

Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University

Board Meeting Minutes

April 15, 2021

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened on April 15, 2021 via video conference. Sherry Eagle, Vice Chair of the Board called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Roll was called and the following Trustees were present: Sherry Eagle; Marvin Garcia; Ann Kalayil; Gabriela Loreda Garcia; Charles Serrano; Jonathan Stein; and George Vukotich.

The following Trustees were not present: Carlos Azcoitia; Barbara Fumo; and Jim Palos

Also in attendance: Gloria Gibson, President; Natalie Brouwer Potts, Acting Assistant General Counsel; Mary Pat Burns, Board Counsel; Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board; vice presidents; staff; and university community members.

Vice Chair Eagle read the following statement: "Because the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services declared that COVID-19 presents a public health emergency and the fact that Governor Pritzker issued a disaster proclamation in response to COVID-19, the most recent Proclamation being dated April 2, 2021, this meeting is being held by video conference.

Since the Board is meeting remotely, Public Act 101-0640 requires a roll call vote be taken on each matter acted upon. I ask that Trustees be prepared to unmute their microphones and clearly respond to the roll call vote on each matter that we consider for approval.

We are proceeding by video and audio conference because we continue to believe that due to the pandemic it is prudent to not all be physically present in the same space. We have posted notice of this meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The open portion of the meeting is being recorded and transcript of the proceedings will be prepared and ultimately, after approval, will be made available to the public on the NEIU website.

I would ask that anyone who speaks during this meeting first identify yourself - name and title – and remember that the standard rules for our board meetings still apply."

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Trustee Serrano, seconded by Trustee Vukotich moved to approve the minutes from the following previous meetings: the open and closed sessions of the February 11, 2021 Board of Trustees meeting; the open and closed sessions of the February 23, 2021 Special Board meeting; the March 18, 2021 Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee meeting; and the open and closed sessions of the March 22, 2021 Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting.

Discussion: after some discussion, Trustee Kalayil asked that the February 11, 2021 Closed Session minutes be amended to include an inadvertent omission. Trustee Garcia asked that the March 18, 2021 Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee meeting

minutes be amended to add a missing action step, and for an opportunity to review the revised document prior to it being presented for Board approval.

Vice Chair Eagle revised the motion in light of the discussion. Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Loreda Garcia moved to approve the following meeting minutes: February 11, 2021 Board Meeting, with correction to closed session minutes; open and closed session minutes of the February 23, 2021 Special Board meeting; and the open and closed session minutes of the March 22, 2021 Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting.

Discussion: there was no further discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia -	Fumo -	Kalayil - Yes	Palos -	Stein - Yes
Eagle - Yes	Garcia - Yes	Loreda - Yes	Serrano - Yes	Vukotich - Yes

The motion carried as revised.

Opportunity for Public Comment

Vice Chair Eagle announced the opportunity for public comment in accordance with P.A. 91-0715. There were 5 requests to speak.

1. **Max Villarreal** – former NEIU student
Topic: to seek redress from the University
2. **Andrew Johnson** – President of the Hollywood/North Park Community Association
Topic: to acknowledge the University's recent community engagement efforts
3. **Sama Ablahad** – NEIU student
Topic: to petition the university to hold an in-person commencement ceremony in May
4. **Nicholas Wilhoite** – NEIU student
Topic: to petition the university to hold an in-person commencement ceremony in May
5. **Daisy Valladares** – NEIU student
Topic: to petition the university to hold an in-person commencement ceremony in May

Committee Reports

Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee

The Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee met on March 18, 2021 via video conference. The committee also held a special meeting via video conference today at 12:30p.

The committee received informational briefings on March 18 and reviewed and discussed Action Item I. A. The committee reviewed and discussed Action Item I. B. earlier today. Both matters are recommended for Board approval by the committee.

Action Item I. A. Recommendation to Hire A Search Firm: AVP Enrollment Services Search

In accordance with 10 ILCS 680/25-175, Northeastern Illinois University may employ an external search firm to facilitate the hiring of the President or the hiring of an individual when there is a demonstrated and justifiable need for guidance from a firm or individual with specific expertise in the field of hiring. The university recently completed a search for an AVP without the use of a search firm. The pool of candidates lacked the overall experience and expertise needed. No

candidate was selected. A search firm will be proactive, aggressively seeking the diversity that Northeastern desires.

Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Garcia, moved to approve the request to hire a search firm for the Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services search as presented.

Discussion: there was no discussion.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia -	Fumo -	Kalayil - Yes	Palos -	Stein - Yes
Eagle - Yes	Garcia - Yes	Loredo - Yes	Serrano - Yes	Vukotich - Yes

The motion carried.

Action Item I. B. Recommendation as to 2021 Tenure and Promotion Recommendations

Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Serrano moved to approve the tenure and promotions as recommended by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs as presented.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Department</u>
Jorge Cantu	Biology
Sung Doo Kim	Management and Marketing
Anne Le	Accounting, Business Law and Finance
Kimberly Maljak	Health Sciences and Physical Education
Hector Morales	Teacher Education
Ulugbek Nurmukhamedov	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
Ryan Poll	English
Brian Vivona	Literacy, Leadership and Development
Xiwei Wang	Computer Science

Discussion: Trustees congratulated the faculty on their accomplishments and dedication to Northeastern.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia -	Fumo -	Kalayil - Yes	Palos -	Stein - Yes
Eagle - Yes	Garcia - Yes	Loredo - *	Serrano - Yes	Vukotich - Yes

* the student trustee is not permitted to vote on this matter

The motion carried.

Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee

The Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee met on March 22, 2021 via video conference and held a special meeting via video conference on April 14, 2021.

The committee received informational briefings and reviewed and discussed the following items and recommend them for approval today.

Action Item I. C. Recommendation as to Real Estate Advisory Services Final Report

In 2020, the University issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Real Estate Advisory Services. Through this process, the University selected Jones Lang LaSalle to provide research and subsequent guidance for the highest and best use of its property holdings along W. Bryn Mawr Avenue and for parcels on its El Centro site.

The scope of work included a market analysis for the North Park and Avondale neighborhoods where both properties are located, a feasibility analysis which included residual land value models, residual land value modeling inputs, and several transaction structures to formulate a list of potential development transaction issues for the University to consider. This comprehensive analysis included extensive community input from area elected officials, community groups, and individual community members. The subsequent results of the work has culminated in a final report that includes a series of recommendations for the University's consideration.

Vice Chair Eagle, seconded by Trustee Stein moved to accept and file the final report based on extensive research and community participation conducted and presented by Jones Lang LaSalle.

Discussion: action on the recommendations of this report will take place at a later time.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia -	Fumo -	Kalayil – Abst.	Palos -	Stein - Yes
Eagle - Yes	Garcia - Yes	Loredo - Yes	Serrano - Yes	Vukotich - Yes

The motion carried.

Action Item I. D. Recommendation to Authorize the Use of Unrestricted Net Assets for Scholarship Initiative.

Declining enrollments have hit NEIU particularly hard compared to last year. A financial model has been created which projects the financial value of the size of the incoming class, estimates what portion of the incoming class is eligible for various other forms of financial assistance (Pell, M.A.P., AIM High and Golden Opp.) and determines the University support required to fund the recruitment incentive. In fall 2021, full tuition and fees for 12 credit hours are approximately \$12,000. The average student at NEIU receives approximately \$9,400 in outside funding/support. This scholarship will provide a top off award of \$2,600, on average, to eligible students.

Trustee Serrano, seconded by Trustee Garcia moved to approve the recommendation that the University be permitted to use up to \$2.5 million of unrestricted net assets to fund an AY22 scholarship initiative contingent upon receipt of a legal opinion confirming the legal validity of the proposed initiative under all applicable federal and state law.

Discussion: the University is in the process of obtaining a comprehensive legal review by its outside counsel and that formal opinion is forthcoming, however the President requested that a contingent approval be granted today. The Board is agreeable to contingent approval based upon a favorable outcome within the legal opinion that packaging the University's proposed top off award in combination with a student's available aid will not create a legal problem for the University. Trustees asked for the expedited opinion and that all promotion and marketing about such an award program be suspended until the legal opinion is favorably received.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia -	Fumo -	Kalayil – Yes	Palos -	Stein - Yes
Eagle - Yes	Garcia - Yes	Loredo - Yes	Serrano -	Vukotich - Yes

The motion carried.

Motion to Convene in Closed Session

At 2:21 p.m. Trustee Loredo, seconded by Trustee Kalayil, moved to convene in Closed Session.

Discussion: there was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia -	Fumo -	Kalayil – Yes	Palos -	Stein - Yes
Eagle - Yes	Garcia - Yes	Loredo - Yes	Serrano - Yes	Vukotich - Yes

The motion carried.

Motion to Reconvene in Open Session

At 2:51 p.m. Trustee Vukotich, seconded by Trustee Loredo moved to reconvene in Open Session. The motion carried by acclamation.

Legal Report

The Board received a legal report in advance and asked questions in Closed Session.

Old Business/New Business

Vice Chair Eagle asked if there was any old or new business. No additional business was raised.

Board Learning Session

Vice Chair Eagle introduced today's speakers/presenters: moderator Sulyema Perez, Senior Executive Director of Government Relations for Northeastern; Tom Cross, former chair of the Illinois Board of Higher Education and retired IL House Minority leader; David Miller, former Chair of the IL House Appropriations Committee; and Courtney Nottage, legislative consultant for NEIU and partner in the firm Kasper & Nottage, P.C. The topic: Government Relations and the Role of Trustee Advocacy. Dr. Perez presented an overview of government relations at NEIU. Mr. Nottage presented on the state appropriations process and the role of the University's lobbyist. Drs. Cross and Miller shared their experience, thoughts, and suggestions for how Trustees can advocate throughout the appropriations process. Trustees engaged in an active question and answer session and thanked the presenters for sharing their vast experience and knowledge. Vice Chair Eagle suggested that there be a follow-up session for further engagement and learning.

Motion to Adjourn

At 4:05 p.m. Vice Chair Eagle adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Eagle, Vice Chair of the Board
Karl Voigt, Assistant Board Secretary
Approved June 10, 2021