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Mayrai Gindy  
*Faculty Representative*

Christopher Bove '23  
*Student Representative*

**The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Friday, September 24, 2021 • 9:00 a.m. EDT**  
**Rhode Island Nursing Education Center, 350 Eddy Street - Room 305**  
**Providence, Rhode Island 02903**

**MINUTES**

Chair Margo Cook welcomed everyone to the September 24, 2021, meeting of the University of Rhode Island (URI) Board of Trustees. General Counsel Alyssa Boss conducted a roll call attendance and confirmed that a quorum of voting members was present in person. At 9:09 a.m., the meeting was called to order.

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 (remote)
- Honorable Charles J. Fogarty, Jr. (in person)
- Ms. Christine M. Heenan (in person)
- Mr. Neil Kerwin (in person)
- Mr. Matthew D. Lenz (in person)
- Mr. Roby Luna (in person)
- Mr. David J. Martirano (in person)
- Ms. Cortney Nicolato (in person)
- Mr. Vahid Ownjazayeri (in person)
- Ms. Susan Petrovas (in person)
- Ms. Jay Placencia (in person)
- Mr. Thomas M. Ryan (in person)
- Mr. Armand E. Sabitoni (in person)

Absent: Mr. Richard Humphrey

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

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

The University of Rhode Island Senior Leadership members:

- Dr. Marc B. Parlange, President (in person)
- Dr. Mary Grace Almandrez, Associate Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer (remote)
- Dr. Laura L. Beauvais, Interim Provost (in person)
- Ms. Alyssa Boss, General Counsel (in person)
- Ms. Anne Marie Coleman, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources (in person)
- Dr. Kathy Collins, Vice President for Student Affairs (in person)
- Ms. Michelle Curreri, Chief of Staff and Board Secretary (in person)
- Dr. Donald H. DeHayes, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (in person)
- Dr. Karlis Kaugars, Chief Information Officer (in person)
- Ms. Lil Breul O'Rourke, President, URI Foundation and Alumni Engagement (in person)
- Ms. Abigail Rider, Vice President for Administration and Finance (in person)

The University of Rhode Island staff members:

- Mr. Karl Calvo, Assistant Vice President, Facilities (remote)
- Mr. Ryan Carrillo, Director, Planning and Real Estate Dev. (remote)
- Ms. Robin Cawley, Executive Assistant II (in person)
- Ms. Cheryl Hinkson, Associate Director, Budget and Financial Planning (remote)
- Ms. Lynn Owens, Associate Secretary (in person)
- Ms. Kelly Slocum, Assistant Director, Budget and Financial Planning (remote)

## 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 September 24, 2021.

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

VOTED:            THAT            The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees accept  
the agenda for the meeting of September 24, 2021.

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

## 2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes of the June 24, 2021 Retreat Meeting [Enclosure 2.a.](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the Board's June 24, 2021 Retreat Meeting, as set forth in Enclosure 2a.

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

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the Board's June 24, 2021 Retreat Meeting, as set forth in Enclosure 2a.

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

b. Minutes of the June 25, 2021 Meeting [Enclosure 2.b.](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the Board's June 25, 2021 Meeting, as set forth in Enclosure 2b.

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

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the Board's June 25, 2021 Meeting, as set forth in Enclosure 2b.

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

in the negative.

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

### 3. OPEN FORUM

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

### 4. REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE CHAIRS

#### a. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE

- **Update Report – September 23, 2021 Committee Meeting**

Committee Chair Neil Kerwin provided an update report on discussion and action at the September 23, 2021 Committee meeting. He reported that the Chief Academic Officer, Provost Donald DeHayes, reviewed fall enrollment. In general, while enrollment looks strong, there are a couple of areas facing some challenge, including in-state full-time and part-time enrollment. URI received 25,000 applications, its highest ever, with in-state applications lower and out-of-state higher. He noted that New England is seeing a demographic decline in high school graduates, similar to forty percent of the country, adding that URI is getting a larger share of a shrinking pool in a very competitive market. URI is looking to expand its pool of students with graduate and international students.

Responding to an inquiry from Board member Edmonds, Provost DeHayes noted that the ethnic makeup of graduating classes is changing. Out to 2030, URI is preparing for a significant increase in Latinx students.

During the committee meeting, the Provost reviewed actions to implement the anti-black racism initiative on campus, including a number of faculty and staff positions that have been funded and put in place, and the programming that has been put in place for the same purpose. He noted that URI will begin the reaccreditation process in the coming months and that will involve a considerable amount of work.

Committee Chair Kerwin reported that the Committee heard from Provost DeHayes, Vice Provost Ann Veeger, and Assistant Vice President Ellen Reynolds about the challenges faced during COVID, including system actions taken, processes in place, and success at the moment in terms of keeping control of COVID on campus. He reported on universal masking on campus, a

vaccination rate of about 95% (clarification: 94% reported during the Committee meeting) amongst the undergraduate student body, and a low 0.88% positivity rate.

