



Members

Margo Cook '86, *Chair*

Michael D. Fascitelli '78

Charles Fogarty '80

Christine Heenan

Richard S. Humphrey

Matthew Lenz '11

Roby Luna '04

David Martirano '91

Michael F. McNally '81, *Vice Chair*

Dr. Karina Montilla Edmonds '92

Cortney M. Nicolato '01

Vahid Ownjazayeri

Susan Petrovas '92

Yahaira "Jay" Placencia '01

Cecilia Rouse

Thomas Ryan '75

Armand E. Sabitoni '73

**The University of Rhode Island
Board of Trustees Meeting
Saturday, October 24, 2020 • 9:00 a.m.**

**PURSUANT TO GOVERNOR RAIMONDO'S EXECUTIVE
ORDER, THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIRTUALLY USING THE
WEBEX PLATFORM (BOARD MEMBERS ONLY) AND
FACEBOOK LIVE (PUBLIC VIEWING)**

MINUTES

Chair Cook welcomed Board members to the meeting, and a formal roll call was taken by Attorney Saccoccio, who acknowledged that a quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m.

Attendees present for this virtual meeting:

The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees voting members:

- Ms. Margo Cook, Chair
- Dr. Karina Montilla Edmonds
- Mr. Michael Fascitelli
- Honorable Charles J. Fogarty (arrived late)
- Ms. Christine M. Heenan
- Mr. Matthew Lenz
- Mr. Roby Luna
- Mr. David Martirano
- Mr. Michael F. McNally, Vice Chair
- Ms. Cortney Nicolato
- Mrs. Susan Petrovas (arrived late)
- Ms. Jay Placencia
- Ms. Cecilia Rouse
- Mr. Thomas Ryan
- Mr. Armand Sabitoni

The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees ex officio members:

- Mr. Tim DelGiudice-Chair, Council on Postsecondary Education
- Ms. Barbara Cottam-Chair, Board of Education
- Mr. Christopher Bove-Student Representative (arrived late)
- Dr. Mayrai Gindy-Faculty Representative

Ex Officio Members

Tim DelGiudice, *Chair*
*R.I. Council on Postsecondary
Education*

Barbara Cottam, *Chair*
R.I. Board of Education

Mayrai Gindy
Faculty Representative

Christopher Bove '23
Student Representative

The University of Rhode Island Staff

- President David M. Dooley
- Ms. Mary Grace Almandrez, Associate Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer
- Ms. Linda Barrett, Director, Budget and Financial Planning
- Mr. Ryan Carrillo, Director, Planning and Real Estate Development
- Ms. Anne Marie Coleman, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources
- Dr. Kathy Collins, Vice President for Student Affairs
- Ms. Michelle Curreri, Chief of Staff and Board Liaison
- Mr. Don DeHayes, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Mr. Peter Harrington, Assistant Legal Counsel
- Mr. Karlis Kaugars, Chief Information Officer
- Mr. Dean Libutti, Vice Provost for Enrollment Management
- Ms. Elizabeth Breul O'Rourke, President, URI Foundation and Alumni Engagement
- Ms. Abbi Rider, Vice President for Administration and Finance
- Mr. Louis Saccoccio, General Counsel
- Dr. Peter Snyder, Vice President for Research and Economic Development
- Mr. John Stringer, Director of Institutional Research

Invited Guests

- Mr. David Chy, Isaacson, Miller
- Mr. David DiIulis, O'Connor and Drew, P.C.
- Mr. John Isaacson, Isaacson, Miller
- Mr. Bud Moseley, Isaacson, Miller
- Mr. Alfred J. Verrecchia, Chairman of the Board, URI Foundation and Alumni Engagement

1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees accept the agenda for the meeting of October 24, 2020.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Sabitoni and seconded by Ms. Nicolato, it was

VOTED:	THAT	The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees accept the agenda for the meeting of October 24, 2020
	VOTE:	13 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative
	YEAS:	Margo L. Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Christine M. Heenan, Matthew D. Lenz, Roby Luna, David J. Martirano, Michael F. McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Jay Placencia, Cecilia Rouse, Thomas M. Ryan, and Armand E. Sabitoni
	NAYS:	0
	ABSTAINS:	0
	ABSENT:	Charles Fogarty, Richard Humphrey, Susan Petrovas

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chair Cook stated that one vote would be conducted to approve the minutes for the meetings on August 22, 2020 and September 11, 2020 and asked for a motion to approve said minutes.

On a motion duly made by Ms. Placencia and seconded by Mr. Sabitoni, it was

VOTED:	THAT	The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees accept the minutes for the meetings of August 22, 2020 and September 11, 2020
	VOTE:	14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative
	YEAS:	Margo L. Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles J. Fogarty, Christine M. Heenan, Matthew D. Lenz, Roby Luna, David J. Martirano, Michael F. McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Jay Placencia, Cecilia Rouse, Thomas M. Ryan, and Armand E. Sabitoni
	NAYS:	0
	ABSTAINS:	
	ABSENT:	Richard Humphrey, Susan Petrovas

3. OPEN FORUM

Chair Cook reported that at every formal board meeting, 20 minutes will be set aside for the general public to speak during the Open Forum. For this meeting, no one signed up to speak; therefore, Chair Cook moved onto the next agenda item.

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION

a. Discussion regarding collective bargaining pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) with the following:

1. URI Physician's Association, NEARI (Tentative Agreement)
2. Graduate Assistants United, NEARI (Tentative Agreement)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees convene into Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) with the URI Physician's Association, NEARI (Tentative Agreement) and the Graduate Assistants United, NEARI (Tentative Agreement).

On a motion duly made by Ms. Placencia and seconded by Mr. Fascitelli, it was

VOTED:	THAT	The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees convene into Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) with the URI Physician's Association, NEARI (Tentative Agreement) and the Graduate Assistants United, NEARI (Tentative Agreement)
	VOTE:	13 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative

YEAS: Margo L. Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles J. Fogarty, Christine M. Heenan, Matthew D. Lenz, Roby Luna, David J. Martirano, Michael F. McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Jay Placencia, Cecilia Rouse, and Armand E. Sabitoni

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS:

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Susan Petrovas, Thomas M. Ryan

The Board entered into Executive Session at 9:15 a.m. The following University staff members were present:

- Anne Marie Coleman, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources
- Michelle Curreri, Chief of Staff and Board Secretary
- David M. Dooley, President
- Peter J. Harrington, Assistant Legal Counsel
- Louis Saccoccio, General Counsel

Executive Session ended at 9:30 a.m. and Open Session was reconvened. 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 October 24, 2020.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Mr. Lenz it was

VOTED	THAT:	The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees seal the minutes of the Executive Session that took place on October 24, 2020
	VOTE:	15 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative
	YEAS:	Margo L. Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles J. Fogarty, Christine M. Heenan, Matthew D. Lenz, Roby Luna, David J. Martirano, Michael F. McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Cecilia Rouse, and Thomas M. Ryan, and Armand E. Sabitoni
	NAYS:	0
	ABSTAINS:	0
	ABSENT:	Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjazayeri

