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## Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes, July 18, 2019

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**WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIFTH MEETING**

**July 18, 2019**

**INDEX**

	<b><u>Page</u></b>	<b><u>Resolution</u></b>
<b>I. CALL TO ORDER</b>	1	
<b>II. PROOF OF NOTICE OF MEETING</b>	1	
<b>III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST</b>	1	
<b>IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION</b>	1	20-1
<b>V. RECESS</b>	2	
<b>VI. RECONVENE</b>	2	
<b>VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST</b>	3	
<b>VIII. PRESENTATION OF THE 2019-2020 UNIVERSITY BUDGET</b>	3	
<b>IX. ADJOURNMENT</b>	4	

**WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-FIFTH MEETING**

**July 18, 2019**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Wright State University Board of Trustees was called to order by Mr. Sean Fitzpatrick, chair, on Thursday, July 18, 2019 at 8:01 a.m. in the First Floor Gallery Space, 2455 Presidential Drive. Mr. Larry Chan, secretary to the Board of Trustees, called the roll:

**Present**

Michael Bridges  
Douglas Fecher  
Sean Fitzpatrick  
Stephanie Green  
Martin Grunder  
Bruce Langos  
William Montgomery  
Andrew Platt  
Grace Ramos

**Absent**

**II. PROOF OF NOTICE OF MEETING**

Mr. Fitzpatrick reported that the meeting was called by written notification and a quorum was present.

**III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Fitzpatrick

Mr. Fitzpatrick read the following conflict of interest statement:

It is of utmost importance to ensure that all university decisions are free from any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

Therefore, please be mindful of all obligations with which you have been charged as a Trustee of Wright State University, and take the steps you deem appropriate to perform your duties fairly and impartially.

**IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

In accordance with the Ohio Open Meetings Law, the Board, after a majority of a quorum and by roll call vote, determined to hold a Special Executive Session by offering the following resolution:

## RESOLUTION 20-1

RESOLVED that the Wright State University Board of Trustees agreed to hold an Executive Session on Thursday, July 18, 2019; and be it further

RESOLVED that pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code 121.22 (G), the following issues may be discussed in Executive Session:

- Personnel – Employment
- Purchase or Sale of Real Estate
- Pending or Imminent Court Action

Mr. Fitzpatrick moved for approval. Ms. Green seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

The Board then moved to the Double Bowler Conference Room for the Executive Session.

### V. **RECESS**

The Board adjourned the Executive Session at 9:41 a.m. and took a short break to reassemble for the Public Session budget presentation.

### VI. **RECONVENE**

The Wright State University Board of Trustees reconvened at 9:50 a.m. in the First Floor Gallery Space, 2455 Presidential Drive. Mr. Chan called the roll:

#### **Present**

Michael Bridges  
Douglas Fecher  
Sean Fitzpatrick  
Stephanie Green  
Martin Grunder  
Bruce Langos  
William Montgomery  
Andrew Platt  
Grace Ramos  
Shaun Wenrick

#### **Absent**

Olivia Sneary

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that the Wright State University Board of Trustees is a public body subject to the Ohio Open Meetings Act. It operates on a fixed agenda available to those attending the meeting. Persons wishing to address the Board in its public session should submit a written request to the Board of Trustees' office 72 hours in advance of the meeting in order to be placed on the agenda. However, all person address the Board at the invitation of the Board and are

subject to time limitations and other guidelines established to maintain the good order of the meeting.

## **VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT**

Mr. Fitzpatrick read the conflict of interest statement:

It is of utmost importance to ensure that all university decisions are free from any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

Therefore, please be mindful of all obligations with which you have been charged as a Trustee of Wright State University, and take the steps you deem appropriate to perform your duties fairly and impartially.

## **VIII. PRESENTATION OF THE 2019-2020 UNIVERSITY BUDGET**

President Cheryl B. Schrader began the budget presentation by reflecting on the last two years and the progress Wright State has made in avoiding fiscal watch and rebuilding reserves. Wright State continues to be a shining star in the region with world-class faculty and top-quality academic programs, cutting-edge research, partnerships with industry leaders, extensive student engagement opportunities and an athletics program that recently received the Horizon League's highest honor.