Committee Chair Kerwin stated that Dr. Peter Snyder, Vice President for Research and Economic Development, reported on URI's research program, noting considerable improvements in research funding, with a goal of \$125 million by FY2024. Dr. Snyder mentioned that for every one dollar, the state realizes 3.5 dollars in return in terms of employment and benefits. Dr. Snyder gave the Committee an overview of operating areas under his department, with heavy influence on available software. He noted the contributions the program and the University make to small business development, including providing advice on starting a business and business operations.

Committee Chair Kerwin shared that Provost DeHayes introduced Dr. Laura Beauvais, who will serve as Interim Provost beginning on October 1. Interim Provost Beauvais reported to the Committee on the University's strategic plan and talked about the planning process and the critical nature of the success of the plan. Engaging the community is critically important, as well as buy-in and acceptance of the plan once it is finalized. It is a strategic plan for the entire University with a one-University concept and theme.

Board members discussed the statewide decline in demographics and its impact on college enrollment. Provost DeHayes reported that there has been a 20% reduction in high school graduates since 2012. He noted that the RI Promise Program is luring students away from URI. Board member Fogarty suggested that URI develop a stronger relationship with CCRI to aggressively recruit the RI Promise students to attend URI for years three and four. Board member DelGiudice noted that URI is actively looking at a seamless process for transfer students, with Dean Libutti leading that effort at URI. Member Bove remarked about the Joint Admissions Agreement among RI's state colleges and university, which encourages RI Promise students to come to URI.

Chair Cook commented that this is a strategic issue, particularly for universities in the Northeast, and something that should be included in the University's strategic planning.

Committee Chair Kerwin noted that the Committee asked Dr. Snyder to discuss at the next Committee meeting the Research Foundation, how it relates to other programs under his purview, and the rest of the University. Chair Cook said the full Board might like to hear about the Research Foundation. He concluded his report by sharing the following action items that were reviewed by the Committee and recommended for approval by the full Board.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

- i. Approval of the awarding of undergraduate and graduate degrees, diplomas, certificates and honors to be conferred by the President to the candidates who will have completed their requirements at the conclusion of the Summer 2021 term and who are approved by the faculty of the University of Rhode Island. [Enclosure 4.a.\(i\)](#).

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the awarding of undergraduate and graduate degrees, diplomas, certificates and honors to be conferred by the President to the candidates who will have completed their requirements at the conclusion of the Summer 2021 term and who are approved by the faculty of the University of Rhode Island as set forth in Enclosure 4.a.(i), and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Jay Placencia and seconded by Matthew Lenz, it was

VOTED:        THAT                    The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the awarding of undergraduate and graduate degrees, diplomas, certificates and honors to be conferred by the President to the candidates who will have completed their requirements at the conclusion of the Summer 2021 term and who are approved by the faculty of the University of Rhode Island as set forth in Enclosure 4.a.(i), and as recommended and presented.

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

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

NAYS:                                    0

ABSTAINS:                              0

ii. Approval of the awarding of tenure for University of Rhode Island faculty members and recommendation to the Board of Trustees

- Dr. Ellen McGough, Professor, Program Director, and Department Chair, Physical Therapy [Enclosure](#)
- Dr. Anthony Marchese, Professor and Dean, College of Engineering [Enclosure](#)
- Dr. David Townson, Professor of Animal Sciences, College of the Environment and Life Sciences [Enclosure](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the awarding of tenure for Dr. Ellen McGough, Dr. Anthony Marchese, and Dr. David Townson, as set forth in the enclosures and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Matthew Lenz and seconded by Christine Heenan, it was

VOTED:        THAT                    The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the

awarding of tenure for Dr. Ellen McGough, Dr. Anthony Marchese, and Dr. David Townson, as set forth in the enclosures and as recommended and presented

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

#### **b. FINANCE AND FACILITIES COMMITTEE**

- **Update – September 23, 2021 Committee Meeting**

Committee Vice Chair Vahid Ownjazayeri provided an update report on discussion and action at the September 23, 2021, Committee meeting. He asked Abigail Rider, Vice President of Finance and Administration, to discuss the proposed Fiscal Year 2023 budget request, tuition and fees.

Vice President Rider briefly addressed some highlights from the presentation made during the Committee meeting. A link to the presentation can be found [HERE](#). She discussed the federal stimulus funds shared with URI, including the direct pass-through grants for students. She noted while the University received \$47 million in institutional funding, URI's extraordinary COVID expenses exceed the funding by approximately \$20 million.