5. EXECUTIVE SESSION ACTION ITEMS

a. Discussion regarding collective bargaining pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(a)(2) with the following:

1. URI Physician's Association, NEARI (Tentative Agreement)
2. Graduate Assistants United, NEARI (Tentative Agreement)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve and ratify the collective bargaining agreements with the URI Physician's Association, NEARI and the Graduate Assistants United, NEARI as recommended and presented in Executive Session.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Sabitoni and seconded by Ms. Heenan, it was

VOTED	THAT:	The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve and ratify the collective bargaining agreements with the URI Physician's Association, NEARI and the Graduate Assistants United, NEARI as recommended and presented in Executive Session
	VOTE:	15 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative
	YEAS:	Margo L. Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles J. Fogarty, Christine M. Heenan, Matthew D. Lenz, Roby Luna, David J. Martirano, Michael F. McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Cecilia Rouse, and Thomas M. Ryan, and Armand E. Sabitoni
	NAYS:	0
	ABSTAINS:	0
	ABSENT:	Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjazayeri

6. REPORT OF THE CHAIR

Chair Cook reported that educating the board about URI would be an ongoing part of each meeting in order to better understand the university on a deeper level. She encouraged board members to provide topics of interest to the Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Life Committee, who will be responsible for facilitating this type of education at future meetings. The topics could include education about the goals and objectives of the University's colleges, the tenure process, or an in-depth review of shared governance in a university setting. Chair Cook shared that she and Vice Chair McNally recently met with Jay Walsh, Executive Director of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and Miriam Reumann, AAUP President and faculty representative. That meeting brought up the topic of balance between research and faculty that teaches. She shared that she would like this to be a topic at a future meeting.

Chair Cook reported on the University's budget process discussed at the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting held on October 23. She clarified that two budgets were submitted to the state—one that shows the university as down 15%; the other being the one the university requests, aka the

“ask” budget. The budget that is being voted on in this meeting is the “ask” budget. Clarity regarding the budget should be available in January when it’s determined if any federal stimulus resources are provided to the state, and in turn provided to URI. Chair Cook also spoke with the Governor’s office, who shared that there was a high probability of receiving federal stimulus resources, and that there is a very strong desire to support higher education in particular.

Chair Cook discussed the progress of the Presidential Search. She reported that the kickoff went very well, which included several town hall meetings. She shared that URI has a very strong reputation and “people feel really good about the university.” It was noted that at every meeting, the topic of diversity, equity, and inclusion was discussed. Additionally, the participants stated that they would like to see a bigger investment in mental health and wellness and the humanities. During the student town hall meetings, it was shared that more campus-wide events are desired to create more interaction within the URI community.

The last topic of discussion Chair Cook spoke of was board culture. She stated that although it has been difficult to establish a culture between members due to COVID-19 restrictions, the process began with the virtual social gathering held on October 23. She stressed board member participation and encouraged members to ask questions if something is not understood. She also shared that each member would receive the book, *Practical Wisdom: Thinking Differently About College and University Governance*, written by Peter D. Eckel, Cathy A. Trower, and Richard Chait (Foreword), which provides an understanding of how/why the governance process in a university is unique.

There were no questions or comments for Chair Cook, and the meeting proceeded to the next agenda item.

7. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE CHAIRS

a. Governance Committee Report – Committee Update

Chair Ryan shared that the Board Composition Survey, developed by Vice Chair Nicolato, and sent to Board members, will provide an inventory of the skills, experience, diversity, and equity of current members. Going forward, the Board will be able to fill in gaps in order for it to look more like URI’s student population. The survey was based on what other universities have used as well as questions that are on university applications in terms of gender, diversity, or ethnicity. Chair Ryan stated that he does not anticipate any change to the Board over the next six months to one year but would like to have an inventory. Vice Chair Nicolato posted the survey link in the WebEx chat and shared that the survey was tested and will take no more than three minutes to complete.

Chair Ryan provided an update regarding the Presidential Search. The Search and Advisory Committees met with senior leadership, a presidential profile survey was distributed, a website was created, and town hall meetings were held with faculty, staff, and the community.

Chair Ryan outlined the proposed timeline for the search as follows:

- Completion of Presidential Profile – December 6
- Review of active candidates – week of December 15
- Top eight selection – week of February 8
- Semi-finalist selection – early March
- Recommend candidate to Board – end of March

Chair Ryan reported on the feedback received at the town hall meetings:

- Common themes such as community, equity, and diversity; what can we do better for students and society; friction between the research and teaching functions
- Student success and graduation retention
- Financial soundness and capital projects
- Communication and brand promotion

The meetings also invited participants to reflect back on their experiences at URI. Chair Ryan shared four common responses:

1. The professor knew my name and inspired me
2. Availability of internships—paid and unpaid
3. Campus activity and involvement
4. Athletics

Chair Ryan ended his report by recognizing the fantastic work of Lil O'Rourke and Megan Echevarria, Chair and Co-Chair, of the Presidential Search Advisory Committee. The meeting was turned over to John Isaacson, of Isaacson, Miller who provided further information regarding the Presidential Search.

Presidential Search Update – John Isaacson, David Chy, and Bud Moseley of Isaacson, Miller

Isaacson, Miller is the firm hired to search for the next URI president. Isaacson, Miller was the same firm that found President Dooley. John Isaacson, Founder and Chair of Isaacson, Miller, joined the discussion regarding the search. Mr. Isaacson spoke about the priorities for the next president in terms of what that person should “look like, act like, and feel like.”

Mr. Isaacson commended Chair Cook, Mr. Ryan, Ms. O'Rourke, and Ms. Echevarria for their work on the search. He stated that the first phase of learning is essential and that a clear definition is necessary to know that what's been done is right and what needs to be done next, so that the next president can carry on the work. Mr. Isaacson encouraged the Board to contribute to this discussion by asking questions such as how the University is positioned, how it got to where it is now, and most importantly, what are the markers you see for the next president over the next 5-10 years?

Ms. Rouse asked how this search differs from the previous search. Mr. Isaacson shared that the previous relationship with the state was “tenuous”, the campus looked “deteriorated”, student enrollment was vaguely acceptable, faculty scholarship was modest, and student success was limited. He also shared that net revenue was highly tentative and highly reliant on the state. Mr. Isaacson also shared that the University is in a fundamentally different position today. Mr. Ryan, who was part of the search for President Dooley, shared that the University had a reputational issue and very little research, and he reiterated Mr. Isaacson's comment about the physical shape of campus buildings. Mr. Ryan also stated that the University's position outside of the state was not strong, nor were applications.

Ms. Heenan agreed that the University is in a much stronger position today but commented that today's leadership challenges at a university are harder. She further stated that the hazards of leadership and the roots to quick failure have increased. She asked Mr. Isaacson and others for their thoughts on that statement in terms of recruitment of a new president.

