

Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University

Meeting Minutes

September 22, 2022

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened on Thursday, September 22, 2022 in the Alumni Hall located at 5500 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, IL. Jim Palos, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m.

Roll was called and the following Trustees were present: Carlos Azcoitia; Sherry Eagle; Shyrice Howell; Ann Kalayil; Jim Palos; Charlie Serrano; and Jonathan Stein

Also present: Gloria Gibson, President; Peter Land, Acting University Counsel (via video); Mary Pat Burns, Board Counsel; Josie Gough, Partner, Burke, Burns & Pinelli, Ltd.; Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board; vice presidents; staff; and university community members

Approval of Past Meeting Minutes

Trustee Serrano, seconded by Trustee Azcoitia moved to approve, by consent, (i) the open and closed minutes from the June 9, 2022 Board meeting; (ii) the open and closed minutes from the June 24, 2022 Special Board meeting; (iii) the open minutes from the August 11, 2022 Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee meeting; (iv) the open and closed minutes from the August 15, 2022 Audit Committee meeting; and (v) the open minutes from the August 15, 2022 Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee Meeting, and to keep all of the closed minutes closed.

Discussion: there was no discussion

The motion carried by acclamation.

Opportunity for Public Comment in Accordance with P.A. 91-0715

Chair Palos announced the opportunity for public comment. There were 9 requests to speak.

1. **Mr. George Gerdow**, as self; History Instructor, retired
Topic: to speak about the recent changes in the governance of NEIU
2. **Dr. Timothy Scherman**, as self; Chair, Department of English
Topic: to make comments on the cost side of the budget
3. **Dr. Sophia Mihic**, as member of faculty; Professor of Political Science
Topic: views on proper functioning/management of university; missteps, failures, ways to improve
4. **Dr. Nancy Matthews**, as Professor of Justice Studies, Women's & Gender Studies
Topic: ongoing dysfunctions in the administration of the university affecting livelihoods and morale
5. **Dr. Kristin Over**, as member of faculty; Associate Professor, Department of English
Topic: about university mismanagement
6. **Dr. Amanda Dykema-Engblade**, as member of faculty; Chair, Department of Psychology
Topic: hurdles and concerns providing services to NEIU students
7. **Dr. Alex Peimer**, as member of faculty; Associate Professor, Department of Geography & Environmental Studies
Topic: experience as a member, and former chair of, the shared governance UPBC group
8. **Dr. Denise Cloonan Cortez de Anderson**, as self; Chair, World Languages and Cultures Department
Topic: university budget and key people who have left the institution
9. **Dr. Rachel Birmingham**, as member of UPI grievance committee, Associate Professor Justice Studies & Child Advocacy Studies
Topic: communication concerns

Shared Governance Presentation: Faculty Senate

Chair Palos invited Dr. Nancy Wrinkle, Chair of the Faculty Senate, to provide remarks to the Board. On behalf of the Faculty Assembly and all faculty, Dr. Wrinkle outlined the Faculty Senate's 2022-23 priorities, along with what the Senate would like the Board to know, and what the Senate needs from the Board. Dr. Wrinkle expressed the Senate's desire to work with the administration and Board to ensure shared accountability for outcomes over the coming year, particularly with respect to enrollment. Additionally, the Senate expressed its desire to see more consistent, cohesive leadership from the Board. Trustees thanked Dr. Wrinkle for her thoughtful, candid remarks.

Chair's and President's Remarks

Chair Palos welcomed Student Trustee Shyrice Howell to her inaugural meeting. Chair Palos welcomed all students, faculty, and staff, both new and returning. Chair Palos thanked Dr. Kimberley Buster-Williams, Vice President for Enrollment Management for her enrollment presentation during the Board's luncheon. Chair Palos represented the Board on August 30 at a lunch meeting arranged by Dr. Suleyma Perez and hosted by President Gibson and the leadership team with City Colleges of Chicago Chancellor, Juan Salgado.

