

Members

Margo Cook '86, *Chair*

Michael D. Fascitelli '78

Charles Fogarty '80

Christine Heenan

Richard S. Humphrey

Neil Kerwin, Ph.D. '73

Matthew Lenz '11

Roby Luna '04

David Martirano '91

Michael F. McNally '81, *Vice Chair*

Karina Montilla Edmonds, Ph.D. '92

Cortney M. Nicolato '01

Vahid Ownjazayeri

Susan Petrovas '92

Yahaira "Jay" Placencia '01

Thomas Ryan '75

Armand E. Sabitoni '73

Ex Officio Members

Marc B. Parlange, Ph.D., P.Eng.
President

Chair
R.I. Board of Education

David Caprio, *Chair*
R.I. Council on Postsecondary Education

Bethany D. Jenkins, Ph.D.
Faculty Representative

Hannah Bachert '23
Student Representative

The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees Meeting Thursday, February 16, 2023 • 9:00 a.m. EST

The University of Rhode Island
The Hope Room, Robert J. Higgins Welcome Center
45 Upper College Road, Kingston, RI 02881

OFFICIAL MINUTES

Chair Margo Cook welcomed everyone to the February 16, 2023, meeting of the University of Rhode Island (URI) Board of Trustees and noted that the meeting was being held in person, with board members participating remotely via Webex. Public access to the meeting was available via the YouTube Livestream video platform. A recording of the meeting is available for viewing 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 Cook called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Attendees present for this meeting included:

The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees members:

- Ms. Margo Cook, Chair (remote)
- Mr. Michael F. McNally, Vice Chair (remote)
- Mr. Michael Fascitelli (remote)
- Honorable Charles J. Fogarty, Jr. (remote)
- Ms. Christine Heenan (remote)
- Dr. Neil Kerwin (remote)
- Mr. Matthew D. Lenz (remote)
- Mr. Roby Luna (remote)
- Mr. David Martirano (remote)
- Dr. Karina Montilla Edmonds (remote)
- Ms. Cortney Nicolato (remote)
- Mr. Vahid Ownjazayeri (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 is an equal opportunity employer committed to community, equity, and diversity and to the principles of affirmative action.

The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees (continued):

- Ms. Susan Petrovas (remote)
- Ms. Jay Placencia (remote)
- Mr. Thomas Ryan (remote)
- Mr. Armand Sabitoni (remote)
- Dr. Marc Parlange, President (ex officio) (non-voting) (remote)
- Mr. David Caprio, Chair, Council on Postsecondary Education (ex officio) (non-voting) (remote)
- Dr. Bethany Jenkins, Faculty Representative (non-voting) (remote)
- Ms. Hannah Bachert, Student Representative (non-voting) (remote)

The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees member not present:

- Mr. Richard Humphrey

The University of Rhode Island President's Leadership Council members in attendance:

- Ms. Abby Benson, Senior Advisor to the President and Chief of Staff (remote)
- Mr. Thor Bjorn, Director of Athletics (remote)
- Ms. Alyssa Boss, General Counsel (remote)
- Ms. Anne Marie Coleman, Assistant Vice President, Human Resources (remote)
- Mr. Matthew McDonald, Vice President for Communications and Marketing (remote)
- Ms. Lil Breul O'Rourke, President, URI Foundation and Alumni Engagement (remote)
- Dr. Ellen Reynolds, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs (remote)
- Ms. Abigail Rider, Vice President for Administration and Finance (remote)
- Dr. Sean Edmunds Rogers, Vice President, Community, Equity and Diversity (remote)
- Dr. Peter Snyder, Vice President for Research and Economic Development (remote)
- Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs (remote)

The University of Rhode Island staff members in attendance:

- Ms. Lauren Burgess, Director, Legislative and Government Relations (remote)
- Mr. Karl Calvo, Assistant Vice President, Facilities (remote)
- Mr. Ryan Carrillo, Director, Planning & Real Estate Development (remote)
- Ms. Robin Cawley, Legal Assistant (in person)
- Ms. Michelle Curreri, Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)
- Dr. Brenton DeBoef, Dean, Graduate School (remote)
- Mr. Carlos Lopez Estrada, Director, Legislative and Government Relations (remote)
- Ms. Lynn Owens, Associate Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)
- Dr. John Stringer, Director, Institutional Research (remote)

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

Chair Cook welcomed Provost Barbara Wolfe to her first official meeting of the URI Board of Trustees in her new role as executive vice president and provost of academic affairs.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes of the November 4, 2022, Board Meeting. [Enclosure 1.a.](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the minutes of its November 4, 2022, Board meeting.

