

Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University

Board Meeting Minutes
September 19, 2019

A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened on Thursday, September 19, 2019 at 1:05 p.m. in the University Auditorium located at 5500 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, IL. Jim Palos, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order.

Roll was called and the following Trustees answered present: Carlos Azcoitia, Sherry Eagle, Barbara Fumo, Marvin Garcia, Jim Palos, Charlie Serrano, Jonathan Stein, and George Vukotich

Trustees not present: Ann Kalayil

Also present: Gloria Gibson, President; Melissa Reardon Henry, Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel; Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board; Vice Presidents; staff, and community members.

Approval of the Minutes

Trustees were presented the following minutes prior to this meeting: June 13, 2019 Academic/Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee meeting; June 13, 2019 regular Board meeting; July 29, 2019 Executive Committee meeting; August 14, 2019 Academic/Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee meeting; August 27, 2019 Audit Committee meeting; and August 27, 2019 Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee meeting. No additions or corrections were recommended and the minutes stand as written.

Chair's Preliminary Announcements

- Chair Palos introduced the recently elected 39th Ward Alderman, Samantha Nugent
- Chair Palos welcomed Student Trustee, Fatima Siddiqua to her first full board meeting.
- Chair Palos reminded Trustees to check Directorpoint regularly
- Chair Palos asked Trustees to note the preliminary 2020 meeting calendar included with the meeting materials.

President's Preliminary Announcements

- Dr. Gibson announced to the Trustees that the Campus Climate Study has begun
- Dr. Gibson thanked Trustees for continuing to facilitate meetings between her and various community leaders
- Dr. Gibson announced that the Golden Gala will be held on campus October 12.
- Dr. Gibson recognized the shared governance group leaders for 2019-2020:
 - Jeremy Babcock, University Advisory Council
 - Vicky Byard, Faculty Senate
 - Lydia Filus, University Budget and Planning Council (represented today by Rae Joyce Baguillat)
 - Amie Jatta, Administrative and Professionals Council
 - Joseph Winfield, Civil Service Council (represented today by Mary Schultz)

Opportunity for Public Comment in Accordance with Public Act 91-0715

Trustee Palos announced the Opportunity for Public Comment. There were 4 requests received prior to this meeting.

1. **Rebekah Fitchett** – NEIU Employee; AFSCME
Topic: the ongoing contract negotiations between AFSCME and the Administration

2. **Cathy Kuentler** – NEIU Employee
Topic: to address the board regarding PA 101-0213, Section 5 giving public institutions of higher education permission to dispose of surplus real estate.

3. **Ymelda Viramontes** – NEIU Employee; AFSCME
Topic: the need for a fair contract and step plan and the important role AFSCME members play in the NEIU Community

4. **Omar Cardenas** – NEIU Employee; AFSCME
Topic: to talk about the working conditions currently experienced by the bargaining unit

Trustee Kalayil joined the meeting.

Dr. Gibson asked Provost Dennis Rome to introduce the University's new faculty members

Convene in Closed Session

At 1:34 p.m., Trustee Vukotich, seconded by Trustee Garcia, moved to convene in closed session. Discussion in closed session may include personnel, real estate, and litigation matters. The roll was called and Trustees unanimously agreed to convene in closed session.

Reconvene in Open Session

At 3:04 p.m., Trustee Vukotich, seconded by Trustee Kalayil moved that the board reconvene in open session. Roll was called and the Trustees agreed to reconvene in open session.

Board Committee Reports

Executive Committee

Chair Palos announced that the Executive Committee met on July 29, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. in the Student Union to finalize the President's evaluation and discussed the agenda for its upcoming Board Retreat. As a result of their first-year evaluation of the President, the committee recommends a 2% increase in her salary and proceeded with a vote.

Action Item I. G. Approval of the President's Salary Increase

Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Eagle, moved to approve the President's salary increase. *The student trustee may not vote on this matter.*

Discussion: There was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Trustee Serrano rejoined the meeting.

