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Michael D. Fascitelli '78

Charles Fogarty '80

Christine Heenan

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Neil Kerwin '73

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

Thomas Ryan '75

Armand E. Sabitoni '73

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*R.I. Council on Postsecondary  
Education*

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

Bethany D. Jenkins  
*Faculty Representative*

Hannah Bachert '23  
*Student Representative*

**The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees Meeting  
Friday, June 24, 2022 • 9:00 a.m. EDT**

**The University of Rhode Island  
The Fascitelli Center for Advanced Engineering  
Room 025C, 2 East Alumni Avenue  
Kingston, RI 02881**

**OFFICIAL MINUTES**

Chair Margo Cook welcomed everyone to the June 24, 2022, meeting of the University of Rhode Island (URI) Board of Trustees and announced that the Board was meeting in person, with some members participating remotely via Webex. Public access to the meeting was available via the Facebook Live video platform.

Board Secretary Michelle Curreri conducted a roll call attendance and reported that a quorum of voting members was present. Chair Cook called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

Attendees present for this meeting included:

The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees voting members:

- Ms. Margo Cook, Chair (in person)
- Mr. Michael F. McNally, Vice Chair (in person)
- Dr. Karina Montilla Edmonds (remote)
- Mr. Michael Fascitelli (in person)
- Honorable Charles J. Fogarty, Jr. (in person)
- Ms. Christine Heenan (in person)
- Mr. Richard Humphrey (in person)
- Mr. Neil Kerwin (remote)
- Mr. Matthew D. Lenz (remote)
- Mr. David J. Martirano (in person)
- Ms. Cortney Nicolato (in person)
- Mr. Vahid Ownjazayeri (in person)
- Ms. Jay Placencia (remote)
- Mr. Thomas M. Ryan (remote)
- Mr. Armand E. Sabitoni (in person) (arrived at 10:11 a.m.)

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

- Ms. Hannah Bachert, Student Representative (in person)
- Ms. Barbara Cottam, Chair, Board of Education (in person)
- Dr. Bethany Jenkins, Faculty Representative (in person)

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

- Mr. Roby Luna
- Ms. Susan Petrovas

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

- Dr. Marc B. Parlange, President (in person)
- Dr. Laura L. Beauvais, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (in person)
- Mr. Thor Bjorn, Athletics Director (in person)
- Ms. Alyssa Boss, General Counsel (in person)
- Ms. Anne Marie Coleman, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources (in person)
- Ms. Ellen Reynolds, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs (in person)
- Ms. Abigail Rider, Vice President for Administration and Finance (in person)
- Dr. Sean Edmund Rogers, Interim Vice President, Community, Equity, Diversity (in person)
- Dr. Peter Snyder, Vice President for Research and Economic Development (in person)

The University of Rhode Island staff members in attendance:

- Ms. Linda Acciaro, Interim Executive Director for External Relations and Communications (in person)
- Ms. Chelsea Berry, Communications Specialist, President's Office (in person)
- Mr. Jeff Cabral, URIFAE Chief Financial Officer and Vice President for Development (in person)
- Mr. Ryan Carrillo, Director, Planning and Real Estate Development (in person)
- Ms. Robin Cawley, Legal Assistant, Office of the General Counsel (in person)
- Ms. Michelle Curreri, Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)
- Mr. Carlos Lopez Estrada, Director, Legislative and Government Relations (in person)
- Mr. Bahram Nassersharif, Faculty Senate Vice President (in person)
- Ms. Lynn Owens, Associate Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)
- Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Dean, College of Nursing (in person)

Chair Cook 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

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees accept the Agenda for the meeting of June 24, 2022.

On a motion duly made by David Martirano and seconded by Vahid Ownjazayeri, it was

VOTED:                    THAT                    The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees accept the agenda for the meeting of June 24, 2022.

VOTE:                    14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS:                    Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS:                    0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

## 2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the April 22, 2022 Meeting as set forth in [Enclosure 2.a](#).

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

VOTED:                    THAT                    The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the April 22, 2022 Meeting, as set forth in Enclosure 2.a.

