

Bridgewater State University  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
February 18, 2025  
6:30pm  
Heritage Room, Maxwell Library  
Hybrid

MEMBERS PRESENT: Trustees Battaglino (Virtual), Cesero (Virtual), Prince, Rose, Taylor, Turchon, Ulett, Vieira

MEMBERS ABSENT: Trustees Alexander, Giles and Koutoujian

ALSO PRESENT: President Clark; Interim Provost Alcon; Chief of Staff Leuenberger; Vice Presidents Bell, Jason, Croft, Gentlewarrior, Jean, Powers, Shropshire, Zuromski; CDO Oliver; Senior Advisor deMacedo

Under the order suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law of the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, as declared on March 12, 2020 by former Governor Baker, having been complied with, and a quorum of the Board present, the Board of Trustees held a meeting on February 18, 2025 with Chairperson Taylor presiding.

Chairperson Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. He put forth a motion that a unanimous vote will be deemed to eliminate the need for a roll call. If a vote is not unanimous, then a roll call vote will be conducted.

On motion duly made via roll call vote, Trustee Cesero-yes, Trustee Rose-yes, Trustee Vieira-yes, Trustee Turchon-yes, Trustee Ulett-yes, Trustee Battaglino-yes, Trustee Prince-yes, Trustee Taylor-yes, it was that the Board of Trustees dispense with a roll call vote for each unanimous vote for the duration of this meeting.

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Prince, Vieira) it was to approve the minutes from the Board of Trustees meeting held on December 12, 2024.  
(Attachment)

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

**Chairperson's  
Report**

Chairperson Taylor began with comments about DEI. The Trustees' commitment to DEI is more important today than it was many years ago. Our steadfast commitment must continue to provide the current BSU students to benefit from DEI and an obligation for future students as well for a more just and equitable world. He would like the Board

to develop a statement to its commitment. Chair Taylor acknowledged President Clark's commitment to ensure the BSU community that we are committed to fostering a safe inclusive environment for the community. He reminded everyone that we are not alone – there is support from the Governor, Attorney General, etc. At BSU, there is a bond of mutual respect and collective love of the university.

Chairperson Taylor offered a warm welcome to Ann Ulett, '92 as a new Trustee. She has been an active alumnus by serving on the Foundation Board and serves as a member of the Ricciardi College of Business Advisory Board. Ms. Ulett is employed at PricewaterhouseCoopers, for 21 years, and was responsible for the creation, promotion and implementation of diversity, work life and inclusion programs. She will be an asset for the university. Ms. Ulett promises to put BSU at the forefront for our students and is honored to be here and looks forward to working with everyone.

#### Student Trustee Update

Trustee Rose stated the members of the SGA are making a large impact on campus. They have worked on a travel grant for students to go off campus for conferences, etc. They are creating a new constitution to be more accessible and will meet with students at UMass Dartmouth to work with them. The Burnell project is conflicting with classes but the students know the university is supporting them. Regarding the Federal situation, this is impacting students, their families, and the LGBTQ community. Their goal is to understand the gravity of the situation and be the leaders that we are today and show hope for the future. Trustee Rose's MBTA goals are going well. They are working with Senator Montigny to help 174 students on campus to get passes for the train. They appreciate the hard work from administration. Trustee Rose is working at Senator Markey's office currently and is thankful to represent BSU in this role. They appreciate the experience.

Chairperson Taylor mentioned there have been many significant campus events this past month: swearing in of Chief of Police Anderson, Governor Healey's visit and the Burnell Project Launch. He acknowledged Kelly Salisbury and Colleen Belmore, of the President's Office, for the amazing preparation of these events.

#### **President's Report**

President Clark's Updates:

- \*Successful start of the spring semester noting enrollment targets have been achieved.
- \*Intensified CC2BSU program.
- \*Governor Healey was hosted on campus.
- \*Collective bargaining progress – AFSCME is completed, funded and dispersed. APA is completed and in the process of being dispersed.

DGCE is agreed upon and in the approval process. MSCA contract is still in negotiations.

\*Advertising campaign has launched. The ads will focus on the programs that people don't associate with BSU and highlight other degrees that we offer to the community.

\*In March, the new MBTA extension line opens which will stop at BSU.

\*He just returned from a trip to India which is a land of opportunity for BSU. They signed 45 agreements with institutions across India; they were impressed by the interest in BSU.

\*The external forces are troubling. A 'Dear Colleague Letter' was released on February 14 which is posted on BSU's website. He found it disturbing, disappointing and disgraceful. Everything we do is in compliance with the Civil Rights Act, Equal Protection clause in the U.S. Constitution and the civil rights statutes in Massachusetts. There will be impacts, but we will manage through them. There could be impacts to the Federal financial aid and there are already impacts with federal grants. We will continue to do what is right.

### AI Presentation

President Clark noted the presentation will provide an overview of the activity taking place on campus regarding AI planning.

