BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Minutes

President’s Boardroom, The Horace Mann Center
February 6, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Kevin Queenin, Vice Chair Edward Sullivan, Secretary Lydia Martinez-Alvarez and Trustees Melissa Alvarado, Paul Boudreau, James Hagan, Robert Martin, Thalita Neves and Gloria Williams

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Trustee Madeline Landrau

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Trustee Robert Magovern

Dr. Ramon S. Torrecilha, President of Westfield State University, was also present.

The meeting was called to order at 2:16 PM by Chair Queenin who stated that Trustee Landrau was participating in the meeting remotely and asked for a motion to approve minutes.

**MOTION** made by Trustee Hagan, seconded by Trustee Martin, to approve the minutes of the December 11, 2019 Board of Trustees meeting.

There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE** taken:

- Melissa Alvarado: Yes
- Lydia Martinez-Alvarez: Abstain
- Paul Boudreau: Yes
- Thalita Neves: Yes
- James Hagan: Yes
- Edward Sullivan: Yes
- Madeline Landrau: Yes
- Kevin Queenin: Yes
- Robert Martin: Yes
- Gloria Williams: Yes

**Motion passed with one abstention.**

**Student Trustee’s Report:** Trustee Neves reported that the Student Government Association (SGA) has rolled out Part 2 of their whiteboard initiative, resulting in good questions being asked. (Trustee Boudreau left the meeting at 2:18 and returned at 2:22 PM.) The SGA is struggling to find leadership with the hall representatives. A club listing was handed out, with over 50 clubs represented. It is hoped to get the list online to keep it updated faster and easier. Although there is currently not a schedule for all the club meetings, an app is being considered to include dates and times of meetings. Trustee Neves talked about the “F word” (FUN) and said the Campus Activities Board is doing well but the sense of community is missing, which ties to the cohort conversation discussed earlier in the day. With the loss of some long-time employees in Student Affairs, some of the sense of community feels lost. Trustee Neves encouraged all faculty and staff to continue to do their part to support the students who need the sense of family on campus to grow intellectually and as a person. This is an all-university effort.

Chair Queenin asked Dr. Terrell Hill to join him at the front of the room to be recognized for his years of service on the Board of Trustees. Chair Queenin expressed gratitude for Dr. Hill’s engagement and voice in
representing the Board, the students, and the faculty and staff of Westfield State University. Trustee Martin read a commendation in appreciation for Dr. Hill’s service. Dr. Hill expressed his appreciation for the honor of serving on the Board of Trustees for seven years.

President’s Report: President Torrecilha stated he trusted all had seen the announcement of his retirement in August, 2020, stating that after thirty years in Higher Education, it is truly time for him to retire. He continued that it has been an honor to serve Westfield State University and he is proud of the collective work and accomplishments that have been done. His presidency was about student success, institutional change, and positioning Westfield State locally, regionally and nationally. There is plenty left to do to move the University forward in transition. State appropriations for the next few years is expected to be flat, if not decreased. The Council of Presidents (COP) has taken the call for access and affordability on behalf of students. Additional resources are being sought to fund financial aid with new legislation being spoken about supporting an endowment match to all donors, not just new ones. There is a focus on student retention with many initiatives from Academic and Student Affairs. Westfield State has a retention challenge, not an enrollment problem, and retention is everyone’s business. President Torrecilha thanked everyone for supporting the work to almost close the budget gap. He also mentioned that the University submitted a Major Project Capital Request to the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) in December. The proposal included a request for nearly $5 million to fund a Center for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion to better centralize the University’s efforts in support of these prioritized areas.

Chair Queenin stated we have come a long way and need to continue with the implementation of the Strategic Plan, work on retention and enrollment management, and discussions on the college structure and fundraising. The good news is that President Torrecilha has brought together a competent team to carry on and the Board will continue the same expectation in performance and collectively we will continue to be aggressive over the next few months and years.

Chair Queenin continued that when President Torrecilha was interviewed for this job, he said he would focus on students and gave a concise blueprint of what we have seen him do over the last four years. The President has done a terrific job in taking the message of Westfield State University to the local community, and to the state and national level. In today’s newspaper there is an article about taking Westfield State to the community. Recognizing the state of transition, there is a lot of work to do. The Board intends to be inclusive, thoughtful, and deliberate, and needs to listen and be patient in the process. Significant decisions need to be made which will affect students, faculty and staff today and in the future. It is important to make sure the process is clearly thought out and defined. The best way to move forward is to send initial discussions of a presidential search to the Executive Committee, which will meet in an open meeting, with all Board members invited to participate. The Board of Higher Education has been consulted to get the standard process they recommend for a search and we intend to reach out to other institutions for their procedures, taking the best to incorporate into our process, which will be two-fold: 1) hiring an interim president between now and August; and 2) hiring a permanent president.