On a motion duly made by Armand Sabitoni and seconded by Michael Fascitelli, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the November 4, 2022 Board meeting.

VOTE: 16 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

2. OPEN FORUM

Chair Cook reported that no one registered to speak during the Open Forum.

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees enter into Executive Session for the following items:

- a. Discussion regarding performance goals and President Parlange's annual review, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(1).
- b. Discussion regarding pending litigation, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(2):

- (i) Sean Burt, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Board of Trustees of the University of Rhode Island, and Does 1-10 inclusive, C.A. No. 20-465-JJM-LDA (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).
 - (ii) Logan Thomson, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Board of Trustees of the University of Rhode Island, C.A. No. 20-295-JJM-LDA (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).
 - (iii) Louis Kwame Fosu v. The University of Rhode Island, University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees, David M. Dooley, President, The University of Rhode Island, Donald DeHayes, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Jeannette E. Riley, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, C.A. No. 21-279-JJM-PAS (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).
- c. Discussions or considerations related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the public interest, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(5), including:
- Student Housing
 - URI Campuses
 - Peckham Farm
- d. Discussion related to or concerning a prospective business or industry locating in the state of Rhode Island when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the interest of the public, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(6).
- e. Discussion of a matter related to the question of the investment of public funds where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(7).

President Parlange was notified in writing that discussion regarding the review of performance goals will be held in executive session.

On a motion duly made by Thomas Ryan and seconded by Jay Placencia, it was

- VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees enter into Executive Session for the following items:
- a. Discussion regarding performance goals and President Parlange's annual review, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(1).
 - b. Discussion regarding pending litigation, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(2):
 - (i) Sean Burt, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Board of Trustees of the

University of Rhode Island, and Does 1-10 inclusive, C.A. No. 20-465-JJM-LDA (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).

- (ii) Logan Thomson, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Board of Trustees of the University of Rhode Island, C.A. No. 20-295-JJM-LDA (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).
 - (iii) Louis Kwame Fosu v. The University of Rhode Island, University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees, David M. Dooley, President, The University of Rhode Island, Donald DeHayes, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Jeannette E. Riley, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, C.A. No. 21-279-JJM-PAS (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).
- c. Discussions or considerations related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the public interest, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(5), including: Student Housing, URI Campuses, Peckham Farm.
 - d. Discussion related to or concerning a prospective business or industry locating in the state of Rhode Island when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the interest of the public, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(6).
 - e. Discussion of a matter related to the question of the investment of public funds where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(7).

VOTE: 16 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

Board members participating remotely confirmed that no other person was present and/or able to hear the discussion at the remote location.

At 9:09 a.m., the Board convened into Executive Session. Virtual public access paused.

At 11:06 a.m., the Board returned to Open Session. Virtual public access resumed.

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees seal the minutes of the Executive Session that took place on February 16, 2023.

On a motion duly made by Michael Fascitelli and seconded by Cortney Nicolato, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees seal the minutes of the Executive Session that took place on February 16, 2023.

VOTE: 16 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

4. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

- a. Board Appointment Update
- b. Strategic Plan

Chair Cook provided an update on the board appointment process. All trustees' original terms have expired as of February 1, 2023. She reported that she sent a letter on behalf of the Board to Governor McKee requesting a meeting to discuss the reappointment process and who will sit on the board. She noted that there will be a few open seats; a list of candidates has been identified. Chair Cook stressed the importance of maintaining diversity on the board, having trustees who want to do the work of the board, that have no conflicts of interest, and that believe in the philosophy that we are the state's university and can propel growth for Rhode Island and its citizens.

