Minutes of the

Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University

Research and Innovation, Legal and Legislative Affairs

Committee Meeting

February 20, 2025

# Call to order and roll call

The meeting was called to order at 9:50 a.m. by Committee Chair Eric Wasowicz. Recording Secretary Shay Wright conducted a roll call of the Trustees.

Committee Vice Chair Rita Athas: Present Trustee Dennis Barsema: Present

Trustee John Butler: Present Trustee Veronica Herrero: Present

Trustee Aidan O’Brien: Absent Trustee Leland Strom: Present

Committee Chair Eric Wasowicz: Present Board Chair Montel Gayles: Present

Also present were President Lisa Freeman; Committee Liaison and Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Richard Mocarski; Vice President and General Counsel and Board Parliamentarian Bryan Perry; Executive Vice President and Provost Laurie Elish-Piper; Chief Strategy Officer and Liaison to the Board of Trustees Matt Streb; Vice President for Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development and Chief Engagement Officer Rena Cotsones; Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Financial Officer George Middlemist; Vice President for Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications Sol Jensen; Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer Carol Sumner; Vice President for Student Affairs Clint-Michael Reneau; Senior Associate Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer John Acardo and UAC members Ben Creed and Larissa Garcia.

# 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 Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Board Chair Gayles so moved, and Vice Committee Chair Rita Athas seconded. The motion was approved.

# Review and approval of minutes of November 7, 2024

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the minutes of November 7, 2024. Trustee Strom so moved, and Trustee Herrero seconded. The motion was approved.

# Chair’s comments/announcements

Committee Chair Wasowicz welcomed University Advisory Committee Members and opened the floor to remarks. UAC member Ben Creed stated his appreciation for the work going on behind the scenes to adjust to the new administration policies.

# Public comment

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

# University reports

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Richard Mocarski, to provide an update from the Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships.

Vice President Mocarski gave a presentation on the timeline of what has happened since the new administration took over.

**Agenda Item 7.a. – State Legislative Report**

Ms. Katie Davison joined virtually to present the State Legislative Report. Committee Chair Wasowicz opened the floor for questions and comments.

**Agenda Item 7.b. Federal Relations Report**

Ms. Julia Rowe joined virtually to present updates to the Federal Relations Report. Committee Chair Wasowicz opened the floor for questions and comments.

**Agenda Item 7.c. Sponsored Programs Administration Quarterly Report**

Ms. Dara Little, Associate Vice President for Research/Executive Director Sponsored Programs gave a written report. Committee Chair Wasowicz opened the floor for questions and comments.

**Agenda Item 7.d. – Faculty Presentation**

Dr. Nicholas Pohlman, Professor, from the Department of Mechanical Engineering in the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology provided a verbal presentation on Accelerating Student Opportunities through Emergent Collaborations.

Committee Chair Wasowicz opened the floor for questions and comments.

# Other Matters

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked if there were other matters to come before the Committee. There were none.

# Next meeting date

Committee Chair Wasowicz noted that the next meeting will be held on May 8, 2025.

# Adjournment

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

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked Mrs. Wright to conduct a roll call vote.

Committee Vice Chair Rita Athas: Present Trustee Dennis Barsema: Present

Trustee John Butler: Present Trustee Veronica Herrero: Present

Trustee Aidan O’Brien: Absent Trustee Leland Strom: Present

Committee Chair Eric Wasowicz: Present Board Chair Montel Gayles: Present

The motion was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

Shay Wright

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.*