

MEETING NO. 323
APPROVED DECEMBER 16, 2025

Bridgewater State University
Board of Trustees Meeting
October 23, 2025
6:00pm
Dunn Conference Room
Hybrid

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustees Antonucci, Battaglino (Virtual), Cesero (Virtual), Giles, Jean-Michel, Koutoujian (Virtual), Prince, Taylor (Virtual), Turchon, Ulett, Vieira

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: President Clark; Acting Provost Alcon; Chief of Staff Leuenberger; Vice Presidents Bell, Croft, Gentlewarrior, Jean, Powers, Shropshire, Zuromski; CDO Oliver; Senior 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 former Governor Baker, having been complied with, and a quorum of the Board present, the Board of Trustees held a meeting on October 23, 2025 with Secretary Turchon presiding due to the physical absence of Chair Taylor.

Secretary Turchon called the meeting to order at 6:10pm. She put forth a motion that a unanimous vote will be deemed to eliminate the need for a roll call. If a vote is not unanimous, then a roll call vote will be conducted.

On motion duly made via roll call vote, Trustee Antonucci-yes, Trustee Cesero-yes, Trustee Giles-yes, Trustee Vieira-yes, Trustee Turchon-yes, Trustee Battaglino-yes, Trustee Prince-yes, Trustee Koutoujian-yes, Trustee Jean-Michael-yes, Trustee Taylor-yes, Trustee Ulett-yes it was

that the Board of Trustees dispense with a roll call vote for each unanimous vote for the duration of this meeting.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Prince, Antonucci) it was to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on June 12, 2025.
(Attachment)

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

**Chairperson's
Report**

Recognition of Faculty Promoted to Full Professor
Secretary Turchon and Acting Provost Alcon recognized the faculty

promoted to full Professor. They expressed their congratulations and appreciation to the faculty for their dedication to BSU, students and profession.

Student Trustee Update

Trustee Jean-Michel noted there are 24 senators in SGA. SGA held an event to encourage students to talk about what they don't like about BSU to gain a better understanding. Students are excited about learning AI. He is continuing the work of former Student Trustee Rose for the MBTA.

Trustee Jean-Michel's goals this year are: support overlooked student areas and explore classrooms for accessibility; expand conversation on mental health and bring about more awareness; help demystify the Board of Trustees as students don't understand the role of the Board as well as the position of Student Trustee.

President's Report

President Clark noted BSU is 185 years old this semester. He reflected on the former presidents and what they would think of BSU now. The former presidents planted the seeds of educational opportunity for all and it is alive and well. BSU is fortunate for the talented and dedicated faculty noting the magic happens in the classroom between the faculty and students.

Regarding Federal policies, the Massachusetts Attorney General has said that you cannot change the law at a Federal level through an executive order. BSU's message is to keep doing what you are doing. With the recent federal efforts to sign a compact (to eliminate academic freedom), AASCU released a statement asking the institutional presidents to endorse a statement to reject those principles, which President Clark did.

Other Updates: BSU has the largest first-time, full-time incoming class in its history. Residence halls are full, retention is strong, students are happy to be here. The Bridgewater Commitment has made a difference for students. BSU is a top place to work and the faculty and staff feel valued. The budget is good. BSU ranked top 14.6% for four-year institutions. Homecoming was very successful and well-attended.

Vice President Croft introduced Shelly Keniston, director for Off-Campus Student Engagement. Ms. Keniston has been at BSU for 24 years and in this role for the past 6 years. For the past several years, she has worked on building a program for commuters. Sixty-eight percent of BSU students are commuters. She spoke with commuters to determine what their needs are. They are working to change the language across campus to include commuters. A few examples of commuter enhancements are: for those who arrive to campus early and

don't have a place to go, some buildings are open early. There are microwaves available for them. They are working to form a sense of belonging. Making connections with landlords in the area to offer housing for those who want to live off campus. Enhance social media engagement. They engage other divisions to come to their office and meet with students.

President Clark provided a few staff updates and introduced new staff member Lauren Mountain, Director for ResLife and Diane Usher who stepped in as the Director for Financial Aid. He also acknowledged MSCA Chapter President Hartsfield noting that the day contract has been settled. Vice President Shropshire will be retiring soon – President Clark is thankful for his service and attributes so much growth for his division and his work.

**ACTION/
INFORMATION
ITEMS**

AUDIT

Draft Independent Audited Financial Statements
(WithumSmith+Brown, PC)

Committee Chair Ulett noted the external auditors have completed their audit. BSU received an unmodified opinion and they were very complementary of Vice President Shropshire's team as they were prepared, professional and transparent during the process.