Mr. Isaacson described the characteristics of a successful university as one that is aligned with the state, has a stable governance structure, and is focused on strong academic success. He further added that those characteristics are rare and that is why URI is very appealing whereas failing institutions are those that are underendowed, don't have a market position, and have not adjusted to American issues of social justice and racial equality.

Ms. Heenan shared that although most of her experience is with private universities, she believes it is imperative for leaders to be skilled communicators. She also added that in terms of rankings, it may be an opportunity for an ambitious candidate to “move the dial and demonstrate momentum.”

Mr. Martirano shared his opinion that URI, being “old fashioned,” as someone previously mentioned, runs the risk of having to keep up with all other public universities. He stated that he has seen a huge movement over the past two years with Tier 1 and even Tier 2 public universities such as UConn and believes the next leader will need to keep us in that group.

Mr. McNally asked what the impediments to attract the best candidate are—is compensation one of them? Mr. Isaacson replied that he would guess URI will pay competitively for its size and will not be competing with the compensation of some private universities. He believes that candidates will be mostly comprised of provosts and deans and the pay will be plenty competitive.

Ms. Nicolato thanked Mr. Isaacson for the work being done to find the next president. She shared that it will be important for that person to have a role in supporting the economic development within the state and also be someone who understands the dynamics of the student population in order to support them.

Mr. Fascitelli commented that because URI's reputation and rankings lag the progress made, it would be important for the next leader to have the skills to close the gap.

Ms. Rouse asked Mr. Isaacson, “if you are not worried about compensation, what are you worried about?” Mr. Isaacson stressed that there are two broad themes that capture most everything: 1. quality of the student experience, be it holistic, a journey, or inspirational, and 2. convince others to take URI seriously as a scholarly institution that is known for excellence in many things—“these two things are what build the core reputation and rankings of a university.”

Mr. Sabitoni inquired about the Presidential Profile and who was working on it. He referred to the positive accomplishments that Mr. Ryan captured in regard to President Dooley. Mr. Sabitoni stressed that we need a leader who is a “Dooley on steroids”, who is a public relations person that can raise money at the same time and has the ability to get alumni excited.

Mr. Ryan shared that the Presidential Profile is the work of the Advisory Committee and the feedback from the town hall meetings. Salient points are taken from that work and are distilled into the profile. Mr. Ryan added that some questions to be answered are do we want someone who will drive the arts and sciences or the humanities? He stressed that, in his opinion, financial soundness is key, and if that is to be achieved, the next leader must be innovative and creative by developing private partnerships and developing new ways of teaching academic programs in addition to being an excellent communicator and collaborator.

Chair Cook agreed with the above points and added that a leader must be able to articulate a vision, understand what stakeholders need, envision what the future looks like, and have the experience to execute the vision.

Mr. Isaacson returned to the question of what he was worried about. He stated that he was far less worried in this search than the previous one because URI is well positioned. He shared that the search will be to scour the country for relevant people in relevant positions and carefully screen them because that person is “fairly rare.” He stated that the difficult part is finding them and understanding them and that this search has been unique due to the current pandemic.

Mr. Ryan inquired if the search would rule out a candidate who is not from academia, and Chair Cook asked if it was rare for a public university to hire someone who is not from academia.

Mr. Isaacson replied that in some public university systems such as California, North Carolina, and Georgia, political people or large public officials are hired, and their primary job is to work the legislature, the governor, and the public; they are not in that position to provide academic leadership. He shared that in some instances talented people fill the position; however, that leader must understand the university, be able to lead faculty, and create a holistic student experience.

Mr. Ryan asked if the profile was posted on Isaacson, Miller’s website and if they’ve received any resumes. Mr. Chy from Isaacson, Miller, replied that a general link with no description had been posted, but as of this date, no external submissions had been received. Mr. Lenz asked for clarification regarding “externals” and asked if any internal submissions were received. Mr. Chy responded that nothing had been received.

Dr. Gindy commented on the background of individuals and that the University should not specifically exclude those that do not come from academia; however, she shared that based on earlier comments about the importance of shared governance and the understanding of how universities work, that someone who is not from the academic world would need to buy into the university’s vision early on. Dr. Gindy also shared that the next leader would have to value where the university has been over the last ten years, be willing to maintain the positive things that have taken place, and also to build on them. She added that those things include maintaining academic relevance, technology, community, and the cost of education to a family.

Dr. Montilla Edmonds concurred with Mr. Isaacson in terms of the Presidential Profile and its description in that it will be limited to those in academia. She stated that although a non-academic would not be ruled out, the candidate should have a strong research background and be able to build off of President Dooley’s success.

Ms. Placencia echoed some of Chair Cook’s comments in regard to the University playing a huge role in economics. She shared that the chosen candidate be someone who is: a fundraiser, someone with integrity and a vision; someone who is accountable to the stakeholders, i.e., community, students, faculty, and staff. She stated that the University’s reputation is not where it should be based on the quality offered and that people do not know enough about that.

Mr. Ryan shared his thoughts in regard to the sense that there is much focus on research and not enough on the humanities and, if so, it be corrected in order for people to feel that they are part of the greater good, that they are contributing, and that they are engaged. He asked whether it was necessary for the Board to be specific in that regard.

Mr. Isaacson replied that URI should want to have a reputation for being a great place for students that is affordable. He shared two components that make a great university: provide the student with an experience better than anywhere else, and the student leaves URI transformed and ready for life. Mr. Isaacson also stressed that the University strive for people to take it seriously as a scholarly institution that is not based on sponsored research and science alone.

Ms. Heenan shared that the new president will have the benefit of a strong board to “scaffold” them in areas in which they have little experience. She also commented that the answer is in the Strategic Plan that the Board is revisiting and that she was impressed as to how clear it was. Ms. Heenan also shared that she would be more comfortable with a candidate who is in the earlier stage of their academic career who is dynamic, scholarly, and credible, with the ability to grow with the institution.

Mr. Martirano agreed with Ms. Heenan’s comments and stated that what URI is lacking is that the rest of the world is unaware of how great an institution URI is. He also shared that with the acceptance rate being 70%, that URI is dismissed on all of the great things that the university and faculty have built.

Ms. Nicolato stressed the necessity to continue to ensure that URI is attainable to the students of Rhode Island. She agreed that it’s important to serve, get, and retain the most competitive students as possible, but also that URI is the go-to organization for Rhode Island students in light of the education problems in the state.

Mr. Lenz shared that the next president needs to be focused on career readiness for students and not just the skill sets that they learn in the classroom, but also prepare them for life after URI. Mr. Lenz shared his experience he had at a workshop for senior students—many did not know what they should be doing.