Regarding the Strategic Plan, Chair Cook stated she thinks the President and his team have done a terrific job in both gathering what's important to Rhode Island and the University over the next several years and putting that plan into motion. She commended President Parlange for publicly

talking about the priorities everywhere he can, communicating the vision and long-term thinking around URI. She noted the effectiveness of helping the state and its citizens understand why having a strong and growing flagship university is so important to the state.

Chair Cook noted that board members are ambassadors of the University and will play a role in communicating the Strategic Plan. She thanked Speaker Shekarchi for suggesting a URI Day at the State House. All board members were encouraged to attend the March 28th event.

5. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND ACTION ITEMS

a. Executive Committee Report

(i) Update – February 7, 2023, Committee Meeting

Chair Cook reported that the Committee took action on the President's performance goals and two tentative collective bargaining agreements.

(ii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of performance goals associated with President Parlange's annual review.

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve President Parlange's performance goals established by the Board Chair and the President for the upcoming year.

On a motion duly made by David Martirano and seconded by Neil Kerwin, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees approve President Parlange's performance goals established by the Board Chair and the President for the upcoming year.

VOTE: 16 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

(iii) ACTION ITEM: Ratification of the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Physicians' Association/NEARI.

Chair Cook summarized the provisions of the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the URI Board of Trustees and the URI Physicians' Association. She called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees ratify the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Physicians' Association/NEARI.

On a motion duly made by Matthew Lenz and seconded by Charles Fogarty, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees ratify the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Physicians' Association/NEARI.

VOTE: 16 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Courtney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

(iv) ACTION ITEM: Ratification of the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Graduate Assistants United (URIGAU)/NEARI.

Chair Cook summarized the provisions of the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the URI Board of Trustees and the URI Graduate Assistants United. She noted that she received several letters from graduate assistants who were asking for a more livable wage; those letters and URI's response have been shared with the Board.

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees ratify the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Graduates Assistants United (URIGAU)/NEARI.

On a motion duly made by Neil Kerwin and seconded by Matthew Lenz, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees ratify the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Graduates Assistants United (URIGAU)/NEARI.

VOTE: 16 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

b. Academic Affairs and Research Committee Report

(i) Update – February 7, 2023, Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Neil Kerwin asked Provost Barbara Wolfe, Chief Academic Officer, to share a summary of her report to the committee.

Provost Wolfe noted that her report to the committee ([linked here](#)) included key performance metrics that are currently being used, an overview of academic efforts in support of student success, and an update of progress, metrics, and planned action steps of academic initiatives in the current University Strategic Plan.

Committee Chair Kerwin stated that Vice President Snyder, Vice President of Research and Economic Development, shared with the committee information on two programs underway at URI that are reflective of the kind of research that has a considerable impact to the State of Rhode Island and the country. Dr. Snyder's report to the committee is [linked here](#).

Dr. Snyder commented on the Plastics: Land to Sea COLAB, a faculty driven effort across six or seven colleges involving approximately 50 faculty and launched around three years ago. He reported that, because of the colaboratory's efforts, URI has submitted and is waiting to hear back on a \$20MM EPSCoR Track I award. Additionally, URI has submitted and is waiting to receive word on a variety of grants totaling an additional \$10MM in plastics research.

Dr. Snyder summarized his report on the Innovation Campus bond program. He stated that within the past month, URI signed contracts to launch an innovation campus, a public private partnership between URI, the State of Rhode Island, and Matunuck Oyster Bar, creating an aquaculture center focused on raising seed stock for shellfish, both oysters and scallops. This effort will increase food production in Rhode Island, serve as a research center primarily for the Department of Marine Affairs, and train students for research by faculty as well as commercial production.

(ii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of the granting of tenure effective August 27, 2023, to incoming faculty member Dr. Jean Gordon who has met the requirements for tenure at the University of Rhode Island. [Enclosure](#)

Provost Wolfe reviewed Dr. Jean Gordon's background information.

