

Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University

Board Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2020

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened on Thursday June 11, 2020 via video conference. Trustee Jim Palos, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

The following Trustees were in attendance: Carlos Azcoitia, Barbara Fumo, Sherry Eagle, Marvin Garcia, Ann Kalayil, Jim Palos, Fatima Siddiqua, Charlie Serrano, Jonathan Stein, and George Vukotich

Others in attendance: Dr. Gloria Gibson, President; Mary Pat Burns, Board Counsel; Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board; vice presidents, and members of the University community.

Chair Palos read a statement regarding the nature of today's meeting being held via video conference.

Chair Palos asked for approval of written minutes from the following meetings: all sessions of the February 13, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting; all sessions of the March 23, 2020 Executive Committee meeting; the April 16, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting; all sessions of the May 4, 2020 Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees; the May 14, 2020 Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee meeting; and the May 18, 2020 Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting. There were no corrections or additions requested. Trustee Eagle, seconded by Trustee Kalayil, moved to adopt the minutes as written. The minutes were approved by acclamation.

Chair Palos acknowledged everyone at the University for their contributions in managing the University's instruction and administration under unprecedented conditions. Chair Palos thanked everyone who has contributed over \$65,000 to the student emergency fund. The funds are in the process of being disbursed to students. Chair Palos congratulated everyone at the Goodwin College of Education on their recent accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation.

Dr. Gibson, along with Provost Rome, congratulated the recently tenured and promoted faculty. These faculty will be recognized at the September board meeting. Dr. Gibson wished well those students who will be taking summer classes and reiterated the University's commitment to their success. Dr. Gibson offered her condolences to the families and friends of Dr. Conrad Worrill and Mr. Hecky Powell. Dr. Gibson offered her thanks and support to those individuals on the front lines in the fight for racial equality and encouraged the community to find ways to join their efforts. Dr. Gibson announced the establishment of the University's George Floyd Social Justice Scholarship with an initial goal of \$50,000. Finally, Dr. Gibson asked Sharon Heimbaugh, Director of Student Health Services and member of the University's Coronavirus Task Force, to report on the University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chair Palos announced the Opportunity for Public Comment. Eleven requests were received to address the board.

1. **Dr. Olivia Perlow**, NEIU faculty
Topic: comments on proposed reorganization and budget

2. **Dr. Denise Cloonan**, NEIU faculty
Topic: process and shared governance
3. **Dr. Joseph Hibdon**, NEIU faculty
Topic: restructure proposal and its impact on student success
4. **Dr. Charles Steinwedel**, NEIU faculty
Topic: shared governance
5. **Dr. Shayne Pepper**, NEIU faculty
Topic: alternate plan to proposed reorganization
6. **Dr. Rachel Birmingham**, NEIU faculty
Topic: shared governance
7. **Dr. Maria De La Torre**, NEIU faculty
Topic: importance of consultation with University community
8. **Dr. Laurie Fuller**, NEIU faculty
Topic: divesting in campus police and investing in student success
9. **Dr. Tim Barnett**, NEIU faculty
Topic: to read portion of statement denouncing police brutality and support of Black Lives Matter
10. **Dr. Cindy Moran**, NEIU faculty
Topic: to read portion of statement denouncing police brutality and support of Black Lives Matter
11. **Dr. Kristen Over**, NEIU faculty
Topic: to read portion of statement denouncing police brutality and support of Black Lives Matter

Convene in Closed Session

At 2:12 p.m., Trustee George Vukotich, seconded by Trustee Marvin Garcia moved to convene in Closed Session. Roll was called and the board unanimously agreed to convene in Closed Session.

Re-convene in Open Session

At 3:41 p.m., Trustee George Vukotich, seconded by Trustee Fatima Siddiqua, moved to re-convene in Open Session.

Board Committee Reports

Trustee Ann Kalayil reported that the **Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee** met on May 14, 2020 via video conference. Two information items were presented at that meeting. Trustee Kalayil asked Dr. Dennis Rome, Provost, and Drs. John Fraire and Frank Gaytan to provide brief oral re-caps of their reports.

Trustee George Vukotich reported that the **Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee** met on May 18, 2020 via video conference. Two action items were discussed and recommended for board action today:

- Action Item I. A. Approval of Preliminary FY21 Operating Budget
- Action Item I. B. Approval of Expenditures \$100,000 or Greater: Financial Advisor Services, Blue Rose Capital Advisors, LLP

Trustees asked clarifying questions about the action items. The information items from the May 18 meeting are included in the President's Report. One information item that was not presented in May, the Construction Report, was presented by Assistant Vice President for Facilities Management, Nancy Medina.

President's Report

Action Item I. A. Approval of Preliminary FY21 Operating Budget

Board approval is requested for the preliminary FY21 operating budget recommendations of \$145,990,100; representing an unrestricted operating budget of \$85,493,600 and a restricted operating budget of \$60,496,500. The final FY21 operating budget will be presented for board approval at its September meeting.

Trustee Palos, seconded by Trustee Stein, moved to approve the Preliminary FY21 Operating Budget as presented.

