Minutes of the

**Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University**

**Research and Innovation, Legal and Legislative Affairs**

**Committee Meeting**

May 8, 2025

# Call to order and roll call

The meeting was called to order at 10:39 a.m. by Committee Chair Eric Wasowicz. 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 Veronica Herrero: Absent *(arrived at 10:41 a.m.)*

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; Ralph Wheeler, Professor, from the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry; UAC member Ben Creed.

# 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. Trustee Strom so moved, and Board Chair Gayles seconded. The motion was approved.

# Review and approval of minutes of FEBRUARY 20, 2025

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the minutes of February 20, 2025. Board Chair Gayles so moved, and Vice Committee Chair Athas seconded. The motion was approved.

# Chair’s comments/announcements

Committee Chair Wasowicz welcomed University Advisory Committee Members and opened the floor for remarks. There were no comments.

# 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 commended Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Richard Mocarski for his leadership and asked for remarks.

Vice President Mocarski gave an overview of the current climate of the research ecosystem under the current administration given the recent changes.

*Trustee Herrero arrived at 10:41 a.m.*

**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 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. Ralph Wheeler, Professor, from the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, gave a verbal presentation on Energizing Student Learning Through Research.

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 August 28, 2025.

# Adjournment

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to adjourn. Board Chair Gayles so moved, and Vice Committee Chair Athas seconded. The motion was approved.

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked Ms. Doyle 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 11:58 a.m.

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.*