Vice President Zuromski stated AI is everywhere and is making an impact in various areas across the world. BSU is not reacting, we are leading in this area. They are looking at how we can use this to enhance student success and the student experience. They want to position BSU as a leader among our institutions.

Niki Glen, Associate Provost, spoke about the work which is guided by the AI Advisory Committee. There are diverse voices developing policy and oversight. This committee developed an AI policy for administrative staff (employee work; not teaching and learning). This has been an inclusive policy soliciting feedback from members of the campus community. The Advisory Committee wants to make sure every member is prepared to take advantage of this opportunity. They are expanding training programs and looking at how AI can enhance the student experience. A new program is the Bear Co-Pilot program. Academic Affairs funded 16 projects through faculty members to include an AI summit.

Eric LePage, Executive Director for IT, spoke about MACH (Massachusetts AI Collaborative for Higher Education). This is a statewide initiative fostering innovation in AI across the community and university college system. This collaborative provides access to shared resources, joint initiatives, and expanded professional development opportunities. This is not just about the technology; now it can be used to advance the mission, vision and goals. They will soon

announce a new center (Center for Artificial Intelligence) which will serve as a central hub to adopt tools strategically. Five key areas: AI literacy and professional development, ethical guidance and governance, enhancement of campus operations, support integration of AI into curriculum, and assessing the impact of AI in serving the students. (Attachment)

Vice President Zuromski stated they will hold an AI Summit on April 2 for the campus community to learn and provide feedback.

**ACTION/  
INFORMATION  
ITEMS**

**EXECUTIVE**

Public, Private Partnership (M. Hogan)

A presentation was provided by consultant Mike Hogan at the Executive Committee meeting regarding available space on campus for community housing which is an initiative from Governor Healey.

Honorary Degree Recipient – Graduate Commencement (Weissman)

President Clark put forth a recommendation to give an Honorary Degree at the Graduate Commencement ceremony to alum Joel Weissman, leading family law attorney, who credits his career to BSU. Attorney Weissman will also serve as the commencement speaker.

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Turchon, Prince) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the recommendation to award an Honorary Degree of Public Service to Joel Weissman at the University's 2025 Graduate Commencement Convocation as recommended by the Executive Committee and as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated February 12, 2025. (Attachment)

Distinguished Service Award Recipient – Graduate Commencement (Joss)

President Clark stated the recommendation is to award the Distinguished Service Award to Sue Joss. She aided in founding Brockton Neighborhood Health Center and has served as its CEO for the past 30 years. Her service to the region and to the university is appreciated.

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Turchon, Prince) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the recommendation to award a Distinguished Service Award to Susan Joss at the University's 2025 Graduate Commencement Convocation as recommended by the Executive Committee and as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated February 12, 2025. (Attachment)

Contract Approval – Live Nation Worldwide, Inc. (Xfinity Center)

Vice President Shropshire brought forward the contract for Live Nation as BSU will host the 2026 commencement ceremonies at this venue due to Gillette Stadium not being available. This will be a one-year contract.

VOTED

FOR: Unanimous

CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Turchon, Prince) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the contract with Live Nation Worldwide, Inc. (Xfinity Center) as recommended by the Executive Committee and as outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated February 12, 2025.

(Attachment)

Update on Mid-Year Divisional and Interdivisional Priorities

Chief of Staff Leuenberger stated the cabinet submits updates for their priorities twice a year. A mid-year report is provided in February and then a final update at the June Board meeting. They are making good progress on their priorities for this year.

(Attachment)

President's Expenses and Travel (November 2024-January 2025)

As an information item, the quarterly expense report for President Clark was provided.

(Attachment)

**ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS**Student Life Update

Committee Chair Battaglino noted Vice President Croft provided highlights of work taking place in her division. In looking at leadership alignment, it was noticed that there was a need in Residence Life. They have streamlined communication and are working together. They have created time for wellness and provided money for staff to attend professional conferences. Cross divisional collaboration is taking place as well. Res Life and Housing has experienced improvements through the assistance of IT, Police and Finance. There are now diverse student employees working in the residence halls. They will work on data driven decision making. At a future meeting, the committee will hear from the new director of family relations and receive a report on how many commuter students are participating in weekend activities.

Spring Residence Hall Occupancy Report

Vice President Croft stated the occupancy report is strong and have experienced high occupancy numbers (89.5%) for the spring.

(Attachment)

Provost Search Update

Committee Chair Battaglinio reviewed the role of the provost. The search committee has been established and noted all committee members have had equity training. Vice President Jean's staff assisted in creating a prospectus. The goal is to bring candidates to campus prior to the end of May. Chief of Staff Leuenberger and MSCA Chapter President Jennifer Hartsfield are co-chairing the search and the members include student representatives at the graduate and undergraduate level as well as a representative from each college. February 28 is the last day for candidates to submit their application.

Vice President Powers will ensure the pool is diverse and spoke about the focus on recruitment. Lastly, Vice President Gentlewarrior offered workshops for equity minded hiring practices.

