

Minutes of the
Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University
Special Meeting
August 20, 2020

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 1:16 p.m. by Board Chair Dennis Barsema virtually. Recording Secretary Crystal Doyle conducted a roll call.

Trustee Rita Athas: Present

Trustee John Butler: Present

Trustee Montel Gayles: Present

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Present

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Present

Trustee Aiden Shields: Present

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Present

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Present

All members of the Board of Trustees were present.

Also present: President Lisa Freeman; General Counsel Bryan Perry; Board Liaison Matt Streb; Executive Vice President and Provost Beth Ingram; Vice President for Administration and Finance Sarah Chinniah; Vice President for Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications Sol Jensen; Associate Vice President for Information Technology Matt Parks; and University Advisory Council (UAC) Representatives Greg Beyer, Cathy Doederlein, Katy Jaekel, Natasha Johnson, Sarah Marsh, and Kendall Thu.

VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

General Counsel Perry indicated the appropriate notification of the meeting has been provided pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Mr. Perry also advised that a quorum was present.

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Vice Chair Wasowicz so moved, and Trustee Athas seconded. The motion was approved.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aiden Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 18, 2020

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve the minutes of June 18, 2020. Trustee Herrero so moved, and Vice Chair Wasowicz seconded.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aiden Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Barsema welcomed the members of the University Advisory Council who were present.

UAC Representative Kendall Thu recognized two new Student Government Association Leaders. Antonio Johnson is the new president of the Student Government Association and Brad Beyer is the new speaker of the Student Senate. He mentioned that he is very excited to work with both this coming year. He also expressed his appreciation to faculty pivoting quickly to transition to teaching online this past spring. As faculty get more experience, we may see a cultural shift to more online learning, especially with all the options we have for it. University Senate meetings will be held virtually, and they are public meetings, and everyone is invited to attend.

UAC Representative Katy Jaekel thanked and recognized Student Affairs for all they have done to get students back on campus and students moved into the dorms. She expressed happiness in being selected to serve on the UAC and looks forward to working with everyone.

UAC Representative Natasha Johnson also expressed her gratitude at being selected to serve on the UAC as the Operating Staff Council President and looks forward to working with everyone.

UAC Representative Greg Beyer noted that he too was happy to be apart of the UAC. He expressed that he has confidence in NIU Leadership, even with all the setbacks, these are very exciting times, and he is thankful for all they have done.

Chair Barsema stated that this Special Meeting was called to allow the Board of Trustees to approve the purchase of Classroom Technology enhancements that are needed to support online teaching and learning capabilities required to serve and protect students and faculty during these challenging times.

Chair Barsema applauded university leadership along with the other Trustees for highly prioritizing safety precautions while navigating the return of the fall semester. He continued that each and every Huskie has a responsibility to help protect our community. This is in particularly true of our students, because students play a critical role in helping to keep fellow students, friends, family and our community safe, and our university campus open. Chair Barsema reiterate this message and could not stress strongly enough that students have a responsibility to keep themselves safe, as well as others on our campus safe and within our community safe. It is critical that everyone take our pledge to Protect the Pack seriously and follow the plans and guidance on and off-campus. He identified the ways in which everyone needs to practice safety, including mask wearing, physical distancing, avoiding large gatherings, etc. Although the temptation may be there to go against our pledge, everyone must resist the urge as a campus and protect the health and safety of our entire community.

Chair Barsema expressed his appreciation for and applauded university leadership for their recognition of the pandemic's significant expenses and mindfulness of our revenue stream. In a situation of this magnitude shared sacrifices need to be made and he expressed deep appreciation for the ways in which members of the university community have stepped up to help. Examples

include Dr. Freeman's request to the Board of Trustees that her FY21 base pay be reduced by 12% and her FY20 incentive base compensation that would have been paid in FY21, be reduced to zero, as well as, members of leadership across the campus, including our Provost, Vice Presidents, Deans, and several athletic coaches who voluntarily reduced their incentives and/or salaries for FY21.

Further, Chair Barsema acknowledged the University Advisory Council for their willingness to explore voluntary furloughs to share in the sacrifice and mitigate further layoffs. All these actions reinforce profound commitments to NIU and promote a sense of community that the trustees are so proud to represent. Thank you again on behalf of the trustees to all who are doing their share in helping us through these times. We appreciate your sacrifices and your work. As noted by Trustee Gayles in his comments as FACFO chair, everyone must be mindful of the significant financial stress already imposed on the university by COVID-19 pandemic.