The FY20 budget will be a challenging one as declining enrollment and decreasing state support remain factors. Dr. Schrader offered a historical perspective on some of the state and national trends affecting enrollment. These trends included the effect of the recession and conversion to semesters, declines in international student enrollment, a shrinking pool of students (especially in the Midwest), decreases in state funding, tuition increases lagging below the level of inflation, and the effects of negative news.

Among Ohio's 14 four-year public universities, eight experienced declining enrollment from Fall 2013 to Fall 2018. Wright State experienced a 13% enrollment decline over this time period whereas other Ohio four-year public institutions ranged from enrollment up by 7% to down by 27%.

The most significant drop in enrollment over the last ten years was in international students. While Wright State mirrors the national trend, changes have been made at the university to expand international student recruitment into new and emerging markets, to develop relationships with international universities, and to incorporate the use of targeted scholarships.

With changes in enrollment have come changes in staffing levels. Over the last ten years, enrollment has dropped 30% while faculty staffing levels have decreased by 8%, administrators by 23.7% and staff by 25%.

Wright State remains among the most affordable institutions in Ohio with in-state undergraduate tuition for students under the Wright Guarantee Program at \$9,252 per year for 2018-2019. This guarantee stipulates that freshmen in the cohort will not have an increase in tuition, room/board or dining plans over their remaining three years as students.

Provost Susan Edwards highlighted Wright State's key mission as providing students with the opportunity to build a solid foundation for success at all levels through high quality innovative programs, the ability to conduct scholarly research and creative endeavors, and to engage in meaningful community service. In addition, Wright State helps to drive the economic vitalization of our region and our state and empowers all students, faculty, staff and alumni to develop intellectually, professionally, and personally.

Dr. Edwards shared a number of enrollment strategies to improve the numbers of direct from high school students, to increase the number of transfer students, to renew the focus on non-traditional adult learners, to improve student retention, and to expand online offerings.

Mr. Walt Branson, vice president for finance and operations and chief business officer, reflected on the change from two years ago when the budget was effected by surprises and overages to the current budget status for fiscal 2018-2019 where it is anticipated that year-end will reflect a surplus of \$5.5 million. Due to the efforts of the campus community and everyone's focus, this budget close marks the second year in a row of surplus funds to return to the university's reserves.

Exercising continued fiscal controls and accountability, the budget for FY20 was built on input from all the colleges and administrative units using realistic enrollment projections. The proposed budget incorporated the following assumptions: In June, the Board approved a series of fee and tuition increases that are currently pending final state approval. Enrollment projections show a decrease in total enrollment of 14% and SSI (State Share of Instruction) is projected downward by \$1.1 million.

**Proposed FY2020 Budget:**

<http://www.wright.edu/sites/www.wright.edu/files/uploads/2019/Jul/meeting/Budget%20Streaming%20Copy%2007182019.pdf>

Mr. Branson shared details of the FY2020 General Funds Expense budget and clarified the makeup of some of the categories contained within the budget. Comparing FY2020 to FY2019, even though enrollment is projected down by 14%, tuition revenue for FY20 is only down 10.2% compared to "actual" figures for FY19. Using the same comparison, total revenue is down 6% and total expenses are down 4%. No surplus is planned for the FY20 budget.

The Board received the Proposed Current Funds Budget for FY2020 which showed all the operating funds for the University, the total expected revenue and expenses for the auxiliaries, and the University's restricted funds (grants, contracts and donor funds).

With questions from Mr. Montgomery and the other trustees, the Board held a lengthy discussion on whether the proposed budget was conservative enough to adequately prevent future cuts should enrollment numbers fall short of projections. Since the proposed budget lacked a "buffer" of planned surplus funds, and with current enrollment trends showing a decrease of 15%, the Board requested that the administration use the updated enrollment numbers and the state's recent budget decisions to prepare an updated, conservative budget taking that information into account.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, Board chair, recognized newly appointed Board members Mr. Andrew Platt and Mr. Martin Grunder and recommended that the Board reconvene in a few weeks to review the revised budget proposal.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 11:16 a.m.