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**The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees  
Academic Affairs and Research Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, June 14, 2022 · 2:00 p.m. EDT**

**The University of Rhode Island  
Alumni Center – Beagle Board Room  
73 Upper College Road, Kingston, RI 02881**

**OFFICIAL MINUTES**

Committee Chair Neil Kerwin welcomed everyone to the June 14, 2022, meeting of the Academic Affairs and Research Committee of the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees. He conducted a roll call attendance and determined that a quorum was present. At 2:05 p.m., this meeting was called to order.

The Committee held a hybrid meeting. Committee members participated remotely via Webex. A recording of the meeting is available at: <https://web.uri.edu/trustees/meetings/>

The URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee members in attendance:

- Mr. Neil Kerwin, Committee Chair (remote)
- Dr. Karina Montilla Edmonds, Committee Vice Chair (remote)
- Honorable Charles J. Fogarty (remote)
- Mr. Matthew Lenz (remote)
- Dr. Bethany Jenkins (ex officio, non-voting, remote)
- Ms. Margo Cook, Board Chair (ex officio, voting, remote)
- Dr. Marc Parlange, URI President (ex officio, non-voting, remote)

The URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee members not in attendance:

- Mr. Richard Humphrey
- Ms. Susan Petrovas
- Mr. Michael McNally (ex officio, voting)

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

- Dr. Laura L. Beauvais, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (in person)
- Ms. Alyssa Boss, General Counsel (remote)
- Dr. Peter J. Snyder, Vice President, Research & Economic Development (remote)
- Dr. Sean Edmund Rogers, Interim Vice President, Community, Equity and Diversity (in person)

The University of Rhode Island staff members in attendance:

- Ms. Michelle Curreri, Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)
- Ms. Lynn Owens, Associate Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)
- Ms. Shawn Marie Simmons, Executive Assistant (remote)
- Dr. Anne Veeger, Vice Provost for Academic Faculty Initiatives (remote)

Committee Chair Kerwin read into the record the University of Rhode Island Land Acknowledgement Statement:

“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.”

**1. ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA**

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee accept the agenda for the meeting of June 14, 2022.

On a motion duly made by Charles Fogarty and seconded by Karina Montilla Edwards, it was

VOTED THAT: The URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee accept the Agenda for the meeting of June 14, 2022.

VOTE: 5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Charles Fogarty, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

## 2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Minutes of the April 21, 2022 Meeting [Enclosure 2.a.](#)

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee approve the minutes for the meeting held April 21, 2022.

On a motion duly made by Karina Edmonds and seconded by Charles Fogarty, it was

VOTED:            THAT        The URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee approve the minutes for the meeting held April 21, 2022.

VOTE:            5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS:            Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Charles Fogarty, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz

NAYS:            0

ABSTAINS:       0

## 3. REPORT OF THE CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Laura Beauvais, reported that she will continue as interim provost until the end of the calendar year. She then provided an update on the searches to fill several significant positions at URI.

- Candidates for the position of director of the Ryan Center for Neuroscience will be coming to campus later in June.
- The search for a new dean for the College of Business has been started, as Dean Ebrahimpour is stepping down, with Dr. Shaw Chen serving as interim dean.
- The search for a new dean of the University College of Academic Success, chaired by Dr. Danielle Dennis, is ongoing.
- Dr. Anne Veeger is chairing the search for a new Honors Program director.
- Finally, the dean of the College of Pharmacy, E. Paul Larrat, has notified us that he will be stepping down next year; and we are very appreciative of the long notice he is providing. A search will be upcoming.

Interim Provost Beauvais stated that the deans will have a retreat in August to discuss the ongoing new strategic planning initiatives, as well as working on enhancing URI's culture of scholarship. A subcommittee has identified areas that we will need to work on in more detail, including available academic space for scholarship and creative works, a

cost-effective model for faculty workload, and improvement of the interface between colleges. And finally, we will work with the deans on the goal of bringing the university community back together after the separations caused by COVID. General discussion followed.

#### **4. REPORT OF THE CHIEF RESEARCH OFFICER**

Dr. Peter Snyder reported that after an excellent internal search, Dr. Elin Torell has been appointed as the new director of the Coastal Institute, following in the footsteps of Dr. Judith Swift, as she retires. Dr. Torell has decades of experience as a scientist, researcher, and administrator, with a focus on global warming and coastal justice.

