

The Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University

Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes

July 29, 2021

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened via video conference on Thursday, July 29, 2021. Jim Palos, Chair of the Board called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

The following Trustee committee members were present at roll call: Sherry Eagle and Jim Palos. Jonathan Stein joined at 9:10 a.m.

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

The Chair recited the following statement:

“Because the Governor’s disaster proclamation remains in place, the most recent proclamation being dated June 25, 2021, we will proceed with this meeting being held by video conference.

Since the Committee 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 any matter that we consider for approval. Notice of this meeting has been posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act. The open portion of the meeting is being recorded and a 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.”

Opportunity for Public Comment

Chair Palos announced the opportunity for public comment in accordance with Public Act 91-0715. There were no requests to speak.

Chair’s Announcements

Chair Palos thanked the President and staff for their work in preparing the campus to re-open in a few weeks, and wished everyone well. He reminded everyone to sign up for the Kane Golf Outing scheduled for Monday, August 2 at the Chevy Chase Country Club in Wheeling.

Status Report on 2021 Scholarship Initiative

President Gibson provided an update on the *NEIU for You* scholarship initiative. The University will use \$2.5 million from its unrestricted reserves and the NEIU Foundation is committing \$400,000 toward the scholarship initiative. Despite a late start, a considerable public relations effort has been underway over the past several weeks. On-campus registration and one-stop events have already taken place, and others will be taking place at El Centro and the Carruthers

Center soon. There are approximately 200 more students registered for fall 2021 now than at the same time last year. Enrollment projections are 300 new students for fall 2021. Many students are still deciding whether or not to enroll or wait until next year. This is a consistent trend among other Illinois publics. Trustees have requested to see the public relations materials including the media interviews.

Status Report on the Return to Campus Plans

President Gibson provided an update on the re-opening of the University's facilities, and thanked everyone involved in the work ensuring all locations are safe. The principal goal is the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff when they are in-person. The administration and faculty union have been working with various HVAC experts to ensure the mitigation protocols are up to the recommended standards. The HVAC systems will be using 100% outside air along with MERF filters in all systems. Plexi-glass has been installed at all locations, along with hand sanitizing stations, wipes, face masks, shields, gowns, social distancing signage, and enhanced disinfecting protocols. Upon their return to in-person work, staff will be able to request additional personal protective equipment (PPE) as well as disinfecting materials and protocols. At this time there is no universal vaccination requirement, but everyone visiting a university location is encouraged to get or be fully-vaccinated. All Nest residents and international students are subject to mandatory testing. Approximately 50% of students are reporting being fully vaccinated. There is no current employee data for vaccinations. The SHEILD testing site on campus is serving approximately 50-60 people per week, and so far the vaccination site on campus has vaccinated approximately 450 people from both the university community and the community at large. Heartland Health Centers is operating a COVID testing location for their clients on the main campus. Sharon Heimbaugh, Director of Student Health Services announced that the university is, after significant testing, up to standards with mitigation protocols, and is currently making investments toward becoming a federally approved vaccination site. Terry Mena, Vice President for Student Affairs announced that the university will be launching a vaccine incentive program offering opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to win various prizes for becoming vaccinated. Prizes will include two tuition waivers for students, as well as other various prizes open to everyone. The total value of the incentive program is just under \$73,000. Trustees have asked to have a report on how many people became vaccinated as a result of the incentive.

Consideration and Approval of Board Education Topics

Chair Palos reviewed the list of board education topics that was approved earlier this year.

Trustee Eagle, seconded by Trustee Palos moved to approve the education topics for the next two regular board meetings.

Discussion: Liesl Downey, Vice President for Institutional Advancement asked Trustees to consider having the fundraising education presentation in November in collaboration with the Foundation board. Trustees agreed with this recommendation and set the September board meeting education topic as Student Mental Health, with November focusing on fundraising.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Eagle: Yes Palos: Yes Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Consideration and Recommendation to Revise Board Regulations

Dr. Gibson asked the board for a revision to the board's current regulations; Section II. Employees, Subsection B. Faculty and Administrative, 6. Employee Benefits, (d) Holidays, 1). In response to the recent addition of "Juneteenth" as a recognized federal and state holiday, the board will add "Juneteenth" to its official list of holidays effective January 1, 2022. Changes in board governing documents receive two public readings and are voted on at the second reading.

Trustee Eagle, seconded by Trustee Palos moved to recommend the addition of "Juneteenth" to the University's official list of holidays in the board's regulations.

Discussion: The university will set the Monday closest to June 19th as the annual day off.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Eagle: Yes Palos: Yes Stein: Yes

The matter is recommended.

Motion to Convene in Closed Session

At 9:25 a.m. Trustee Eagle, seconded by Trustee Stein moved to convene into Closed Session.

Discussion: there was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Eagle: Yes Palos: Yes Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Motion to Return in Open Session

At 10:44 a.m. Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Palos, moved to re-convene in Open Session. The motion carried by acclamation. Trustee Eagle left the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

Approval of the President's 2022 Compensation

Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Palos moved to approve a 2% increase in the President's compensation for the time period of July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 based on the board's annual evaluation and the board's delegation to the Executive Committee to finalize said compensation.

Discussion: there was no further discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Eagle: Palos: Yes Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Approval of the President's 2022 Performance Goals

Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Palos moved to approve the President's goals for time period of July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 and to have those goals memorialized in a written document signed by the President and the Board Chair.

Discussion: the four goal areas as defined by the President's employment agreement shall be:

- Enrollment goal – 2% increase
- Retention goal – 3% increase
- Graduation goal as defined by declared majors – level
- Fundraising goal – 5.8% increase

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Eagle: Palos: Yes Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Approval of Board's Response in Matter #21-40460

Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Palos moved to authorize counsel to file the proposed response in matter #21-40460 as discussed during Closed Session.

Discussion: there was no further discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Eagle: Palos: Yes Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Approval to Extend the Contract with Burke, Burns & Pinelli, Ltd.

Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Palos moved to approve the extension of the contract with Burke, Burns & Pinelli, Ltd. based on existing terms through June 30, 2022.

Discussion: there was no further discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Eagle: Palos: Yes Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Old Business / New Business

Chair Palos asked if there was any old or new business.

Motion to Adjourn

At 10:50 a.m. Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Palos moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Palos, Board Chair
Karl Voigt, Assistant Board Secretary
Approved September 23, 2021