(Attachment)

**FINANCE AND OPERATIONS**FY2025/Q2 Trust Funds Report

Vice President Shropshire stated the budget was better than expected for the Spring. The occupancy and dining trust funds have helped and the expenses are on track. There is a slight surplus to support the operating budget. The projection is revenue will be up about \$1/4M. Third quarter projections will be made prior to spending any money on projects.

On motion duly made and seconded (Prince, Vieira) it was that the Board of Trustees approves the FY2025/Q2 Trust Funds Report as recommended by the Finance and Operations Committee and outlined in the memorandum from President Clark dated January 28, 2025.

(Attachment)

FY2025/Q2 Budget Report

Vice President Shropshire stated expenses are on track. They will commit any additional resources for one-time expenditures. They will allocate 10% of operating expenses for reserve purposes. Regarding Success Funding, the DHE has not yet submitted the funds. This funding is specifically for student support.

(Attachment)

FY2025/Q2 Contracts Report

Vice President Shropshire noted the contracts report was brought as an Information item.

(Attachment)

FY2024 ACFR Report (Annual Comprehensive Financial Report)

AVP Beaulieu spoke about the Annual Comprehensive Financial

VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

Report which is submitted annually. This is the 17<sup>th</sup> year that the report has been submitted and BSU has received the award for the last 16 years. They are proud of the document as it tells the Bridgewater story. Vice President Shropshire believes the report is easily readable and is about transparency. He appreciates the work of AVP Beaulieu and her team and also thanked Vice President Jean for the efforts of his team in providing photos which tell the story. BSU is the only state university to submit the financial report.

(Attachment)

#### Capital Projects Update

Chairperson Taylor recognized Barbara Masaitis, Director for Capital Planning, who managed over \$45M in projects and counting. Their success is due to her skill in working with the Town of Bridgewater, DCAMM and various departments.

Vice President Jason is pleased to have 5 projects completed since the last report. The Burnell project is coming along as well as the Maxwell Library HVAC project.

(Attachment)

#### Master Plan

Vice President Jason stated the last master plan was in 2012 which looked out ten years. This new plan is for the next 10 years. Over 500 individuals across the university participated in the development of the plan.

Highlights from the report:

- \*A majority of BSU's land will be filled with geothermal wells.
- \*Exterior space across campus for roadways, pedestrian ways, etc.
- \*Outdoor placemaking development – park square, entrance to Kelly gym, traffic calming, the Boyden quad, new entrance to Tillinghast Hall, University Park (need more 'spaces' within the park).
- \*Major building renovation – invest in reinventing the Maxwell Library as it is not just a library. Think about using the space in a different way. Let people on the outside know what is going on in the inside. Kelly Gym to be inclusive – build a new entrance for accessibility and repurpose interior spaces. Third undertaking: RSU from a racial diversity perspective. Look at accessibility issues within the building. Tillinghast Hall is the home of Humanities and Social Sciences. Give this building an identity – Humanities pavilion. Make it a student-focused building. Harrington Hall: front entrance is not accessible. Create more student lounge space. The size of the Bookstore will be revised and moved. Use current bookstore for student space. Moakley Learning places: need to look at instructional spaces.

The plan will be posted on the website so that it is available to everyone.

(Attachment)

#### FY2026 Budget

Vice President Shropshire noted they have started the FY26 budget process and instructions have been distributed. The Governor's budget has come out with no significant increase. Success Funding is in the budget. Waiting for the House budget in mid-April. They are hoping for multiple-year funding which will allow the hiring of staff to assist with student success. The funding for the endowment match was not in the budget. They are working on enrollment projections for next year. The budget instructions for the divisions is for modest growth but there is uncertainty with federal funding.

### **RACIAL EQUITY AND JUSTICE**

Chairperson Taylor recognized Vice President Gentlewarrior's work on the RJEI summit and values her commitment.

#### Moving Equity Values to Equity Action

At the committee meeting, there was a presentation focused on how equity mindedness is being infused into the work across the campus. Laura Pistorino and Uma Shama presented on faculty who are interested in looking at equity gaps in their teaching. In working with IT, IR, Academic Affairs and faculty, data has been established. Faculty are increasingly taking the steps to look at their data and identify areas where there are performance gaps in terms of equity.  
(Attachment)

#### Enacting Equity by Design

Vice President Jason spoke at the committee meeting on how she is infusing equity into her work.  
(Attachment)

#### Updates/Discussion on Potential Impact of New Presidential Transition

President Clark provided an update at the committee meeting regarding federal funding/the national landscape.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairperson Taylor appreciates the remarkable presentations, activity and progress. "As you reflect on the future, lean on the success of the work that is being done."



VOTED  
FOR: Unanimous  
CARRIED

On motion duly made and seconded (Turchon, Prince) it was that the meeting be adjourned (8:10pm).

Respectfully submitted,

*Carolyn Turchon*

Carolyn Turchon  
Secretary

Minutes prepared by:  
Tracey Keif