President Dooley shared his comments about the metrics around the student population. He stated that the rankings in *U.S. News and World Report* weigh selectivity “very high”, which, URI is never going to be, due to its priority to benefit and serve Rhode Island. President Dooley noted that 10% of the freshman class come through the Talent Development (TD) program, which services those who are economically disadvantaged and have not had a good high school background but have talent to succeed. He stressed that in his opinion that it would be a serious mistake if URI backed away from the TD program.

President Dooley stressed that the critical metrics are student success, which is improving dramatically. He also shared that URI has been nationally recognized for closing the equity gap between Pell students and students with adequate financial means and closing the equity gaps between students of color and minority students. President Dooley emphasized that URI stands in a unique place in terms of its access mission and does not want that to be insufficiently emphasized in the presidential search.

Mr. Bove, the Board of Trustees student representative, shared his views on the acceptance rate at URI. He emphasized the importance for URI to continue to prioritize in-state students and make it obtainable; especially for economically disadvantaged students such as himself.

Mr. Fogarty shared his views on the next URI leader in terms of collaboration and that person’s ability to attract a top-notch team to build on its success and move the university forward. In addition, he asked if the search committee would be speaking with potential candidates about a time commitment to the University. Mr. Isaacson replied that although there are no guarantees of

that person's tenure, they are looking for someone to remain at URI for at least ten years in order to make a fundamental commitment.

Ms. Petrovas shared that the next president be a leader and a communicator. She commended President Dooley for his role in growing the University and stressed the importance of finding that person who works directly with each college to creating diversity within in order to build up the University.

Chair Cook shared her thoughts about potential questions for the next leader such as: what are your thoughts about taking URI to the next level; what is your vision of a state university that wants to attract a certain type of student, and how would you take us to the next level?

Ms. Heenan shared her views about how the Strategic Plan can be used as a recruitment tool in that the Plan has enough "big boxes" for the next candidate to make their mark with enough room to set a direction.

Ms. Cottam reiterated earlier comments in what is needed in the next leader—the ability to listen and lead, communicate, innovate, and excite.

Chair Cook invited Al Verrecchia, Chairman of the Board for the University of Rhode Island Foundation and Alumni Engagement, to share his viewpoint on the next leader. Mr. Verrecchia described the role of the next president to be someone who develops, can articulate a vision, and be able to find the people and resources to carry out that vision. He also shared that due to the issues surrounding the struggling K-12 schools, the leader would need to provide those students with an opportunity while keeping URI's scholarly reputation; this will be an important challenge for that person.

Mr. DelGiudice shared his views for the next leader as someone who would need to be an active member in the state's academic community, while Ms. Cottam stressed the importance of innovation and partnerships and redefining the future to avoid being left behind.

Mr. Ryan asked Mr. Isaacson to comment on the diversity and ethnicity of potential candidates. Mr. Isaacson replied that his team is working very hard to provide a diverse pool to choose from.

Mr. Isaacson thanked the Board for their participation in the discussion and commended URI by stating it has one of the most attractive governance structures for a public university.

Chair Cook thanked Mr. Isaacson and his team and moved to the next item on the agenda.

b. Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee Report

Chair Luna updated the Board on the meeting held on October 23 and shared that the discussion centered around making changes to the selection of the external auditors. Vice Chair Martirano reported that the Committee agreed to stay the course and not make any drastic changes to the selection process in light of COVID-19.

Chair Luna turned over the discussion to Vice President Abigail Rider. VP Rider shared that URI, Rhode Island College (RIC), and the Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) have traditionally used the same auditor. The University issues a Request for Proposal (RFP), the auditors respond, and a selection is made. She shared that O'Connor and Drew have been selected numerous times over the last ten years. The current contract expires on June 30, 2021,

and normally at this time of year, URI would prepare an RFP and solicit a bid. Due to extenuating circumstances such as COVID-19, a new Board of Trustees, and a presidential search, the Board will be asked to approve a contract extension for one year. VP Rider further stated that RIC and CCRI intend to request from the general auditor of the state to extend their contracts.

Chair Cook stated that the motion to extend the contract will be brought forward at a later time during today's meeting. This concludes the report of the Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee.

c. Finance and Facilities Committee Report

Chair Fascitelli provided a recap of the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting that took place on October 23. This meeting centered around the budget, which included the fiscal year (FY) 2021 Allocations, FY2022 Budget Request, and the FY2022 Tuition and Fee Rates. In addition, the Capital Improvement Plan for FY2022-26, a resolution authorizing URI to borrow money for emergency conditions during FY21, and the review of financial statements for FY ending June 30, 2020 were also discussed. It was noted that these items will be discussed in greater detail when they will be recommended for approval by the Board.

Chair Fascitelli commented that the budgeting process this year has been a challenge due to the delay at the state legislature, which in turn makes it difficult to predict the FY22 budget. VP Abigail Rider added that the FY2021 budget may not be finalized until January 2021.

Mr. Ryan asked if the \$9M health services budget is covered by student fees. VP Rider replied that the revenue portion is generated from student participation in the health plan and pays for health services. Mr. Ryan asked if that just covers expenses or is it a revenue generator. Ms. Rider replied that it varies from year to year, and any surplus goes to health services. She added that the University is saving to build a new health and counseling services center—that surplus would be put toward that and the remainder would probably come from revenue bonds. This concludes the Finance and Facilities Committee report.

Note: The next agenda item will be the report from the Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Life Committee Chair, followed by the report of the University Advancement and External Affairs Committee. The filed agenda listed them in the reverse order.

d. Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Life Committee Report

Chair Rouse began her report with discussion of the committee meeting held on October 23. The first topic of discussion was the inaugural climate survey that URI is developing; this was discussed in great detail during yesterday's plenary session. Chair Rouse stated that the survey will be important in terms of the presidential search in that it will provide the incoming president an understanding of the campus' sentiment.

Another topic discussed at yesterday's committee meeting included a presentation by Dr. Peter Snyder, Vice President for Research and Economic Development at URI. This presentation provided an overview of current research metrics that included his team's research proposals that faculty are developing. Dr. Snyder's report also included that URI's animal research processing time, which beat benchmarks. Additionally, the report included information regarding export control, intellectual property disclosures, licensing deals and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). It was noted by Chair Rouse that research and economic development at URI is

estimated to generate approximately \$300M statewide in terms of economic impact supporting approximately 1,182 jobs with a return investment of about 350%. Chair Rouse suggested that this topic be included in a future plenary session.

Chair Rouse shared that Provost DeHayes presented the Fall 2020 Enrollment Report which is a discussion item on today's meeting agenda.

Chair Rouse reported that the bulk of the committee meeting was devoted to an overview of the faculty senate process for the development and review of proposed new programs and majors. A presentation was given by Faculty Senate President Megan Echevarria and Vice President Audrey Cardany, which led to the discussion of how the Board of Trustees should work with the Faculty Senate and President when considering new majors and programs. Chair Rouse explained that it is in the purview of the Board to approve new majors and programs; however, the question was broached as to the right time for the Board to discuss and consider the proposals in a way that respects the shared governance between the Board, Faculty Senate and other administrative officials. She stressed that the Board is ultimately responsible for such decisions, as they are the fiduciaries and that some of the programs may have "real impacts on resources and potential reputational risk", which is in the purview of the Board. Chair Rouse noted that in order to respect the ability, flexibility, and speed with which the University may need to proceed with the process, it may be necessary to call a special meeting of the Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Life (AARSL) Committee to review any new proposals prior to full Board presentation and approval.

