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**The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees  
Student Life and Athletics Committee Meeting  
April 6, 2023, 1:00 p.m. EDT**

**The University of Rhode Island  
Meeting Room 103 – Robert J. Higgins Welcome Center  
45 Upper College Road, Kingston, RI 02881**

**OFFICIAL MINUTES**

The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee meeting was held in person, with committee members participating remotely. Virtual public access to the meeting was available via the YouTube video platform and is available for viewing at [https://web.uri.edu/trustees/meetings/..](https://web.uri.edu/trustees/meetings/)

Committee Vice Chair Jay Placencia conducted a formal roll call and confirmed that a quorum of members was present. The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m.

URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee members in attendance:

- Ms. Jay Placencia, Vice Chair (virtual)
- Mr. Roby Luna (virtual)
- Mr. Armand Sabitoni (virtual)
- Dr. Marc B. Parlange, President (ex officio, non-voting) (virtual)

URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee members not present:

- Mr. David Martirano, Chair
- Mr. Thomas Ryan
- Ms. Hannah Bachert

*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.*

URI President's Leadership Council members in attendance:

- Ms. Abby Benson, Chief of Staff, Senior Advisor to the President (virtual)
- Ms. Alyssa Boss, General Counsel (virtual)
- Mr. Thorr Bjorn, Athletics Director (in person)
- Ms. Ellen Reynolds, Vice President for Student Affairs (virtual)
- Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (virtual)

URI Staff members in attendance:

- Ms. Michelle Curreri, Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)
- Ms. Lynn Owens, Associate Secretary (in person)
- Ms. Carol Pegg, M.Ed., Executive Assistant II (virtual)
- Mr. Garrett Waller, Associate Athletic Director, Development (in person)

## 1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

### a. Minutes of the October 17, 2022 Meeting. [Enclosure 1.a.](#)

Committee Vice Chair Placencia called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee approve the minutes of the October 17, 2022, meeting of the Committee.

On a motion duly made by Roby Luna and seconded by Jay Placencia, it was

VOTED:	THAT	The URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee approve the minutes for the meeting of October 17, 2022.
	VOTE:	2 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.
	YEAS:	Roby Luna, Jay Placencia
	NAYS:	0
	ABSTAINS:	Armand Sabitoni (was not a committee member at the time of the October meeting).

## 2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### a. Student Affairs [Enclosure 2.a.](#)

- Ellen Reynolds, Vice President, Student Affairs

- i. Housing and Residential Life Master Plan and Capital Improvement Plan Update**
- ii. Dining Services Capital Improvement Update**
- iii. URI Greek Life Update**

Vice President Reynolds began by sharing the improvements being made to the Hope Dining Facility, which will increase seating capacity and mechanicals of the building at the anticipated cost of \$3.6 Million and with a completion date of 2026.

Dr. Reynolds continued her update to include the improvement plan for newly constructed undergraduate housing adding 500 new, apartment-style beds. She stated that project planning is underway with the goal of completion by fall of 2025.

Dr. Reynolds also spoke of the Phase 2 improvements to Fraternity Circle which will add lighting, walkways, and recreational facilities.

Dr. Reynolds shared the fire safety and protection improvement plan, which will add a generator farm, allowing for emergency power during outages to the complex facilities, at a cost of \$2.4 Million, paid by Rhode Island Health and Educational Building Corporation (RIHEBC) bonds.

Dr. Reynolds shared that housing and residential life is actively undergoing a master plan study to determine housing needs for the next 15 years.

Dr. Reynolds continued her presentation with an update on URI Greek Life. She shared that Greek Life has been at URI for 100 years, with more than 3,000 current members, and is working on a strategic plan aligning with the University's plan. She also shared that increasing diversity is an important part of Greek Life's mission. Last year, Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, the oldest Greek letter organization established by an African American woman, was established at URI. Dr. Reynolds also shared that Greek members represent all majors and colleges at URI.

Dr. Reynolds shared that through Greek Life philanthropy projects, their 5-year community fundraising total is almost \$1 Million.

**b. Athletics [Enclosure 2.b](#)**

- Thorr Bjorn, Athletics Director

- i. Name, Image and Likeness in College Athletics/URI**
- ii. Athletics Facilities Update**

- (1) Soloviev Practice Facility**
- (2) Meade Stadium East Stands**
- (3) Outdoor Track**

Director Thorr Bjorn began his presentation by sharing a video that outlined the renovation of the west gym facility, formerly used for campus recreation and academic classes. He noted that

the project is coming in on time and on budget, being converted to the state-of-the-art Soloviev Basketball Practice Facility that is consistent with our Division I peers.

Director Bjorn continued his presentation by highlighting that, with the support of the Governor's proposed budget, Rhode Island Capital Plan Fund (RICAP) funding is being provided to support essential upgrades to Meade Stadium, which currently is significantly lacking compared to peer institutions as well as funding for an outdoor track, which URI has not had in over 30 years, despite being one of the teams that has the most national championship wins. Additional needs for softball, baseball, and the soccer complex were discussed.

A document outlining anticipated costs for the Athletics Complex improvements was shared with the committee members following the meeting. [Enclosure](#).

Director Bjorn shared that URI will be partnering with Opendorse™ to assist student athletes with a platform to serve the full lifecycle of supporting student athletes with Name, Image and Likeness (NIL). Director Bjorn also shared how student athletes are engaging in the Launch Lab to pursue innovation in entrepreneurial projects around business development. He also discussed the Life Skills programming, where student athletes are engaged in community initiatives, including Rhody Reads, Rhody Mentors, and speaking opportunities.

- c. Annual Review of the Student Life and Athletics Committee Charter** [Enclosure 2.c.](#)  
- Jay Placencia, Committee Vice Chair

Committee Vice Chair Placencia led the discussion regarding the review of the committee charter outlining the committee's responsibility to ensure that they are doing what they are charged with doing. The committee will consider action on proposed amendments to the charter at its June meeting.

- d. Annual Review of Student Life and Athletics Committee Calendar** [Enclosure 2.d.](#)  
- Jay Placencia, Committee Vice Chair

The committee members reviewed the Student Life and Athletics Committee calendar to ensure they were on target for what is needed to be accomplished. The committee will consider action on proposed amendments to the calendar at its June meeting.

### 3. ADJOURN

On a motion duly made by Roby Luna and seconded by Armand Sabitoni, it was

VOTED:                      THAT                      The URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee adjourn the meeting.

URI Board of Trustees  
Student Life and Athletics Committee Meeting  
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VOTE: 3 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members  
voted in the negative.

YEAS: Roby Luna, Jay Placencia, and Armand Sabitoni

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 2:08 p.m.

**The next URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee Meeting is tentatively  
scheduled for June 2023.**

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