VOTE:                    14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS:                    Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael

McNally, Courtney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

### 3. REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE CHAIRS

#### a. Academic Affairs and Research Committee Report

##### (i) Update – June 14, 2022 Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Neil Kerwin provided a report on discussions had and action taken during the June 14, 2022 meeting of the Committee. Interim Provost Beauvais had shared with the Committee an update on key searches that are underway and discussed ongoing new strategic planning initiatives. Dean Libutti had shared with the Committee an enrollment update highlighting another record year for first-year applications. The Committee heard a report from the Chief Research Officer, Dr. Peter Snyder which included an update on searches in his area and the possible significant state investment to grow the Blue Economy. Dr. Snyder discussed the critical nature of compliance work within the research division and the need to shore up research infrastructure staffing to provide greater support for faculty researchers.

Dr. Snyder advised the Board that a thorough review of staffing efforts is underway, using external audits as guideposts; a detailed plan will be ready in September 2022 that will recommend enhanced support in pre-award and post-award efforts in offices of sponsored projects, sponsored cost accounting, research development, and seated out in all the colleges.

Board members discussed with Dr. Snyder the work of the Coastal Institute and the Coastal Resource Center.

Committee Chair Kerwin recognized Dr. Sean Rogers in his new role as Interim Vice President, Community, Equity and Diversity.

- (ii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of the granting of tenure for University of Rhode Island faculty members effective July 1, 2022.  
[Enclosure 3.a.\(ii\)](#)

Committee Chair Kerwin reported that the Committee reviewed this item during its June 14 meeting and recommended favorable action by the Board. He called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the granting of tenure, effective July 1, 2022, to the designated faculty members who have met the requirements for tenure at the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.a.(ii).

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

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the granting of tenure, effective July 1, 2022, to the designated faculty members who have met the requirements for tenure at the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.a.(ii).

VOTE: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

(iii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of amendments to the Academic Affairs and Research Committee Charter and Calendar.  
[Enclosure 3.a.\(iii\) Academic Affairs and Research Committee Charter](#)  
[Enclosure 3.a.\(iii\) Academic Affairs and Research Committee Calendar](#)

Committee Chair Kerwin reported that the Committee reviewed this item during its June 14 meeting and recommended favorable action by the Board. He called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve amendments to the Academic Affairs and Research Committee Charter and Calendar, as recommended and presented in Enclosures 3.a.(iii).

On a motion made by Karina Montilla Edmonds and seconded by Matthew Lenz, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve amendments to the Academic Affairs and Research Committee Charter and Calendar, as recommended and presented in Enclosures 3.a.(iii).

VOTE: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael

McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

b. Executive Committee Report

(i) Update – June 23, 2022 Committee Meeting

Chair Cook provided a report on discussions had and action taken during the June 23, 2022 meeting of the Committee. Assistant Vice President Anne Marie Coleman reviewed with Committee members the key components of the tentative collective bargaining agreements for three non-classified bargaining units in executive session. Committee members discussed the need to remain competitive with peer institutions in terms of salaries for tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty.

(ii) ACTION ITEM: Ratification of the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

Chair Cook reported that the Committee recommended favorable action by the Board. She called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees ratify the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

On a motion made by Jay Placencia and seconded by David Martirano, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees ratify the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

VOTE: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

- (iii) ACTION ITEM: Ratification of the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Professional Staff Association (PSA/NEA).

Chair Cook reported that the Committee recommended favorable action by the Board. She called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees ratify the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Professional Staff Association (PSA/NEA).

On a motion made by Cortney Nicolato and seconded by Vahid Ownjazayeri, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees ratify the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Professional Staff Association (PSA/NEA).

VOTE: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

- (iv) ACTION ITEM: Ratification of the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Professional/Technical Administrative Association (PTAA).

Chair Cook reported that the Committee recommended favorable action by the Board. She called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees ratify the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Professional/Technical Administrative Association (PTAA).

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

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees ratify the tentative collective bargaining agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the URI Professional/Technical Administrative Association (PTAA).

VOTE: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

(v) ACTION ITEM: Approval of amendments to the Executive Committee Charter and its Calendars.  
[Enclosure 3.b.\(v\) Executive Committee Charter](#)  
[Enclosure 3.b.\(v\) Executive Committee Calendar](#)  
[Enclosure 3.b.\(v\) Compensation Subcommittee Calendar](#)

Chair Cook reported that the Committee reviewed this item at its June 23 meeting and recommended favorable action by the Board. She called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve amendments to the Committee Charter and Calendars, as recommended and presented in Enclosures 3.b.(v).