In terms of the FY23 budget, Vice President Rider indicated that URI is requesting \$121.6 million in state appropriation, a \$7.5 million increase over the FY22 enacted budget. She pointed out that the state appropriation for FY22 is equal to the state appropriation in FY07, while enrollment has increased by 2,300 students during that time. This means the University has had to generate other revenue to continue growing. Vice President Rider reviewed the annual enrollment projections for in-state and out-of-state, undergraduate and graduate students; enrollment is expected to remain even. The budget request reflects a \$10.6 million increase in tuition and fees. The \$548 increase in tuition for in-state students reflects a 2.5% increase in tuition and a 10.2% increase in mandatory fees. Percentage increases are similar for out-of-state and graduate students. Provost DeHayes commented that every time URI raises its tuition, it increases financial aid by about 35 percent, remaining true to its access mission. He shared out-of-state tuition rates and explained that URI is careful to remain competitive with regional public universities.

Vice President Rider reviewed URI's Rhode Island Capital Fund (RICAP) FY2023 request of \$15.4 million in asset protection allocations. URI is hopeful that with the unexpectedly strong revenue performance of the State, there will be sufficient RICAP. She explained how RICAP is funded; once the contingency fund of the State has reached 5% of the revenues of the previous year, any excess funds flow into RICAP. RICAP asset protection has been consistently funded by the State at \$7.5-\$8.5 million annually. Vice President Rider noted that capital maintenance costs at URI are around \$17-\$20 million annually. She reviewed the FY2022 Allocation and FY2023 Restricted Budget.

In summary, in FY2023, URI requested Board approval of FY23 tuition and fees which includes a 2.5% tuition increase (in-state and out-state) and fees. URI also requested the Board's approval to submit a request to the State for an increase in state appropriation of \$7.5 million. URI's budget request will be submitted to the Governor following the Board's review and approval and may be modified prior to being presented to the General Assembly for action in June 2022.

It was noted that tuition and fee rates are set to maintain URI's competitive position in the higher education market. President Parlange called attention to Slide 10 of the budget presentation, an analysis of what URI contributes for every in-state student. Vice President Rider noted that with state appropriations falling, there is continued pressure on tuition and alternate funding and subsidies. From Slide 10: "State Appropriation is designed to subsidize the full Cost of Education for in-state students for public institutions of higher education. Subsidy should be equivalent to the difference between in-state tuition and the full cost of education." She noted that the FY22 State Appropriation of \$82.4 million provides only about two thirds of needed subsidy for the total number of in-state full-time students (approximately 7,100). Provost DeHayes commented that URI loses money on every Rhode Island student. The Board discussed the national trend of defunding higher education and confirmed the importance of conveying the message to elected officials that URI is losing money on in-state students.

Board member Sabitoni discussed the need to develop a long-range plan to close this funding gap over a period of time, focusing on the mission to keep tuition reasonable for in-state students. Member Ownjazayeri suggested a group of board members meet to discuss making a presentation to the State. Board members Cottam and DelGiudice confirmed that elected officials are aware of this issue, which is also a problem at RIC and CCRI. President Parlange welcomed a small group of board members working on this to support Rhode Island students. Chair Cook added that she and Vice Chair McNally will take the lead on positioning the University for access to funding sources present in the state right now, highlighting that URI is the biggest catalyst for growth in Rhode Island. Trustee Ryan suggested that URI tap into the federal infrastructure funding for deferred maintenance work.

Board member Lenz asked that URI pay close attention to student transportation issues. Vice President Rider stated that URI is encouraging the use of mass transit to address traffic issues on campus and noted that URI provides for half the cost of a Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority (RIPTA) bus pass for students. Member Bove announced that the Student Senate and the Division of Student Services recently agreed to jointly fund a subsidy program for student transportation using the RIPTA bus system.



Vice President Rider noted that URI plans to introduce bond referendums in 2022 to fund \$157 million in Phase II improvements at the Bay Campus, and \$63.2 million in funding for a Life Sciences building.

Vice President Rider reviewed her memo regarding the demolition of the Fernwood building (3071 Kingston Road) and a small shed located at 2133 Kingston Road. She confirmed that URI has sought permission from the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission to demolish the Fernwood building. Approval to demolish the shed is in process with the Commission and demolition is of course subject to that approval.

Committee Vice Chair Ownjazayeri noted that the signature authority approvals are required due to change in leadership at URI. The following action items were reviewed by the Committee and were recommended for approval by the full Board.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- i. Approval of the University of Rhode Island Total Budget Request, Tuition and Fee Rates, and Tables of Organization for FY 2023, and the Total Budget Allocations for FY 2022. [Enclosure 4.b.\(i\)](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the University of Rhode Island Total Budget Request, Tuition and Fee Rates, and Tables of Organization for Fiscal Year 2023, and the Total Budget Allocations for Fiscal Year 2022, as set forth in enclosure 4.b.(i) and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Armand Sabitoni and seconded by David Martirano, it was

VOTED:        THAT        The URI Board of Trustees approve the University of Rhode Island Total Budget Request, Tuition and Fee Rates, and Tables of Organization for Fiscal Year 2023, and the Total Budget Allocations for Fiscal Year 2022, as set forth in enclosure 4.b.(i) and as recommended and presented.