Academic/Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee

Trustee Kalayil reported that the Academic/Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee met on August 14, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in the Student Union and was briefed on the following matters: tenure and rank recommendations; biographies of new faculty; student housing update; student enrollment and retention updates. The two items presented today for Board Action were deferred from the June 13, 2019 Board meeting; approval of tenure and rank recommendations for Dr. Dennis Rome, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Steven Harris, Dean of the Libraries. One new item for board action, Approval of IFEEL Tuition Rate for Computer Science, will be introduced for discussion at the vote.

Trustee Kalayil invited Dr. John Fraire to provide an update on the fall enrollment. The university registered 7% fewer student credit hours this fall than last year. Yet, that 7% decrease stops the trend of an increasing credit hour gap between years.

In fall 2018, NEIU enrolled 451 new freshmen. This fall it enrolled 452 new freshmen and did so with 20% fewer freshmen applications, which increased the yield rate from 13% to 16%. Also of note, NEIU has 20 more full-time freshmen than last year. Graduate enrollment experienced double-digit increases for the fall term, which can be attributed to faster admissions processing, quicker turnaround in decisions from academic departments, targeted digital marketing, an expanded communication planning and events calendar, and increased and better counseling for prospective students at the pre-admit stage. The graduate market shows much potential for growth.

Transfer enrollment remains a challenge. This fall NEIU saw a 12% decline in new transfers; a decline in headcount of 122. Many institutions in Illinois and the Midwest are facing similar challenges with transfer enrollment, due in part to declining demographics for that population. NEIU needs to do a better job of communicating with prospective transfer students and creating a greater presence at its feeder community colleges in and outside of Chicago. Additionally, the current registration process needs improvement to continue to eliminate flaws that impede progress.

A student's enrollment and retention is more than just recruitment and messaging. Past enrollment presentations have been followed up by questions almost exclusively focused on recruitment practices and messaging. Many of the needed best practices and outreach efforts employed by modern enrollment offices have been missing at NEIU. In addition to stemming the seven year enrollment decline, this past year was focused on building infrastructure; acquiring and putting into place basic enrollment platforms, focusing on building collaborative internal working relationships among Enrollment, Marketing and the Student Success programs to create an integrated and coordinated communication plan. The University continues to invest in training for enrollment counselors, and building foundations for a solid inbound marketing strategy and a more structured relationship with the Chicago Public Schools. Going into the fall 2020 campaign - freshmen, transfer, and graduate - will be strengthened by these partnerships with other institutions and organizations, and the continued development of direct pipelines, both domestically and internationally.

At present, Academic Affairs is working with a consortium of high schools headed by Clemente High School to house credit earning courses at the high schools. As well, work is underway with the Niles School system in developing campus-based programs for their students. There is now an agreement with the Chicago Police Department to provide a deferred payment plan for their officers seeking a degree, and a similar program is being developed with the city of Niles. The

University has re-written its Memorandum of Understanding with ASPIRA, and continues to pursue relationships with other organizations and institutions.

Trustee Kalayil invited Dr. Frank Gaytan to present a student retention update. Dr. Gaytan reported that the retention rate for first-time, full-time freshmen jumped to 58.8%, up from 49.2% last year. The University has been successful, too, in addressing some equity gaps with African-American and Latino students. African-American student retention last year was 24.5%. This year that number is 49%. Latino student retention last year was 53.6%. This year that number is 59.7%. Several factors were noted in these increases. Better coordination and communication about University advising and success programs and services available to students, as well as getting in front of students much sooner. Dr. Gaytan attributed some of the uptick in retention to the Golden Tour; a collaborative group of academic and financial aid advisors who visited high schools to work with students who had already been admitted to Northeastern to help them get placed into programs and services that would benefit them the most. President Gibson and Trustee Kalayil acknowledged and thanked Trustee Garcia for his personal assistance with the many community connections that have helped the student retention initiatives to thrive.

