

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
Minutes of the Meeting  
August 24, 2018

The meeting of the Board of Trustees of Western Illinois University convened at 8:00 a.m. at Macomb Campus in the Grand Ballroom. Chair Carolyn Ehlert Fuller presided. Trustee Early moved to convene to open session. Trustee Savala seconded the motion.

Roll Call

|                               |        |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| Trustee Roger Clawson         | Yes    |
| Trustee Lyneir Cole           | Absent |
| Trustee Cathy Early           | Yes    |
| Trustee Carolyn Ehlert Fuller | Yes    |
| Trustee Justin Brown          | Yes    |
| Trustee Todd Lester           | Yes    |
| Trustee Yvonne Savala         | Yes    |

Motion carried.

**ATTENDANCE**

The following trustees were present:

Trustee Roger Clawson  
Trustee Cathy Early  
Trustee Carolyn Ehlert Fuller  
Trustee Justin Brown  
Trustee Todd Lester  
Trustee Yvonne Savala  
Trustee Lyneir Cole (Arrived at 8:19 am on the phone)

Also present for the open meeting of the Board of Trustees:

President Jack Thomas  
Legal Counsel Elizabeth Duvall  
Board Treasurer and Interim Vice President for Administrative Services William Polley  
Interim Provost and Academic Vice President Kathy Neumann  
Senior Vice President for Strategic Planning and Initiatives Joe Rives  
Vice President for Student Services Ron Williams  
Vice President for Advancement and Public Services Brad Bainter

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

\*Joanne Jones Curtis, faculty: Concerned about the university pulling funding from the public radio station, Tri States Public Radio. Upset with the way the decision was made and communicated and asks for a reversal.

\*Becky Parker, resident of Macomb: Expressed distress over the pulling of funding for the radio station. Referenced rumors of new hires and expansion of other budgets while cutting the radio station's funding.

\*Paul Plagenz, Director of Development, WIU-QC: As a long-time supporter of public media he would like to offer his assistance to raise funds to allow Tri States to become self-sufficient.

\*Bill Jacobs, Alumnus of WIU and resident of Bethel Township: Disappointed that the community has not expressed greater frustration with defunding the radio station. The decision to defund will directly affect the quality of life for citizens and also human capital.

\*Elaine Hopkins, resident of Macomb and wife of retired history professor: Expressed desire to move to Macomb full time but says she will not if there is no public radio station. The station supplies culture, internship opportunities and reliable news.

\*John Curtis, community member: Displeased with the manner in which the decision was executed to eliminate funding for the radio station. Asked for a reconsideration and a reversal of the decision.

\*Richard Chamberlain, retiree: Believes the decision to eliminate a daily voice and university presence in every home is a poor one. Mr. Chamberlain referenced the four core values and how the decision to eliminate TSPR violates the core values.

\*Ginny Boynton, professor: Personalized the situation by explaining that over a dozen students who work at the TSPR station have gone on to great careers. Urged administration not to abandon their mission to provide opportunities to students.

\*Sterling Kerneck, retired history professor: Believes there should be better decision-making processes by the administration and the Board of Trustees. The result of a top-down decision is low morale and a loss of citizens and urged leaders to explain their decisions more thoroughly, and requested they cease “beating up” on the arts and sciences and cut administration and athletics.

\*Gordon Rands, faculty and on the board of a local small business: A major portion of his decision to move to Macomb was based upon the fact that there is a public radio station. Believes that the university’s ability to recruit quality faculty and a quality community lies in having a viable public radio station. Urges the university to find other areas to cut.

### **CHAIRPERSON’S REMARKS**

Good Morning. It is my honor to serve as the Chairperson of the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees. We have a strong and dedicated university community and Board of Trustees. Together, we will emphasize high impact practices and make positive differences for the current and future generations of students whom we serve.

It has been a very busy period of time since becoming the Chair on July 1st. We had a very productive Board of Trustees Retreat on July 12th and 13th. Our planning actions are setting the stage for a very exciting year.

Our Retreat was followed by a Press Conference on July 16th when we heard the outstanding vision for Western Illinois University expressed by President Thomas and Interim Provost Neumann. Through successful implementation of the goals and priorities in Higher Values in Higher Education, the President’s Executive Institute, and the July 16th press conference we will position Western Illinois University for the future.

And it was made even more clear to me and my fellow Board members in remarks made by President Thomas and others at last week’s University Assembly and New Student Convocation. President Thomas and other members of the University community speak with such passion and eloquence in regard to student and institutional success.