Chair Barsema recognized the importance to making the appropriate contingency plans related to the university budget. These plans must acknowledge that while the current conditions are not permanent, our own selves will not be able to return quickly to where we were pre-COVID-19. In this context, he urged our university leadership to bring forward in September, an updated budget that reacts appropriately to both the extraordinary temporary stresses the university is experiencing, as well as the permanent changes in restructuring that may need to occur to ensure multiyear sustainability. Everyone must continue to address our revenue shortfall as the university gains more clarity regarding fall enrollment, the fate of additional federal aid, and the ability of our state to fulfill its annual commitment. To this end, our university leadership faces tough choices. At this time, the budget must consider the possibility of furloughs and further layoffs. Be they temporary, or permanent, as well as plans to provide an increment to the subset of employees who are waiting patiently for resolution.

Chair Barsema urged the university leadership to continue to navigate these challenging decisions with compassion and empathy. As well as to engage with shared governance to confirm strategies and to work collaboratively with collective bargaining units on these matters. The board appreciates the level of care and thoughtfulness that goes into every difficult decision that impacts our employees, their families and their livelihoods. Contingency planning all possible scenarios and hard decisions come with running a university, but do not make them any less painful.

Chair Barsema is confident that our mission, vision, and values will continue to guide us all and that everyone will be able to emerge from this challenging time stronger and smarter. Remember, Huskies never quit.

PUBLIC COMMENT

General Counsel Perry stated that Mr. Roderic Moyer registered to make a public comment. Mr. Roderic Moyer made a public comment.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT NO. 144

Chair Barsema asked President Freeman to present the President's Report No. 144.

President Lisa Freeman made a comment to Mr. Roderic Moyer regarding his public comments throughout the day.

President Lisa Freeman presented Agenda Item 7.a. Classroom Technology Upgrades

President Freeman noted that the Classroom Technology Upgrades item was discussed in detail at the FACFO meeting earlier today. During the FACFO meeting, the requested amount was amended from \$450,00.00 to \$600,000.00, which the Board approved at that time. The recommendation of the University is that the Board of Trustees approve the item with the amended amount of \$600,000.00.

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to amend Action Item 7.a. and the requested amount of \$450,000.00 to \$600,000.00 for Classroom Technology Upgrades. Vice Chair Wasowicz so moved, and Trustee Gayles seconded.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aiden Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve amended item 7.a. Vice Chair Wasowicz so moved, and Trustee Gayles seconded.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aiden Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

OTHER MATTERS

There were no other matters.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held September 17, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION

Chair Barsema stated that the Board needed to go into closed session and would not take up new business following the closed session. He asked for a motion to close the public meeting to conduct closed session to discuss the following subjects as authorized by the Open Meetings Act: personnel matters as generally described under sections 2(c)(1)(2)(3) and (21) of the open meetings act; collective bargaining matters as generally described under section 2(c)(2) of the open meetings act; litigation and risk management matters as generally described under sections 2(c)(11) and (12) of the open meetings act; and closed session minutes matters as generally described under section 2(c)(21) of the open meetings act.

Trustee Gayles so moved and Vice Chair Wasowicz seconded. The motion was approved.
Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to take a roll call vote to close the public meeting.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes	Trustee John Butler: Yes
Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes	Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes
Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes	Trustee Aiden Shields: Yes
Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes	Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The Board closed the public meeting at 1:52 p.m.

The meeting reconvened from closed session at 3:20 p.m.

Chair Barsema asked Dr. Streb to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Present	Trustee John Butler: Present
Trustee Montel Gayles: Present	Trustee Veronica Herrero: Present
Trustee Bob Pritchard: Present	Trustee Aiden Shields: Present
Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Present	Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Present

The motion was approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Pritchard so moved, and Vice Chair Wasowicz seconded.

Chair Barsema asked Dr. Streb to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes	Trustee John Butler: Yes
Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes	Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes
Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes	Trustee Aiden Shields: Yes
Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes	Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Crystal Doyle
Recording Secretary

In compliance with Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/1, et seq, a verbatim record of all Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees meetings is maintained by the Board Recording Secretary and is available for review upon request. The minutes contained herein represent a true and accurate summary of the Board proceedings.