

Minutes of the
Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University
Research and Innovation, Legal and Legislative Affairs
Committee Meeting
August 26, 2021

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m. by Committee Chair Veronica Herrero. The Committee meeting was conducted through video conferencing communications and was conducted pursuant to Section 6 of Executive Order 2020-7 (Suspending OMA requirements of in person attendance by members of a public body). Recording Secretary Crystal Doyle conducted a roll call of the Trustees.

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

Also present were President Lisa Freeman; Committee Liaison and Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Gerald Blazey; Vice President and General Counsel and Board Parliamentarian Bryan Perry; Chief of Staff and Liaison to the Board of Trustees Matt Streb; Director of State Relations Katie Davison; Assistant Vice President for Federal Relations Anna Quider; Assistant Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs Dara Little, and Director of Innovation Luke Sebby.

VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

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

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Committee Chair Herrero asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Trustee Wasowicz seconded. The motion was approved.

Committee Chair Herrero asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

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

The motion was approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee Chair Herrero asked for a motion to approve the minutes of May 13, 2021. Trustee Pritchard so moved, and Trustee Barsema seconded. The motion was approved.

Committee Chair Herrero asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

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

The motion was approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Chair Herrero reported that the Committee would be receiving verbal reports from State and Federal Relations regarding the status of legislation and funding as well as a verbal report from the Director of Innovation, regarding the status of the 71 North Partnership Studio. Committee Chair Herrero welcomed the members of the University Advisory Committee and requested comments. Operating Staff Council President, Holly Nicholson, expressed gratitude to the committee and senior leadership for their advocacy on behalf of NIU.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Committee Chair Herrero introduced the public comment portion of the meeting. General Counsel Bryan Perry confirmed that no public comments were received.

UNIVERSITY REPORTS

Committee Chair Herrero asked Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Dr. Gerald Blazey, to provide an update from the Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships. Dr. Blazey noted that the Committee would receive reports from Director of State Relations Katie Davison and Assistant Vice President for Federal Relations Dr. Anna Quider, regarding a variety of relief and infrastructure bills related to NIU's mission, as well as an FY21 sponsored programs report from Assistant Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs Dara Little, followed by a presentation from Director of Innovation Luke Sebby on the status of NIU's innovation ecosystem across campus.

Agenda Item 7.a. - State Legislative Report

Director of State Relations Katie Davison reported that NIU received a flat appropriation of \$87.8M for FY22. Ms. Davison noted that the state budget included a slight increase of 6% to the Monetary Award Program (MAP) Grant program and reappropriations of all capital projects.

Ms. Davison highlighted legislation that NIU played a key role in developing. Most notably, Senate Bill 1832, which was introduced with the intention of increasing access to advanced degrees and certifications for incumbent workers in early childhood education through four-year degree offerings from community colleges. NIU worked closely with the bill sponsor, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois Community College Board, and its sister universities to provide modifications that called for the creation of an Early Childhood Education Consortium that will identify target metrics for degree completion through partnerships between the community

colleges and four-year universities. The bill successfully passed in both chambers and was signed by the Governor on July 28.

Ms. Davison reported that NIU's leadership on the issue of diversity, equity, and inclusion was demonstrated when the institution was called upon to support House Bill 3438, which would require higher education institutions to create resource centers for undocumented students. Coordinator for Undocumented Student Support Sandy López, provided compelling testimony about NIU's existing resource center that aided in the passage of this bill.

Ms. Davison noted that decennial legislative district remapping was underway, and that DeKalb County was among the counties with the most significant geographical changes. New maps were passed by the general assembly and signed by the Governor, but are expected to be challenged upon the release of U.S. Census data. Ms. Davison reported that she would continue to monitor the committee hearings and proceedings closely.

Ms. Davison indicated that the Office of State Relations was working closely with NIU Alumni Relations for advocacy efforts and outreach to legislators during 2022 spring session.

Agenda Item 7.b. – Federal Legislative Report

Assistant Vice President for Federal Relations Dr. Anna Quider reported that the Senate recently passed a \$1.2T infrastructure bill that is expected to pass in the House of Representatives. She noted that while the bill is the largest investment in infrastructure in decades, it does not include provisions specifically related to NIU's equities in higher education or research. Dr. Quider reported that the House of Representatives and Senate passed a FY22 budget resolution, which paves the way for a major reconciliation bill, tentatively called the Build Back Better Act. Dr. Quider noted that NIU is working with peer institutions in Illinois and across the country to actively engage the Illinois congressional delegation and key congressional committees as the legislation is drafted. Dr. Quider reported that Congress is expected to approve a continuing resolution in September to fund the federal government and will wait until December to act on a final FY22 appropriations measure.

Dr. Quider reported that Congressman Adam Kinzinger recommended to the House Appropriations Committee that NIU be allocated \$660,000 from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for the project "Understanding and Mitigating Future Weather and Climate Risks to Agriculture." Dr. Quider noted that the House Appropriations Committee has included the project in its draft of the FY22 Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. Dr. Quider reported that Senator Dick Durbin has recommended that NIU receive \$500,000 from the Small Business Administration for food entrepreneurship, improving employment for underserved communities, and experiential learning opportunities. Dr. Quider also reported that Senator Tammy Duckworth has recommended that NIU receive \$577,000 from the US Department of Education to create the Paraprofessional to Professional Educator Licensure (ProPEL) program, which will help address the shortage of licensed special educators in northern Illinois, with the goal of at least half of program participants be people of color.

Dr. Quider reported that the Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships has prioritized raising awareness of equity issues through the Request for Information (RFI) process. She noted that since February 2021, NIU has submitted five equity focused RFI responses, which include President Freeman's comments to the White House and Vice President Blazey's comments to the

National Science Foundation, Department of Energy, National Institutes of Health, and the US Patent and Trademark Office.

Agenda Item 7.c. – Sponsored Program Administration Quarterly Report

Assistant Vice President for Research and Sponsored Programs, Dara Little reported that 127 faculty and staff secured 343 awards totaling \$80M in FY21. She noted that NIU’s total sponsored and research funding with and without COVID-19 relief funds was at its highest level in ten years. Ms. Little reported that non-COVID-19 related funds grew by almost 50%. She reported that the composition of agencies and types of funding are changing to align with NIU programs and research emphases.

Agenda Item 7.d. – Innovation Report

Director of Innovation Luke Seby reported that the Office of Innovation is focused on developing an inclusive culture of innovation through infrastructure, partnerships, and programs, while also supporting strategic development efforts. Mr. Seby reported that NIU has signed industry partner leases with Premier Crop Systems and Experimentica. Mr. Seby provided examples of recently developed programming that supports innovation from inception to impact.

OTHER MATTERS

Committee Chair Herrero asked if there were other matters to come before the Committee. The Committee confirmed that there were no other matters to be discussed.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Committee Chair Herrero noted that the next meeting will be held on November 18, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

Committee Chair Herrero asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Trustee Barsema seconded. The motion was approved.

Committee Chair Herrero asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

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

The motion was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

Jessica Cima/Crystal Doyle

Recording Secretary

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.