**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

December 10, 2021 at 9:00 AM

Virtual Meeting

**Minutes**

**In Attendance**

**Voting Members:**

Chair William Fisher, Vice Chair John Bartow, Trustee Dan Fitts, Trustee Oluwole McFoy, Trustee Steven (Rick) Fedrizzi, Trustee Vita DeMarchi *(Left meeting at 10:53 am)*

**Non Voting Members:**

Kent Syverud, Chancellor Syracuse University (*ex-officio*); Matthew Marko (*Representative of Commissioner Seggos*), Patrick Wickersham (*Graduate Student representative)*

**College Personnel in Attendance:**

Joseph Rufo (*Secretary to the Board)*, Joanne Mahoney *(President),* Kelly Berger*,* Malika Carter, Danielle Gerhart*,* Brenda Greenfield, Mark Lichtenstein*,* Anne Lombard, Matthew Millea*,* Samuel Mukasa*,* Gary Scott*,* Ragan Squier*,* John Stella,Baylee Woods

**Absent**

Trustee Steve Sloan, Trustee Linda Brown Robinson, Trustee Lexi Chipules *(Undergraduate Student)*

**Call to Order, Roll Call and Welcome**

Chair Fisher called the meeting to order at 9:04am and asked Secretary Rufo to begin a roll call. With more than 5 voting members in attendance, Chair Fisher confirmed a quorum.

**Approval of the Consent Agenda**

* + Approval of the Minutes of the September 24, 2021 Board Meeting
  + Personnel Actions Presented for Board Review
  + Candidates for Graduation Presented for Endorsement – December 2021
  + Bylaws Update

Chair Fisher asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda. Trustee Fedrizzi made a motion to approve, seconded by Trustee Bartow. The motion was carried unanimously.

**RESOLVED** that the items in the consent agenda be approved as presented.

**Report of the Board Chair – *William* *Fisher***

Chair Fisher reviewed the updates to the agenda

* Request from Shelby Coleman (GSEU) to speak at today’s meeting
* Academic Governance report was added to the agenda

**President’s Report – *Joanie Mahoney***

College Updates

* Provost Samuel Mukasa started November 1st
* Dr. Mariann Johnston named Society of American Foresters Fellow and received National recognition
* Dr. Theresa Selfa was appointed Environmental Studies Department Chair
* Mark Lichtenstein was honored with Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Recycling Coalition
* Michael Mahoney, ESF Graduate Student, was honored by the NYS GIS Association for developing Open-Source Geoscience Software
* Brie Hymes, Environmental Biology Senior, has been accepted to SUNY Upstate Medical University Doctor of Physical Therapy program, one of the first students to participate in SUNY’s new Pre-Med opportunity program
* David Bullis, ESF Ph.D. Student, received an Honorable Mention in the inaugural SUNY Chancellor Distinguished Ph.D. Graduate Dissertation Awards
* ESF Athletics
  + 3 National Titles
    - Men & Women Cross Country
      * Won USCAA National Championships
    - Women’s Soccer Team
      * National Title
* SUNY ESF Awarded National Science Foundation Grant to help Underrepresented STEM Students succeed
* Center for Native People and the Environment and The Nature Conservancy 4 Year partnership, which includes a $800,000 grant to help create co-learning between the center, nature conservancy and indigenous communities
* We are considering hosting ESF Commencement on the ESF Quad on May 7, 2022
* ESF in the High School, First Admissions Event (12/4), Offered admissions to 8 high school seniors
* ESF Rankings
  + #9 Top 50 Green Colleges
  + #5 of 328 Cool Schools
  + Platinum stars rating
* 10 New EV Charging stations, partnership with National Grid
* ESF in the News
  + 60 Minutes and the New York Times
    - Bill Powell, Chestnut Program
* Campus Conversations: The Podcast Season 1 complete
* Joe Rufo, CFO and VP for Administration, will be retiring early next year

**Board Resolution:**

The Board of Trustees of the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry commends, congratulates, and expresses its deep appreciation to Joseph L. Rufo for his 13 years of tireless, resolute, and unwavering commitment to the College, its people and its mission; and

The Board of Trustees, on behalf of the entire ESF College Community, wishes Joe well upon his retirement.

Moved by Trustee Bartow, seconded by Trustee DeMarchi.