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the granting of tenure, effective August 27, 2023, to incoming faculty member Dr. Jean Gordon who has met the requirements for tenure at the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in [Enclosure 5.b.\(ii\)](#)

On a motion duly made by Karina Montilla Edmonds and seconded by David Martirano, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees approve the granting of tenure, effective August 27, 2023, to incoming faculty member Dr. Jean Gordon who has met the requirements for tenure at the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in [Enclosure 5.b.\(ii\)](#)

VOTE: 15 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Christine Heenan was not present to vote on this item.

(iii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of the awarding of undergraduate and graduate degrees, diplomas, certificates, and honors to be conferred by the President to the candidates who have completed their requirements at the conclusion of the Fall 2022 term and who are approved by the faculty of the University of Rhode Island. [Enclosure](#)

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the awarding of undergraduate and graduate degrees, diplomas, certificates, and honors to be conferred by the President to the candidates who have completed their requirements at the conclusion of the Fall 2022 term and who are approved by the faculty of the University of Rhode Island. [Enclosure 5.b.\(iii\)](#)

On a motion duly made by Matthew Lenz and Charles Fogarty and seconded by Roby Luna, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees approve the awarding of undergraduate and graduate degrees, diplomas, certificates, and honors to be conferred by the President to the candidates who have completed their requirements at the conclusion of the Fall 2022 term and who

are approved by the faculty of the University of Rhode Island.
[Enclosure 5.b.\(iii\)](#)

VOTE: 15 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members
voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Neil Kerwin,
Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally,
Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri,
Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Christine Heenan was not present to vote on this item.

c. Ad hoc special sponsored Research Committee Report

(i) Update – December 5, 2022, and January 26, 2023, Committee Meetings

Committee Chair Tom Ryan reviewed the work of the special committee. Committee members Ryan, Kerwin and Jenkins met several times with President Parlange, Provost Wolfe, Vice President Snyder, and Chair Cook to align its goals. He reported that over the course of twelve months, the committee will periodically update the Board and try to make changes and take action that will improve our research as we go forward.

The goals of the committee include determining how the University's research program should be resourced, organized, and funded and how does URI double its research dollars in the next 5-7 years. In addition, the committee will recommend to the Board of Trustees how the Board should support and give oversight to this group. The committee will identify quick steps to jump start research, making sure that the research conducted is consistent with the Strategic Plan, and send a clear message that the Board of Trustees is concerned with all areas of research at URI.

Committee Chair Ryan noted that early findings confirm that URI is under-resourced as an R2 university, particularly in pre- and post-award support. Upcoming meetings will address areas of strength and weaknesses and opportunities for research and will look at indirect costs and overhead allocations compared to our peers.

d. Finance and Facilities Committee Report

(i) Update – February 9, 2023, Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Ownjazayeri reported on activity at the February 9, 2023, Committee meeting.

- (ii) DISCUSSION ITEM: Approvals Under the Delegation of Authority to the President Relating to Land and Property. [Enclosure](#)

Director Ryan Carrillo reviewed the approvals that the President has made since the last Board meeting under the Board's Delegation of Authority to the President to approve certain transactions related to land and property.

- (iii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of a lease agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the United States Government through the United States Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service (USDA), for use of space in the Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences (CBLS), Morrill Hall and Woodward Hall. [Enclosure](#)

Director Carrillo provided background information on this lease agreement.

Committee Chair Ownjazayeri called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the Lease Agreement and authorize President Marc B. Parlange to execute the Lease Agreement with the United States Government through the US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service (USDA) for use of space in the Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences (CBLS), Morrill Hall and Woodward Hall, Kingston as a duly authorized agent, pursuant to the Approved Signature Authority of the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in [Enclosure 5.d.\(iii\)](#).