On a motion made by Jay Placencia and seconded by Neil Kerwin, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve amendments to the Committee Charter and Calendars, as recommended and presented in Enclosures 3.b.(v).

VOTE: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.



NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

c. Finance and Facilities Committee Report

(i) Update – June 14, 2022 Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Michael Fascitelli provided a report on discussions had and action taken during the June 14, 2022 meeting of the Committee. He stated that since the June 14, 2022 Committee meeting, the General Assembly has taken action on the University's budget request.

The Committee discussed the auditing process and heard from representatives of URI's new auditing firm, CliftonLarsenAllen LLP. The Committee also reviewed and voted to recommend for approval the University's Capital Improvement Plan, which includes the addition of the Brookside II residence hall. The Committee discussed the current general obligation bond strategy.

During the Committee meeting, members recommended that the Board approve two resolutions authorizing the borrowing in connection with the issuance of Rhode Island Health and Education Building Corporation Higher Education Facility Revenue Bonds for the Utility Infrastructure Upgrade Phase 2 Project and the Facilities Service Sector Upgrade Project, pending enactment of the budget. These items have been deferred to the September meeting, as the budget has yet to be enacted and signed into law at the time of this meeting.

(ii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of the University of Rhode Island Capital Improvement Plan FY2024-2028. [Enclosure 3.c.\(ii\)](#)

Committee Chair Fascitelli called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the University of Rhode Island Capital Improvement Plan for FY2024-2028, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.c.(ii).

On a motion made by David Martirano and seconded by Thomas Ryan, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the University of Rhode Island Capital Improvement Plan for FY2024-2028, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.c.(ii).

VOTE: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

- (iii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of a Lease Agreement between the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees and the Independence Square Foundation for rental of space at 500 Prospect Street, Pawtucket, RI for URI's Department of Communicative Disorders. [Enclosure 3.c.\(iii\)](#)

Committee Chair Fascitelli reported that the Committee reviewed this item at its June 14 meeting and recommended favorable action by the Board. He called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the Lease Agreement and authorize President Marc B. Parlange to execute the Lease Agreement with the Independence Square Foundation for space at 500 Prospect Street, Pawtucket as a duly authorized agent, pursuant to the Approved Signature Authority of the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.c.(iii).

On a motion made by Neil Kerwin and seconded by Jay Placencia and Christine Heenan, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the Lease Agreement and authorize President Marc B. Parlange to execute the Lease Agreement with the Independence Square Foundation for space at 500 Prospect Street, Pawtucket as a duly authorized agent, pursuant to the Approved Signature Authority of the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.c.(iii).

VOTE: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael

McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

- (iv) **ACTION ITEM:** Approval of an Administrative Subdivision to merge six separately assessed lots, Assessor's Plat N-C/Lots 6, 6A, 6B, 6C, 7, 8 at the Narragansett Bay Campus into a single parcel and to update the Ownership Name to the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees.  
[Enclosure 3.c.\(iv\)](#)

Committee Chair Fascitelli reported that the Committee reviewed this item during its June 14 meeting and recommended favorable action by the Board. He called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the Administrative Subdivision of Assessor's Plat N-C Lots 6, 6A, 6B, 6C, 7 and 8 in the Town of Narragansett and the recording of the updated ownership and authorize President Marc B. Parlange to execute the Application for an Administrative Subdivision as well as any other required documents for the Town of Narragansett as a duly authorized agent, pursuant to the Approved Signature Authority of the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.c.(iv).

On a motion made by Matthew Lenz and seconded by Cortney Nicolato and Karina Montilla Edmonds, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the Administrative Subdivision of Assessor's Plat N-C Lots 6, 6A, 6B, 6C, 7 and 8 in the Town of Narragansett and the recording of the updated ownership and authorize President Marc B. Parlange to execute the Application for an Administrative Subdivision as well as any other required documents for the Town of Narragansett as a duly authorized agent, pursuant to the Approved Signature Authority of the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.c.(iv).