President Gibson welcomed students, faculty, and staff to the new academic year. Dr. Gibson provided some background on the incoming class of first-time full-time students. Of the 516 new freshmen, 49% identify as Latinx, 20% identify as African-American, and the median grade point average is 3.14 on a four point scale. 326 incoming students qualified for NEIU for You 2.0. Top majors are Psychology, Computer Science, Biology, and Business. Student yield notched up from 15% to 18%. Dr. Gibson thanked Dr. Kimberley Buster-Williams, her team, and everyone across the University for their efforts in bringing in the new class. More enrollment plans will be discussed at the upcoming Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee meeting in October. The Nest occupancy is at 87.8%, its highest occupancy in several years. More than 100 resident students have been awarded Living and Learning Cohort (LLC) scholarships, 30 of the 38 Hope Chicago students, and several of the first cohort of MBA students from India are also living at The Nest. In addition to working closely with Chicago Public Schools, the University is pleased to welcome two students from East St. Louis. Dr. Gibson thanked those who sponsored, and attended the recently revived Presidential Lecture Series on September 15, which featured NEIU Alumna and MacArthur Genius Grant recipient, Dr. Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor. Dr. Taylor delivered a powerful lecture to a near capacity crowd on racial politics and how we move forward together. Dr. Gibson introduced and welcomed Mr. Christopher Childers, the University's Executive Director of Marketing and Communications. Mr. Childers will be a member of the President's Cabinet. The University will begin work on its 2015 strategic plan that was revised in 2017 beginning in October. Dr. Andrea Evans, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, has been asked to chair the committee. All sectors of the University, along with the Board of Trustees, will play an integral part in the process. An exploratory committee on athletics will be formed this fall to respond to a request from the Student Government Association, as well as feedback from the 2020 Climate Study. Dr. Terry Mena, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, will chair the exploratory task force. The President's Diversity Council will be reconstituted this year to begin to operationalize response to feedback received from the Climate Study concerning diversity, equity, and inclusion at the University. Dr. Gibson expressed her gratitude to everyone who participated in last weekend's family and alumni festivities and encouraged everyone to attend the October 15 Golden Gala that will take place at the Museum of Contemporary Art. Dr. Gibson encouraged everyone to consider contributing to the Hurricane Relief Fund being organized by the National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture.

Dr. Andrea Evans introduced the three newest faculty members: Dr. Diana Gallardo, Counselor Education; Dr. Margot Giannoulis, Literacy, Leadership, and Development; Jacqueline Zook, Ronald Williams Library. Dr. Evans also introduced Dr. Connie Zak, Interim Director of the Nursing Program.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee

Trustee Ann Kalayil reported that the committee met on August 11, 2022 in the Golden Eagles Room on the main campus. The committee received several informational briefings. Due to the lack of an eligible quorum, the committee was unable to make a tenure recommendation at that time. Trustee Kalayil read an abbreviated biography of Dr. Thomas Philion, Dean of the Goodwin College of Education, and asked to introduce the following action item:

Action Item I. A. Consideration and Approval of Tenure for Dr. Thomas Philion, Dean of the Goodwin College of Education

Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Serrano, moved to approve the tenure recommendation at the rank of full-professor for Dr. Thomas Philion, Dean of the Goodwin College of Education. This recommendation comes with support from the Department of Literacy, Leadership and Development, and Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Andrea Evans.

Discussion: Trustees welcomed Dean Philion and offered their congratulations

Roll was called and the vote was as follows (the Student Trustee may not vote on tenure):

Azcoitia: Yes	Garcia:	Kalayil: Yes	Serrano: Yes
Eagle: Yes	Howell:	Palos: Yes	Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Audit Committee

Trustee Jonathan Stein reported that the Audit met on August 15, 2022 in the Golden Eagles Room on the main campus. The committee received reports on the ongoing audit findings corrective action plan and the University's FY21 Single Audit and Compliance Examination. The committee made the following recommendations to be considered today:

Action Item I. B. Recommendation to Accept and File the FY21 Single Audit and Compliance Examinations as released by the Illinois Auditor General.

Trustee Serrano, seconded by Trustee Azcoitia, moved to accept the committee's recommendation as presented.

