



Board of Trustees

Governance and Nomination Committee

October 12, 2022

Minutes

Arno Maris Gallery, Room 201, Ely Campus Center

And via Zoom, in accordance with Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, § 20 dated March 12, 2020.

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing also took place on YouTube.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Melissa Alvarado, Vice Chair Ali Salehi, Secretary William Reichelt, and Trustee Chris Montemayor

TRUSTEE GUESTS PRESENT: Trustee Dr. Robert Martin

Also present and participating were Westfield State University President Dr. Linda Thompson and Chief of Staff Dr. Michael Freeman. Vice President for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion LaRue Pierce was joining via Zoom.

The meeting was called to order at 8:38 AM by Committee Chair Alvarado. A roll call was taken of the committee members participating as listed above and it was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded.

MOTION made by Trustee Salehi, seconded by Trustee Reichelt, to approve the minutes of the June 28, 2022, meeting. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Committee Chair Alvarado stated the first order of business was to consider a bylaw amendment to add a Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Board committee. The new Vice President for JEDI, LaRue Pierce, is getting to know the campus climate and finding resources and opportunities to engage with others.

Bylaw Amendment to Create a Committee for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI).

MOTION made by Trustee Alvarado, seconded by Trustee Montemayor, to amend the Westfield State University's Board of Trustees Bylaws **Article V.** by adding **Section 10.** to establish a standing committee to consider and recommend to the Board policies and actions regarding the Division of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion activities. The proposed language of Section 10 is as follows:

Section 10. Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee

- A. *Membership.* The justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion committee shall consist of at least three voting trustees.
- B. *Responsibilities.* See the Justice, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Charter for a more detailed listing of responsibilities. The committee shall provide oversight to the University's strategic planning of activities, initiatives, and practices designed to enhance the campus climate and culture.

Discussion: It was important to create this independent committee. The first responsibility of the committee will be to create a charter by pulling information from the UEAAC report. This is an opportunity for Mr. Pierce, the JEDI committee, and the University community to build something that has not existed before. This was one of the more impactful UEAAC recommendations and it is incumbent on the Board to support that work and help set the JEDI agenda for the University. The committee will be chaired by Trustee Landrau and members include Trustees Montemayor (vice chair), Alvarado (secretary), and Williams. The University staff liaison will be LaRue Pierce, who has been talking about linking the Strategic Plan category of culture in engaging with people on and off campus. There being no further discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Board of Trustees Committee Assignments and new Committee Structures. New committee assignments were provided in the Board materials. There was no discussion on them.

Other Bylaw Revisions. Bylaw revisions need to be vetted with the president and cabinet and brought back to this committee in December. Trustees were requested to provide feedback to the revisions to the Board assistant by November 2.

This committee has discussed an external assessment of the Board, initially thinking a couple of Trustees could conduct focus groups of campus constituents. It may be more beneficial to have an unbiased third party who has deep ties to the University and all the constituents do a review. The names of past Board members were suggested, or the person could be a retired faculty member or administrator. It should be someone with whom participants trust and feel comfortable talking to who can be a scribe in reporting back what they hear. The process needs to be confidential. Trustees Alvarado and Martin will discuss further.

There being no further business, **MOTION** made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Montemayor, to adjourn. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a) Draft Minutes of June 28, 2022
- b) Motion – Bylaw Amendment to Create a Committee for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI)
- c) Proposed Bylaw Amendment to Create a Committee for Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- d) Committee Assignments for 2022-2023