We, as a Board, are very pleased that the President indicated that this will be a year of change at Western Illinois University and that we are putting past challenges aside. Positivity and determination are defining characteristics of academic excellence, educational opportunity, personal growth, and social responsibility as we prepare students to lead in dynamic and diverse communities. Students and their families place trust and confidence in Western Illinois University, and we will deliver.

In fact, positive actions speak louder than words. We have much work ahead of us as we all continue to address the aftermath of the statewide budget impasse and position Western Illinois University for a strong and sustainable future. Now, more than ever, we need to do what we say and say what we do.

To that end, President Thomas will be announcing some changes that the Board asked for, and we are extremely pleased with these changes. Dr. Thomas we admire your strong leadership, vision, and actions.

We also asked the President that following his remarks and the Presidential Assessment resolution that the majority of this meeting focus on follow-up actions and discussions resulting from our July Board of Retreat.

Therefore, this will be an information-sharing meeting. In our September meeting, which is a regularly scheduled quarterly meeting of the Board, we will use our established meeting format and hear from our vice presidents, governance groups, and attend to fall reports and resolutions.

Dr. Thomas, I know that there have been many accomplishments at the University recently. I look forward to hearing about those and the changes that the University will be making. We applaud the institutional success and your university actions. Thank you to you and the entire WIU community for all that you do.

### **PRESIDENT'S REMARKS**

Good morning. Thank you for being here today and thank you for sharing your thoughts and opinions with us. It is my hope that we can channel this passion in positive ways to move Western Illinois University forward.

As many of you are aware, at the July 16th press conference and at the recent University Assembly, my leadership team and I presented budget-, program-, and enrollment and recruitment-related announcements. At these events, we outlined Western's current budget situation, the need to reduce programs, services, and personnel, and our plans for moving forward through strategic investments.

One of the changes recently announced was that Tri States Public Radio will no longer receive appropriated funding from the institution after March 1, 2019. We are not eliminating Tri-States Public Radio. We do understand the importance and the need of having a public radio station in the community. The station will continue to be housed at Western Illinois University. Like WQPT, which is housed at the WIU-Quad Cities campus, Tri States Public Radio will not receive appropriated funding for its personnel expenditures. Furthermore, similar to the WQPT partnership with the University, the WIU Foundation will continue to provide nonprofit status for Tri States Public Radio. The University will try to help find ways for the radio station to be self-supportive so that it can survive this budget crisis and any future budgetary challenges. I have charged Brad Bainter, Vice President for Advancement and Public Services, to work with Dean Billy Clow, General Manager Jonathan Ahl and others to help find sources of funding for Tri States Public radio.

As we reflect on the budget situation, this is one of the most difficult periods in the history of higher education in this country and most certainly one of the most challenging times for the State of Illinois and Western Illinois University. The decisions that have been made, in large part due to the State budget impasse

and the many reductions since 2002, are extremely painful. We agonize over decisions and try to do everything in our power to limit the harm done to individuals and programs. However, there comes a time when difficult decisions, which I understand are also unpopular decisions, have to be made so that we can deal with the fiscal realities facing our University.

Illinois public higher education is the only major sector in the state's appropriated budget that received less funding in Fiscal Year 2018 than it did in Fiscal Year 2002. As I stated at last week's University Assembly, since 2002, Illinois Public Higher education funding has declined by 27 percent which does not account for inflation. In an era of change, we have become an increasingly tuition-dependent University.

In fiscal year 2016, Western received only \$14.9 million from the State. Prior to that point, we were able to build our reserves. However, because of the budget impasse and decreased appropriations, along with declining enrollment, we had no choice but to use those reserves to continue operating. Now, in the aftermath of the historic and unprecedented statewide budget impasse, the Illinois public universities are still recovering from the effects of this major reduction and the subsequent decreases in state appropriations. On many occasions, we have implored legislators to restore the funding we should have received for FY16 & 17, but that has not happened.

Last year's state appropriation was 10 percent less than the amount received in FY15. Additionally, this year's appropriated funding is 8 percent less than what we received in FY15. Taking inflation into account, the 2 percent increase in this year's appropriation is basically level with last year's funding. We have experienced almost two decades of decreased state funding, which is forcing us to change the way we operate. This is a fact we cannot alter. We are changing to adapt to this new reality. When resources are this scarce, we have to act accordingly and know that the University cannot be everything to everybody.

Everyone at Western Illinois University has sacrificed and must continue to sacrifice to keep this University strong and viable. I ask each of you to please come together in solidarity, even with those of us who are making difficult decisions with which you may disagree. At a time when we need to grow our way out of the financial challenges forced upon us, we need to do all that we can to join forces to meet these challenges. Please bear with us. We are doing the best that we can.