Discussion: there was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia: Yes	Garcia:	Kalayil: Yes	Serrano: Yes
Eagle: Yes	Howell: Yes	Palos: Yes	Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee

Trustee Sherry Eagle reported that the Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee met on Monday, August 15, 2022 in the Golden Eagles Room on the main campus. The committee received several informational briefings and presents the following recommendations to be considered today:

Action Item I. C. Approval of Recommendation for Purchases \$100,000 or Greater: UIC Facility Use Contract

Trustee Serrano, seconded by Trustee Stein, moved to approve the committee's recommendation to enter into a three-year contract between NEIU and the University of Illinois Chicago for use of the Credit Union 1 Arena for future NEIU Commencement exercises at a cost of \$395,415.00.

Discussion: Trustee Eagle reported that previous venue exploration revealed UIC to be the best value for the University and no further venue exploration was considered in advance of this contract recommendation. The University will refresh its venue review at the conclusion of this agreement.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia: Yes	Garcia:	Kalayil: Yes	Serrano: Yes
Eagle: Yes	Howell: Yes	Palos: Yes	Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Action Item I. D. Approval of Recommendation for Purchases \$100,000 or Greater: El Centro Janitorial Services

Trustee Eagle, seconded by Trustee Serrano, moved to approve the committee's recommendation to enter into a five-year contract for janitorial services for the El Centro location with ATALIAN US Midwest for a total amount not to exceed \$500,000.00.

Discussion: there was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia: Yes	Garcia:	Kalayil: Yes	Serrano: Yes
Eagle: Yes	Howell: Yes	Palos: Yes	Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Action Item I. E. Recommendation to approve the ratified contract between NEIU and Teamsters Local 700 / Building Service Workers

Trustee Eagle, seconded by Trustee Azcoitia, moved to accept the committee's recommendation to approve the four-year labor agreement between the University and Teamsters Local 700 / Building Service Workers as ratified by its members on July 26, 2022.

Discussion: Trustees thanked everyone who partook in this successful negotiation.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia: Yes Garcia: Kalayil: Yes Serrano: Yes
Eagle: Yes Howell: Yes Palos: Yes Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Trustee Eagle reported that due to the recent Fall 2022 student census confirmation, both the FY23 Operating Budget and the Preliminary FY24 Unrestricted Operating and Capital Budgets Request need to be revised and will be reviewed at a special Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting, and presented for Board approval at a special Board meeting shortly thereafter. These items are deferred.

Motion to Convene in Closed Session

At 2:44 p.m. Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Serrano, moved to convene in Closed Session.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia: Yes Garcia: Kalayil: Yes Serrano: Yes
Eagle: Yes Howell: Yes Palos: Yes Stein: Yes

The motion carried.

Motion to Reconvene in Open Session

At 5:38 p.m. Trustee Serrano, seconded by Trustee Kalayil, moved to reconvene in Open Session. The motion carried by acclamation.

Board Action Items

Action Item I. H. Consideration and Approval of President's 2022-23 Goals

Chair Palos reported that the Board would not take any action on this item today.

Information Item II. A. Consideration of Changes to the Board's Regulations

Chair Palos provided a brief overview of the proposed changes to the Board's current regulations regarding bereavement leave (Regulations Section II. Employees, Subsection B. Faculty and Administrative, 6. Employee Benefits, e. Bereavement Leave, 1) – 2); and Section II. Employees, Subsection C. Civil Services, 7. Employee Benefits, F. Bereavement Leave, 1) – 2)). These changes are being requested in order to comply with new legislation signed into law by Governor Pritzker on June 9, 2022 as the Family Bereavement Act. This is the first of two public readings of these proposed changes. The final language will be approved at the November 17, 2022 Board meeting.

Old/New Business

Chair Palos asked if there was any old business to present. Hearing none, Chair Palos made the following announcements:

- The next regular Board Meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2022 at the Carruthers Center
 - A special Board Meeting to approve the deferred budget items will be announced shortly
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Motion to Adjourn

At 5:41 p.m. Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Serrano, moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Palos, Chair of the Board
Karl Voigt, Assistant Board Secretary
Approved November 17, 2022