Trustee Kalayil invited Dr. Daniel Lopez to present a Student Housing update. Dr. Lopez presented an overview of the most updated Student Housing report. The capacity of The Nest is 440 and the University's contractual occupancy requirement is 80%, or 352 residents. As of today, there are 179 students with signed leases (or 42% occupancy) and 58 pending applications. The University will again this year make a contribution to the Collegiate Housing Foundation of around \$2 million to make up the occupancy difference. The NEIU Foundation has awarded \$45,426 in housing grants to 24 students. The University continues to aggressively market student housing. Dr. Lopez invited Sara Garcia, Regional Manager of American Campus Communities, to present on The Nest's intake, marketing and management efforts. Ms. Garcia answered Trustees' questions about her presentation.

Two additional items were discussed at the August meeting, the committee charter and metric dashboards. These will be presented at the November board meeting. Trustee Azcoitia left the meeting.

At this time, Chair Palos asked to suspend the committee reports in order to vote on the remaining action items as other Trustees needed to leave the meeting.

President's Report

The entire President's Report is incorporated herein by reference.

Action Item I. A. Approval of Tenure and Rank recommendation for the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Dennis Rome.

Trustee Garcia, seconded by Trustee Kalayil, moved to approve the tenure and rank recommendations for the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Dennis Rome. Dr. Rome was hired as the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs in June, 2019. He is recommended for the rank of Professor in the Department of Sociology and has the endorsement of the department. This vote was presented for action at the June 13, 2019 meeting, but due to lack of a quorum was deferred to September. *The student trustee may not vote on this matter.*

(Action Item I. A. con't.)

Discussion: There was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Action Item I. B. Approval of Tenure and Rank recommendation for the Dean of the Libraries, Mr. Steven Harris.

Trustee Fumo, seconded by Trustee Garcia, moved to approve the tenure and rank recommendations for the Dean of the Libraries, Mr. Steven Harris. Mr. Harris was hired at the Dean of the Libraries in August 2019. He is recommended for the rank of Associate Professor in the Library and has the endorsement of the Library staff. This vote was presented for action at the June 13, 2019 meeting, but due to lack of a quorum was deferred to September. *The student trustee may not vote on this matter.*

Discussion: There was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Action Item I. C. Expenditures of \$100,000 or More: Approval of UIC Commencement Contract

Trustee Fumo, seconded by Trustee Garcia, moved to approve the three (3) year contractual agreement for the use of the Credit Union 1 Arena for the next six (6) commencement ceremonies. The contract will begin with December 2019 commencement and will end following the May 2022 ceremony. The Credit Union 1 Arena is offering Northeastern a competitive rate for an extended agreement resulting in an overall savings of \$22,527.

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Action Item I. D. Approval of FY20 Operating Budget

Trustee Eagle, seconded by Trustee Stein moved to approve the final FY20 Operating Budget of \$88,846,700 reflecting the FY20 revised state appropriation of \$35,566,900 and tuition revenues of \$51,934,800, differential revenues of \$480,000 and other revenues of \$865,000.

(Action Item I. D. con't.)

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Action Item I. E. Approval of FY21 Operating and Capital Requests Budget

Trustee Fumo, seconded by Trustee Stein moved to approve the Unrestricted Operating Budget request for FY21 totaling \$93,288,100 and requested capital projects totaling \$276,416,200, with \$251,536,000 in Regular Capital projects and \$24,880,200 in Capital Renewal projects.

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Action Item I. F. Approval of Collective Bargaining Contract: University Professionals of Illinois (UPI)

Trustee Garcia, seconded by Trustee Vukotich moved to approve the tentative agreement to roll the collective bargaining agreement between the University and UPI in accordance with the terms negotiated by the Provost's designee, the contract administrator. The collective bargaining agreement negotiated for 2014-2019 will remain in effect until August 15, 2021. *The student trustee may not vote on this matter.*

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Action Item I. H. Approval of IFEEL Tuition Rate: Computer Science

Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Vukotich moved to approve the tuition rate for the 1+1 graduate Master of Science partnership between The Institute for Future Education, Entrepreneurship and Leadership (IFEEL) in Lonavaia, Manarashtra, India and NEIU as developed by the Department of Computer Science. Students will spend their first year at IFEEL taking courses and then transition to NEIU for their final 21 hours culminating in an earned degree from Northeastern Illinois University.