VOTE: 14 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael

McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board member Armand Sabitoni was not present for the vote.

d. Governance Committee Report

(i) Update – June 17, 2022 Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Cortney Nicolato provided a report on discussions had and action taken during the June 17, 2022 meeting of the Committee. She thanked all involved in advancing Board management legislation considered during this year’s legislative session. Committee Chair Nicolato reviewed the key changes to the Board’s enabling legislation approved by the General Assembly and awaiting signature by the Governor, including adding the President as an ex-officio non-voting member of the Board, reducing the quorum to a simple majority, and the addition of language on the board member appointment and removal process. She spoke about the changes to the Open Meetings Act enacted earlier this year which allow the Board to meet remotely. She discussed the establishment of remote meeting protocols to ensure transparency and the Board’s “best in class” standard.

Committee Chair Nicolato noted that the Committee made final plans for retreat activities, including the Board self-assessment, the setting of goals for the coming year, and increased Board engagement and learning opportunities.

Board members expressed their appreciation to Committee Chair Nicolato and Board Secretary Michelle Curreri for the time and effort put into planning the optional interactive campus experience held on Thursday evening. Board members also noted how beneficial it was to interact with student ambassadors while learning about points of interest on the Kingston campus.

(ii) ACTION ITEM: Approval of the URI Board of Trustees Policy on Presidential Performance Review  
[Enclosure 3.d.\(ii\)](#)

Committee Chair Nicolato reported that the Committee reviewed this item during its June 17 meeting and recommended favorable action by the Board. She called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the URI Board of Trustees Policy on Presidential Performance Review, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.d.(ii).

On a motion made by Christine Heenan and seconded by Charles Fogarty, it was

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the URI Board of Trustees Policy on Presidential Performance Review, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.d.(ii).

VOTE: 12 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Karina Montilla Edmonds, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board members Fascitelli, Martirano and Sabitoni were not present for the vote.

e. Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee Report

(i) Update – June 7, 2022 Committee Meeting

Committee Vice Chair Karina Montilla Edmonds provided a report on discussions had during the June 7, 2022 meeting of the Committee. She noted that the Committee was introduced to the new auditors from CliftonLarsonAllen LLP, who will prepare audited financial statements for the University. The Committee heard from Kara Larsen, Assistant Vice President, Enterprise Risk Management, who gave an overview of the Environmental Health and Safety department. She introduced its team members and reviewed activity within the department. Committee Vice Chair Edmonds noted that the Committee discussed changes to its calendar to more accurately reflect duties outlined in the Committee charter. She noted that the Committee heard from the Chief Information Officer who reported on ongoing enhancements and optimization to the University's security program in executive session.

f. Student Life and Athletics Committee Report

(i) Update – June 14, 2022 Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Thomas Ryan provided a report on discussions had during the June 23, 2022 meeting of the Committee. The Committee heard from Athletics Director Bjorn and two student athletes who reported on year-end metrics and key performance indicators. They reviewed the demographic profile of URI's athletes, including academic progress of student athletes, compliance with applicable regulations, and success in team and individual competition. Athletics Director Bjorn discussed the department financials and provided an update on the capital needs of the athletics programs.

Committee Chair Ryan called attention to the Committee's discussion on the new National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) policy on Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) and the significant impact on URI's Athletics Department. He recommended that the Board discuss this topic at an upcoming meeting to ensure that all Board members have a sound understanding of the policy and its impact on the institution and the student athletes.

The Committee heard from Interim Vice President Ellen Reynolds on the high student satisfaction ratings received regarding Health Services and its utilization. Interim Vice President Reynolds briefed the committee members on the University's Talent Development (TD) program available to students in Rhode Island who do not meet traditional admission criteria. She reported that there are currently 996 TD scholars and shared some success stories. Board members discussed the significant opportunity to highlight and leverage this program, which serves as a national model for success.

g. University Advancement and External Affairs (UAEA) Committee Report

(i) Update – June 17, 2022 Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Christine Heenan provided a report on discussions had during the June 17, 2022 meeting of the Committee. The Committee heard from Directors Lopez Estrada and Burgess regarding 2022 legislative successes, the budget process, plans to advance remaining legislative priorities, and efforts at the federal level to raise the profile and priorities of URI. Committee Chair Heenan noted that Jeff Cabral, Vice President of the URI Foundation & Alumni Engagement, provided an update report on fundraising efforts, including gifts totaling \$235M as of June 16, 2022.