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

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

NAYS:        0

ABSTAINS:   0

**ii.** Approval of the demolition of the Fernwood Building and an East Farm shed. [Enclosure 4.b.\(ii\)](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the demolition of the Fernwood Building and an East Farm shed, as set forth in Enclosure 4.b.(ii) and as recommended and presented.

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

VOTED:        THAT            The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the demolition of the Fernwood Building and an East Farm shed, as set forth in Enclosure 4.b.(ii) and as recommended and presented.

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

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

NAYS:        0

ABSTAINS: 0

**iii.** Approval of Signature Authority on behalf of the University of Rhode Island and the URI Board of Trustees effective August 1, 2021, and Ratification of All Actions Taken Consistent with such Authority. [Enclosure 4.b.\(iii\)](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the Updated Signature Authority on behalf of the University of Rhode Island and the URI Board of Trustees effective August 1, 2021, including ratification of all actions taken consistent with such authority, as set forth in Enclosure 4.b.(iii) and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Jay Placencia and seconded by Cortney Nicolato, it was

VOTED        THAT:            The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the Updated Signature Authority on behalf of the University of Rhode Island and the URI Board of Trustees effective August 1, 2021, including ratification of all actions taken consistent with such authority, as set forth in Enclosure 4.b.(iii) and as recommended and presented.

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

negative.

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

- iv. Approval of Signature Authority on behalf of the University of Rhode Island and the URI Board of Trustees effective October 1, 2021. [Enclosure 4.b.\(iv\)](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that URI Board of Trustees approve the Signature Authority on behalf of the University of Rhode Island and the URI Board of Trustees effective October 1, 2021, as set forth in enclosure 4.b.(iv) and as recommended and presented.

On a motion duly made by Armand Sabitoni and seconded by Charles Fogarty, it was

VOTED THAT: The URI Board of Trustees approve the Signature Authority on behalf of the University of Rhode Island effective October 1, 2021, as set forth in Enclosure 4.b.(iv) and as recommended and presented.

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

**c. Governance Committee**

- Update – September 23, 2021 Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Cortney Nicolato provided an update report on discussion and action at the September 23, 2021, Committee meeting. She noted that much of the Board of Trustees' guiding

legislation is about setting up the Board, and not Board management. To address this, the Governance Committee is looking at policies and procedures for the Board.

Committee Chair Nicolato reported that the Committee discussed succession planning for Board members; how are members nominated; how members are presented for renewal. She noted that legislation is pending for consideration, as 11 of 17 Board members are up for renewal by the end of February 2022. She reported that at the November meeting, the Committee will present the suggested slate for renewal.

Results of the Board member self-assessment surveys were reviewed. Committee Chair Nicolato noted that Chair Cook and Vice Chair McNally will be reaching out to those individuals that have expressed an interest in leadership roles. She thanked the trustees for their candor and perspective and added that the Governance Committee will use the information gathered when thinking about priorities moving forward. She reported that a Board composition survey is being updated for distribution in November.

Committee Chair Nicolato reported that committee members had a thoughtful discussion about honorary degrees. She said that the University has an honorary degree nomination process in place, and the Board wants to create a policy to speak to honorary degree nominations that are recommended to the Board for consideration.

Committee Chair Nicolato outlined the policy review and approval process. During the Committee meeting, five policies were presented for review: Policy on Ethics and Conflict of Interest; Policy on Conflict of Interest in Research; Policy on Intellectual Property; Policy on University Trademarks and Licensing; and Policy on Public-Private Partnership in Research and Development. Two policies were presented for action. The Policy on Nondiscrimination is in response to the federal government's changes to Title IX regulations enacted last summer, which led to the Board's creation of a sexual misconduct policy separate from then-existing policies governing discrimination and harassment and prompting the creation of this companion policy addressing all other forms of discrimination. The Board of Trustees Remote Meeting Participation Policy was drafted in response to recent legislation allowing URI Board members to participate in meetings remotely where a quorum of 13 voting members is in-person. Committee Chair Nicolato noted the challenges of getting thirteen members to meet in person during a global pandemic.

She concluded her report by saying the Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees approve both the Policy on Nondiscrimination and the URI Board of Trustees Remote Meeting Participation Policy.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- i. Approval of the URI Board of Trustees Policy on Nondiscrimination [Enclosure 4.c.\(i\)](#).

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the URI Board of Trustees Policy on Nondiscrimination, as set forth in Enclosure 4.c.(i) and as recommended and presented.

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 approve the URI Board of Trustees Policy on Nondiscrimination.

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

- ii. Approval of the URI Board of Trustees Remote Meeting Participation Policy.  
[Enclosure 4.c.\(ii\)](#).

