MEETING NO. 313
APPROVED DECEMBER 14, 2023

Bridgewater State University
Board of Trustees Meeting
October 19, 2023
6:30pm
Heritage Room, Maxwell Library-Hybrid

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustees Caulfield, Giles (Virtual), Longo, Taylor, MacCormack, Turchon, Allen, Oliari and Prince

MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustee Alexander, Battaglino

ALSO PRESENT: President Clark; EVP and Provost Ismaili; Chief of Staff Leuenberger; Vice Presidents Bell, Gentlewarrior, Jason, Jean, Powers, Shropshire, Zuromski; CDO Oliver

Under the order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, as declared on March 12, 2020 by Governor Baker, having been complied with, and a quorum of the Board present, the Board of Trustees held a meeting on October 19, 2023 with Chairperson MacCormack presiding.

Chairperson MacCormack called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. She put forth a motion that a unanimous vote will be deemed to eliminate the need for a roll call. If a vote is not unanimous, then a roll call vote will be conducted.

On motion duly made via roll call vote, Trustee Longo-yes, Trustee Caulfield-yes, Trustee Allen-yes, Trustee Giles-yes, Trustee Taylor-yes, Trustee Turchon-yes, Trustee Oliari-yes, Trustee Prince-yes, Trustee MacCormack-yes, it was
VOTED that the Board of Trustees dispense with a roll call vote for each
FOR: Unanimous unanimous vote for the duration of this meeting.
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Caulfield, Longo) it was
VOTED to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on
FOR: Unanimous June 8, 2023.
CARRIED (Attachment)

Chairperson's Report

Recognition of Faculty Promoted to Professor

Provost Ismaili welcomed and introduced the faculty promoted to full professor. They were presented with a gift from Chair MacCormack on behalf of the Board.

Student Trustee Update

Trustee Allen stressed the importance of transparency with students at all times as it is important to them. Campus attendance is great and it's noticeable that there is a large representation of students on the weekends; they are choosing to stay and participate which is important. Students seem to be involved and happy. The recent events in the Middle East does have an impact on the students. We may not know what students are going through and they need to realize it's okay to not be okay; empathy for students is important.

President's Report

President Clark acknowledged the faculty and appreciates all they do for BSU and our students. With the recent unfortunate incidents in the Middle East, a good next step would be a peace vigil to bring people together and provide a safe space for everyone.

He introduced new staff and staff new to their role: Dr. Marci Swede, Dean of the College of Education and Health Sciences; Dr. Lee Torda in her new role as Interim Dean of Undergraduate Studies; Yolany Gonell, Assistant Vice President for Student Success; and Dr. Jennifer Hartsfield as the new MSCA Chapter President.

President Clark stated there is a good feeling on the campus. Enrollment is stabilized, retention is up, and the budget status is good. A Fall Preview day was held recently and they experienced a 30% increase in attendance over the past year.

All three collective bargaining agreements are settled with one more to settle (DCGE). The Lech Walesa event was a highlight for the campus. An endowed scholarship was established in honor of Lech Walesa and five student scholarships will be provided next year. BSU has a new outdoor Fitness Court and Homecoming will be held soon. Lastly, the Wall Street Journal rated BSU as one of the best in consideration of social mobility and universities that make a difference in the lives of their students.

Presentation: In-State Tuition and Financial Aid

Vice President Shropshire noted BSU's goal is to keep the institution affordable. The staff in Financial Aid do remarkable work. The state has changed the law for undocumented students and they can now attend a state institution for in-state cost and state funds will be allocated to assist these students.

Laura Biechler, Assistant Vice President, Financial Aid, provided a presentation. She noted BSU was notified in August about this new funding which they are still waiting for.

BSU borders a large city, Brockton, where many undocumented students reside. BSU usually has about 20-30 students. She received several

calls from current students and will continue to work with them through this process and provide clarification.

She advocated for the southeast region to begin conversations with our students. BSU currently has 34 students who are all eligible for in-state rates and eligible for financial assistance. It's important to assure the students they can persist here. The students are advocating for each other which is terrific.

President Clark stated, due to affirmative action in other states and the Supreme Court ruling, BSU is making sure that students are welcomed and to let them know they belong here. The percentage of students of color is the largest it has ever been and we want to stay vigilante and let students know everyone is welcomed here.

