

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**February 9, 2022**

**PRESENT:** Trustees Butts, Chisholm, Contreras, DeSimone, German-George, Maldonado, Mattera, Russell and Lutts. Also participating at the meeting were President Keenan and Board Secretary Montague.

**ABSENT:** None

In accordance with the General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Chapter 30A and amended by Executive Order issued March 13, 2020, suspending parts of the Open Meeting Law to allow public remote participation and participation by the public body remotely.

\* \* \*

**I. CALL TO ORDER** - Chair Lutts called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm

*Call to Order*

**II. CONSENT AGENDA** - Chair Lutts read the items contained on the Consent Agenda and asked for any objections or modifications and hearing none he asked if there was a motion. Trustee Mattera duly offered a motion to approve which was seconded by Trustee Russell. Following a roll call it was,

**VOTED:** To approve the Consent Agenda of February 9, 2022 (CA-21-02)

*Consent Agenda*

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Voting in the affirmative: | Butts, Chisholm, Contreras, German-George, Mattera, Russell and Lutts (Chair) |
| Voting in the negative:    | None  |
| Absent:                    | DeSimone, Maldonado   |

\* \* \*

**III. Student Focus Segment – Samantha Giffen**

*Student Focus*

Chair Lutts introduced Samantha Giffen for the Student Focus Segment of the meeting and asked her to share her background and SSU experience. Samantha explained that she came to SSU while she was working at a full-time job with MassPIRG. She knew from her time on the campus and from being with the campus community that SSU was the right place for her to pursue to her studies. Samantha is currently a graduate student in the Higher Education Student Affairs (HESA) program and has an assistantship at the Center for Civic Engagement at SSU. She emphasized her interest in showing students how to make change thru education. She detailed her roles on campus and the many opportunities that SSU had offered. One of the projects that she is currently working on is the Berry Institute of Politics (IOP) Fellowship. The IOP will soon bring Jennifer Levi, Transgender Rights Project Director of Gay and

Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD) to campus. Additionally, Samantha mentioned that thanks to her work at the IOP and work with its Executive Director, she was able to obtain an internship with the Board of Higher Education (BHE) and the opportunity to work on the New Undergraduate Experience (NUE) report. Samantha said that she has had amazing experiences and opportunities at SSU, however, the graduate experience has not been without its challenges, and she brought up a few concerns. SSU does a wonderful job recognizing and supporting first generation undergraduate students but not for graduate students, who also tend to be first generation, and there is a lack of support in finding internships. Samantha was excited to report that she is part of developing a mentorship for first- and second-year graduate students. A further discussion ensued, and the board members thanked Samantha for participating at the meeting.

\* \* \*

**IV. Faculty Focus** – Chair Lutts introduced Professor Marion Frost who is interim chair of the Nursing Department. Professor Frost utilized a power point presentation to discuss her role within the Department of Nursing. She began her presentation by mentioning that she is a two-time graduate of Salem State. She said that in addition to her work at SSU she also works clinically in a long-term and short-term rehabilitation and hospice facility. Professor Frost went on to share that she has taught eighteen different courses at Salem State. She then talked and gave specific details about the courses she has taught at Salem State including the SNA skills lab which consists of students teaching students and mentioned how the program builds community. Professor Frost said that her work with students built bonds and that students often came back in groups to work in her office. Professor Frost shared photographs of student interactions in her presentation.

Following Professor Frost’s presentation, a discussion ensued with the board. Several of the trustees including Trustee Butts, Trustee Contreras and Trustee Russell thanked Professor Frost for her presentation and provided feedback. The Faculty Focus portion of the meeting ended with Chair Lutts thanking Professor Frost for her presentation and attendance.