We all have rights, freedom of speech and expression granted by our glorious Constitution. However, with these rights come great responsibility. Your expression, your speech, and your rights will never be stifled, or curtailed. I simply want to point out that we sometimes do the greatest harm to ourselves. Every negative comment that is made in private conversations or in public settings may have an impact on the reputation of the University. Every negative story harms the reputation of this University and makes recruiting and retaining students much more difficult.

We may disagree, but at the end of the day, I think it is fair to say that each of us loves this University and our students. If we did not, we would not be sitting here today. It is in our students' and in the University's best interests to move forward in a spirit of civility and mutual respect.

There are some who may say that the administration does not consult with others in making decisions. This is not accurate. Last year, we met with advisory groups, held fifteen town hall meetings, hosted two brown bag lunches, and I met often with the President's round table for students, the President's round table for staff and the President's round table for faculty. These are all opportunities for individuals to voice their concerns and express their ideas. We have listened, and we appreciate the participation in these events and meetings. We must make decisions that are best for the overall fiscal health of Western Illinois University. This year, I will continue to host the President's round tables for students, staff and faculty. We will also continue to host town hall meetings with every college, the Quad Cities stakeholders and the library, and hold brown bag lunches.

We can and must have healthy dialogue. Nevertheless, we will not always agree and sometimes difficult decisions still must occur. Because of budgetary influences beyond our control, we have been cut to the bare bone and will have to cut more. We know that each reduction hurts. They affect people. I ask, what would you have us do? Where are we to cut? This is what we face each and every day. I understand and respect the diverse perspectives of our University community. However, at the end of the day, as the president of this university, it is my responsibility to make the tough calls.

I am reminded of the story of the minor league baseball umpire who was criticized constantly by a fan sitting high in the stands. The fan loudly criticized every call the umpire made through five innings. Finally, the umpire halted the game, walked up into the stands, sat next to the critic and yelled, "Play Ball!" Then, people said, "You can't call the game from the stands." At which point, the umpire stated, "This appears to be the best seat in the house to make the calls."

The point of this narrative is that everyone has their own unique perspective. As the umpire on the field, the leadership team's perspective is unique because we can see the whole field. We have been told on multiple occasions by multiple University groups—not just the Board, but by our own University constituency groups—to right the ship, chart the course, and make the calls. But when we do attempt to right the ship, chart the course and make these calls, we are criticized and people react as if this is the first they have heard of the need for changes.

Again, as I stated at the assembly, we must all do our part to focus on all the wonderful things that have taken place at our University recently. We should highlight and share the positive aspects of our University and the accomplishments of our outstanding people.

It is my pledge as President, on behalf of my leadership team, we will continue to communicate and do so in a positive and constructive manner. We will invest in our programs and services that will further place WIU on the leading edge and position our university for growth. We will continue to provide a world-class, high-quality, and well-rounded educational experience. We take pride in the academic excellence, value and affordability that we provide. We will work with the appropriate constituencies to implement innovative academic restructuring.

We are beginning to witness the success of our innovative thinking and efforts. As Interim Director of Admissions Jason Woods recently reported, enrollment trends for fiscal year 2019 are outperforming the expectations from this past March. This is good news.

While we expect to have more new students than originally predicted, we are still projected to deficit spend again this year, assuming we receive no additional state funding. Last year, the University's appropriated expenditures exceeded revenues by approximately \$4 million. This is not sustainable.

Yesterday, our Budget Director, Letisha Trepac, sent a letter to the University community outlining measures to help the University decrease the amount we will deficit spend this year. I am repeating Ms. Trepac's statements, asking each of us to limit spending as much as possible, so that we can invest more resources into growing our way to prosperity. Decreasing expenditures must be accompanied by increasing revenue. We must grow enrollment, and increase retention and graduation rates. We must enhance and diversify our revenue streams. I will be going to Springfield in the coming weeks to continue advocating for increased funding, including appropriated funds, deferred maintenance and capital projects.

In light of the current funding model from the state, we need more students. To contribute to enrollment growth at Western Illinois University, we need to compete to keep students from leaving the state, and we

must have premier, unique and high demand programs to draw even more high-quality, diverse students, faculty, and staff to this University.

All of us have to share the responsibility of recruiting and retaining students. Recruitment and retention must be our top priorities. Let us remember that we are here because of our students and all of us play a role in ensuring student success.

For fifteen consecutive years, Western has been recognized among the "best of the best" by The Princeton Review. Western is one of 159 regional universities, and one of two Illinois public institutions, named to the "Best in the Midwest" list.