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the URI Board of Trustees Remote Meeting Participation Policy, as set forth in Enclosure 4.c.(ii) and as recommended and presented.

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

VOTED: THAT The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the URI Board of Trustees Remote Meeting Participation Policy, as set forth in Enclosure 4.c.(ii) and as recommended and presented.

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

## 5. ADDITIONAL ACTION ITEM

- a. Approval of the 2023 Board of Trustees meeting calendar [Enclosure 5.a.](#)

Chair Cook called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees approve the 2023 Board of Trustees calendar, as set forth in Enclosure 5.a.

On a motion duly made by Jay Placencia and seconded by Cortney Nicolato, it was

VOTED:        THAT        The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees approve the 2023 Board of Trustees calendar, as set forth in Enclosure 5.a.

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

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

NAYS:                    0

ABSTAINS:              0

## 6. 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 potential and anticipated litigation, pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5(a)(2).
- b. Discussion regarding litigation, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(2).
- i. Synopsys, Inc. v. University of Rhode Island, and Does 1-10, inclusive Board of Trustees of the University of Rhode Island, Case No. 5:21-cv-00581-BLF (U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California).
- ii. Sean Burt, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Board of Trustees of the University of Rhode Island, and Does 1-10 inclusive, C.A. No. 20-465-JJM-LDA (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).

- iii. Logan Thomson, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Board of Trustees of the University of Rhode Island, C.A. No. 20-295-JJM-LDA (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island)
  - iv. Louis Kwame Fosu v. The University of Rhode Island, University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees, David M. Dooley, President, The University of Rhode Island, Donald DeHayes, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Jeannette E. Riley, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, Case No. 1:21-cv-00279 (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).
  - v. Barry J. O'Connor, Jr. v. University of Rhode Island, Civil Action No. PC-2021-03978 (Superior Court of Rhode Island).
  - vi. Salman Habeeb et al. v. University of Rhode Island et al., Civil Action No. PC-2019-9694 (Superior Court of Rhode Island).
- c. Discussion related to or concerning a prospective business or industry located in the State of Rhode Island when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the interest of the public, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(6).

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

- VOTED: THAT      The URI Board of Trustees enter into Executive Session for the following items:
- a. Discussion regarding potential and anticipated litigation, pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5(a)(2).
  - b. Discussion regarding litigation, pursuant to R.I.G.L. §42-46-5(a)(2).
    - i. Synopsys, Inc. v. University of Rhode Island, and Does 1-10, inclusive Board of Trustees of the University of Rhode Island, Case No. 5:21-cv-00581-BLF (U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California).
    - ii. Sean Burt, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Board of Trustees of the University of Rhode Island, and Does 1-10 inclusive, C.A. No. 20-465-JJM-LDA (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).
    - iii. Logan Thomson, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated v. Board of Trustees of the University of Rhode Island, C.A. No. 20-295-JJM-LDA (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).

- iv. Louis Kwame Fosu v. The University of Rhode Island, University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees, David M. Dooley, President, The University of Rhode Island, Donald DeHayes, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Jeannette E. Riley, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences, Case No. 1:21-cv-00279 (U.S. District Court for the District of Rhode Island).
- v. Barry J. O'Connor, Jr. v. University of Rhode Island, Civil Action No. PC-2021-03978 (Superior Court of Rhode Island).
- vi. Salman Habeeb et al. v. University of Rhode Island et al., Civil Action No. PC-2019-9694 (Superior Court of Rhode Island).
- c. Discussion related to or concerning a prospective business or industry located in the State of Rhode Island when an open meeting would have a detrimental effect on the interest of the public, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(6).

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

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

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

At 10:32 a.m., the Board entered into Executive Session. Virtual public access was paused.

At 12:57 p.m., the Board reconvened in Open Session. Virtual public access resumed.

Chair Cook called for a motion that the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees seal the minutes of the Executive Session that took place on September 24, 2021.

On a motion duly made by Matt Lenz and seconded by Jay Placencia, it was

VOTED THAT: The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees seal the minutes of the Executive Session that took place on September 24, 2021.

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, Neil Kerwin, Matthew Lenz, Roby Luna, David Martirano, Michael McNally, Vahid Ownjazayeri, Susan Petrovas, Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, and Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

Cortney Nicolato left the meeting prior to the vote.

## 7. ADDITIONAL REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE CHAIRS

### a. Executive Committee

- Update – September 23, 2021 Committee Meeting

Committee Vice Chair Michael McNally provided an update report on discussion that took place at the September 23, 2021, Committee meeting. He reported that Anne Marie Coleman, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources, briefed the Committee on active collective bargaining negotiations. He noted that the Committee will reconvene once the negotiations are finalized.