\* \* \*

**V. COMMITTEE ACTIONS:**

**Advancement, Marketing & Communication** – Trustee DeSimone reviewed the Committee’s charter changes which changes the committee’s name to better reflect its work. Trustee DeSimone read the committee’s recommended motion and hearing no further discussion asked for a second. Trustee Chisholm seconded the motion and by a roll call vote it was,

**VOTED: That the Board of Trustees of Salem State University hereby approves the proposed changes to the**

**Committee Charter as presented (see attachment A). (AA-21-01)**

*Committee  
Actions:*

*A,M&C  
Charter  
Changes*

Voting in the affirmative: Butts, Chisholm, Contreras, DeSimone,  
German-George, Maldonado, Mattera,  
Russell and Lutts (Chair)  
Voting in the negative: None  
Absent: None

\* \* \*

**Governance Committee** – Trustee Mattera provided a heads up that the Governance Committee would be scheduling a spring meeting in the weeks ahead.

\* \* \*

**VI. Chair’s Report** – Chair Lutts began his report by thanking both the administration and faculty for all their work over the past two years in managing the unique needs of the pandemic. Chair Lutts said that he and the entire board has been incredibly pleased that SSU managed to continue to be a remarkably effective institution in the midst of a challenging health and facility situation. The chair said that it must be noted that SSU had done well, and for that, we should all be very thankful. He thanked all who had risen to the occasion to do the challenging work.

Lutts noted that now that the university has a better financial situation, a key question that both the administration and faculty must answer is - are we properly positioned to best serve the education needs of the Greater Northshore community in the coming decade? He said that there is a great deal of research leading us to believe we should be growing in specific areas like health care and the sciences. Chair Lutts noted that SSU had recently made some changes to address students’ needs and that we have the BOLD proposal that we are hopeful will be approved this year.

The chair questioned - are we doing everything we can to change the organization to best address these new urgent needs? Chair Lutts said that for certain that if SSU does not do it... then there are others who will certainly act to meet the education needs of students. A perfect example of this is the recent announcement that Endicott College in Beverly is building a new Cummings School of Nursing and Health Sciences. He noted a recent multi-million-dollar donation to Endicott. Endicott College is a different institution than SSU and serves a different demographic than we do, however, Endicott sees a need and they are satisfying it.

Chair Lutts said that the point of bringing up this matter is to encourage leadership and faculty leaders to work together cooperatively so that we can be flexibly in the way we manage so that we can be adaptable and properly position the institution to grow in the coming decade. This will not happen without being flexible and open to change.

\* \* \*

**VII. President's Report** – President Keenan concurred with the Chair's challenge to adapt to the needs of the day. He cited SSU's response to Covid as evidence of the university's ability to adapt to change.

-President Keenan thanked Samantha and Chair Frost for joining the Board meeting.

-President Keenan thanked the Facilities Team/Maintainers for the extraordinary effort during the Blizzard of 2022 a couple of weeks ago.

-The president then acknowledged the tremendous loss that day of longtime employee – and in fact, a lifelong friend - Maintainer Brian Phelan who collapsed and died suddenly that day shortly after arriving to work. And asked for a moment of silence.

-President Keenan then thanked Chair Lutts and the BOT for the opportunity to provide a campus update at regular board meetings as it forced him to take a moment and reflect on where we've been, where we are and where we're heading over the next five to ten years.

-Covid Update:

Positivity rates, hospital ICU capacity and even MWRA wastewater are all important indicators that are trending significantly in the right direction. In fact, just last night the Salem Board of Health – like all surrounding communities – dropped its vaccine and mask mandates for local businesses. We too will be reviewing our protocols to align with the science and safety of our campus. The staggered start with remote instruction the first two weeks could not have played out better.

Indeed, spring is in the air and students are beginning to sense and experience a return to some normalcy on campus.

-Commencement 2022

We are also now finalizing plans for Commencement 2022. While we are likely not returning fully to 2019 (pre-covid), neither will it be 2020 or 2021. More details, including Honorary Degree recipients to follow soon.

-Project BOLD:

The next few weeks should also prove positive for the advancement of Project BOLD as DCAMM finalizes the Request for Proposals for the sale of South Campus which is a significant piece of the financing puzzle. More to come on that as well.

