED

New Major Recommendation: B.S. in Photonics and Optical Engineering

Provost Ismaili stated this was discussed with the Board on a couple of occasions. The letter of intent went through governance and then went through fast-track approval at the BHE. BSU's local governance

approved the full proposal and is now presented to the Board of Trustees to approve the delivery of the final proposal to the BHE. The review will be expedited. They are very pleased to bring engineering to BSU.

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Turchon, Alexander) it was that the Board of Trustees approve the B.S. in Photonics and Optical Engineering major as recommended and described in the memorandum from President Clark dated June 12, 2020.  
(Attachment)

#### COVID/Reentry Update

President Clark noted the flight center has reopened. A safety plan was developed and was shared with the Secretary of Education's office for their review and approval. Vice President Powers provided an update on the safe return of staff. They quickly reviewed the Governor's reopening plan. There were discussions on how to plan for a gradual return of employees in a controlled way to ensure their safety which is extremely important. Employees must go through a training before returning. A control plan will be in place and a signed attestation that we are in compliance. Guidance will be provided for supervisors on how to gradually return employees. A safety assessment matrix was created to determine which positions can return and those who can telecommute. Employee guidance has been drafted. Online training has been completed by 561 employees thus far. Mandates are in place that we cannot exceed 25% of employees in an office place. Office space will be assessed to ensure social distancing. Flexibility, adaptability and providing options is taking place for employees. The unions on campus have partnered with the leaders in making these decisions. It's important to ensure our employees that it is safe to return. There will be continual assessment as employees return to campus and will adhere to the Governor's guidance.

President Clark commented when employees return, they will pay attention to guidelines and make sure everyone is as safe as possible. Provost Ismaili headed up the Safe Return Task Force which was responsible to plan and coordinate a safe return for students and employees. Over the last 7 weeks, they have uncovered many details/ issues that have to be explored. There are key ways the campus will have to change due to social distance policies. Will need to test health protocols, sanitation, courses and how they will be delivered, and we'll have to be ready to pivot away from campus if there is another significant emergency. They recognize many students love the community of BSU. Four subcommittees were established to work on a safe return. It's important to be flexible and have options and recognize there isn't a lot of time to plan. Facilities has done

incredible work. Student life has thought about the student experience. External engagement has reviewed how we can continue to be an engine and a resource for the region. The planning has been deep and thoughtful. There will be a clear plan for the campus but flexibility is important.

Trustee Denterlein recognized remarks from MSCA Chapter President Hegbloom regarding concerns of the faculty. She would appreciate having a discussion about the faculty and how we will address those concerns.

Trustee Oliari inquired how the Board of Trustees will conduct their meetings going forward; will Trustees continue to be included in conversations for continued planning and are Trustees considered as 'special employees'.

Chairman Durgin noted, of course, the preference is to meet in person; however, given the pandemic this may not be possible for quite some time.

President Clark commented the Board has been consulted with during the meetings and continues to keep the Board informed. Trustees do not have employee rights (statutory rights can be distributed if needed).

#### Slate of Board Officers for AY2020-2021

Trustee Alexander said, of note, the committee's desire is to have a greater discussion on term limits and have succession planning in terms of leadership. This will be discussed at the Board retreat. With the balance of COVID, social justice, desires of people to have something to look forward to, it goes without saying that one would be very thankful to have leaders who are responsible. He is confident with the slate of officers being recommended.

On motion duly made and seconded (Turchon, Denterlein) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the Slate of Board Officers for AY2020-2021 as recommended by the Nominating Committee in the attached memorandum from Secretary Alexander.  
(Attachment)

The slate of Board Officers for AY2020-2021 is: Eugene Durgin as chair, Jean MacCormack as vice chair and Margaret Caulfield as secretary.

Chairman Durgin noted the president's performance will be brought to a future meeting as new guidance and timeline has been moved from June 30 to September 1. The date is to be determined for the Presidential Review Committee to meet.

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

OTHER  
BUSINESS

Irina Seceleneau, the new MSCA Chapter President, introduced James Leone, who is the new vice president of the BSU MSCA chapter. She thanked the trustees for raising the issue of the safety of faculty. She would like to have a prepared statement at the next meeting. Faculty and Librarians are in a different age group than students and there is concern about being in the classroom and their offices. Faculty hope to engage in the upcoming conversations about decisions on individual face-to-face classes. Faculty members in the labs need to be part of these conversations. Faculty are usually busy during the summer months preparing for the Fall. They are very motivated to improve their techniques. Faculty need to know well in advance the modality of their classes – online, hybrid, etc. The timeline needs to be expeditious. She is hopeful that MSCA and management can work together for a quick resolution regarding the contract. The current contract has no language for new realities of remote teaching to define working conditions and the students' learning conditions. Hopeful this will be a joint effort and that the Board will encourage administration to work with the MSCA.

On motion duly made and seconded (Longo, Alexander) it was that the meeting be adjourned (5:50pm).

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

Respectfully submitted,

*Davede Alexander*

Davede Alexander  
Secretary

Minutes prepared by:  
Tracey Keif