Advancement and Enrollment Management Committee: Trustee Martinez-Alvarez stated the committee did not meet earlier in the day due to the weather delay. Dr. Erica Broman, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, stated there was a robust response to the survey for Marts & Lundy.

Academic and Student Affairs Committee: Trustee Martin stated at the committee meeting there was a presentation from the Provost and college deans on the college structure and on the deans’ roles and how they are perceived. Academic Affairs is interested in providing metrics on how the college structure is doing, focusing on student success and stewardship of resources. There was also a presentation from Dr. Gloria Lopez, Vice President for Student Affairs, on retention and the programs being provided by Student Affairs. There was discussion about the “student in the middle” who may not be part of a cohort and may
fade into the background. Reaching these students is fundamental to the sustainability of the institution.

Finance and Capital Assets Committee: Trustee Sullivan stated that in the committee meeting they reviewed second quarter financials, a budget balancing update, travel expenses for the President and cabinet, and received updates on the Parenzo Hall project and December water emergency on campus. The Investment subcommittee’s commitment to raise additional revenue for the University is moving in a positive way. In the FY21 budget update, Residence Life strategies moving forward were discussed as well as the current budget model for FY21. There were two motions that were approved to be brought for vote by the full Board as follows.

MOTION made by Trustee Sullivan, seconded by Trustee Boudreau, to approve the FY21 annual tuition and fees schedule for undergraduate students and College for Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE) students, as presented.

Discussion: Supporting documents are in the packet of materials. The average is a 2.8% increase in the cost of attendance for residential students. The vote will lock in the increase since there is a need to package financial aid, which rests on the price.

ROLL CALL VOTE taken:
Melissa Alvarado Yes Lydia Martinez-Alvarez Yes
Paul Boudreau Yes Thalita Neves No
James Hagan Yes Edward Sullivan Yes
Madeline Landrau Yes Kevin Queenin Yes
Robert Martin Yes Gloria Williams Yes
Motion passed with nine yes votes and one no vote.

MOTION made by Trustee Sullivan, seconded by Trustee Martin, to close the University’s bank accounts at Peoples Bank and Massachusetts Municipal Depository Trust (MMDT), investment account at Commonfund, and Berkshire Bank certificate of deposit at maturity date 3/7/2020 and to approve the transfer of those funds to the University’s money market account at Berkshire Bank.

Discussion: Policy requires Board approval to open or close accounts. The interest rate is less at other banks than what we can get at Berkshire Bank. It is the goal to move funds from underperforming accounts elsewhere to better performing accounts.

ROLL CALL VOTE taken:
Melissa Alvarado Yes Lydia Martinez-Alvarez Yes
Paul Boudreau Yes Thalita Neves Yes
James Hagan Yes Edward Sullivan Yes
Madeline Landrau Yes Kevin Queenin Yes
Robert Martin Yes Gloria Williams Yes
Motion passed unanimously.

Governance and Nominating Committee: Trustee Boudreau stated the committee will provide input at the next meeting on the Board Grid, Process for Nominating New Trustees, and the Statement of Commitment and Responsibilities. Proposed Divisional Informational Session dates with the vice presidents will be sent out.

Chair Queenin reminded all those in the room that we still have conflict on campus. As the campus
community moves forward, it needs to be together in a healing process.

There being no further business, **MOTION** made by Trustee Sullivan, seconded by Trustee Alvarado, to adjourn.

**ROLL CALL VOTE** taken:

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**Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 2:59 PM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

a. Minutes of December 11, 2019

**Finance and Capital Assets Committee:**

b. Motion – FY21 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees (Undergraduate and CGCE)
c. FY21 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees (Tuition and Fee Recommendations)
d. FY21 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees (Undergraduate)
e. FY21 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees (CGCE)
f. FY21 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees (Comparison State Universities FY20)
g. FY21 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees (CGCE Request)
h. FY21 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees (Nursing Fee Memo)
i. FY21 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees (Baystate Notification)
j. FY21 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees (Nursing Fee Increase Calculations)
k. FY21 Schedule of Annual Tuition and Fees (Student and Faculty Resources)
l. Motion – Consolidation of Bank Accounts
m. Memo – Consolidation of Bank Accounts
n. Handout: SGA’s Westfield State University Clubs – Updated Spring 2020