**RESOLVED** that the proposed resolution is adopted unanimously.

**Financial Overview – *Joe Rufo***

Projected cash balance

* + The projected cash balance for the 4 months moving forward are all significantly below zero
  + The ‘4-month totals’ are pretty much equal, showing we are at a steady state, but we carry the negative balance forward
  + The state delayed our state funding when COVID hit
    - We typically receive almost half of our $22.6 million State aide in the 4th quarter of the fiscal year

2021-22 State Operating Budget

* + Revenue projections
    - Our revenue is consistent with the projection
  + Expenditure projections
    - We are currently doing better than the projection, in regards to expenditures
  + Under context of current business model, we will have a structural deficit
  + Our state support allocation is down 20% since 2008-09, our operating costs have increased 28% since the decrease, contributing to the deficit

Student Broad Based Fee Submission

* Each SUNY institution is required to submit any proposed changes to its student broad- based fees
* Fees all students pay
  + Fee revenue collected from students is restricted and therefore cannot be used for any other purpose
  + All fees should generate revenue sufficient to cover the costs of the activities for which they are collected
* Student input included as part of SUNY review process
* ESF Proposal
  + $20 increase to the Student Health Fee
  + $30 increase to the broad-based fee- SU services
* Increased based on projection of revenue from the fee, expenses associated with providing the service, and current cash balance in the fee account

**Office of Research Programs – *John Stella***

* + Work under the SUNY Research Foundation, a 501C(3), separate from SUNY ESF
  + $16-20 million in sponsored research expenditures
  + Main Functions
    - Sponsored Programs (Grants and Awards), Research Finance (Finance and Compliance), Analytical and Technical Services, 27 ESF Research Institutes and Centers
  + Priorities
    - Rebuild and reorganize
    - Research Development, promote strategic research priority groups & multi-institutional partnerships
    - Communicate and connect research
    - Strengthen and diversify the graduate program
  + Annual research expenditures: $15.7M, Annual indirect cost recovery: $2.8M, IDC:DC Ratio: 22%
  + Faculty salary recovery (IFR): $1.2M annually goes to SUNY side to pay for GA’s, faculty start-up funds, incidental research staff
  + RF indirect costs support staff in Admin Offices
  + SUNY pays for A&TS service salaries ($486K)
  + FY22 Expenditures to Date, and versus FY21
    - Revenue up 6% and expenditures are up 5% from last year, Reserved cash balance of $1.7 million
  + Sponsored Programs Funding Sources
    - 39% State (DEC, others), 23% Federal, 15% Federal flow-thru, 9% Federal, 14% Industry/Other
    - Need to increase Federal funding
  + Research Program Goals
    - Short term: More proposals to federal agencies, better incentives for faculty, foster strategic working groups
    - Long term: More multi-PI proposals, upgrade research labs, Global Change Grad Fellowship program
  + Discovery 2.0: Strategic Working Groups
    - Build on Discovery 1.0
    - Address society’s ‘wicked’ problems
    - Focus on ESF’s core strengths
    - Redundancy, resilience, replicability- senior/junior faculty teams
    - Targeted funding sources
    - Climate, Water and Bioeconomic
      * Climate & Applied Forest Research Institute (CAFRI)
      * Climate-Friendly Bioprocess Engineering
      * Water Quality: Monitoring and Mitigating Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)
      * Sustainable Cities: Environmental Health and Justice Mapping Tool
* ‘’25x ‘25’’ PhD Graduation Goal: Matched Student Funding Proposal
* Goal: To incentive and improve PhD recruitment and graduation
* A funding match between research awards faculty), Gas (departments), and tuition waivers (ESF)
* A streamlined and standard coordination and communication process to student applicants
* Early 2022 task force group will take this on

**Overview of Major Fundraising Campaign – *Brenda Greenfield***

* Outcomes
  + Expand ESF’s Resource Base
  + Build a Cohort of Educated, Committed Volunteer Advocates
  + Identify the Next Generation of leaders and donors
* Enhance ESF’s image and strengthen reputation among key constituents
  + Strengthen internal morale within the ESF Community
  + Enhance the ESF Development Infrastructure for Future Fundraising
* 2 Key Factories if an institution is ready to go into campaign
  + Well defined set of strategic priorities
  + Strength of leadership
* Currently in Phase 1, pre-campaign tasks
  + Hired Campaign Consulting firm Washburn & McGoldrick
  + Arrange meetings with top donors
* Strategic Goals
  + Help Relieve College Budget Deficit, Invest in Areas College Budget Cannot Support, Help Stabilize or Grow Enrollment for Revenue Generation, Support Academic “Hallmark” Programs for Visibility
* A Mix of Art and Science
  + (Need + Priorities) – Reality + Leap of Faith = Goal
* Timeline
  + Phase 1 end in Q2 2022, Phase 2 end in Q2 2023