Discussion: there was no discussion.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Action Item I. B. Approval of Expenditures \$100,000 or Greater: Financial Advisor Services, Blue Rose Capital Advisors, LLC

A financial advisory services firm provides competent and objective advice to assist the University with financial matters related to capital planning and debt issuance, investment ratings, primarily revenue bonds and/or certificates of participation. A fee for the professional services has been negotiated, and upon Board approval a three-year contract will commence on July 1, 2020 and will expire on June 30, 2023. The contract also includes a two-year renewal option. Blue Rose Capital Advisors, LLC., 6400 Flying Cloud Dr., Suite 212, Eden Prairie, MN was one of two firms reviewed by a committee via the competitive sealed proposals (RFP) process. Blue Rose Capital Advisors, LLC. is recommended as the financial advisory services firm based on their strong understanding of best practices in higher education, their broad experience working almost exclusively with higher education clients, and their in-depth understanding of the University's finances.

Project Cost

Up to \$230,000 for five years

Source of Funds

University and Auxiliary Funds

Trustee Palos, seconded by Trustee Eagle, moved to approve the Expenditure of \$100,000 or Greater: 3-year contract for Financial Advisor Services, Blue Rose Financial Advisors, LLC, with an optional 2-year extension beginning July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023.

Discussion: Trustees asked clarifying questions.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Board Action Items

Action Item: Approval of the President's Contract Extension

The President's employment contract provides for an extension beyond its initial term upon notice and action by the Board of Trustees. The Board must notify the President of its intent to extend the employment agreement no later than one year prior to its expiration.

Original term: 3 years from June 1, 2018 – June 30, 2021.

Extended term: 2 years beginning July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023

Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Serrano, moved to approve the President's employment contract extension. Discussion took place in Closed Session.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia – Yes	Fumo - Yes	Kalayil - Yes	Serrano - Yes	Stein – Yes
Eagle – Yes	Garcia – Yes	Palos – Yes	Siddiqua - Yes	Vukotich – No

The motion carried.

Action Item: Approval of the President's Annual Evaluation

The President's employment agreement calls for an annual performance appraisal or evaluation by the Board of Trustees. The Board established an Ad Hoc Committee on the President's Annual Evaluation Process in September 2019. The committee devised and approved a timeline and process for the Board to annually carry out the President's evaluation based upon areas outlined within the President's employment agreement and mutually agreed upon metrics. The Board approved the metrics in consultation with the President at its February 13, 2020 meeting. In accordance with 110 ILCS 680/25-185 (8), Northeastern Illinois University Law, the Board's written evaluation will be posted on the University's website along with the materials from the meeting at which the evaluation was approved.

Trustee Serrano, seconded by Trustee Stein, moved to approve the President's Annual Evaluation. Discussion took place in Closed Session.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Azcoitia – Yes	Fumo - Yes	Kalayil - Yes	Serrano - Yes	Stein – Yes
Eagle – Yes	Garcia – Yes	Palos – Yes	Siddiqua - Yes	Vukotich – No

The motion carried.

Action Item: Consideration and Possible Action Regarding Engagement of Board Counsel

This item is to consider extending the current contract with Burke, Burns & Pinelli, Ltd., for the services of independent legal counsel to the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Garcia, seconded by Trustee Serrano, moved to extend the contract with Burke, Burns, & Pinelli, Ltd. for a period of six months.

The motion carried by acclamation.

Old Business

No old business was raised.

New Business

Chair Palos announced Board Officer elections. Mary Pat Burns explained the voting procedure to Trustees and that they will nominate and elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary for two-year terms that begin on July 1, 2020.

Trustees Serrano and Eagle nominated Jim Palos for Chair and he accepted the nomination. Trustee Vukotich nominated Charlie Serrano for Chair and he accepted the nomination. Trustee Palos was elected as Chair of the Board.

Trustee Siddiqua nominated Ann Kalayil for Vice Chair and she declined the nomination. Trustees Palos and Stein nominated Sherry Eagle for Vice Chair and she accepted the nomination. Trustees nominated George Vukotich for Vice Chair and he accepted the nomination. Trustee Eagle was elected as Vice Chair of the Board.

Trustee Stein nominated himself for Secretary. Trustee Stein, running unopposed, is Secretary of the Board.

Chair Palos made the following announcements:

Chair Palos made a virtual presentation and tribute to outgoing Student Trustee Fatima Siddiqua and read the following resolution:

WHEREAS, Fatima Siddiqua was elected to serve as the Student Trustee on the Northeastern Illinois University Board of Trustees from July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Fatima Siddiqua is a recent Dean's List graduate of Northeastern Illinois University with a Bachelor of Science in Political Science; and

WHEREAS, Fatima Siddiqua, in addition to her impressive academic work, has worked tirelessly in promoting Northeastern Illinois University and the success of its students through her active involvement in Student Leadership Development and Student Government; and

WHEREAS, Fatima Siddiqua has been a leader in political action with organizations and groups both at Northeastern and within the community-at-large; and

WHEREAS, Fatima Siddiqua has actively pursued excellence in citizenship, and has represented her fellow students as a member of the Board of Trustees, as well as being a respected ambassador of Northeastern Illinois University.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University honors Fatima Siddiqua and expresses its sincere gratitude for her exemplary service.

Upcoming Board Committee Meetings:

- Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee on August 20, 2020
- Audit and Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committees on August 24, 2020

Next Board meeting: Thursday, September 17, 2020

Adjournment

At 5:18 p.m., Trustee Siddiqua, seconded by Trustee Serrano, moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

Jim Palos, Chair of the Board
Karl Voigt, Assistant Board Secretary
Approved September 17, 2020