



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOARD MEETING ■ SEPTEMBER 21, 2022 6:30 P.M. ■ REMOTE & ALUMNI ROOM, MCCARTHY CENTER
MINUTES

Chair Kevin Foley called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked Counsel Ann McDonald to conduct the roll call.

I. Roll Call

Nancy Budwig – present; Beth Casavant – present; Lino Covarrubias – present;
Diane Finch – present; Kevin Foley – present; Mariel Freve* – present;
Anthony Hubbard – present; Claire Ramsbottom – present; Robert Richards – present;
McKenzie Ward – present; Mike Grilli – absent

II. Public Comment

Per a request made by members of the University community, Chair Foley moved the public comments section of the agenda to the beginning of the meeting's agenda.

Chair Foley made a statement prior to opening the meeting to public comment, in which he apologized for offending members of the community by comments made during a previous committee meeting, adding that this has provided him an opportunity to learn and grow from the experience. He continued by detailing actions that will be made in effort to assure the community of his, and the Board's commitment to the University's racial equity agenda.

The following actions will be taken:

- With the assistance of a consultant, a special session will be scheduled within the next 90 days to address additional antiracism training for the Trustees.
- Working with University administrators, additional periodic training, dedicated to antiracism will be scheduled.
- Commissioner Carlos Santiago will speak at the November Board meeting to address the DHE's strategic initiative for racial equity.

Chair Foley opened the meeting to public comments[†]:

- Dr. Benjamin Alberti, Professor, department of Sociology and Criminology, read a letter submitted to the Board of Trustees in support of the BIPOC community of FSU.
- Rafaat Elkhoury, Vice President of SGA and President for the Class of 2024, read from a statement made by former president Dr. Javier Cevallos, in June of 2020.
- Dara Barros, SGA President, read a written statement.

The public comments concluded at 6:42 p.m.

*Signifies remote attendance.

[†] Copies of the letter and statements are included as supplemental documents to the meeting minutes.

III. Chair's Report

- a. Welcome to New Trustees and Administrators:**
Chair Foley recognized new trustees Mariel Freve, Lino Covarrubias, and McKenzie Ward; new administrators President Nancy Niemi, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Kristen Porter-Utley, and Interim Chief Diversity Officer, Wardell Powell.
- b. Open Trustee Position Status**
President Niemi and Chair Foley will be meeting with a prospective trustee in the coming weeks.
- c. Trustee Convening**
The trustee convening session will be delayed until the spring to allow participation of the incoming DHE Commissioner.
- d. BOT Committee Assignments**
Chair Foley asked the new trustees to indicate which of the committees they would like to work with.
- e. Consent agenda**
 - BOT Meeting Minutes: May 11, 2022
 - BOT Retreat Minutes: May 25, 2022
 - Personnel Actions

Chair Foley moved the motion, Diane Finch seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Mariel Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; McKenzie Ward – abstained

- Motion approved

IV. President's Report

President Niemi began by stating that this is her first Board of Trustees meeting as President, and that she is deeply honored to be at the University. She followed by reading a brief statement*

- a. Updates included the following:**
 - Annual Report: a copy of the report has been distributed to the Trustees for their information.
 - Reorganization and Personnel Updates: the reorganization of the executive staff and the different divisions was presented and reviewed – page 23
 - Personnel Updates: a search for a new Dean of Enrollment Management will ensue. An interim dean will be placed as a search for a permanent dean will be made.
 - The President's 90-Day Report is forthcoming: October 1st will mark the 90-day mark in her role. She will submit an assessment of the work performed during this timeframe to be available by the end of next month.
 - Summer Delegations of Authority Approvals: a list of decisions made by the President during the summer delegation were noted – page 24

* A copy of the statement is included as supplemental document to the meeting minutes.

b. Student-in-the-Spotlight

Dr. Lissa Bollettino introduced Meeghan Bresnahan, as a dedicated student whose work involves providing voices to unrepresented individuals, specifically for those of diverse women. She has done this creatively through research and writing, inviting the audience to inhabit the lives of these unrepresented individuals. She is a uniquely curious, empathetic, student of history.