Vice President Shropshire was pleased to say BSU received a clean opinion on the financial statements. He acknowledged his finance team who does phenomenal work. The internal control review was clean as well. BSU has a controlled environment which works very well. No management letter comment was issued meaning there were no improvements needed. The audit deadline for submission to the state is October 31, 2025. He also noted that the Foundation received a clean audit.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Giles, Taylor) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the draft Bridgewater State University Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis report dated June 30, 2025 prepared by the Finance Division including the related independent audit report prepared by WithumSmith+Brown, PC as recommended by the Audit Committee and as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated October 17, 2025.

EXECUTIVE

President's Budget for FY2026

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

The president's budget for this coming year is level funded with minimal expenses for this past year.

On motion duly made and seconded (Vieira, Antonucci) it was that the Executive Committee approves the President's Budget for FY2026 as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated October 14, 2025.
(Attachment)

President's Expenses and Upcoming Travel

The president's expenses and upcoming travel was brought as an information item representing expenses from May-July 2025.
(Attachment)

President Clark's Self-Evaluation and the Board's Evaluation

Submitted to the Board of Higher Education

Chair Taylor noted the president's self-evaluation and the Board's evaluation was thoroughly reviewed at the Executive Committee meeting held on September 15, 2025. The assessment was due to the Commissioner no later than September 30. Under the Delegation of Authority, the Executive Committee unanimously approved the Board's Evaluation of President Clark and his self-assessment and is now brought to the Board as an information item.
(Attachment)

President's Goals and Objectives – AY2025-26

President Clark provided his goals for the upcoming year which includes the divisional priorities as well. He mentioned they will focus on affordability, academic innovation, and the BSUWorks initiative.
(Attachment)

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

Annual Report of Grants and Sponsored Projects

Committee Chair Battaglino was pleased to report BSU received \$4.2M in grants this past year and mentioned three large grants were received. The total grant requests submitted represented \$8.8M.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Vieira, Antonucci) it was that the Board of Trustees accepts the Annual Report from the Office of Grants and Sponsored Projects for the period of July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025, as recommended by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and described in the memorandum from President Clark dated September 30, 2025.
(Attachment)

Faculty and Librarian Hiring Report

Committee Chair Battaglino noted 14 full-time tenure track faculty were hired and 26 one-year appointments.

Acting Provost Alcon was pleased with the pool of faculty who applied.

(Attachment)

Fall Residence Hall and Occupancy Report

Committee Chair Battaglino stated fall occupancy was slightly over 100%. The staff made use of space on campus to accommodate the additional students and contracted with a local apartment complex to house students.

Vice President Croft appreciates the partnership with Dwell to house about 30 students. She also acknowledged the cross divisional support to make Fall housing successful.

(Attachment)

Divisional Priorities – AY25-26 (Acting Provost Alcon and Vice President Croft)

Vice President Croft and Acting Provost Alcon provided their priorities for this coming year.

(Attachment)

Update on Orientation/Crimson Celebration

Committee Chair Battaglino noted Matt Miller, Director for Student Engagement, provided a presentation at the committee meeting. He is responsible for onboarding students and reported out on their pilot program through the use of Bear Launch Calls, a new student dashboard, academic advising and registration, etc. The Crimson Celebration had over 1,000 students who participated.

FINANCE AND OPERATIONSFY2026 Budget

Vice President Shropshire stated BSU has a \$258+M budget which is an 8.8% increase over the prior year. Revenues are up by \$15M due to enrollment being up 6% as well as an increase in occupancy and dining. Expenditures show a 9% increase for salaries and benefits. The Success Funding is due to come in. Divisional budgets have an increase by 10% and financial aid increased by 16%.

On motion duly made and seconded (Prince, Battaglino) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the FY2026 Budget including \$258,477,827 in combined total revenue from operations and trust funds and \$258,153,920 in total expenditures from operations and trust funds as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee and

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIED

outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated September 30, 2025.
(Attachment)

FY2025 Year-End Trust Funds Report

Vice President Shropshire noted all in all the increase in occupancy and dining revenues allowed them to fund items in the operating budget and generated about \$200K extra.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Antonucci, Battaglino) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the FY2025 Year-End Trust Funds Report as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated September 30, 2025.
(Attachment)

Meal Plan Rates for AY2026-27

Vice President Shropshire said the overall increase for the meal plan rates will be 3.8% which is below the inflationary rate. He noted Vice President Jason and her team conducted extensive research to arrive at this amount.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Prince, Giles) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the Meal Plan Rates for AY2026-27 as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated September 30, 2025.
(Attachment)

Burnell Project Financing Authorization

Vice President Shropshire stated, due to uncertainties with the state and federal budget, they are requesting the authority to borrow \$18M for the Burnell project and will only borrow what is needed.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Antonucci, Prince) it was that the Board of Trustees approves borrowing up to \$18 million for the Burnell Renovation Project based upon the \$32 million provided in state funding for the project and as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated September 30, 2025.
(Attachment)

Contract with A&A Metro (Athletics Transportation)

Vice President Shropshire said this contract is for transportation for BSU athletes. They received two responses with the lowest bidder being A&A Metro and will save about \$96K over two years.

