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**The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees  
ad hoc special Sponsored Research Committee Meeting  
Monday, December 5, 2022 · 9:00 a.m. EST**

**The University of Rhode Island  
Avedisian Hall, Room 207  
7 Greenhouse Road, Kingston, RI 02881**

**OFFICIAL MINUTES**

Chair Thomas Ryan welcomed everyone to the December 5, 2022, meeting of the University of Rhode Island (URI) Board of Trustees ad hoc special Sponsored Research Committee meeting. Members participated remotely via Webex. Public access to the meeting was available via the YouTube video platform and is available at: <https://web.uri.edu/trustees/meetings/>.

Board Secretary Michelle Curreri conducted a roll call attendance and reported that a quorum of voting members was present. Chair Ryan called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

Attendees present for this meeting included:

The University of Rhode Island Sponsored Research Committee members:

- Mr. Thomas Ryan, Committee Chair (voting) (remote)
- Dr. Neil Kerwin (voting) (remote)
- Dr. Bethany Jenkins (non-voting) (remote)
- Dr. Marc Parlange (ex officio, non-voting) (remote)

The URI Board of Trustees invited guest in attendance:

- Ms. Margo Cook, Chair, URI Board of Trustees (remote)

Members of the President's Leadership Council in attendance:

- Abby Benson, Senior Advisor to the President and Chief of Staff (remote)
- Alyssa Boss, General Counsel (remote)
- Dr. Peter Snyder, Vice President for Research and Economic Development (remote)

*"The University of Rhode Island occupies the traditional stomping ground of the Narragansett Nation and the Niantic People. We honor and respect the enduring and continuing relationship between the Indigenous people and this land by teaching and learning more about their history and present-day communities, and by becoming stewards of the land we, too, inhabit."*

The University of Rhode Island staff members in attendance:

- Ms. Patricia Correia, Executive Assistant (in person)
- Ms. Michelle Curreri, Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)
- Ms. Lynn Owens, Associate Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)

Chair Ryan acknowledged that the University of Rhode Island occupies the traditional homeland of the Narragansett Nation and the Niantic People.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Chair Ryan welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting of the newly formed ad hoc special Sponsored Research Committee.

## 2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### a. Discuss and agree on the goals, responsibilities, and the desired outcome of this recently formed committee on Sponsored Research.

Chair Ryan initiated a conversation to discuss the goals, responsibilities, and the desired outcomes of the committee. The committee agreed on the following goals and outcomes.

- Determine how the University's research program should be resourced and organized, with a goal of doubling research funding in five years. Further, to understand how sponsored research is resourced across campuses and colleges.
- Recommend the best way for the URI Board of Trustees to oversee and support sponsored research.
- Maintain and improve current R2 university classification (Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education).
- Identify some quick steps that would jump start research efforts.
- Have a unified mission to grow the research enterprise at the University. Give clarity to the current mission and vision statements to ensure they accurately reflect the goals and purpose of research at the University.
- Consider the University's new strategic plan--where does research and scholarship fit in?

### b. Agree on next first steps for the committee.

Committee members discussed a variety of initial steps and concluded that the following steps would be instrumental:

- Provide clarity to faculty and staff on what each department within the Division of Research and Economic Development provides.
- Understand the model of research infrastructure at this university and how it compares to best practices elsewhere.

- Realign current resources to help achieve goals.
- Send a clear message that the Board of Trustees is concerned with all areas of the University, not only research.
- Clarify with the deans and college leadership what they understand to be their obligations regarding providing incentives to faculty at all levels and how they position their resources.
- Clarify how the URI Research Foundation supports sponsored research.
- Gain a better understanding of the University's peer institutions.
- Prepare a committee statement for the budget packet on the urgency of funding.

**c. Discuss what internal resources, if any, will be needed to support the work of the committee.**

The committee discussed a range of internal resources including the following:

- Generate revenue, invest in start-up funds, invest in new faculty, and invest in graduate students to help support new faculty. Reallocate funds to attract PhD students.
- Reallocate time so that faculty can do research and apply for grants. Review where faculty is spending time on teaching and reduce teaching obligations. Review courses that are taught repeatedly.
- Review new fundraising avenues with the URI Foundation and Alumni Engagement Office.
- Support from the Rhode Island state legislature will be needed to see growth in research at the University.

**d. Discuss timeline for completion of findings and recommendations to URI President and URI Board of Trustees.**

After discussion, the committee agreed to start with a 12-month timeline and hold ten meetings during that period. The preference is to put into action ideas along the way rather than wait until the end of the year to start implementation. The committee will provide periodic updates of the committee's findings to the Academic Affairs and Research Committee and a final report. Committee Chair Ryan asked President Parlange to develop a three-bullet point list of the expected outcomes of this committee.

Chair Ryan pointed out that incoming Provost Barbara Wolfe should be an *ex officio* member of this committee, and everyone agreed. She will be invited to future meetings.

**3. ADJOURN**

Chair Ryan called for a motion to adjourn.

On a motion duly made by Neil Kerwin and seconded by Thomas Ryan, it was

VOTED:        THAT        The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees adjourn the meeting.

VOTE:         2 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS:         Neil Kerwin, Thomas Ryan

NAYS:         0

ABSTAINS:    0

The meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

**The ad hoc special Sponsored Research Committee meetings will be scheduled on an as-needed basis. The next meeting will be held at a future date to be determined.**

Official