Chair Cook noted that she attended yesterday's meeting of the AARSL Committee and concurred with President Dooley's comment that the Board be able to insert its viewpoint early enough to respect the faculty process but not have it come to a "loggerhead" late in the process.

Provost DeHayes commented on the above discussion and stated that the Board, Faculty Senate, and administrative leadership are not very far apart in finding the right place for the Board to get a "heads up" and provide initial reaction while still keeping the shared governance in place.

Chair Rouse continued with her report by sharing the items that were recommended for approval by the full Board. These items included the advancement of the African Studies and Gender and Women's Studies from program to departmental status and the awarding of tenure for Dr. Guarav Khanna, Professor of Physics in the College of Arts and Sciences. This concludes the report of the AARSL Committee.

Chair Cook called on Christine Heenan, Chair of the University Advancement and External Affairs Committee, for a report of the meeting held on October 23.

e. University Advancement and External Affairs Committee Report

Chair Heenan reported that the committee meeting held on October 23 consisted of an update from Elizabeth Breul O'Rourke, President of the University of Rhode Island Foundation and Alumni Engagement (URIFAE). Ms. O'Rourke provided an update to the *Big Ideas. Bold Plans. The Campaign for the University of Rhode Island*. Ms. O'Rourke reported that currently \$180M was raised toward the \$250M goal.

The second item discussed was the University's national rankings and peer competitiveness. She reported that the rankings from *U.S. News and World Report* and *Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education (WSJ/TE)* are the two sources that most people look to, with the latter

considered to be less credible, but both very subjective. She shared that URI was currently ranked 170 by *U.S. News and World Report*, which is in the top 45% of all universities; top 40% of research universities. Chair Heenan reported that a concern of hers was that these numbers have not meaningfully moved over the last eight years and should be something for the Board to think about. The rankings from *WSJ/TE* ranked URI lower and in the bottom half. She added that in the category of best-valued schools, URI went from 121st to 94th, which is an impressive increase.

Chair Heenan noted that the Committee expressed an interest in understanding the rankings presented and ways in which to approach a campaign around them and suggested an additional meeting be scheduled to address this issue prior to the next scheduled meeting in January. She noted that institutional research plays a role in working with the communications office and academic leadership when thinking about strategically answering surveys and that it would be worth it to invest time into doing so.

Mr. McNally commented on the importance of peer surveys and stated that student surveys are equally important in that, “if you don’t think you’re good, you won’t be rated, so it says a lot about branding, and I think we can move the needle.”

Mr. Ryan inquired about the average student debt after graduation. Provost DeHayes replied that it is approximately \$26K—a blend of instate and out of state—at the undergraduate level.

Ms. Placencia suggested that the Board discuss and publish the statistics for job placement after graduation. Mr. Ryan mentioned that the numbers for pharmacy, engineering and nursing students should be high and asked if graduates are surveyed. Provost DeHayes replied that efforts to receive a higher response rate are made but it is sometimes difficult to obtain that information once a student has graduated. He added that he would provide the Board with that information.

Chair Heenan concluded her report by further promoting a special meeting dedicated to a deeper discussion on rankings and understanding the reasons why, when students are accepted and don’t attend, and also when faculty are offered employment and don’t accept the offer. This concludes the meeting for the University Advancement and Academic Affairs Committee.

8. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

a. State of the University

President Dooley thanked Chair Cook and provided a report on the state of the University. He emphasized to the Board that over the last several years, URI has been very transparent and open with communication and cited an example by mentioning the budget discussion during the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting held on October 23. He added that discussion was an example of shared governance and transparency to the community at large.

The President stressed that the anticipated budget will be tight and that budget reduction strategies will be part of the planning process of a budget council chaired jointly by the Provost and the Vice President for Finance and Administration which comprises students, faculty, staff, deans and a community member. He also informed the Board that any university community member may participate by observing and listening to the discussions/evaluations.

President Dooley emphasized that URI has outstanding leadership with a student senate that works very closely with administration. President Dooley also commended Anne Marie

Coleman, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources, for her good relationship with unions and collective bargaining units within URI.

President Dooley expressed his appreciation for incorporating the first Plenary Session into the meeting schedule for October 23 and acknowledged the progress made to close equity gaps, increase diversity, and provide more academic offerings regarding antiracism and diversity.

The President reported that Dr. Deborah Birx, coordinator of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, visited the Kingston campus on October 8. He stated that Dr. Birx complimented URI for its conduct during the COVID-19 pandemic. While touring the campus, Dr. Birx met a few professors and students who are conducting research on COVID-19 related projects, including a smart mask that can detect coronavirus symptoms and a saliva test being explored by pharmacy Associate Professor, Angela Slitt.

President Dooley highlighted the efforts made in regard to the testing protocol at URI. All students were tested, and the University continues to test faculty and staff at their initiative. President Dooley provided an update of the COVID-19 testing data as follows:

- URI overall positivity rate since October 4: 2%
- On-campus population (students in URI residence halls/facilities positivity rate: 1.3%
- Off-campus students total population positivity rate: 1.98%
- Greek housing positivity rate: 8.75%
- Off-campus Greek affiliate student rate: 8.42%

The President shared information regarding specific situations that required an immediate response, including the decision to issue a shelter-in-place order for the Greek Life community chapters who had high positivity rates. He commended the leadership of Greek Life and student leadership for their cooperation and support of the initiatives and difficult decisions that were made. He shared his optimism that the goal to make it to the Thanksgiving break will be met and aggressive testing and contact tracing will continue.

President Dooley shared plans for the Spring semester which included strategies for offering academics with a blend of in-person teaching, fully online teaching, and a hybrid of face-to-face and online teaching. He added that the University has encouraged synchronous formats which, for many years, have been considered best practices for online learning and continues to be a robust strategy for many students.

Additionally, the President informed the Board that the Faculty Senate voted to eliminate spring break and students will complete the semester one week early. This decision was made in an effort to minimize risks associated with travel over the break.

The topic of the current election season was noted by the President to encourage students to register and vote and that URI is working with national organizations in this regard as well as internal projects established within the university.

Other highlights were addressed by President Dooley including Fall enrollment targets that were met and exceeded and strong numbers received for the Spring semester. In addition, he noted the Day of Giving that raised over \$1.1M and the Campaign raised \$180M toward its goal.