-Faculty Administration Relations

President Keenan noted that he remained disappointed that our campus is still in work-to-rule status, he was nonetheless optimistic of a spring thawing there too as there are several green shoots popping up:

He cited the recent agreement on the formation of the Strategic Planning Committee is a notable example and its work is now fully underway. He thanked Professor MaryJo Grenfell for chairing the committee and Cynthia Lynch Executive Director of the Center for Civic Engagement for leading this work and Trustee Contreras for her assistance. They will be engaging our campus for input for our next five-year plan.

Planning our future could not come at a more opportune time with the knowledge gained through Covid, our NECHE accreditation report and the recent release of the New Undergraduate Experience (NUE). In many ways it affirms SSU's aspiration of becoming an HSI.

NUE will be the foundational document for our plan as well as the North Star for the system especially as we transition to a new Commissioner. President Keenan said that he

would be remiss not to mention his extreme gratitude to outgoing Commissioner Santiago for leading the Equity Agenda. He will be missed. With the NUE, he has truly planted the flag for equity and the forthcoming 10-year strategic plan will be his legacy.

Another point of mutual interest and agreement with faculty is the importance of Civic Engagement to our campus. This too should be a component of our next Strategic Plan. Just yesterday, PEC met with members of the faculty to discuss a teach-in focused on the need for increased support for public higher education.

Yesterday we also heard about efforts of several faculty members to scrutinize data for insight on how to improve student success and persistence.

-Advancement:

An exciting spring ahead for sure with both the Celebration Honoring Tom Feeley as well as our 40<sup>th</sup> Speaker Series. In just a matter of weeks, we will return to Naples to celebrate St Patrick's day with hundreds of alumni and supporters.

-Campaign Kick Off:

Planning is well underway for our anticipated kick-off next spring (2023). While early, I promise it will be an evening to remember.

-New leadership opportunities:

President Keenan will be the new President of The Salem Partnership as it focuses on the South Salem Train Station – and the new development of Salem Harbor to support offshore wind. Next week, the group will be visiting with Rear Admiral McDonald at Mass Maritime to discuss collaboration.

President Keenan will be the next Chair of the State University Council of Presidents (end of this academic year).

The president just recently became the Chair of the Life Sciences Consortium of the North Shore – with the focus being jobs, internships and grants for our students and institutions. NECHE has asked President Keenan to lead a focused accreditation visit of Vermont Technical College in April.

-Black History Month:

Tomorrow night as part of our Black History Month celebration, SSU will welcome Dr. Marc Lamont Hill to deliver remarks at our 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Convocation – thanks to Vice President Bennett and Collaborative Members.

Lastly, President Keenan noted that now that the Patriots were out of the Super Bowl, with a kidney now residing in Ohio, he was rooting for the Bengals!

\* \* \*

**VIII. Open Forum** – Vice Chair Butts – Vice Chair Butts announced that there were two questions submitted, however, the questions were directed to the administration so there were no topics for the board. A topic that did come up during the meeting was the issue of “safety” and that is a huge topic that Trustee Butts noted that the staff and faculty should

think about holistically. Vice Chair Butts encouraged the campus community members to submit questions and topics for future meetings.

\* \* \*

**IX. ADJOURNMENT** - There being no further business to come before the Board and on a motion made by Trustee Butts and seconded by Trustee Mattera it was unanimously,

**VOTED: to adjourn the meeting at 6:07 pm**

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Voting in the affirmative: | Butts, Chisholm, Contreras, DeSimone, German-George, Maldonado, Mattera, Russell and Lutts (Chair) |
| Voting in the negative:    | None   |
| Absent:                    | None   |

Respectfully submitted,

*Adjournment*



John Keenan  
President



Lynne Montague  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
February 9, 2022  
Agenda page 2

Consent Agenda:

**Approval of the following meeting minutes and committee reports:**

Academic Affairs & Student Success: January 26, 2022

Advancement, Marketing & Communications: January 26, 2022

Risk Management & Audit: January 26, 2022

Finance & Facilities: January 26, 2022

Board of Trustees: October 13, 2021

\*Minutes will be posted to Sharepoint portal for review



## Board of Trustees

### ~~Institutional~~ Advancement, Marketing and Communications Committee Charter

---

#### Purpose:

The ~~Institutional~~ Advancement, Marketing and Communications Committee of the Board of Trustees shall be a permanent committee which will be active and involved in the identification of university priorities and long-term plans that should be supported by private philanthropy. This committee will concern itself with the public's perception of the university in the marketplace and efforts to promote the university to various constituents. This committee will provide reports to the Salem State University Board of Trustees as necessary. The Committee on ~~Institutional~~ Advancement, Marketing, and Communications shall have the following duties and powers:

- Recommendations to the full Board concerning how the university and the SSU Foundation can work together as agreed to in the Memorandum of Agreement to support the university's priorities and long-term plans
- Recommendations with regard to policies and programs related to the advancement of the
- institution, including activities involving alumni, the SSU community and other external bodies, in order to foster understanding of, and support for, the university and its mission.
- Recommendations with regard to plans, proposals and the acceptance of major gifts to the Foundation on behalf of the university in accordance with the guidelines of the Naming Opportunities and Gift Recognition Policy and the Gift Acceptance Policy. This is inclusive of all private funds, including: special gifts, endowments, bequests, and other means as annual or campaign gifts.
- Recommendations with regard to policies, programs, and initiatives for marketing the university to all constituencies including advertising, direct marketing, digital marketing, social media, media relations and public relations.
- Recommendations with regards to policies, programs, and initiative involved in the management of the university's brand.



### **Responsibilities for Advancement**

1. Within the scope of existing policies and procedures, make recommendations to the Board for the naming of any physical facility, campus grounds or academic program as appropriate.
2. In conjunction with the Salem State University Foundation, set goals and funding priorities for major fundraising campaigns to benefit the university
3. In addition to making a personal gift, assist with the identification, education, cultivation and stewardship of prospects and donors to the university
4. Assist with expanding the pool of volunteers for consideration as Trustees, Foundation Board, Alumni Board, Overseers, Assistance Corporation, Campaign Committees and Deans Advisory Councils

### **Responsibilities for Marketing and Communications**

1. Assist in defining and assessing the university's position in the marketplace
2. Make recommendations to the board concerning marketing activities that directly impact the university's brand and position in the marketplace.
3. Make recommendations to the board regarding policies that govern institutional communications, marketing, and public relations.

### **Membership:**

The ~~Institutional~~ Advancement, Marketing and Communications committee shall have not fewer than three Trustees appointed by the Chair of the Board. The President shall be a member of the committee, ex officio, voting. Committee members may include individuals who are not trustees so long as the majority membership of the committee is comprised of trustees. The Chair shall have the authority to appoint non-trustee members advisory, nonvoting to the committee to serve until the next annual meeting. Members may be appointed to the committee on a temporary basis, by the Chair, as may be required.

### **Staff Designee:**

The vice president for ~~Institutional~~ Advancement is the senior staff member supporting the committee for ~~Institutional~~ Advancement and SSU Foundation matters. The associate vice president for Marketing and Communications is the senior staff member supporting the committee for marketing and public relations matters.

**Meetings:**

The committee is expected to meet at least four times each academic year. Frequency and timing of meetings shall be determined by the chair of the Board of Trustees. Meetings shall be conducted in compliance with the state's Open Meeting Law. Executive sessions may be conducted periodically and shall be limited to those matters permitted by the state's Open Meeting Law.

**Agenda, Minutes, and Reports**

The chair of the committee, in collaboration with the staff designees, shall be responsible for establishing the agendas for meetings. An agenda, together with relevant materials shall be made available to committee members at least five days in advance of the meeting. Minutes for all meetings shall be drafted by the staff designee, reviewed by the committee chair, and approved by committee members at the following meeting.