Committee Chair Heenan announced the addition of a new Vice President for Communications and Marketing, Matthew McDonald, who will join the University on August 1, 2022. President Parlange and Board members thanked Linda Acciaro for her service to the University.

#### **4. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

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

- a. Discussion regarding President Parlange's annual review pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5(a)(1).
- b. Discussion regarding collective bargaining pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5(a)(2) with the following bargaining units: AAUP (Full-time Faculty), Professional Staff Association (PSA), Professional and Technical Administrative Association (PTAA), Marine Professional Association (MPA), URI Physicians' Association, and Graduate Assistants United (GAU).

President Parlange was notified in writing that his annual review would be conducted in Executive Session.



YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Richard Humphrey, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Board members Montilla Edmonds, Placencia and Ryan were not present for the vote.

## 5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

### a. 2022 Annual Legislative Report [Enclosure 5.a.](#)

Dr. Sean Edmund Rogers, Interim Vice President, Community, Equity and Diversity, made a brief presentation on the 2022 Annual Legislative Report, which was submitted to the Board members on May 1, 2022. Dr. Rogers provided the following highlights of the report and responded to questions from Board members:

- The work of the Gender and Women's Studies Department and the Africana Studies Department.
- New positions in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion department, including assistant deans of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion in each of the colleges.
- High-profile departures of underrepresented minority leaders and faculty across campus.
- URI's analysis shows that, from 2012-2021, the percentages of our faculty of color and underrepresented minority students are on upward trends while the percent of our staff of color has remained relatively flat.
- Talent Development continues to be a success in terms of attracting, retaining, and supporting our scholars who participate in the program. There is significant opportunity to highlight and leverage this program, which serves as a national model for success.
- Improving diversity and morale amongst staff will require a multi-pronged approach, which should include implementing stronger professional development programs and opportunities for career exploration and growth.

Dr. Rogers concluded by saying that URI is making a strong effort to create a community and climate where people feel comfortable working, living, and learning in it.

Chair Cook encouraged continued conversation on this important effort to change the complexion of the University community.

### b. Campus Climate Survey Update

Dr. Sean Edmund Rogers, Interim Vice President, Community, Equity and Diversity, made a presentation on the Campus Climate Survey, a follow-up to the November 2021 presentation to the Board on the survey results. He reviewed the data of the report and facilitated a discussion



using the data as a starting point for action, initiatives and strategy to move URI forward. He spoke of the survey's background, execution, and analysis, and pointed to the University's website entitled, "Campus Climate Survey" (<https://web.uri.edu/climate-survey/>).

Dr. Rogers reviewed the findings of the survey in context and with implications for practice, highlighting the importance of response rate (URI's response rate was 22%). He reported that college and division-level data analysis is complete; the information and results are being prepared for presentation to the college/division leaders who will include the results into unit-level strategic plans and operations. He listed takeaways of the survey, including:

- campus climate at URI is more positive than not
- certain groups experience URI differently (worse) than others
- managing the student experience is key
- leverage organizational best practices to enhance URI as a workplace

Board members discussed with staff members the safety features on campus as well as the importance of diversity of thought – creating a community that welcomes differences of opinion. The group discussed the need to increase education and awareness of resources available for conflict resolution, including the Affirmative Action office (focused on compliance issues), the campus ombudsman's office, and the bias resource team.

Chair Cook thanked Dr. Rogers for his presentation and the work that he is doing. She invited him to report back to the Board with next steps and solutions.

The Board took a brief break at 12:37 p.m., returning to open session at 12:44 p.m.

As Chair Cook introduced the President's budget presentation, she noted that it is a multi-year process to help State officials recognize and understand the importance of URI to Rhode Island. She noted that this was a strong first step, with positive attention from the State. She asserted that there is more work to do; and with everyone working together, we can accomplish great things for the University and the State.