Recognition was given by the President to many areas of the University for their hard work and dedication that included faculty, staff, Faculty Senate, custodial and health services staff. He

noted the comments made earlier in the meeting in regard to the friction between research and teaching and referred to it as a “healthy tension” for research universities, which may be due to faculty looking for a balance between scholarship and research, whether it be in the humanities, arts, engineering, etc. He also noted the increasing engagement of undergraduate scholarship in research and the increasing opportunities for internships and active off-campus learning opportunities as being an important part of the University.

This concluded President Dooley’s report. Chair Cook invited Board members to ask questions and provide comments.

Student representative, Christopher Bove, thanked President Dooley for his report and his mention of the hard work of the Student Senate. He noted that there is a perception that in recent months, senior leadership has not been listening to students and have been making decisions without getting student input nor receiving advanced warning. Those decisions relate to the proposed tuition increase, spring break cancellation, pass/fail options, direct payments for tuition assistance grants, and housing decisions. Mr. Bove inquired if the University had plans to address these concerns with students.

President Dooley thanked Mr. Bove for his question and provided information that Faculty Senate has indicated the desire to be more attentive to requesting student input on decisions concerning the academic calendar and that the calendar and grading decisions are under the purview of the Faculty Senate and are not typically decisions made by senior leadership. President Dooley turned the discussion over to Provost DeHayes and Dr. Kathy Collins to speak to Mr. Bove’s concerns.

Provost DeHayes noted that during his most recent meeting with the Student Faculty Senate, the topic of alternative grading was mentioned by Thomas McGrath, the Student Senate Academic Affairs Representative. During that meeting it was determined that a resolution for the Fall semester had yet to be received and that there had only been a resolution from last Spring. Provost DeHayes concurred with President’s Dooley’s statement that this particular item falls under the purview of the Faculty Senate and stated that he believed the Senate is not inclined to move in the direction of an alternative grading option, yet he did not want to speak for them. He noted that the Faculty Senate would welcome a meeting with Student Senate leaders to discuss this matter.

In regard to the decision to cancel spring break, it was necessary for the Faculty Senate to act during their September meeting, as they could not alter the spring semester calendar. Provost DeHayes stated that student representatives are on assignment at every Faculty Senate Committee meeting and are in the process of adding a student to the Academic Affairs Diversity Task Force.

Dr. Kathy Collins responded to the student concerns that Mr. Bove voiced. She noted that she attends Student Senate meetings in addition to providing open office hours where students can speak in the Student Senate chambers. In addition, Dr. Collins and President Dooley meet regularly with URI’s Student Senate president, Austyn Ramsey.

Dr. Collins shared her understanding that this semester is extremely hard for students, faculty, and staff and stressed that URI is very much dedicated to providing resources to address diversity, equity, inclusion, and mental health needs.

Dr. Collins also provided information about the issuance of transition assistance grants (TAG) for those students that were no longer able to live on campus. She explained that the TAG funds differed from the funds provided by the Federal Cares Act in that they went directly to the students, whereas the TAG funds were University funds that were applied to a student's outstanding Fall bill first; any remaining balance was accessible to the student.

President Dooley continued the discussion and shared that URI will continue to work hard to involve student leadership whenever appropriate while respecting shared governance and will collaborate as a partnership in making decisions.

Ms. Rouse asked President Dooley about URI's plans for Thanksgiving. President Dooley replied that most of the students will return home for Thanksgiving and complete the remainder of the semester virtually. They will return to campus in mid-January. It is anticipated that up to 1,000 students will remain on campus during the holiday/winter break either because their home is not conducive to their academic work, their home is not a safe environment, or technology is not available to them. Systems are in place including dining for those students. President Dooley added that students will begin the Spring semester beginning the last week of January, and the academic model in terms of hybrid learning will be very similar to the one used in the Fall.

Chair Cook asked Dr. Collins how the University plans to keep students focused during Halloween. Dr. Collins shared that her team would try to do alternative programming for on-campus students. Staff presence will increase during that time, and students will receive repetitive messages regarding community responsibility in terms of group/gathering size. For off-campus students living "down the line", close partnerships with town policy and managers are upheld in order to follow state guidelines. Dr. Collins also added that students found in violation of the handbook will be dealt with accordingly.

Ms. Nicolato commented that the COVID-19 numbers are increasing and inquired if there is a magic number in terms of quarantine beds filled. President Dooley explained that there is a handful of metrics in place as to how much space we have for isolation and quarantine. URI has kept many rooms vacant on campus and at nearby hotels for that reason. Total capacity numbers as well as positivity rates are carefully watched in addition to where the positivity rates are. In addition, President Dooley noted that there are 50 professionals in health services, with an additional 500 volunteers assisting with testing and contract tracing. If that core group of professionals get sick or become exhausted, that would be another indication that the University may need to take action.

Ms. Nicolato inquired about staff and faculty burnout and how URI is supporting that. President Dooley replied that the faculty is doing extraordinary work while feeling the stress of teaching a new modality. He also reported that the URI community as a whole are doing their best. In addition, senior leadership routinely encourage staff members to take advantage of available vacation and sick time in order to take a needed break.

Provost DeHayes thanked Ms. Nicolato for her question and added that some of the heightened tension mentioned earlier is due to the amount of time faculty are spending on teaching in a new modality. He also mentioned that faculty are nervous because they are being judged on both teaching and research. Provost DeHayes noted that the University has reached out to faculty to ensure them that there will be flexibility in the annual review process.

Ms. Nicolato also asked what the Board could do to show their support. President Dooley replied that a message from the Board showing support and understanding would be very well received on campus and to consult with he or Kelly Mahoney in this regard.

Ms. Rouse commented that there is concern about the post presidential election in terms of her students and faculty at Princeton University and inquired about URI's concerns in this regard. President Dooley concurred with Ms. Rouse and stated that while specific plans have yet to be formulated, he believes that Dr. Collin's team has given it some thought.

Dr. Collins commented that events have been planned in her centers in terms of processing and space; the counseling center is gearing up under the leadership of VP Rider and the emergency management staff, and a tabletop exercise involving many units on campus are planning and practicing for civil unrest.

Chair Cook thanked President Dooley for this report and commented on Mr. Bove's perspective regarding student leadership at URI. She stated that hundreds of decisions are being made during this unique and difficult time that are moving URI ahead in a healthy way. She commended URI's leadership and accomplishments and the importance of the student's perspectives and viewpoints.

9. DISCUSSION ITEM

a. Presentation of the URI Fall Enrollment Report

Prior to presenting the 2020 Fall Enrollment Report, Provost DeHayes provided information in regard to an earlier question posed by Christine Heenan regarding survey results from URI graduates. The most recent data showed that after six months post-graduation, 90% of students were either employed or enrolled in graduate school.

Provost DeHayes, with assistance from Vice Provost Dean Libutti and John Stringer, Director of Institutional Research, presented the official [URI Fall Enrollment Report](#) which is a snapshot of the University's enrollment as of October 15. The report is shared statewide and submitted nationally to the Common Data Set. The Provost reported that the total undergraduate headcount for the fall semester is 17,761, a slight increase from last year and the graduate level had a 2.5% increase. Provost DeHayes added that URI was the only higher education institution in Rhode Island that **did not** have a decline in enrollment where other institutions had decreases from about 1 ½ % to as high as 12% in their enrollment headcounts. Enrollment peaked in 2016-2018 but declined in the last two years due to a reporting artifact related to dual and concurrent enrollment of high school students who took college level classes in high school.