Meeghan Bresnahan introduced herself as a senior, History major with minors in Diversity Studies and Anthropology. She is one of the first Mancuso Scholars. The scholarship provides full tuition, fees, and housing for scholarship recipients. The variety of minors has allowed her to customize her education to satisfy her interests. With the combination of a History major with the two minors, Meeghan hopes to pursue a career at a museum. Meeghan is also an active member of the Hilltop Players. She is a member of the Arts and Ideas Committee, as well as that of Henry Whittemore Library's Student Assistant Advisory Committee.

c. Diversity, Inclusion, and Community Engagement Report

Wardell Powell highlighted the following items from his report:

- CIE collaboration with CELTSS offered a series of workshops focusing on policy review through a racial equity lens.
- CIE Grants and Programs, certified in June as facilitators of the WCM program.
- Bias Education Response Team (BERT) will meet monthly. Meetings will focus on three priorities as outlined – page 27

d. Development and Alumni Relations

Eric Gustafson highlighted items from his report – pages 28 – 29

- FY22 completed a total of \$2,169,731 raised in private funds; \$283,252 has been raised year to date.
- Alumni Engagement: successful events included a WooSox game, Cape Cod Clambake, and the Rams Booster Club Golf tournament.
- Grants and Sponsored Programs: FY 2022, \$6,390,880 was awarded in funding; an additional \$14,027,797 in grants are pending.
- Danforth Art Museum: exceeded their FY22 unrestricted fundraising goals.
 - Membership has doubled since last year. The Museum will be launching a corporate membership program in the new year.
- Danforth Art School was very successful this summer, finishing FY22 with an operational surplus.
 - A scholarship fund has been established for the Art School.

Based on a question posed by Trustee Diane Finch, Eric Gustafson invited Colleen Coffey, Executive Director of the MetroWest College Planning Collaborative, to provide information on the program.

- Colleen Coffey described the program and reported the program metrics.

V. Student Trustees Report

McKenzie Ward began by introducing herself. She continued by commending the students attending the meeting, stating that one of her objectives as a Student Trustee is to help educate students on the role of the Board of Trustees and how they contribute to the structure of the University.

Trustee Ward reported on the following:

- a. Administrator's Forum: will be held in person on October 11.
- b. Accessibility Tour will address areas on campus that are not fully accessible.
- c. Citing data from a Lumina Foundation study provided with the assistance of Benjamin Day, director of the FSU Counseling Center, Trustee Ward encouraged trustees and University administrators to continue to support mental health resources for students and highlighted the direct impact on student retention.

Trustee Claire Ramsbottom asked Trustee Ward if there were specific areas of focus that the Board needs to do better at supporting.

- Trustee Ward responded that having more funding for telehealth options for students would be an area that would be important.

Trustee Lino Covarrubias asked if state university facilities are required to be ADA compliant.

- Dr. Dale Hamel confirmed that they were.

VI. Enrollment and Student Development

Trustee Ramsbottom addressed that this is the first meeting since the restructuring of the division and began by asking President Niemi to present an update.

- a. Fall 2022 Enrollment Update: President Niemi reported that a forthcoming report will be presented with updated fall 2022 data.
- b. Rebranding and Web Redesign: Trustee Claire Ramsbottom reported on a presentation made by Primacy (marketing firm working under contract for FSU on brand refresh and website redesign) from the Enrollment and Student Development Committee meeting.
 - Primacy addressed "how we build on our success" and how to develop a narrative that highlights these successes.
 - Expanding our market reach; messaging beyond our traditional undergraduate population, i.e. graduate and continuing education programs and University centers.
 - Members of the Primacy team have toured the University campus and met with 15 focus groups and key stakeholders.
 - With initial assessment of ideas, a survey was sent to Alumni for further feedback and testing of brands and taglines.

Trustee Ramsbottom concluded her report by stating that many institutions are working very hard to achieve the diversity that FSU already has established, noting that we need to find ways to capitalize and celebrate this strength. She added that she is thankful that the trustees will be doing work as a Board, as it is something that everyone needs to do.

A conversation regarding the scope of work and timeline of the rebranding efforts was held. Dr. Lorretta Holloway informed trustees that Primacy will test brand concepts in October to present brand proposals in November. As the redesigned website will require more time, soft-launches of the new website will take place.

c. RNL

RNL is the group currently contracted with FSU to assess and address enrollment concerns, ultimately resulting in the development of a strategic enrollment management plan. Dr. Lorretta Holloway presented an update on the RNL scope of work:

- The individuals assigned to each of the 5 project areas, two subsections under Market Research were reviewed as outlined – page 29, *Enrollment and Student Development Committee Meeting Book*

d. Introduction to Academic Enhancement

Dr. Hollow introduced the newly created division that she will be leading. She presented the following information:

- Review of the Division’s charge.
- Review of four areas that will make up the new Division as outline – page 38
 - Detailed review of Academic Advising and Center for Academic Success and Achievement (CASA), as outlined – page 40
 - International Program student participation numbers were presented, as outlined – page 41
 - Dr. Holloway shared the importance of holding inclusive conversations with families, particularly of first-generation and BIPOC students about their concerns for their children studying abroad. Addressing how to utilize the family’s involvement to promote student success was also presented.
 - Chair Foley requested an updated report for a meeting in the spring semester.