URI was recently notified that one of the pending American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) appropriations from the State of Rhode Island is \$70M over the next three years to grow the Blue Economy and the Build Back Better Regional Challenge (BBBRC). URI Research Foundation must provide \$35M from a successful BBBRC grant in order to receive access to the \$70M; URI will know by September if this will actually happen. It would be a transformative program going forward.

Dr. Snyder stated that at the last meeting we looked at the budget challenges in the Research Division, and he provided two documents from Hanover Associates that make up two thirds of their external audit of the Office of Sponsored Projects. There is an additional audit that he has not yet provided because it contains sensitive information, but by the next Academic Affairs and Research Committee meeting, he will present a forward plan to share for discussion and debate. Brief discussion followed.

#### **5. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

##### **a. Review enrollment management activities, outcomes, and initial enrollment projections for 2022-23 academic year**

Dr. Dean Libutti provided an enrollment update. He said that we are experiencing another record year for first-year applications, with an increase across most of the colleges. So far, gross deposits are looking good, as are out-of-state enrollments. ([Enclosure 5.a.](#))

##### **b. 2022 Legislative Report, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 16-32-2.1, Diversity efforts and progress related to student, staff and faculty recruitment and retention at URI. [Enclosure 5.b.](#)**

Dr. Sean Rogers reported to the committee that the 2022 Annual Legislative Report has been compiled and submitted by the Office of Community, Equity and Diversity on the topics of recruitment and retention of diverse faculty and students. He is working across the University to build their tools to work on diversity and inclusion.

**6. ACTION ITEMS**

- a. Review of the granting of tenure for University of Rhode Island faculty members, effective July 1, 2022, and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees. [Enclosure 6.a.](#)**

Dr. Laura Beauvais presented the list of faculty members to be ratified by the Board of Trustees for the awarding of tenure. The candidates have been thoroughly reviewed by their departments, their individual colleges, and the Office of the Provost.

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion that the Academic Affairs and Research Committee of the URI Board of Trustees recommend that the Board of Trustees approve the granting of tenure to the designated faculty members who have met the requirements for tenure at the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in [Enclosure 6.a.](#)

On a motion duly made by Karina Montilla Edmonds and seconded by Charles Fogarty, it was

**VOTED THAT:** The Academic Affairs and Research Committee of the URI Board of Trustees recommend that the Board of Trustees approve the granting of tenure to the designated faculty members who have met the requirements for tenure at the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 6.a.

**VOTE:** 5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

**YEAS:** Karina Montilla Edmonds, Charles Fogarty, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Margo Cook.

**NAYS:** 0

**ABSTAINS:**0

- b. Review of amendments to the Academic Affairs and Research Committee Charter and Calendar, and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees.**

Committee Chair Neil Kerwin

[Charter Enclosure 6.b.\(i\)](#)

[Calendar Enclosure 6.b.\(ii\)](#)

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion that the Academic Affairs and Research Committee of the URI Board of Trustees recommend that the Board of Trustees approve

amendments to the Committee Charter and Calendar, as recommended and presented in Charter Enclosure 6.b.(i) and Calendar Enclosure 6.b.(ii). Board Secretary Michelle Curreri noted that an index has been added to the charter to itemize changes over time.

On a motion duly made by Karina Edmonds and seconded by Charles Fogarty, it was

VOTED THAT: The Academic Affairs and Research Committee of the URI Board of Trustees recommends that the Board of Trustees approve amendments to the Committee Charter and Calendar, as recommended and presented in Charter Enclosure 6.b.(i) and Calendar Enclosure 6.b.(ii).

VOTE: 5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Karina Montilla Edmonds, Charles Fogarty, Margo Cook, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS:0

## 7. ADJOURN

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion to adjourn the meeting of June 14, 2022.

On a motion duly made by Charles Fogarty and seconded by Karina Edmond, it was

VOTED: THAT: The URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee adjourn the meeting of June 14, 2022.

VOTE: 5 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Karina Montilla Edmonds, Charles Fogarty, Margo Cook, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.

The next URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2022.