On a motion duly made by Armand Sabitoni and seconded by Matthew Lenz and Cortney Nicolato, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees approve the Lease Agreement and authorize President Marc B. Parlange to execute the Lease Agreement with the United States Government through the US Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Service (USDA) for use of space in the Center for Biotechnology and Life Sciences (CBLS), Morrill Hall and Woodward Hall, Kingston as a duly authorized agent, pursuant to the Approved Signature Authority of the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in [Enclosure 5.d.\(iii\)](#).

VOTE: 15 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Christine Heenan was not present to vote on this item.

e. Ad hoc special Real Estate Committee Report

(i) Update – November 30, 2022, and February 8, 2023, Committee Meetings

Committee Chair Fascitelli provided a high-level summary of the work of the committee. Long-term plans are focused on supporting the University's Strategic Plan. He reported that the Kingston campus master plan was created over twenty years ago to provide design guidelines and policies for current and future development and is largely complete. A refresh of the master plan is in order but comes at an expense. Short term needs are to run in parallel with work on the master plan to include additional graduate housing, undergraduate housing, creation of a "Third Place" for shopping and potentially a hotel. The committee is looking at onsite locations for the "Third Place", including the Fine Arts parking lot. The committee is also considering the best way for the University to have a presence in Providence.

Vice President Rider reviewed other topics the committee is considering, including long and short-term solutions to comply with the PFAS statute that was enacted in 2022, including building a new water treatment facility on the Kingston campus.

f. Governance Committee Report

(i) Update – February 7, 2023, Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Nicolato reported that the Governance Committee met to discuss board appointments, the annual selection of a student trustee, and retreat planning. President Parlange stated that the Student Senate will recommend potential students for the student trustee position. Following review by the President, the Provost, and the Vice President of Student Affairs, a new appointee's name will be brought to the Governance committee at its April meeting for a start date in June.

(ii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of the URI Board of Trustees Policy on Approval and Execution of Contracts and Other Binding Documents. [Enclosure](#)

General Counsel Alyssa Boss noted that this policy will replace the vote that is periodically taken by the Board for signature authority by name. The new policy designates authorized signatories by title, explicitly indicates when other approvals of University officers are required and allows for delegation of signature authority. This Board policy effectively incorporates current protocol into a broader campus-wide approach to routing contracts for approval and signature effectively. Committee Chair Nicolato noted that the Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee also reviewed this new policy and proactively agreed with the policy.

Committee Chair Nicolato called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the URI Board of Trustees Policy on Approval and Execution of Contracts and other Binding Documents, superseding the University of Rhode Island's Approved Signature Authority on Behalf of the University of Rhode Island and the URI Board of Trustees that was effective September 23, 2022, as recommended and presented in [Enclosure 5.f.\(ii\)](#).

On a motion duly made by Karina Montilla Edmonds and seconded by David Martirano, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees approve the URI Board of Trustees Policy on Approval and Execution of Contracts and other Binding Documents, superseding the University of Rhode Island's Approved Signature Authority on Behalf of the University of Rhode Island and the URI Board of Trustees that was effective September 23, 2022, as recommended and presented in [Enclosure 5.f.\(ii\)](#).

VOTE: 15 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Christine Heenan was not present to vote on this item.

(iii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of President Parlange's appointment of Primary Liaisons and University Liaisons to Committees pursuant to Section 5.7 of the Bylaws. [Enclosure](#)

Committee Chair Nicolato called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees accept the President's appointment of Primary University Liaisons and University Liaisons to committees as presented and set forth in [Enclosure 5.f.\(iii\)](#).

On a motion duly made by Armand Sabitoni and seconded by Michael Fascitelli, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees accept the President's appointment of Primary University Liaisons and University Liaisons to committees as presented and set forth in [Enclosure 5.f.\(iii\)](#).

VOTE: 15 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Christine Heenan was not present to vote on this item.

g. Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee Report

(i) Update – January 31, 2023, Committee Meeting

Committee Vice Chair Matthew Lenz reported on activity at the January 31, 2023, meeting, including review of the Policy on Approval and Execution of Contracts, anticipated changes to Title IX, review of insurance market conditions in higher education, review of the annual compliance calendar and specifically, compliance with standards governing research misconduct.