A larger discussion by the trustees regarding resources that may be required for student success and examples of potential roadblocks, led Dr. Holloway to highlight the renamed “Family Programs” department as outlined – page 45

e. Student Well-being

Highlights from the Dean of Students, Meg Nowak Borrego’s report included the following:

- The Counseling Center is fully staffed: 4 full-time counselors, 2 part-time counselors, and 3 Master’s of Social Work interns.
- Three vaccination clinics to be held on campus for flu and COVID vaccinations.
- 39 RAs were involved in a 2-week in-person training this summer for the 1,320 residential students living on campus this fall.
- Sponsored program hosted by CASA and the Counseling Center was held during the summer to assist with the growing number of students on the spectrum attending FSU.

Dean Nowak Borrego’s presentation led to a broader conversation regarding further details of the Counseling Center staff demographics and the wait-time involved for students to see a counselor.

VII. Academic Affairs

Trustee Nancy Budwig reviewed the four aspects examined by the Academic Affairs Committee during the September 13, 2022 meeting:

- a. Framing of the Committee’s work: included addressing why are we doing this work, who are our students, and how to ensure student success.
- b. Review of the charge of the committee: to fully understand the committee objectives, and to help guide the committee discussions.

- c. Academic Affairs and Institutional Projects: discussion of broad focus areas within Academic Affairs and within the broader set of branding, website redesign, and strategic and enrollment management.
- d. Academic Enhancement, Antiracism, and Retention and Graduation and Being a Student Ready Institution: opened a discussion for analysis of strengths, and early assessments.

In closing, Trustee Budwig articulated, as chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, her unwavering commitment to antiracism and to the success for the students, as well as all members of the FSU community. She commended the Academic Affairs team, which continues to focus on this work. Finally, Trustee Budwig asserted her commitment to the University efforts in creating a vibrant learning and working environment that are central to the FSU community, and hopes that the lens and focus will continue to be centered on this important work.

A larger conversation developed around the charges of the subcommittees and various University departments work overlapping in their efforts and strategies to enable student success.

VIII. Administration, Finance, and Information Technology

- a. Trustee Anthony Hubbard brought forth a motion to delegate the approval of the FY 2022 Independent Audit of FSU Financial Statements to the FSU BOT joint Finance and CAR Committee in order to meet the State Comptroller’s October 15 submittal deadline. The joint committee meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2022.

Anthony Hubbard moved the motion; seconded by Diane Finch.

Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Mariel Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; McKenzie Ward – yes

- Motion approved

- b. FY2023 Budget Update

Dr. Dale Hamel provided the following updates:

- FY2023 operations budget: a graph on page 50 of Trustee materials details updates made to the budget since its approval made by the BOT in May 2022.
- Summarized areas which significantly impacted the operations budget, as outline – page 53
- Summarized changes and responses beyond the approved FY2023 budget – page 61
 - Faculty Day Program position adjustments, FEMA reimbursement, and acceleration of debt service reserves to FY2023 and FY2024 will balance the budget but leave a larger structural deficit in the out-years.
- “Fair Share” Amendment, if passed should anticipate lobbying for the share of applicable funds for high education, and may be a potential item for consideration in the out-years.

- c. FY2023-FY27 Capital Spending Plan, as detailed – page 64

Highlights included:

- \$34.2M five-year spending plan
 - Main sources of funding include DCAMM Critical Repairs Program, Federal ARPA/State Appropriations, Warren Center Contract, MSCBA/Residence Hall and Dining Capital Programs
 - Additional highlighted details, as outlined – page 67

- d. FY2022 Investment Funds Performance Report, as detailed – page 88
 - Investments, on average, is greater than what we assumed the rate would be.
 - Performed over the benchmarks.

IX. Chief of Staff and General Counsel

Counsel McDonald reported on the following:

- a. Enterprise Risk Management and Internal Assessment vacancy has been filled.
 - David Sargeant.
- b. AGB OnBoard
 - The new board management system, has been successfully implemented.

X. New Business

Trustee Diane Finch addressed the Board regarding a book she recommended the trustees read at the May 25, 2022 BOT Retreat. She asked if the book could be read and discussed by the full board.

- Conversation ensured, and the recommendation of a bibliography to be developed for the trustees was agreed upon.

XI. Adjourn Open Meeting

Trustee Beth Casavant made a motion; seconded by Diane Finch.

Roll call vote: Roll call vote: Nancy Budwig – yes; Beth Casavant – yes; Lino Covarrubias – yes; Diane Finch – yes; Mariel Freve – yes; Kevin Foley – yes; Anthony Hubbard – yes; Claire Ramsbottom – yes; McKenzie Ward – yes

The meeting ended at 9:00 p.m.

Note all pages referenced are from the *September 21, 2022 BOT Meeting Book*, unless indicated otherwise.