### b. Institutional Risk and Compliance Committee

- Update – September 23, 2021 Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Roby Luna provided an update report on discussion that took place at the September 23, 2021, Committee meeting. He reported that the Committee reviewed the IT risk assessment and risk treatment plan, noting significant progress on end point protection and asset management protection. Staffing levels were discussed; shortfalls were identified given the number of people needed to improve URI's security posture. The Committee discussed creative ways to continue research and innovation at the University, while maintaining a strong security process.

Committee Chair Luna reported that the Committee discussed the University's online sexual violence training course for all faculty and students. He noted that the external auditor procurement process is up for bid at the end of the fiscal year; the procurement process will include CCRI and RIC and will include a request for both three-year and five-year bids. He concluded by saying the University has hired a compliance review officer, which is important because there is no internal auditor at URI because internal audit for URI is handled by the State. There were no action items considered by the Committee.

### c. Student Life and Athletics Committee

- Update – September 23, 2021, Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Thomas Ryan provided an update report on discussion that took place at the September 23, 2021, Committee meeting. As this was the Committee's first meeting, members received an overview of the Division of Student Affairs and the Department of Athletics. Athletics Director

Thorr Bjorn reviewed department revenues and donations, noting that revenues have been reduced at the football stadium because of reduced seating due to fire egress requirements. In terms of expenses, Chair Ryan remarked that amongst the A10 basketball teams, those that win spend a lot more than URI's teams. The Director reported that the average GPA of a student athlete is 3.0, up from 2.8 in 2006.

The Committee heard a report from Vice President Kathy Collins, who highlighted staffing issues within the Division of Student Affairs, especially around mental health. Committee Chair Ryan reported that staffing issues mirror nationwide trends; the Division finds it challenging for opening dining halls on the weekends, with long lines at the Memorial Union similar to off campus experiences. The Committee discussed facilities, including \$90 million needed to replace the swimming pool, \$64 million to renovate and expand the Memorial Union, and the lack of an outdoor track at the University.

Committee Chair Ryan noted that at the June meeting the Board heard from students and faculty about increasing the number of people of color within faculty and staff. Mary Grace Almandrez, URI's Chief Diversity Officer, reported on ten ongoing searches led by her office.

Committee Chair Ryan noted that while past efforts to fund improvements to athletics facilities using general obligation bonds have failed, these necessary upgrades will improve the student experience for all students, athletes and intramurals. He noted that the University's next funding challenge is dorm space. The Trustees discussed exploring the use of private funds to develop residential housing and hotel space.

Chair Cook noted that there is more to put in front of the Committee and agreed that funding athletic facilities ties into student success. She stated that President Parlange will come up with a strategy to prioritize projects and to fund them.

There were no action items considered by the Committee.

**d. University Advancement and External Affairs Committee**

- Update – September 23, 2021 Committee Meeting

Committee Chair Christine Heenan provided an update report on discussion that took place at the September 23, 2021, Committee meeting. She reported that there were no action items to consider. In terms of URI Communications, meeting the new President was the number one story. She noted that President Parlange will speak during the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce's annual Economic Outlook Forum next week. She stated that the Communications team continues its work with COVID announcements and changing protocols. URI's positivity rate is less than half the State average, which shows that URI is part of the solution.

The Committee discussed developing an information-based communications protocol to share more information with Board members. The protocol will be introduced to the Board at the November meeting. In terms of development, Committee Chair Heenan celebrated the impressive progress of the campaign and reminded all of the upcoming Day of Giving.

Lil O'Rourke, President of the URI Foundation and Alumni Engagement, reported on key dates, including the Alumni and Family weekend and the Day of Giving. A campaign celebration is planned

for October 22<sup>nd</sup>; the University will dedicate the Dooley Science Quadrangle at 2:00 p.m., with a reception at 5:30 p.m. The campaign is doing well and remains above the trend line at \$214.7 now. The Distinguished Achievement Awards event is planned for Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Ms. O'Rourke announced that the Foundation has hired a new vice president of development, Jeff Cabral, who will oversee New York regional activity. Mr. Cabral, a Rhode Island native, led fundraising for the arts at Brown University. She thanked the Board members for all their support.

Committee Chair Heenan reported that the University has hired two government relations people to assist the President and the University. She noted that President Parlange is off to a strong start in developing relationships, both formal and informal, with our government leaders.

There were no action items considered by the Committee.

## **8. REPORT OF THE CHAIR**

Chair Margo Cook officially welcomed President Parlange to his first meeting. She noted how engaged President Parlange has been since arriving at URI, from organized events to very simple things like being on campus when students moved in, wanting to talk to them and their parents to understand the student experience. She noted that President Parlange has been very present around what's happening in the State, as URI has an important role in the State of Rhode Island. She expressed her confidence that the President will make sure URI is in the center at the state level.

Chair Cook acknowledged that the Rhode Island Nursing Education Center is an amazing facility and is an example of what the University does when it raises resources to put a facility together where it can be the best in the world, investing its resources in a great program.