Vice President Rider gave an overview of anticipated changes to Title IX, expected in May, which will widen the scope of the regulation for colleges and universities. She noted that insurance premiums and the size of deductibles have risen steeply over the last couple of years, and URI is feeling that effect. She added that the committee also reviewed the comprehensive list of compliance activities that the University is required to do under its federal grants and contracts, and is systematically tracking them.

Committee Vice Chair Lenz expressed his concern that the new Title IX regulations may stress the current team structure within the Enterprise Risk Management group.

Former Committee Chair Roby Luna reported that URI was successful in getting insurance to protect us against cyber threats, a significant accomplishment for the University. Vice President Rider noted the huge effort on the part of Information Technology Services and a lot of people to meet the requirements that the insurers set forth.

The Board took a brief lunch break at 12:04 p.m., returning to open session at 12:22 p.m.

6. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

- a. University Financial Update
- b. Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators
- c. University Rankings

President Parlange reviewed with the Board his presentation [linked here](#). He welcomed Provost Barbara Wolfe to his leadership team and reviewed university activity since the last board meeting including his State of the University address on February 1st to launch FOCUS URI, a strategic vision for the University of Rhode Island. The President provided an update on Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for the University of Rhode Island and thanked those who are supporting the University and the work of the Foundation.

Several budget slides were reviewed, including the FY23 operational deficit (\$11.3MM), the FY24 current service level (\$24.2MM), the \$24.1MM gap between URI's FY24 operating budget request and the Governor's recommended budget, and the \$63.3MM gap between URI's FY24 RICAP budget request and the Governor's recommended budget. The President discussed the capital improvements needed at URI, including asset protection, the stormwater management project, the PFAS removal treatment plant and Athletics Complex improvement projects. He spoke of the importance of having modern facilities to recruit students and the economic impact of hosting sporting events on the Kingston campus. He reviewed the University's advocacy strategy including bringing key decision makers to URI to tour the facilities and celebrating URI at the State House on March 28th (URI Day). Board members discussed balancing the University's priorities with its limited resources.

President Parlange spent considerable time discussing national and international college and university rankings in response to a request for data heard from the Board at a previous meeting. He reviewed the University's current rankings in U.S. News Best Colleges, The Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education, The World University Rankings, QS World University, ARWU-Shanghai, U.S. News Best Global Universities, NTU – Performance Ranking of Scientific Papers and CWTS – Leiden (University) Ranking. He explained the ranking methodology and measurements of crucial factors used by each publication, such as research work and where we publish. He encouraged Board members to look at the Leiden University website to see the statistics that URI will be measuring as part of its Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). He reported that approximately ten percent of our publications sit in the top ten percent of papers out there in their fields being cited; however, there has been a slow decline, a reflection that other countries and states are investing in their research universities in terms of the total growth of the university. In the last twenty years, URI has not been able to grow its tenure-track faculty members who conduct the research.

President Parlange remarked that around the world it has been well recognized that when you invest in your flagship research facility you will see economic growth locally, regionally, and nationally; you will see the knowledge economy grow, which will attract new companies and take important university ideas out to the market.

The next presentation topic was "Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators." President Parlange displayed the KPI Roadmap and listed URI's proposed peer sets for comparison and measurement purposes. He reviewed the four priorities of the Strategic Plan and its ambitious goals, including:

Priority 1: Broaden Our Impact

President Parlange spoke about broadening the University's impact and reputation by growing its research investment over time, increasing the number of ranked publications, and continuous improvements in external recognitions and honorific awards in all fields.

Priority 2: Enhance Student Achievement

President Parlange spoke about improving undergraduate student retention rates and the six-year graduation rate, reducing (and eliminating) the graduation rate equity gap between Pell and non-Pell recipients, doubling the number of graduate degree conferrals (PhD and Masters) and doubling the number of teams winning a conference championship.

Priority 3: Foster Inclusive People-Centered Culture

The President spoke about increasing diversity and fostering a people-centered culture at URI, using a national diversity index to measure equity and inclusion amongst students and staff (instructional and non-instructional). The University looks to have the same target rates as those of the State of Rhode Island. URI will also look at colleagues to join URI to achieve its target goals.