The Provost shared that over the last ten years, URI has worked hard to provide programs, initiatives, and student success activities such as internships and experiential learning opportunities which have helped to enhance URI's brand in the marketplace. In this regard, over the last 9-10 years URI has moved 4,000 students a year, engaged in credit-bearing, experiential learning and internships to 10,650 this past year in credit-bearing internships and other forms of experiential learning. Provost DeHayes also reported that the Governor's Workforce Board tracks the proportion of graduates from each institution that receive a degree in a "high demand, high wage sector." URI had an increasing proportion of graduates in those "high demand, high wage" sectors, with 70% being reported for last year.

Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, Dean Libutti, provided a review of statistics highlighting that URI received a record number of undergraduate applications—23,856 which was an increase of over 1,100, and a record number of gross deposits of 3,009. Mr. Libutti reported that the first-year, full-time enrollment is at 3,314, which is ahead of target and that 23% of the first-year class is comprised of historically underrepresented students.

Mr. Libutti explained the reasons for the positive enrollment data stating there was a strong community-wide effort comprised of every division of the University—from the URIFAE’s support from scholarships and amazing donors to admission decisions being released one month early, and faculty stepping up with new ways to recruit the students.

Vice Provost Libutti continued with additional enrollment statistics found in the enrollment report, thanked the Board, and welcomed their questions.

Ms. Heenan requested clarification that URI was not among the 77% of colleges and universities that did not meet their May 1 enrollment target and URI is among the 23% that did. Mr. Libutti confirmed that was correct.

Mr. Fascitelli noted that the recommendation to raise tuition by 2.5% will be voted on later in the meeting. He asked why that number is not larger due to the fact that over the last ten years enrollment has grown for both in-state and out-state students. He asked if URI is being as aggressive as possible in that regard in order to compete with other institutions. Mr. Libutti responded by saying that when many colleges with tuition rates of \$70-80K per year discount their price points by 50-60% it causes families to ask questions. He noted that due to URI’s the large population of Pell Grant and first-generation students and the current economy, that this is not the time to raise tuition by a lot and that a 2.5-3% raise is something URI can work on. Mr. Libutti further commented that one of the reasons URI invested heavily in financial aid is that students and families need help—that it is not only the price point that is seen, but it is the aid that is given.

President Dooley shared another statistic in regard to communications and promotion for URI: for students living between Virginia and Maine, not including Maine, URI is the least expensive research university, unless one chooses to attend their home state research university. This continues to be a powerful talking point for Vice Provost Libutti and the recruiting staff.

Provost DeHayes noted that 24,000 applications were received—4,000 were from Rhode Island students; 20,000 were from out of state. URI has a larger proportion of out of state students than many other universities. Tuition is set around those numbers with affordability and access for all students.

Mr. Bove asked what URI plans to do to make up for the budget shortfall with the knowledge that the majority of money is in auxiliary funds. President Dooley responded that auxiliary funds are required by law to be self-supported, and URI’s funds go beyond that by making many contributions for the well-being of the University. Refunds for housing and dining from the Spring semester were taken out of auxiliary funds. Auxiliary funds are valued and need to be protected in the best way possible. Going forward, if the general budget allows, URI will be looking for ways in which to rebuild those funds to support such things such as building repairs and future plans to build a new health counseling center and renovate the Memorial Union.

This concludes the discussion items. The Board of Trustees took a short break and returned to discuss the action items on the agenda.

10. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approval of the Revised 2021 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule [Enclosure 10a](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the Revised 2021 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule set forth in Enclosure 10a and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Sabitoni and seconded by Ms. Nicolato it was,

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the Revised 2021 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule set forth in Enclosure 10a and as recommended and presented

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

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Cecilia Rouse, Thomas Ryan, and Armand Sabitoni

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjazayeri

b. Approval of an amendment removing responsibility for the oversight of the University's Academic Strategic Plan from the charter of the University Advancement and External Affairs Committee [Enclosure 10b](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve an amendment removing responsibility for the oversight of the University's Academic Strategic Plan from the charter of the University Advancement and External Affairs Committee as set forth in Enclosure 10b and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Sabitoni and seconded by Mr. Ryan, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve an amendment removing responsibility for the oversight of the University's Academic Strategic Plan from the charter of the University Advancement and External Affairs Committee as set forth in Enclosure 10b and as recommended and presented

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjayazeri

Prior to advancing to the next action item in the agenda Mr. Sabitoni raised a question regarding the voting process for the remaining items. Is it necessary to do a voice vote for each item? Attorney Saccoccio replied that due to this meeting being virtual, a roll call must be taken. Mr. Ryan asked that it be possible to forgo a voice vote each time unless a member raises a negative vote. Attorney Saccoccio replied that it would be permitted so long as the minutes reflect a record of the members that are in favor and those who are not to comply with the Open Meetings Act. The meeting proceeded to the next action item.

c. Approval of an amendment adding responsibility for the oversight of all collective bargaining issues to the charter of the Executive Committee [Enclosure 10c](#)

Chair Cook explained that after doing research and having a discussion with the Association and Governing Board and other URI Board of Trustees members, it was found that collective bargaining issues cross many committees but typically sit at the Executive Committee level. Due to the possibility that quick decisions need to be made, the responsibility should belong to the Executive Committee rather than the Finance and Facilities Committee. Chair Cook added that in general, all actions will ultimately be presented to the full board for approval.

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve an amendment adding responsibility for the oversight of all collective bargaining issues to the charter of the Executive Committee as set forth and as recommended and presented in Enclosure 10c.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Ms. Placencia, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve an amendment adding responsibility for the oversight of all collective bargaining issues to the charter of the Executive Committee as set forth and as recommend and presented in Enclosure 10c

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjayazeri

- d. Approval of an amendment removing the review of University financial statements from the charter of the Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee and adding to the charter of the Finance and Facilities Committee the review of the University financial statements and budgets and provide committee recommendations for board approval ([Enclosure 10d](#)) ([Enclosure 10d\(i\)](#))**

Chair Cook explained the intent of this action item as follows: The Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee approves the external audit of the financial statements and the external auditors, while the Finance and Facilities Committee reviews the actual financial statements and the budgets.