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Prince, Battaglino) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the contract with A&A Metro (Athletics Transportation) as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee and as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated September 30, 2025.
(Attachment)

FY2025 Year-End Budget Report

Vice President Shropshire noted there was a small operating surplus. They exceeded revenue targets due to better than expected enrollment and occupancy. They deployed excess revenue for financial aid and large one-time projects (Tillinghast Hall, branding/advertising, and two airplanes and renovations to the hangar).

(Attachment)

FY2025/Q4 Contracts Report

The quarterly contract report was brought as an information item.
(Attachment)

Capital Projects Update

Vice President Jason provided the quarterly report for capital projects as an information item.
(Attachment)

Divisional Priorities – AY25-26 (Vice Presidents Shropshire and Jason)

The divisional priorities for Vice Presidents Shropshire and Jason were provided as an information item which were reviewed at the committee meeting.

(Attachment)

RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITYCampus Climate Survey Results

Vice President Gentlewarrior stated student belonging is tied to student success. Some of the results from the survey: 88.5% of students feel welcome; 79.6% feel they belong; 76.3% feel valued and 71.7% feel they are part of the community.

Looking at peer institutions – 65% feel safe; at BSU it's 76%; faculty accept points of view – nation is at 70%; at BSU it's 77%. BSU does need to do additional work on belonging for students of color and transgender students.

(Attachment)

Attorney General/DEI

President Clark mentioned over the summer there was a communication from the U.S. attorney general that was in conflict with what we are

doing here at BSU. BSU will continue to do what we do. He was please to note Vice President Gentlewarrior was recently asked to represent higher ed in Boston on this subject.

ALUMNI AND DEVELOPMENT

FY2025/Q4 Alumni and Development Dashboard Report

Committee Chair Turchon stated the fourth quarter exceeded the goals and raised \$4.9M+. The total commitments are \$11.691M. The market value net assets total \$86.675M and \$1M+ was awarded in scholarships. The Trustees had 100% participation which is appreciated.

President Clark was pleased to note the ribbon cutting for the College of Graduate Studies will be held the morning of Homecoming.

CDO Oliver was happy to report that they had a great FY25 and so far FY26 is going very well. The first quarter was strong with almost \$1.7M cash in; year-to-date \$3.2M cash in. The student-managed investment fund starts with \$200K and they consistently reach \$250K. Anything in excess of \$200K is moved to the scholarship fund. It is a very successful program.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Vieira, Antonucci) it was that the Board of Trustees approves FY2025/Q4 Alumni and Development Dashboard Report as recommended by the Alumni and Development Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated September 30, 2025.
(Attachment)

Foundation Update

CDO Oliver shared Sodexo committed to a campaign gift of \$100K+ to install an outdoor kitchen behind the Park Terrace property. Also, an Investment Committee meeting was held with Russell Investments. The relationship has gone well, but it is time to look at what other options are available. A RFP for next spring or summer will be issued.

Alumni Update

Committee Chair Turchon stated Kevin Costa, BAA President, shared a few goals for this coming year: engage with young alumni; create a space for minutes, agenda items and documents; partner with CDO Oliver and Vice President Bell to plug in the BAA with a professional mentoring program.

Divisional Priorities – AY2025-26 (CDO Oliver)

CDO Oliver's priorities for this coming year were provided as an information item.
(Attachment)

ADHOC ENROLLMENT AND MARKETINGFall 2025 Enrollment Report

Committee Chair Vieira reported BSU had the largest first-year class in its history this fall. Transfer students are up almost 20% due to growth in community colleges, and they had 7.8% growth in graduate studies.

(Attachment)

Vice President Jean was pleased that the College of Continuing Studies had a strong growth. Other institutions did not experience the same growth as BSU. They are excited to continue the Bridgewater Commitment. This coming weekend is the first of 3 open houses to welcome potential new students and families to campus. There are 500 high school visits planned for college fairs, and they will continue to work on retention efforts which is vitally important.

HONORARY DEGREECommittee Report

Committee Chair Battaglino noted the committee met and reviewed the nominations. The committee will meet again to bring forth nominations for the May commencement ceremonies.

The committee voted to include the following people in the pool for consideration: Jim Stevens, Gifts to Give; Chrystia Freeland, Canada Special Rep for reconstruction of Ukraine; Paula Milone-Nuzzo, MGB Institute of Health Professions; Elvira Lopes, Budget Director, City of Brockton; Erika Kirk, CEO, Turning Point USA; Corey Thomas, Rapid 7; Davede Alexander, former Trustee; Tom Nichols, The Atlantic Magazine

Also, it was suggested that David Wilson be considered as a Distinguished Service Award recipient.

**OTHER
BUSINESS**

None

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Antonucci, Giles) it was that the meeting be adjourned (8:30 pm).

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Turchon

Minutes prepared by:
Tracey Keif

Carolyn Turchon
Secretary