Chair Cook spoke about the URI Foundation's campaign to raise \$250 million. She said URI will announce on October 22<sup>nd</sup> that it will surpass its goal. She credited the success of the campaign to the great team at the Foundation under Lil O'Rourke's leadership. She noted that the University is in great shape, with good leadership and this Board as its steward.

Concluding her report, Chair Cook recognized Provost DeHayes for his 13 years of service to the University. She said that enrollment, application numbers, GPAs, and graduation numbers are at their highest. She noted that we often give the president all the kudos, but it's the provost leading the academic programs that drives those numbers. She thanked the Provost for his grace and calmness under fire during the last 18-24 months and for the tremendous amount of work completed during his time at URI.

## **9. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT**

President Marc B. Parlange presented a President's Report/Fall '21 to the Board. A link to the President's PowerPoint can be found [HERE](#). His presentation highlighted URI's pandemic response and preparedness, early actions and insights since his arrival, an update on the new academic year, and a look ahead, building on distinctive strengths to develop a Strategic Plan for URI.

President Parlange reported that in the seven weeks he has been on campus, he's received a warm welcome from the broad community, and noted the strong culture, pride and support surrounding the University. He warmly acknowledged Chair Cook and the Board for their support since his appointment, and for their unwavering dedication to URI. He acknowledged President Dooley and Provost DeHayes for their wise counsel since his appointment. The President recognized the University's academic and administrative leaders for the consistent care and commitment that they have demonstrated during this period ensuring the safe and successful opening of the fall semester. He has received a warm welcome from students and alums, and from leaders within Rhode Island government and industry.

Early activities included a reception on the grounds of the house, student move-in visits, a welcome reception on the quad, a dean's retreat, tours of the colleges, labs, and institutes. Academic excellence discussions on campus provided insight into how the University wants to distinguish itself from other universities. The Honors Colloquium – Sustaining Our Shores, was extremely well received. President Parlange recognized the work of Mary Grace Almandrez and the University Diversity Council.

The President reviewed URI's COVID response and preparedness and discussed the promotion of public health initiatives on campus. He recognized the great work of Vice President Collins and her team in addressing the pandemic at the University. A COVID-19 Advisory Group chaired by Interim Provost Laura Beauvais will track key metrics and make recommendations to senior leaders based on changing conditions.

President Parlange noted that URI is now a member of the Institute of International Education – Scholar Rescue Fund, supporting displaced and endangered Afghan students and scholars, and encouraged the continued funding of this partnership through the Foundation. He wrote to Governor McKee affirming URI's commitment.

The President reviewed enrollment statistics, campus life highlights and a report on record-setting URI athletes. He welcomed 45 new faculty to the University and welcomed new coaches and deans.

Reporting on research highlights, the President noted an all-time high of \$123 million in external grant awards for FY 2021, the fourth consecutive year of steady increases in external funding. URI is preparing for the public launch of its first university-wide signature research program: "Plastics: Land to Sea Co-Laboratory (COLAB)". President Parlange recognized the important Blue Economy and URI's partnering with institutions, agencies, companies and non-profit organizations across the state to dramatically increase Rhode Island's capacity to grow its Narragansett Bay-based economy. The major goal of the Blue Economy is to increase workforce development opportunities for a more diverse community.

President Parlange addressed fiscal sustainability. He noted URI must think about how it generates revenue to do its research and education. It is clear to him that in many areas, colleges are stretched thin, with limited resources. He emphasized that URI needs to come together as one university to diversify revenue.

The President foreshadowed with the Board his plans to engage the University community in a comprehensive strategic planning process, which will be launched later this semester. The objective will

be to benefit from the perspectives of students, staff, faculty and alumni as we design a bold plan for the University's future to enhance our contributions and impact within and beyond Rhode Island. Key factors in strategic planning will be promoting diversity, equity and inclusion, improving student success and the student experience, supporting faculty and academic excellence, improving partnerships, alliances and innovation, and fostering a culture of service.

#### **10. PLENARY SESSION – URI COLLEGE OF NURSING**

Barbara Wolfe, Dean, College of Nursing

Melissa Sosa '22, College of Nursing [Enclosure](#)

Devon Carroll, PhD Candidate, College of Nursing [Enclosure](#)

Barbara Wolfe, Dean, The University of Rhode Island College of Nursing (URI CON), thanked the Board for inviting her to speak as the College of Nursing celebrates its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and during a time of heightened awareness about the importance of nursing. She shared with the Board a booklet on the College of Nursing 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and History, a narrative documentation of the history of the college, a look back at the innovations in education, clinical practice, leadership, and knowledge development that has transformed the college over the decades. A link to Dean Wolfe's presentation can be found [HERE](#).