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve an amendment removing the review of University financial statements from the charter of the Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee and adding to the charter of the Finance and Facilities Committee the review of the University financial statements and budgets and provide committee recommendations for board approval, as set forth in Enclosure 10d and 10d(i) and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Ms. Placencia, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve an amendment removing the review of University financial statements from the charter of the Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee and adding to the charter of the Finance and Facilities Committee the review of the University financial statements and budgets and provide committee recommendations for board approval, as set forth in Enclosure 10d and 10d(i) and as recommended and presented

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjayazeri

e. Approval of Awarding Tenure to Dr. Gaurav Khanna, Professor of Physics, College of Arts and Sciences [Enclosure 10e](#)

President Dooley spoke in regard to Dr. Khanna’s outstanding record at UMass Dartmouth, who is highly regarded as a faculty member and tremendous asset to the physics department at URI. Dr. Khanna’s tenure was discussed at yesterday’s Academic Affairs, Research and Student Life Committee meeting and approved for recommendation to the full Board.

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the awarding of tenure to Dr. Gaurav Khanna, Professor of Physics in the College of Arts and Sciences as set forth in Enclosure 10e and as recommend and presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Mr. Fogarty, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the awarding of tenure to Dr. Gaurav Khanna, Professor of Physics in the College of Arts and Sciences as set forth in Enclosure 10e and as recommend and presented

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjayazeri

f. Approval of the University of Rhode Island Total Budget Request, Tuition and Fee Rates, and Tables of Organization for FY 2022, and the Total Budget Allocations for FY 2021 [Enclosure 10f](#)

Vice President for Administration and Finance, and Linda Barrett, Director of Budget and Financial Planning gave a thorough overview of the presentation found in Enclosure 10f. This presentation was also given at yesterday’s Finance and Facilities Committee meeting where a majority of the Board members attended. Chair Cook asked the Board if there were any questions regarding the presentation. Mr. Fascitelli added that the members of the Finance and Facilities Committee approved this item for recommendation and approval to the full Board during yesterday’s committee meeting.

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the Total Budget Request, Tuition and Fee Rates, and Table of Organization for FY2022, and the Total Budget Allocations for FY2021 as set forth in Enclosure 10f and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Sabitoni and seconded by Mr. Fascitelli, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the Total Budget Request, Tuition and Fee Rates, and Table of Organization for FY2022, and the Total Budget Allocations for FY2021 as set forth in Enclosure 10f and as recommended and presented

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjayazeri

g. Approval of the University of Rhode Island Capital Improvement Plan for FY2022-2026 [Enclosure 10g](#)

Vice President Rider provided a summary on yesterday's discussion of the Capital Improvement Plan for FY2022-2026. She shared that the information found in Enclosure 10g identifies the plan and projects slated for fiscal years 2022-2026. Mr. Ryan Carrillo, Director of Planning and Real Estate Development gave an in-depth presentation entitled, [Capital Improvement Plan FY22-FY26](#).

Ms. Nicolato shared her excitement about the plans presented and stated that what brings students and parents to URI is the look, feel, and modernization of the campus.

Chair Cook encouraged Board members to go through the plan if they did not get the opportunity to do so. With no further questions, Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the University of Rhode Island Capital Improvement Plan for FY2022-2026 as set forth in Enclosure 10g and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Ms. Nicolato, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the University of Rhode Island Capital Improvement Plan for FY2022-2026 as set forth in Enclosure 10g and as recommended and presented

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjayazeri

h. Approval of the audited financial statements for the University of Rhode Island for FY ending June 30, 2020 [Enclosure 10h](#)

VP Rider was asked to provide a summary regarding the audited financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2020. She shared that the financial statements follow accrual accounting principal statements whereas the budget “really dovetails with the way the state manages its finances and is essentially cash.”

Ms. Rider introduced David DiIulis, Director of Higher Education Practices and lead partner from O’Connor and Drew. Mr. DiIulis reported that he and his team went through the required communications with the Finance and Facilities Committee members to submit the audited financial statements with the state by a deadline of September 30, which is always met. He added that an unmodified opinion and an internal control report were issued with the state and that those reports were clean, which was good news for URI. The financials that were submitted by September 30 will be reviewed by the auditor general as well as the state controller.

With no questions for Mr. DiIulis, Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the audited financial statements for the University of Rhode Island for fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 as set forth in Enclosure 10h and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Martirano and seconded by Mr. Luna, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the audited financial statements for the University of Rhode Island for fiscal year ending June 30, 2020 as set forth in Enclosure 10h and as recommended and presented

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjayazeri

i. Approval of timeline and selection process for external auditors

Chair Cook shared that during the Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee meeting held on Friday, October 23, 2020, Chair Roby Luna, recommended to the Board of Trustees that they extend the contract of external auditors, O'Connor and Drew, P.C. for one year. Since this item was thoroughly discussed during said meeting and there were no further comments or questions from the Board members, Vice President Rider thanked Mr. DiIulis, head partner at O'Connor and Drew, P.C., for his participation in today's meeting and requested he exit the meeting.

With no further discussion, Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the timeline and selection process for external auditors as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Ms. Placencia and seconded by Mr. Martirano, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the timeline and selection process for external auditors as recommended and presented

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

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Cecilia Rouse, Thomas Ryan, and Armand Sabitoni

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjazayeri

j. Approval of a resolution authorizing the University of Rhode Island to borrow money in the name of and on behalf of the Board of Trustees for emergency conditions during FY 2021 [Enclosure 10j](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve a resolution authorizing the University of Rhode Island to borrow money in the name of and on behalf of the Board of Trustees for emergency conditions during FY2021 as set forth in Enclosure 10j and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Mr. Luna, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve a resolution authorizing the University of Rhode Island to borrow money in the name of and on behalf of the Board of Trustees for emergency conditions during FY2021 as set forth in Enclosure 10j and as recommended and presented

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

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Cecilia Rouse, Thomas Ryan, and Armand Sabitoni

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjazayeri

k. Approval to advance Africana Studies and Gender and Women’s Studies from “Program” to “Departmental” status. Note: Organizational changes approved by Faculty Senate on 9/17/20 and by President Dooley. [Enclosure 10k](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the advancement of Africana Studies and Gender and Women’s Studies from “Program” to Departmental” status as set forth in Enclosure 10k and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Mr. Ryan and seconded by Mr. Luna, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the advancement of Africana Studies and Gender and Women’s Studies from “Program” to Departmental” status as set forth in Enclosure 10k and as recommended and presented

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

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Cecilia Rouse, Thomas Ryan, and Armand Sabitoni

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

ABSENT: Richard Humphrey, Vahid Ownjazayeri

Chair Cook made closing comments by thanking the staff, leadership, and the Board for their support. She announced that the 13th Annual Academic Summit is scheduled for January 21 and encouraged all Board members to attend and show support. She also commented on President Dooley's statement in regard to Board messaging in support of faculty and staff during the pandemic and would like to continue the conversation with him. Chair Cook reiterated that 77% of schools did not meet enrollment goals, but URI met their goal. Additionally, she reiterated President Dooley's statement that URI is the least expensive research university between Virginia and Maine.

11. ADJOURN

There was not an official motion to adjourn the meeting of October 24, 2020, and the meeting ended at 3:16 p.m.

The next meeting of the URI Board of Trustees is scheduled for October 24, 2020.