Break: 10:53am-11:05am

**Student Reports**

Undergraduate – *Trustee Chipules*

* No undergraduate report with Trustee Chipules absence

Graduate – *Patrick* *Wickersham*

* Continuity of GA funding, need for multi-year funding packages for students in competitive time periods, becomes an issue with health insurance in-between employment terms
* Streaming administrative processes for students (paperwork, funding, etc.), want for administrative support, robust orientation processes
* Database Management, seems to be a disconnection between databases between students and employees, banner system (student status, classes) affects billing and reimbursements
* Students want to build back trust with institution, reporting with inaccuracies with billing, payment plan interest rates

**Graduate Student Fees – *Shelby Zangari***

* Graduate workers are required to pay $700-$800 in fees due at Aug 15th and Jan 15th (Fall & Spring semester)
* GSEU has requested to change billing deadlines to October 15th and March 15th, the bills are said to be sometimes incorrect
* Shelby shared testimonials from graduate students on the financial burden

Questions

* Are there conversations with the union at the SUNY level, would there be additional funding from SUNY? (Fisher)
  + - Lobbied the NYS legislature, support from former Chancellor Malatras
    - Shelby was unsure about additional funding from SUNY
  + President Mahoney clarified that she did meet with Rose Osborne, Patrick Wickersham and Melanie Berger
    - Graduate students have received a 15% raise since she became President
    - There was a no-cost payment plan put into place for students
    - The administration is on the same team as graduate students

**Academic Governance Report – *Gary Scott***

* Bylaws and Standing Rules Revision
  + Streamlining of AG Committees to 6 standing committees
  + Expect to make greater use of ad hoc committees
  + Allow participation without the commitment of being a committee member
* Streamlining of various processes (Formation of search committees, consultation with academic governance)
* Standing Rules, Various clarifications
* Electronic balloting
* Committee membership and voting
* Removal from office
* Process for consultation
* Standing Rules Consultation
  + Consultation with AG on policies
    - Triage decision by AGEC
      * Tier 1: Academic, content negotiable
      * Tier 2: Academic, content non-negotiable
      * Tier 3: Non-Academic
  + Consultation Concerning Appointment and Re-appointment of Academic VPs and Deans
    - AGEC will be consulted by the administration in advance as to the composition of the committee
  + New Bylaws/Standing Rules: Transition to Spring Semester
    - Transition to new committees
  + Concerns of the Faculty
    - Administrative Support Positions
      * Large amount of openings
    - Engagement of Faculty Burnout
    - Strategic Planning
    - College Budget
    - Covid-19 Funds
    - Graduate Student Stipends
    - BOT Task Force Findings
    - Shadow Work and Faculty Workload

Questions/Comments

* How does AG fits into Provost Office, Research, etc.? What does the shared governance model mean?
  + Consultation model between the faculty and the administration

**Committee Reports**

* + Diversity, Equity & Inclusion – *Trustees Brown-Robinson and Bartow*
* Met 3 times, Academic Governance has made their appointment on the committee, the committee will be broken out into sub-committee groups
  + Sustainable Finance – *Chair Fisher*
* Met last week, focused on what a virtual all funds budget would look like
  + Governance – *Matthew Marko*
* Postponed meeting to January, will still conduct self-evaluation

**New Business**

* + Appointment of Secretary to the Board
* Chair Fisher recommends that the Board take the action that President Mahoney’s letter outlined which is to have Ragan Squier be appointed as Secretary to the Board as of January 1, 2022, for a 4-year term.
* Chair Fisher asked for a motion to adopt his resolution. Trustee McFoy moved the motion, and seconded by Trustee Fitts. The motion was carried unanimously.
* Chair Fisher established a new standing committee known as the Facilities Committee
  + Trustee Fedrizzi was asked to serve on this committee
  + Chair Fisher will reach out to see who is interested on serving

**Adjournment**

Chair Fisher called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Motion by Trustee Fedrizzi, seconded by Trustee Bartow.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:08pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Baylee Woods.