Dean Wolfe reviewed the College of Nursing's Strategic Plan, its listing of degree and certificate programs, and its outcomes dashboard. She highlighted the student experience, reviewed faculty metrics in terms of publications and research, and recognized noted alumni impacting health care both nationally and internationally. Dean Wolfe spoke of the College of Nursing's advancement metric, with increases seen in both philanthropy and community engagement.

Dean Wolfe celebrated URI CON's increased national prominence, evidenced by US News and World Report's ranking of 96 out of 650 nursing schools reporting, and noted that the Program is ranked first for National Institute of Health (NIH) funding amongst nursing schools in New England. Additionally, the number of URI CON Fellows in the American Academy of Nursing has increased 400 percent. She noted that all metrics are going in the right direction, and the excitement is palpable amongst faculty and students.

Signature initiatives were reviewed including the Sculco Scholarship, the Pathways Program, Undergraduate Research Fellows, international experiential learning, the Barlow and Godfrey-Brown Scholarships. Challenges and opportunities were reviewed including COVID impact and response

Dean Wolfe concluded her presentation by reviewing challenges and opportunities for the URI CON, including COVID's impact and response, strengthening the student experience with aging facilities at URI's campus, the huge nursing shortage in clinical areas, and huge shortage of nursing teachers. Recruitment in psychiatric mental health nurse practitioners is extremely challenging. Finding clinical placements and preceptors is a common challenge amongst every nursing program in the country. She noted her focus on rightsizing faculty and expanding allocations to maintain URI CON's competitiveness. She added that nationwide there is a huge demand for nursing, and more people are interested in nursing, recognizing its value to society. URI must stay ahead and manage the capacity; the demand for high quality students is a challenge to the URI CON Program and resources.

Dean Wolfe introduced nursing student Melissa Sosa. Melissa shared her family story with the Board, and the reasons she wants to be a registered nurse. She credited URI's Talent Development Program and the Pathways Program, which introduced her to the nursing program in her first year at URI and has allowed her to expand her four-year nursing program experience into five years. She thanked the faculty and staff at the College of Nursing for their support and encouragement in helping her realize her goal of becoming a registered nurse to support families struggling with medical challenges and to advance research in the field of nursing.

Ms. Sosa is an undergraduate research fellow, a URI College of Nursing ambassador, a URI 101 mentor, an undergraduate senior fellow for the Pathways Program. She is part of the honors program and is a member of the undergraduate research committee at the College of Nursing. She stressed that it doesn't matter where you came from, what matters is what you make of a situation, and who you have around you.

Board member Luna, fellow Talent Development alum, told Melissa that the Board is proud of her efforts and accomplishments.

Dean Wolfe introduced Devon Carroll, a member of the College of Nursing's Ph.D. program. Dean Wolfe noted that Devon is a very accomplished nurse practitioner and published author with scholarly scientific articles appearing in several professional journals.

Devon Carroll shared her personal path to nursing, her interest in research, and what attracted her to the URI CON Program. She credits Dean Wolfe for being a mentor. She noted that URI CON met her criteria when searching for a doctoral program, including interdisciplinary work, support and mentorship in NIH funding, and the Sculco Scholarship, which made URI stand out amongst other schools. She also wanted to commit herself to a public institution and recommit to serving the common good.

Ms. Carroll concluded by saying she is excited about advancing the profession of nursing in Rhode Island through her teaching assistantships in both the undergraduate and graduate programs, and hopes her research has an impact on children and their families in Rhode Island.

Dean Wolfe thanked her students for their presentations and opened the floor to questions.

Provost DeHayes noted that Dean Wolfe came to URI's College of Nursing in 2016 and has transformed the college through her work and leadership. He congratulated Dean Wolfe, the entire faculty and college, and the two students.

Chair Cook thanked Dean Wolfe, Melissa Sosa, and Devon Carroll for speaking to the Board. She thanked Dean Wolfe for her leadership and efforts to advance the College of Nursing. She noted that the nursing students' presentations showcased their personal and student experiences at URI's College of Nursing and highlighted the support they receive from faculty and peers.

## **11. ADJOURN**

Chair Cook stated that she and Chair McNally will advance a more formal budget discussion and strategy surrounding funding and access to state and federal resources, to place URI front and center.

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She noted that Trustee Nicolato will come back to the Board in November with the work of the Governance Committee. She acknowledged the trustees and their work with URI and the Board of Trustees, recognizing their commitment to the University.

Chair Cook called for a motion to adjourn.

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

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

VOTE:        13 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, Vahid Ownjazayeri,  
Jay Placencia, Thomas Ryan, and Armand Sabitoni.

NAYS:        0

ABSTAINS: 0

Neil Kerwin, Cortney Nicolato and Susan Petrovas left the meeting prior to the vote.

At 3:10 p.m., this meeting ended.

The next meeting of the URI Board of Trustees is scheduled for November 5, 2021.