ACTION/
INFORMATION
ITEMS

AUDIT

Draft Independent Audited Financial Statements

Committee Chair Oliari noted a presentation was given by the auditors at the meeting. There are strong internal controls in place and the auditors had high praise for the Finance staff. Vice President Shropshire stated BSU received an unmodified opinion and all requirements were met to obtain this. Upon approval by the Board, the audit will be submitted to the State.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Oliari, Prince) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the draft independent audited financial statements for FY2023 prepared by the Finance Division and audited by WithumSmith+Brown, PC. as recommended by the Audit Committee and as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated October 16, 2023.
(Attachment)

EXECUTIVE

President's Budget for FY2024

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Oliari, Turchon) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the President's Budget for FY2024 as recommended by the Executive Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated October 12, 2023.
(Attachment)

President's Expenses and Upcoming Travel
The president's quarterly expense report was provided as an information item.
(Attachment)

Board of Trustees Budget FY24 - Update
An updated report of the Board budget was brought for information which included the expense for the Presidential 360 Review consultant.
(Attachment)

Strategic Plan 2.0
A draft of the Strategic Plan was shared with the Trustees. President Clark noted, as part of the planning process, listening tours were held in order to include the campus community and it will be discussed with Leadership Council members and at a campus summit. Chief of Staff Leuenberger thanked everyone for their efforts in working on the new plan.
(Attachment)

Delegation of Authority – Approval of Presidential 360 Review Committee Guidelines
As an information item, the Presidential 360 Review Committee Guidelines were provided. They were approved by the Executive Committee under the Delegation of Authority.
(Attachment)

Delegation of Authority – Contract Approval for Comcast Cable Communications
As an information item, the contract for Comcast Cable Communications was provided. This was approved by the Executive Committee under the Delegation of Authority.
(Attachment)

Delegation of Authority – Contract Approval for Presidio (Cisco SMARTnet Marketing Services)
As an information item, the contract for Presidio was provided. This was approved by the Executive Committee under the Delegation of Authority.
(Attachment)

Delegation of Authority – Contract Approval for Net Natives (Integrated Marketing Services)
As an information item, the contract for Net Natives was provided. This was approved by the Executive Committee under the Delegation of Authority.
(Attachment)

Delegation of Authority – Contract Approval for Tower Construction Corporation (Tillinghast Hall)
As an information item, the contract for Tower Construction was provided. This was approved by the Executive Committee under the Delegation of Authority.
(Attachment)

Delegation of Authority – Contract Approval for Tower Construction Corporation (Kelly Gym Funeral Services)
As an information item, the contract for Tower Construction was provided. This was approved by the Executive Committee under the Delegation of Authority.
(Attachment)

President's Goals and Objectives for AY2023-2024
President Clark provided his goals for this coming academic year to the Executive Committee.
(Attachment)

ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS

Annual Report of Grants and Sponsored Projects
Provost Ismaili briefly reviewed the annual report on external funding. Over the past 5 years, they have successfully provided funds which reached $5.1M this past year. They are generating more proposals and have been successful at the federal and state level.

On motion duly made and seconded (Taylor, Oliari) it was
VOTED that the Board of Trustees accept the Annual Report from the Office
FOR: Unanimous of Grants and Sponsored Projects for the period of July 1, 2022 to
CARRIED June 30, 2023 as recommended by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and described in the memorandum from President Clark dated October 12, 2023.
(Attachment)

B.S. Degree (Full Proposal), Cybersecurity and Digital Forensics
Provost Ismaili noted the department has been hard at work developing this degree. The Letter of Intent was fast-tracked and BSU moved forward with the proposal. The Department of Computer Science appreciates all the efforts. It is expected to have students enrolled for the Fall of 2024.

On motion duly made and seconded (Taylor, Caulfield) it was
VOTED that the Board of Trustees approves the submission of a full proposal
FOR: Unanimous for a new B.S. degree in Cybersecurity and Digital Forensics to the
CARRIED Department of Higher Education as recommended by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and described in the memorandum

from President Clark dated October 12, 2023.
(Attachment)

Faculty and Librarian Hiring Report
The Faculty and Librarian Hiring Report was brought as an information item. The report provided an overview of faculty and librarians hired this year. Forty-five percent of the hires were tenure-track level and represent diversity.
(Attachment)

Fall Enrollment Report
The incoming first-year class is the second largest in BSU's history. Vice President Jean noted the incoming transfer class experienced a small increase, a strong Continuing Studies class size and a slight decrease in returning students. Overall, it is good news and he appreciates the work of all across the campus.
(Attachment)

Fall Residence Hall Occupancy Report
Vice President Oravecz was pleased to see an increase in occupancy rates for the residence halls.
(Attachment)

Divisional Priorities – AY23-24 (Provost Ismaili and Vice President Oravecz)
The divisional priorities were provided an as information item.
(Attachment)

FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

FY2024 Budget
Committee Chair Longo provided a brief review of the budget report.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Longo, Caulfield) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the FY2024 Budget of $222,781,342 in total revenue and $222,759,503 in total expenditures as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated October 5, 2023.