## **6. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

### **a. Budget Update**

President Parlange's Budget Update Presentation can be found [here](#). The President reviewed where the University stands with the latest state and federal allocations and recognized the positive results this year. He thanked all who supported the University in its efforts to increase state and federal funding and to build a strong partnership with Rhode Island. He highlighted the importance of investing in the Blue Economy, the sustainable use of ocean resources, and creating opportunities to transform the economy and the vibrancy of Rhode Island. URI has been in intense discussions about growing the Narragansett Bay Campus as the hub for the Rhode Island Blue Economy.

Funding approved by the Rhode Island General Assembly includes:

- \$140M: RI Capital Plan (RICAP) funding/RI state surplus
  - \$16M: Fine Arts building shortfall
  - \$12.5M: Narragansett Bay Campus (NBC) Dock shortfall
  - \$25M: NBC Phase II (Ocean Engineering)
  - \$86.5M: Capital projects
- \$91.7M: Operating budget (2021 request approved)
- \$7M: ARPA matching funds for Build Back Better Regional Challenge Grant
- \$100M: General Obligation Bond for NBC Phase II
- \$384M: Kushner authorizations
  - \$15.4M: Utility Infrastructure Phase II project
  - \$13M: Service Sector project
  - \$356M: Brookside II residence hall (includes debt service)

URI secured nearly \$20M in federal earmarks to support Blue Economy research, including \$1.5M for the new BlueTech Innovation Center at NBC.

President Parlange highlighted important efforts ahead, including working in collaboration with state officials, industry leaders and philanthropic groups, building a foundation for long-term investment in URI, engaging deans and the Leadership Council on priorities, making an honest assessment to determine the University's true operating needs, and preparing for the bond campaign.

President Parlange reviewed the successful legislative updates passed during this session of the General Assembly concerning the University of Rhode Island, including permanent remote board meetings, increased purchasing authority (pending the Governor's signature), and the establishment of best practices for the composition of the Board of Trustees, quorum limits and membership (pending the Governor's signature).

## **7. BOARD RETREAT**

- a. Opening Remarks
  - Margo Cook, Chair

Chair Cook introduced the Board's self-assessment portion of the retreat, noting that last year the Board laid out what is expected of Board members. She said that the URI Board of Trustees is functioning in a positive way and has developed great practices. In an effort to improve on success, she encouraged honest discussion on what is working and not working, with focus on how the Board can continue to support the University.

- b. Board Self-Assessment and Feedback
  - Cortney Nicolato, Governance Committee Chair

Board member Cortney Nicolato thanked Board members for completing the self-assessment exercise and shared highlights and comments made. Many Board members noted that they take their role as a Board member very seriously. Significant contributions included supporting the President in his transition and supporting legislative efforts at the State House. Areas of opportunity and stimulation included being informed Board members and vocal ambassadors of the University, continued involvement in strategic planning efforts, student interaction, being more engaged, learning about the University, and participating in campus events.

Goals identified in the self-assessment exercise included increasing support of diversity, equity and inclusion efforts at the University and actively advancing the strategic plan, learning more about opportunities to grow as a trustee, connecting with advisory boards and the URI Foundation, ensuring priorities are being aligned.

Areas of opportunity included engagement and philanthropy, creating metrics to identify top areas of focus, working to meet objectives, and learning more insights about the trends in higher education. Board members supported increased connection with URI's colleges, advisory boards, and foundations so the Board is seen as an important part of the University and to make sure that priorities are being aligned and success is measured in the same fashion. It was suggested that a calendar of events be shared with Board members to encourage and increase participation in University events. Board member Nicolato added that she will meet with URI Foundation & Alumni Engagement President O'Rourke to discuss opportunities for better engagement and philanthropy, for presentation at an upcoming Board meeting.

Regarding Board structure and governance, Trustee Nicolato asked if there is anything that can be done better or thought about differently. Chair Cook noted that it would be helpful if an executive summary were prepared for all action items, to provide context at a summary level including implications of the recommended action, with details available in an appendix.

Board members discussed the benefits of holding Committee meetings in advance of the Board meetings. There was further discussion about the amount of time spent on process rather than strategic discussions on important topics. The use of a consent agenda was considered to allow more time for substantive discussion. Board members talked about the need for a plan so the Board can support the strategic priorities of the University.

