



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

December 13, 2023

### Minutes

Conference Room 107, Parenzo Hall

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

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair Ali Salehi, Vice Chair Melissa Alvarado, Secretary Dr. Gloria Williams, and Trustees Paul Boudreau, Daniel Currier, George Gilmer, Theresa Jasmin, Dr. Robert Martin, Chris Montemayor, and William Reichelt

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Trustee Madeline Landrau

Also present and participating were Westfield State University President Dr. Linda Thompson, Beverly Army Williams, Dr. Lynn Shelley, Dr. Megan Kennedy, and cabinet members Dr. David Caruso, Dr. Michael Freeman, Dr. Kevin Hearn, Dr. LaRue Pierce, Timothy Rooke, and Stephen Taksar.

Chair Salehi called the meeting to order at 2:45 PM and it was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Currier, seconded by Trustee Williams, to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2023, meeting. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Chair Salehi welcomed everyone to the last meeting of 2023. Goals and KPIs for the University are taking place and improvements to the structure of the board are being discussed. Vice presidents are working closely with committee chairs. He has been hearing positive feedback from students and the University is on the right path for growth and collaboration.

President's Report. Dr. Linda Thompson thanked the Board for contributing to the governance and advancement of the University. She acknowledged that Westfield State University was built and currently sits on unceded traditional ancestral territory of the Nipmuc, Pocumtuc, Agawam, and the Woronoco peoples. The NECHE re-accreditation suggestions are being implemented and momentum has started in developing the next strategic plan. The University aims to be an integral contributor to workforce development to capture trends and innovations for the student success. The support of strategic investments will enhance enrollment stabilization and growth, campus culture, and economic health. An international focus on programming is critical for unity and collective spirit throughout the world. Coming in 2024 is a year's worth of events showcasing Westfield State's 185<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Student Trustee Report. Trustee Daniel Currier stated it was a successful fall semester with open houses, enhanced commuter engagement, MASCAC athletics achievements, and events supporting the greater Westfield community. He shared issues and initiatives that the Student Government Association (SGA) is working on and gave an update on his student trustee projects on student employment centralization and marketing and engagement for intramural athletics.

General Education Reform Presentation. Dr. Caruso introduced Dr. Kennedy, Dr. Shelley, and Ms. Army-Williams who presented an update on the General Education Reform, which will be implemented in fall 2024, culminating three years of committee work. The statement of general education was created from faculty and students leading to broad learning goals, the model, and university curriculum requirements to be fulfilled as part of the student's major. High-impact practices were shared, which students will take in their first semester.

Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Committee. Committee Chair William Reichelt updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting.

Academic Affairs Committee. Committee Chair Dr. Robert Martin updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting and presented the following Motion approved by the committee.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Montemayor, to approve the granting of faculty emeritus status, effective December 13, 2023, to Mr. David A. Laing, Physical Education. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Advancement, Marketing, and External Relations Committee. Committee Chair Dr. Gloria Williams updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting and presented the following Motion approved by the committee.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Currier, to approve the granting of staff emerita status, effective December 13, 2023, to the following individuals: Barbara Hand and Bette Jemillo. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee. Committee Chair Chris Montemayor updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting and presented the following Motion approved by the committee.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Currier, seconded by Trustee Reichelt, to approve the university Student Preferred/Chosen Name policy as presented to the Board of Trustees, acknowledging its significance in advancing our institution's commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Financial Affairs and Advancement Committee. Committee Chair George Gilmer updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting and presented the following Motions approved by the committee.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Currier, seconded by Trustee Reichelt, to adopt the Chosen Name Policy for employees, as presented. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

**MOTION** made by Trustee Currier, seconded by Trustee Reichelt, to eliminate Keeping the Campus Safe Policy (2210), as it is no longer needed. There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

**MOTION** made by Trustee Currier, seconded by Trustee Montemayor, to approve the allocation of \$1,000,000 in cash reserves to fund the revised FY24 capital project plan, as presented, contingent on the further approval of the committee prior to expending funds for the repairs of Ely pool. Unspent funds from this allocation will automatically roll forward to the next fiscal year to fund the project(s) listed in the updated spending plans.

To further approve the revised five-year capital spending plan allocations for new and existing projects, as presented.

There being no discussion, **Motion passed unanimously.**

Audit Committee. Committee Chair Theresa Jasmin updated the Board on discussions held in the committee meeting.

Board Crisis Management and Communication and Board Committee Structure. Trustee Alvarado highlighted resources provided by the Association of Governing Boards (AGB). Although the president and the University have procedures in place to manage crises, there are circumstances where the Board needs to have additional oversight and needs to develop a process. Most resources are also consistent that Board committees be aligned with strategic priorities instead of administrative structure. There needs to be further discussion on whether the Board should re-align their committees as the new Strategic Plan is being created. The Board should review the materials provided on these topics and both items will remain on the Governance and Nomination Committee agenda for upcoming meetings.

Chair Salehi reminded the campus community that the Board of Trustees is open and transparent and if anyone has questions or concerns, they should reach out to any member of the Board.

There being no further business,

**MOTION** made by Trustee Reichelt, and seconded by Trustee Gilmer, to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 4:28 PM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a. Draft Minutes of October 11, 2023
- b. President's Presentation
- c. Student Trustee Presentation
- d. General Education Reform Presentation
- e. SCORE Model

**Academic Affairs Committee:**

- f. Motion – Faculty Emeriti and supporting document

**Advancement, Marketing, and External Relations Committee:**

- g. Motion – Staff Emeriti and supporting documents

**Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee:**

- h. Motion – Preferred/Chosen Name Policy (Student) and supporting document

**Financial Affairs Committee:**

- i. Motion – Chosen Name Policy/Employees (New) and supporting document
- j. Motion – Keeping the Campus Safe Policy (2210) and supporting document
- k. Motion – Reallocation of Capital Project Funds and supporting documents

**Full Board:**

- l. Resources on Board Crisis Management and Committee Structure

**Secretary's Certificate**

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Westfield State University Board of Trustees meeting held on December 13, 2023.

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Dr. Gloria Williams, Secretary

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Date