Priority 4: Power the University of the Future

The final priority of the Strategic Plan involves the financial health of the University and includes target goals for revenue per full-time enrolled student (FTE), revenue diversity, and operating cash flow margin measures. President Parlange advised that URI is at the bottom of the listing of its peers in terms of revenue per student; the target goal is to move to the middle of the list. Regarding revenue diversity, he noted that URI will look at other sources of revenue and partnerships with industry and other institutions, and sources of revenue from friends of the University.

President Parlange reported that there will be an online dashboard to track annual progress relative to the KPIs. He is working with the schools and colleges and administrative units to have supporting plans to track performance and cross-university collaboration, overall goals, and specific actions relative to the one university strategic plan. He outlined how the University plans to execute and move ahead to be the best stewards of its resources. URI will explore how efficiently it operates, how it generates revenue, how it grows revenue to support research and academic efforts, and how it spends its time. URI will prioritize near-term and long-term large-scale strategies associated with implementation of the University's Strategic Plan. It will collaborate as one university and will communicate its story, data, and analytics to both internal and external community stakeholders, alumni and partners.

President Parlange thanked the Faculty Senate and everyone involved in the formation of the Strategic Plan and its KPIs.

Board members discussed rankings with the President, who asserted that when you have a solid university you will move up on all rankings. URI has a goal to increase to 12% the number of

papers in the top 10% of publications, similar to its aspirational peers. The President noted that it is important that there is quality across the university in any field that we choose to do research.

Board member Lenz stressed the importance of making sure URI remains affordable to middle and lower-class families. Discussion continued about the increase in tuition but correspondingly an increase in aid at URI. The President stated that the strategy of URI has been to grow out-of-state tuition to grow resources to invest in things like the Talent Development program supporting Rhode Island students.

In response to inquiry about managing the operation of the University given the funding shortfalls, President Parlange stressed that he is trying to work with the state to help turn this around. He is working with the College of Business to present a new master's program to form the base with specializations in nursing, naval architecture and special credit courses. We are moving as quickly as possible with corporate partners, measuring, and looking at every unit and how it is working. Everyone should feel that this is their opportunity to lead and work with companies, form partnerships, look at how we operate, and where we spend our time.

Provost Wolfe reported that they are looking at academic units; what are the revenues produced and the expenses, where can we increase efficiency, including course enrollment and program enrollment. We are meeting with college deans to come up with a plan. We are also looking at the budget assumptions. URI is looking at revenue generating areas; how can we move quickly to create those professional masters' and certificate programs to meet the needs of the state and various industries in RI and beyond. We are in the process of implementing some of these plans, with our presence in Providence, so that people have access to URI in ways that the state hasn't had in the past.

Board members discussed the importance of cooperative efforts between URI, CCRI and RIC, as well as the need for a strategic allocation of resources across Rhode Island's public higher education institutions, for a better overall return for the state. President Parlange reviewed the state appropriations per FTE at RI public universities; URI falls below CCRI and RIC. The President reviewed areas of collaboration between URI and President Jack Warner at RIC and President Meghan Hughes at CCRI. He mentioned his work with Shannon Gilkey, Commissioner of Postsecondary Education, to build a master plan for higher education. Chair Cook reiterated the importance of collaboration with RIC and CCRI.

Chair Cook concluded the meeting by stating that there is a lot across the Strategic Plan that President Parlange is trying to implement. The more the University digs into the Plan, the more we can home in on the priorities. You can't get everything done in year one, but there is a lot that we can do across several years. The execution is important.

7. ADJOURN

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees adjourn the meeting.

On a motion duly made by Michael Fascitelli and seconded by Cortney Nicolato, it was

URI Board of Trustees Meeting
February 16, 2023

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: 16 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members
voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine
Heenan, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David
Martirano, Michael McNally, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Cortney
Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia,
Thomas Ryan, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

At 1:49 p.m., this meeting ended.

The next URI Board of Trustees Meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2023.