Chair Cook discussed the possibility of creating a Research Committee in place of the University Advancement and External Affairs (UAEA) Committee. She suggested that substantive discussions about raising revenue and legislative and governmental relations can be incorporated into the Board meetings. The purpose of the Research Committee would be to raise up the importance of research at the University, with a focus on excellence in research and to address the main campus master planning in terms of research needs.

Board member Kerwin agreed that it makes strategic sense to create a Research Committee at URI. He stressed the importance of crosswalks between the new committee's charter and the priorities of other standing committees. He noted that as the President finalizes the University's research program it is critical that we realize the ability to translate that plan into the (economic development) benefits that will accrue to Rhode Island. He added that the creation of a Research

Committee would allow the Board to build in routine reports from the Research Foundation on how their work is supporting the larger research objectives of the University.

UAEA Committee Chair Heenan noted that the UAEA Committee was created to assign board-level focus on the capital campaign, reputational opportunities through the campaign, the recruitment of a new leader, and to harness relationships with the General Assembly. She thinks that the Committee has done that in addition to recruiting and hiring a new vice president for marketing and communications. The UAEA Committee has never brought action to the Board. She noted for the record that the Board is not de-emphasizing the activities of advancement or external affairs; those remain important as a board-level focus.

Board member Hannah Bachert suggested that members of the Student Senate be invited to speak to the Student Life and Athletics Committee about areas of interest and concern from the students' perspective. President Parlange added that it would be good to hear from the multicultural student organizations and sporting clubs that do not necessarily get represented by the Student Senate. Chair Cook agreed that the Board should interact with students at every meeting (Committee and full board) and in less formal environments.

Board member Nicolato stated that the Governance Committee will frame a goal around long-term planning and engaging students in the process. She inquired about creating a deeper connection with URI's colleges, the URI Foundation & Alumni Engagement, and the URI Research Foundation to create pipelines for interaction and opportunity, priority alignment, and better collaboration. Board members discussed having the colleges' deans present to the Board at its meetings to report on their priorities and activity and to gain a deeper knowledge of what is happening at URI. Trustees suggested that the Board take advantage of campus-wide social events to interact with the foundation boards and advisory committees and that the Board look to best practices of other university boards.

Board members discussed board succession, specifically the appointment and reappointment process and the timeline for action, given the expected changes to the Board's enabling legislation (pending the Governor's signature). Chair Cook asked Director Lopez Estrada to follow up and clarify the reappointment and confirmation process for board members.

Trustee Nicolato concluded this portion of the Board retreat by thanking all for their thoughtful contributions and perspective.

- c. Overview of Strategic Plan [Enclosure 7.c.](#)  
- Marc Parlange, President

President Parlange presented an "Overview of the Strategic Plan" as shown [here](#). He thanked members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee for all their hard work on this endeavor. He reported that the University concluded a productive series of community forums and meetings, collecting insight and feedback from stakeholders across our campuses and in the community on the direction of our 10-year strategic plan. Over 500 pages of feedback and notes were collected and distilled into four overarching themes, [found here](#), that will provide the structure and framework for the next phase of the planning process.

He highlighted the last sentence of the University's new mission statement about the University's inclusive environment for researchers, teachers, learners, and community members, which is infused throughout the entire University community. The President spoke about the newly created foundational values of the University (formally known as cornerstone values), following input from various stakeholder groups.

Board members gathered in small groups to discuss each of the four themes of the Strategic Plan, joined by members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

*Theme 1: Achieving Bold Impacts: Local to Global. Solving world and regional problems through scholarly work and learning.*

Board members Heenan, Fogarty and Jenkins joined Vice President Rider and Bahram Nassersharif to discuss Theme 1.

The group reported on the outcome of their discussion. Trustee Heenan noted that in communicating this theme, URI should not lose sight of its global reach, particularly in terms of research. The group suggested making the fifth bullet the first bullet and end with "deep impact". What was meant by "emphasis on public scholarship" was not fields of scholarship per se, but rather publicly communicating the research distinction and value of URI to the State. The group suggested the following language: "developing a research-intensive institution with broad and deep impacts, communicated widely." She explained that the group did not see the first bullet reflecting the kind of choice-making that guides strategic planning and offered suggestions.