For the second consecutive year, the Western Illinois University chapter of The National Society of Collegiate Scholars has been recognized as a Certified Gold Star Chapter.

School of Music graduate student Gwangwon Park was recently named the winner of the prestigious Atlantic Music Festival's annual piano competition in Maine.

Recently the College Media Association named WIU's NEWS3 finalists for Pinnacle Awards for Best Television Newscast for "Live at 4" and for Best TV Entertainment Program for "Good Morning Macomb."

For the second time in the last ten months, Western Illinois University has been awarded a National Science Foundation grant to boost the laboratory capabilities for students across academic majors. On July 30, the University was awarded a nearly \$300,000 grant to buy a mass spectrometer to benefit academic research and educational programs in major areas, including forensic chemistry, chemistry, biology and agriculture.

Western's Zeta Beta chapter of Beta Alpha Psi was recently recognized internationally by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) as a Superior Chapter for its efforts during the 2017-18 academic year.

These noteworthy achievements and accomplishments persist in spite of the fiscal challenges we face. While changes at Western Illinois University are inevitable due to the state's ongoing fiscal challenges, what will not change at Western Illinois University is our tradition of providing a quality educational experience.

To celebrate the new academic year, please join us at the CUPP Block Party from 5-7 p.m. on September 5, and WIU Founders' Day on September 24 at 1 p.m. We are also pleased to announce that our very own graduate, Representative Tony McCombie will be this year's Founders' Day keynote speaker.

This fall we will start the search for the following positions: Provost and Academic Vice President and Vice President for Administrative Services.

Thank you for your hard work and your passion for Western Illinois University.

**Motion to untable the Presidential Assessment and Contract Resolution**

A motion was made by Trustee Savala to untable the Presidential Assessment and Contract Resolution. Trustee Clawson seconded the motion.

Roll Call

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Trustee Justin Brown  | Yes |
| Trustee Roger Clawson | Yes |

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Trustee Lyneir Cole   | Yes |
| Trustee Cathy Early   | Yes |
| Trustee Ehlert Fuller | Yes |
| Trustee Todd Lester   | Yes |
| Trustee Yvonne Savala | Yes |

Motion carried.

**Resolution No. 18.8/1: Presidential Assessment and Contract**

A motion was made by Trustee Savala to approve. Trustee Brown seconded the motion.

Roll Call

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Trustee Roger Clawson | Yes |
| Trustee Lyneir Cole   | Yes |
| Trustee Cathy Early   | Yes |
| Trustee Ehlert Fuller | Yes |
| Trustee Justin Brown  | Yes |
| Trustee Todd Lester   | Yes |
| Trustee Yvonne Savala | Yes |

Motion carried.

**Resolution:**

**WHEREAS** the Board of Trustees is responsible for Presidential Assessment; and,

**WHEREAS** constituency input was sought:

**THEREFORE** be it resolved that the Western Illinois University Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the following:

This has been a difficult year for all at WIU. We appreciate that President Thomas has held steady throughout. We awaited completion of the academic reorganization plan and were pleased with its content and announcement on July 16. Now, we look for its very aggressive and timely implementation to be led by President Thomas. Further, the board and president will focus on a strong year of engaging in a comprehensive, rigorous assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of both campuses, which is needed to fully understand what more is necessary to move forward successfully. This examination will attempt to leave no stone unturned. Meanwhile, we look for a year of stability and getting things done. The standing letter of employment entered into with President Thomas when he was hired into the position of President of WIU in 2011 will continue to govern. There will be no changes to his salary or benefits.

**GENERAL**

**Report No. 18.8/1: Positioning Western Illinois University for the Future: August 2018 Update**  
(Vice President Joe Rives)

This is a follow-up report to the Board Retreat from July and was presented as submitted.

Seven items to report on:

1. Task force formed on Predictive Analytic Framework for retention

2. Hosting a conference with Antioch, UoP, GC, and other institutions to see how they
3. Military Recruiter approved for Macomb Campus
4. Retention Office approved for Macomb Campus through Stanes Foundation gift
5. Dr. Rives and Ms. Paulsen, with the help of the literature review of Debbie Kepple-Mamros, have commenced a cooperative education and internship review committee.
6. Simpkins Hall programming study on track and Holabird & Root are contracted to do study
7. Development Funding Officer reporting line change was made from Athletics to Foundation

President Thomas announced the following:

- Dr. Joe Rives has had a title change (with no additional salary compensation) to Senior Vice President for Strategic Planning and Initiatives.
- Director of Honors College will have a title change (without additional salary compensation) to Dean of Honors College.