FY2023 Year-End Trust Fund Report
Committee Chair Longo noted there are ten trust funds (residence, parking, aviation, dining, etc.) and they performed better than expected.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous

On motion duly made and seconded (Longo, Oliari) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the FY2023 Year-End Trust Fund Report as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee

CARRIED

and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated October 5, 2023.
(Attachment)

FY2023 Year-End Budget Report
Committee Chair Longo pointed out there was excess revenue in the budget and money was invested in one-time expenditures. Vice President Shropshire noted there was a large savings in salary budgets.
(Attachment)

Student Accounts Receivable
Committee Chair Longo noted a lot of work goes into collecting student account monies that are owed and staff are ably tracking the receivables. The report was provided as an information item.
(Attachment)

FY2023/Q4 Contracts Report
The quarterly contracts report was brought as an information item.
(Attachment)

Capital Projects Update
The Capital Projects Update was brought as an information item. Some projects focus on accessibility across campus; they are conducting a facility condition assessment; working on a new master plan as the last one was conducted in 2012; looking at potential decarbonization funding to become carbon neutral (BSU is slated as one of five agencies to hopefully get funding).
(Attachment)

Divisional Priorities – AY23-24 (Vice Presidents Shropshire and Jason)
Vice President Shropshire noted a top priority for his division is to support the enrollment efforts and to upgrade budget methodology to have better reporting capacity. He also mentioned Amy Beaulieu was accepted by NACUBO as a faculty fellow. Vice President Jason highlighted a few of her priorities: complete a facilities condition assessment, work on capital improvements, assessment of BSU's Bookstore, etc.
(Attachment)

RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

Divisional Updates on Racial Justice and Equity
Chairperson MacCormack noted the Trustees received professional development and have established a standing committee to integrate the racial justice equity agenda into the committees. A lot of progress has been made and requires a lot of time, attention and focus across the campus.

Reimagining the Racial Justice and Equity Council
The Council role has been reviewed and Provost Ismaili will work on the focus and purpose of this council.

Update on Faculty/Librarian Service in Support of Racial Justice
Provost Ismaili noted faculty are feeling more comfortable about the work and the continuation of building the culture of racial justice and equity work on campus.

ALUMNI AND DEVELOPMENT

FY2023/Q4 Alumni and Development Dashboard Report
Committee Chair Turchon noted almost $6.3M in gifts were received; total commitments stand at $10.6M. The Foundation was able to disburse money for scholarships, financial aid, student retention and internships. She was pleased to report, there was 100% participation rate by the Board of Trustees.

CDO Oliver stated they continue to have commitments coming in through a bequest or pledge. The next step is to launch the campaign. Community involvement is important and BSU students always come first.

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Turchon, Longo) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the FY2023/Q4 Alumni and Development Dashboard Report as recommended by the Alumni and Development Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated October 12, 2023.
(Attachment)

Divisional Priorities – AY 23-24 (CDO Oliver)
CDO Oliver's main priority is to kick off the campaign and achieve the $100M endowment goal.
(Attachment)

Foundation Update
Committee Chair Turchon noted the assets are up 6.5%; there is an investment club that meets and works with BSU students; a goal for the Foundation is to recruit talent for its board; the Foundation recently acquired a new property located at 21 Park Terrace which was purchased and will be renovated with private funds.

Alumni Update
Committee Chair Turchon noted Alumni Chair Kulick-Clark provided information on their activities and goals at the committee meeting.

HONARARY DEGREE

Committee Report
Chair MacCormack noted the committee met and reviewed nominations received from the campus community. The committee will meet soon to review recommendations for the May 2023 commencement ceremonies and bring them forward for Board approval.

OTHER BUSINESS

None

VOTED
FOR: Unanimous
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Caulfield, Longo) it was that the meeting be adjourned (8:35 pm).

Respectfully submitted,

Scott Longo

Scott Longo
Secretary

Minutes prepared by:
Tracey Keif