*Theme 2: URI: Engine and Catalyst. Creating broad and sustaining societal and economic impacts.*

Board members Nicolato, Ownjazayeri, Sabitoni and Martirano joined Athletics Director Bjorn and Interim Vice President Rogers to discuss Theme 2.

Trustee Nicolato shared the group's suggestions on creating an early sense of belonging at URI and doing a better job connecting to areas outside of Kingston. The group suggested defining what the community is as referenced in Bullet 1. The group discussed the importance of career development and management, and the importance of building a pipeline of job opportunities for graduates to stay in Rhode Island and contribute to its economy. Other points included fostering and elevating entrepreneurship and relationships, leveraging athletics to connect better with the community, and bringing community events to URI.

*Theme 3: A Vibrant Integrated University. Fostering a strong connected community energized by its work and learning.*

Board Chair Cook and Vice Chair McNally joined Dean Wolfe, Interim Vice President Reynolds and Interim Director Acciaro to discuss Theme 3.

Vice Chair McNally noted that this theme is about creating a cohesive university community, which the group thought was aspirational. However, there are reasons why URI is not there now, including morale issues, no incentive pay for high performers, limited development plans, and work-life balance issues. The group noted that people cannot afford to live in this community and suggested that URI come up with a long-term affordable housing plan for faculty, staff, and graduate students. The group also discussed flexible schedules, evaluation of supervisors, development plans, and fair and equitable treatment of all. Chair Cook would like to see a long-term real estate plan that would bring URI to a vibrant, integrated university.

*Theme 4: A Thriving Institution. Developing a high-performing, fiscally-sound, and agile organization.*

Board members Bachert and Fascitelli joined President Parlange, General Counsel Boss, Interim Provost Beauvais, and Assistant Vice President Coleman to discuss Theme 4. Trustee Bachert noted that the group stressed the need for key performance indicators to clearly define the bullet points. Interim Provost Beauvais added that over the next few months actions and strategies will be added to the themes. The group discussed the value of expanding research beyond the sciences to include the humanities. The group stressed the importance of building pride and integrating with the outside community, creating an urban footprint, offering unique and innovative academic and research programs to engage the urban community. The group suggested that the Plan could better define the meaning of “exceptional effectiveness” and that URI should expand opportunities for engagement to increase a sense of belonging on campus. Interim Provost Beauvais added that the group stressed the importance of seeking alternate sources of revenue.

Board members Lenz, Kerwin and Placencia also discussed Theme 4. Trustee Placencia noted the group’s suggestions, including having more streamlined and efficient communication and collaboration between the numerous advisory boards, connecting with high-profile business leaders, and expanding relationships throughout the country. The group recommended more streamlined fundraising and resource management to include people and data and prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion in everything at URI. Trustee Kerwin suggested considering alumni as beneficial human capital. He stressed the importance of a plan that has clear direction with a lot of specific objectives that can be distributed around the campus and will bring about a sense of cohesion and direction.

President Parlange read the draft Vision Statement into the record: “To be a leading global research university that drives positive social and economic change by attracting non-profits, government, and industry that want to work with our faculty and students, collaborate on research, hire our graduates, and ultimately invest in the state of Rhode Island.”

President Parlange thanked the Board of Trustees for their thoughts and guidance on the themes, which will feed into the implementation stages of the Strategic Plan. He reported that over the course of the next few months URI will create committees that will work on specific objectives, goals, measures for success, and methods for execution on the four themes, culminating in a cohesive, 10-year plan that will serve as a guiding document for decision making going forward.

**8. CLOSING REMARKS**

- Margo Cook, Chair

Chair Cook thanked all participants and stated that the Board looks forward to seeing what the Strategic Plan looks like in September 2022. She said it was a great collaborative effort.

**9. ADJOURN**

Chair Cook called for a motion to adjourn.

On a motion duly made by David Martirano and seconded by Jay Placencia, it was

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

VOTE: 12 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Margo Cook, Michael Fascitelli, Charles Fogarty, Christine Heenan, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Cortney Nicolato, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Jay Placencia, Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

At 3:05 p.m. this meeting ended.

**The next URI Board of Trustees Meeting is scheduled for September 23, 2022.**