

The Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2022

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened on Friday, January 21, 2022 via video conference. Jim Palos, Chair of the Committee, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Roll was called and the following Trustee Committee Members were present: Sherry Eagle; Jim Palos; and Jonathan Stein

Other Trustees present: Charlie Serrano

Also present: Gloria Gibson, President; G. A. Finch, University Counsel; Mary Pat Burns, Board Counsel; Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board; vice presidents, staff, and University community members

Chair Palos recited the following statement: Governor Pritzker has continued in place his prior disaster proclamation in response to COVID-19, the most recent Proclamation being dated January 7, 2022, and, as a result, this meeting is being held by video conference.

We have posted notice of this meeting 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.

Opportunity for Public Comment

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

Chair's Remarks

Chair Palos thanked President Gibson and members of the University's COVID-19 Task Force for keeping the University safe.

ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Chief of University Police, John Escalante, presented a safety and security report on all University locations. FY22 police budget has seen a funding reduction of 15%. Currently, there are 8 fewer department employees compared to same time last year. There are two essential personnel to be hired; one security guard, and one telecommunicator. A new civilian manager position is under consideration in the department to handle general administrative oversight, co-chair the Emergency Management Team, and take on risk management responsibilities. Despite these conditions, the University continues to maintain an adequate police force. From July 1 through December 31, 2021, University Police department staff received daily policy training, as well as training in the following areas: community policing, social media, Clery, sexual assault investigations, de-escalation, LGBTQ community, use-of-force, active shooter, hazardous materials, case reporting, and Spanish for law enforcement. A new "Safety Training" tab has been added to the UPD webpages with links to additional resources. All police and administrative staff have been re-certified in first aid/CPR/AED. In this same time period, UPD responded to 6,830

service calls and calls for assistance. These include 3,402 buildings/grounds checks, as well as several calls for lost and found, police escorts, suspicious persons/vehicles, well-being, fire/security alarms, medical assists, thefts, and disturbances. Overall, community crime is down in all of the districts where the University has locations compared to same time last year.

In Spring 2022, the UPD will continue to provide safety and security to all University locations, even when the University is operating remotely. An upgrade to the BRG emergency notification systems will be underway, along with the installation of security cameras, and hands-free entrances. A new ordinance violation will be introduced as an option for certain low-level infractions in lieu of arrest. An ongoing de-escalation training will take place this month. As always, the UPD continues to look to the University community for ways to build better relationships, and seek community input on how to improve UPD services. Trustees asked several questions of the Chief, endorsed additional funding for the department to meet its objectives, and thanked him for his continued service to the University. The Committee took no action.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Chair Palos announced that the shared governance presentation at the February board meeting will be from Chris Maxwell, Assistant Dean of Students and Chair of the A&P Employees Council.

The Board's Lunch-and-Learn session at its February board meeting will be presented by Dr. Shireen Roshanravan, Executive Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.

President Gibson and Sharon Heimbaugh, Director of Student Health Services and Chair of the COVID-19 Task Force, provided information about the University's pandemic operations. In response to the recent surge in the Omicron variant in Cook County, and in conjunction with the city, county, and state advisories, Northeastern pivoted to remote work beginning January 11 continuing through January 28. Dr. Gibson will send a notice to the University community on January 24 announcing the return to in-person learning and work beginning January 31 contingent upon favorable health advisories and guidance. The University has ordered 40,000 masks for distribution over all locations. The task force has asked the University community to wear provided N95 and KN95 masks when on site. To date, the University has had 46 reported cases of COVID-19, of which 16 were students, and 1 reported on site. There have been no reported cases of campus transmission. As of the most recently available data, 90% of University students have reported full vaccination, as well as 99% reported for staff including faculty. Northeastern is an approved SHIELD Illinois site and continues to provide COVID-19 testing and vaccine administration at all of its locations.

Chair Palos asked the Board's Counsel to investigate whether the lunch-and-learn topics would qualify as acceptable Trustee training in accordance with Board of Higher Education Act.

Liesl Downey, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, introduced Ted Sudol, Managing Director of Carter Fundraising Consultants. Mr. Sudol presented an overview of the services Carter will be providing in the University's Capital Campaign feasibility study over the coming months. The due date for the study is May 13, 2022. Trustees asked a variety of questions and learned that fundraising training is included in the services offered by Carter.

ITEMS FOR COMMITTEE ACTION

Consideration and Possible Action Related to the President's Annual Evaluation

Chair Palos will introduce a recommendation to form the 2022 Ad hoc Committee on the President's Evaluation at the February board meeting. Trustee Carlos Azcoitia has agreed to be the committee chair. The other members are not yet confirmed.

Consideration and Possible Approval of Recommendation from the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee to Approve Urgent Request for Additional Tuition Waivers for Afghan Students

Trustee Eagle, seconded by Trustee Stein moved to approve two additional scholarships for Afghan students consistent with the program already underway at NEIU.

Discussion: Chair Palos is asking the Executive Committee to take action on this request after a recommendation from the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee meeting yesterday morning. The matter needs to be voted on today as the semester has kicked off this week and cannot wait until the February board meeting. After a general discussion of the program, the President stated that these additional two students represent the only requests to be made for the Spring 2022 semester. Trustees are in favor of granting this request.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Eagle: Yes Palos: Yes Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Old/New Business

Trustee Stein re-iterated his request for the University to provide the maximum resources available to the University Police Department. Trustee Eagle and Chair Palos asked for a five-year analysis of crime statistics in time for the March Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting. The report should include corresponding enrollment and technology impacts to the number of police officers on staff.

There was no further business.

Adjourn

At 10:08 a.m. Trustee Eagle, seconded by Trustee Stein moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Palos, Chair of the Committee
Karl Voigt, Assistant Board Secretary
Approved February 10, 2022