## **FINANCE**

### **Report No. 18.8/2 Foundation Report**

(Vice President Brad Bainter)

Foundation and Development

- Endowment has a value of \$56 million
- Total Foundation assets are now \$65 million
- Planned Giving inventory is over \$40 million
- Gifts and pledges now total over \$13.7 million

Reported on FY18 Foundation funds usage.

## **ACADEMIC AND STUDENT SERVICES**

### **Report No. 18.8/3 University Marketing Plans and Metrics**

(Director of Marketing Suzi Pritchard and Assistant to the Senior VP, Strategic Planning and Initiatives Debbie Kepple-Mamros)

Marketing Initiatives

- Increasing Enrollment
- Strengthening the Brand (value, affordability, safety of campuses)

QC Goals

- Implement strategies that are consistent with the University's marketing plan but address the QC's unique profile
- Strategically be present in the community at events (VIVA QC, Bix7 Expo, QC Marathon)
- Develop campaign designs to increase awareness of QC programs (feature successful alums)
- Social Media tracking of events
- Promote innovations occurring on the QC Campus

Chair Ehlert Fuller commended the Communications Team for their work with the Alumni Magazine and presented a kudos from former Senator Kirk Dillard.

### **Report No. 18.8/4 Recruitment Update**

(Vice President for Student Services Ron Williams and Associate Vice President for Student Services and Interim Director of Admissions Jason Woods)

- Real-time data indicates a trend for an increase in enrollment beyond March 2018 projections.
- Veterans and service members are increasing in numbers (100 new students).
- Honors College changes will happen due to a Stanes Foundation grant and require no new funding from the university.

Dr. Williams shared an email from a military student who expressed the need to showcase our programs to avoid students seeking the same programs elsewhere.

Dr. Woods welcomed comments, criticism and suggestions.

**Report No. 18.8/5 President's Executive Institute Update**

(Sr. Vice President Joe Rives and Director of Development, Business Engagement and Outreach Becky Paulsen)

Dr. Rives presented the updated PEI flier that highlights the accomplishments of the committee and thanked members for their work and results.

Ms. Paulsen reported that the value of the PEI is that the committee crosses over many boundaries and the processes are fluid. The PEI is exploring the idea of cooperative education and internship processes. PEI has heard customers want a one-stop-shop and the committee will continue to be stewards of the University and will work to move it forward.

A break was called at 9:57 a.m. The meeting resumed at 10:10 a.m.

**Report No. 18.8/6 Retention Initiatives**

(Vice President Ron Williams and Sr. Vice President Joe Rives)

There will be a Retention Office with a Director's salary to be funded by reallocation of funds. There will be an Academic Success Coach, Program Coordinator, and staff to provide support for students and to provide a sense of home. Data analysis will augment the services to determine successes.

Chair Ehlert Fuller shared a memo from former Student Trustee Wil Gradle regarding retention points at WIU. Greek Life is one major area that offers potential for increasing retention. Dr. Williams indicated there is a new focus on enhancing Greek Life on campus.

**Report No. 18.8/7 Academic Update**

(Interim Provost Kathy Neumann)

General Education report review is in and presented to Faculty Senate.

Restructurings meetings have been scheduled with department chairs. Town Hall Meetings with various groups will occur to gain feedback.

Dual Enrollment shows new exploration with Cambridge HS, Quincy HS.

**Report No. 18.8/8 Review of Low-Enrolled Programs**  
(Interim Provost Kathy Neumann)

Interim Provost Neumann gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining terms and metrics for low enrolled programs and a review of enrollment of the various programs at all levels. Faculty Senate has begun populating the Academic Review Committee with a timeline for early December for completion.

**AUDIT**

**Report No. 18.8/9 Overview of Internal Audit and Consulting Services**  
(Director of Internal Auditing Mike Sartorius)

Mr. Sartorius distributed and discussed an overview of the department's scope, standards, services and processes. Trustee Early highlighted how Internal Auditing has the potential to increase efficiencies and in turn positively impact the budget.

**OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Trustee Savala commended Paul Plagenz for offering his expertise.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next Board meeting will be held September 27-28, 2018 on the Macomb campus in the Union Capitol Rooms.

**ADJOURN ACTION**

Chair Ehlert Fuller called for a motion to adjourn the meeting of the Board at 10:45 am. A motion was made by Trustee Lester and seconded by Trustee Clawson. All were in favor and none opposed.

Carolyn Ehlert Fuller, Chair  
Kerry McBride, Business Administrative Associate to the Board

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