(Action Item I. H. con't.)

Discussion: Trustees were advised of an incorrect figure in the presented tuition tables that did not affect the stated cost to participants.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Destruction of Verbatim Records

Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Vukotich, moved to approve the destruction of verbatim records from the closed session portions of the January 23, 2018 special Board meeting and the February 8, 2018 regular Board meeting.

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

Release of Confidential Written Minutes

Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Fumo, moved that the confidential written minutes of the closed session portion of the September 20, 2018 meeting no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection.

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

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

The motion carried.

At this time, Trustees Kalayil and Garcia left the meeting. Chair Palos asked Trustee Stein to present the Audit Committee Report.

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee met on August 27, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in the Student Union. The committee received a status update on the FY18 Audit Findings, and received and accepted the University's FY20-21 Audit Plan as presented by the Director of Internal Audits, Rita Moore.

There was no discussion.

Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee

Trustee Vukotich reported that the Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee met on August 27, 2019 at 9:30 a.m. in the Student Union and was briefed on four items that the Board has already taken action on today, and ten information items.

Discussion: Trustees asked for a narrative summary of one of the marketing slides that was previously provided.

There was no further discussion.

Chair Palos and President Gibson asked Trustees to review the Work Plan documents and reach out to the President with any questions.

General Counsel's Report

Vice President for Legal Affairs and General Counsel, Melissa Reardon Henry, announced that the Trustees received the legal report in advance of the meeting and had an opportunity to ask questions during Closed Session. The report stands as submitted.

Old Business

Chair Palos asked if there was any old business. No old business was raised.

New Business

Chair Palos asked if there was any new business. The Chair announced that he has asked Trustee Eagle to chair an *Ad hoc* Committee to present recommendations for an evaluation process for the President's annual review. Trustees Kalayil and Garcia will also serve on the committee. Their meeting will be held on Thursday, October 17, 2019 immediately following the Academic/Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee meeting at El Centro.

Chair Palos made the following announcements:

- The 2019-20 NEIU Arts brochure is provided with your materials]
- The **Illinois Public Universities Trustees Conference** will take place on Wednesday, September 25, 2019 at Illinois State University. Karl registered all interested Trustees yesterday.
- The **Executive Committee** will meet on Wednesday, October 2, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. in the Golden Eagles Room
- The **Academic/Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee** will meet on Thursday, October 17, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in the Community Room at El Centro.
- The **Ad hoc Committee** will meet on October 17, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. in the Community Room at El Centro.
- The **Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee** will meet on Thursday, October 24, 2019. Time will be announced shortly.
- The **Audit Committee** will meet on Thursday, October 31, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in the Golden Eagles Room
- The second board retreat will take place on Friday, November 1, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. Location is still being determined.
- The next **Board meeting** will take place on Thursday, November 14, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. in the Donn F. Bailey Auditorium at the Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies.
- **Academic Honors and Master's Hooding Ceremonies** will take place on Wednesday, December 4, 2019 at 5:00 and 7:30 p.m. respectively.

- **Commencement Ceremony** will take place on Sunday, December 15, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. at the Credit Union One Arena.

Chair Palos asked Trustees to review the list of networking events provided in their packets and respond to Karl as soon as possible which dates they are available.

Adjourn

At 4:30 p.m., Chair Palos asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Stein, seconded by Trustee Vukotich moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned by acclamation.

Jim Palos, Chair
Karl Voigt, Assistant Board Secretary
Approved November 14, 2019