

SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES MINUTES

March 24, 2023

The Slippery Rock University Council of Trustees held its quarterly business meeting Friday, March 24, 2023, in the Russell Wright Alumni House and Conference Center and via ZOOM conferencing. Chair Domenic Ionta called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

The video recording of this meeting in its entirety can be found on the Council webpage, <https://www.sru.edu/about/administration/council-of-trustees>

Recording of Attendance

Trustees present: Dr. Alfonso Angelucci, Ms. Brooklyn Graham, Mr. Domenic Ionta, Mr. Matt Lautman, Mr. William McCarrier, Ms. Elise Michaux, Mr. Jeffrey Smith, Mr. Robert Taylor, Mr. Joshua Young,

Trustees absent: Mr. Dan Lavalley, Ms. Suzanne Vessella

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Trustee Angelucci moved, second by Trustee McCarrier, approval of the March 24, 2023 meeting agenda. Motion carries. (Tab 6, Appendix A)

Approval of Minutes

Trustee McCarrier moved, second by Trustee Young, approval of the quarterly business meeting minutes w/certified copy of meeting minutes specific to action: selection of continuing candidates for the position of university president, December 9, 2022. Motion carries. (TAB 15/16, Appendix B)

Public Comments

Samantha Shaffer, Vice President of Campus Outreach, Slippery Rock Student Government Association (SRSGA)

Thank you and good afternoon. My name is Samantha Shaffer, and I am the Vice President of Outreach for Student Government Association. Our President, Hannah D'Egidio, could not be here today due to student teaching.

This spring, SGA approved 19 updates and additions to our Constitution and bylaws, including the addition of an athlete senator, a judicial branch, and an update for naming of our vice president positions to the Vice President of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging to mirror the University's office of DEIB. We are also in the process of approving new mission, vision, values, and affirmation statements.

Nicole Husnik, vice president, Finance, and her committee are busy reviewing 151 budget submissions from recognized student organizations on campus. Together, they will make a recommendation for the final 2023-2024 budget to SGA in April.

Elections for next academic year are in full swing, and Parliamentarian Chris Thrasher is heading the Election Commission. We have several candidates running for both Executive Board and Senate positions. SGA is hosting a “candidate discussion” session for the SRU community next Tuesday where students can hear the candidates discuss their platforms and goals for next year. We are also hosting a voter event on April 3 and 4 to promote voter turnout in the SGA Pavilion. We are using QR codes to encourage students to participate in the election process in choosing the student who will represent them on campus next year.

This concludes my report. I am available to answer any questions.

Presentations

Commendation: Brooklyn Graham

SRU Council of Trustees recognized Brooklyn Graham with a Commendation for her outstanding service to the University as the Student Representative to the SRU Council of Trustees. (TAB 8) (Appendix C)

To read related article, <https://www.sru.edu/news/032423a>

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

William J. Behre, Ph.D.

Good morning, Chair Ionta and trustees:

I’ll start my report with highlights of student achievements and recent campus activities.

We hosted Dr. Karen Riley, 18th president of SRU, on campus this week and she did an outstanding job addressing the assemblage at her welcome event. Karen met with numerous individuals and groups during her visit. Dr. Riley will officially assume her role as SRU President, July 1.

The Rock Life program at Slippery Rock University for students with intellectual or developmental disabilities underwent an external review last year by independent consultants to consider ways to improve the program, Rock Life will be restructured for the fall 2023 semester with new staff and curriculum. Dr. Natalie Burick, SRU director of disabilities services, will oversee the program.

State Representative Dan Miller toured the campus on March 3 with a focus on meeting with students with disabilities and faculty who work with them. Rep. Miller enjoyed lunch at Boozel Dining Hall with Student Government Association representatives and faculty who advocate for people with disabilities. Rep. Miller also toured the engineering labs and safety management facilities.

In case you missed our good news announcement, Josephine Reott, a Slippery Rock University senior civil engineering major from Butler, was presented the Italo V. (Ody) Mackin Achievement Award by the American Society of Civil Engineers’ (ASCE) Pittsburgh Section Student Awards

Foundation. This award, presented at the ASCE Pittsburgh's Engineers Week Awards Banquet, Feb. 18, in Pittsburgh, recognizes outstanding civil engineering students preparing to be future leaders of the profession. Reott received a \$2,000 cash prize and she was only one of two college students who received awards at the event.

Four SRU students had their artwork recognized in the 2022 Pittsburgh Society of Illustrators' Student Scholarship Awards competition. The society's jury selected 13 winners among 160 entries from seven schools. Samantha Dennerlein won the Ruddy Award for a painting titled "Sunrise Upon Birth," produced in the Advanced Studio Painting class. Kayla Przekop won the Ruddy Award for a digital illustration titled "Simply Elements," produced in Basic Studio Graphic Design class. Mason Bell won an honorable mention for a digital illustration titled "The Last Straw," produced in the Senior Studio Graphic Design class. Alexandra Frazier earned an honorable mention for a printmaking project titled "MOOOOO," produced in the Basic Studio Printmaking class.

Five SRU students were recognized at the Region 2 Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival at West Chester University. Tyler Parsonage won for best sound design for his work on SRU's production of "Pride and Prejudice," which was one of five plays selected for the event. Katelyn Loss was chosen as a finalist in the Musical Theatre Intensive; Alawna Mallory and Noah Reed were finalists for the Irene Ryan Acting Scholarship, and Naomi Costanza, was a semifinalist.

Slippery Rock University's Office for Inclusive Excellence will host a conversation with Gisele Barreto Fetterman, April 5, at the Miller Theatre in the Performing Arts Center. Fetterman, the partner of U.S. Sen. John Fetterman, will discuss how her intersectional identities have impacted her life's journey, as well as her work as an access and equity advocate.

Kelli Rensel, our administrative assistant in the President's Office, is leaving SRU. Today is her last day at the ROCK. She has accepted a position at a firm in Butler. I am grateful for Kelli's service and wish her well.

Chair Ionta, this concludes my report.

Committee Reports

Academic and Student Affairs Committee (Agenda, Appendix D)

Elise Michaux chairs the Academic and Student Affairs Committee and provided the following report.

Michael Zieg, Interim Provost and Chief Academic Officer, provided updates on upcoming registration for summer and fall classes and the status of the search for the Dean of the College of Engineering and Science. He thanked the faculty and staff for all of their hard work on behalf of the students this academic year.

Dean Keith Dils described programming in the College of Education that is helping prepare students to meet the need for K-12 teachers in the state. Despite declining enrollments across the state, SRU leads all institutions of higher education across the commonwealth in initial teaching certifications. He shared the strengths and initiatives of the College of Education that are driving its success.

Dr. Anthony Jones, chief diversity officer, shared the “You Belong” campaign and gave an update and overview of the President’s Commissions. He updated the council on the ongoing activities of the DEIB office, including:

- ongoing training opportunities for campus
- the DEIB Task Force, Advising Team, and Bias Response Team
- focus groups following up on the systemwide campus climate survey
- the status of the DEIB strategic plan

Dr. Amanda Yale, chief enrollment officer, provided an enrollment update for census winter and spring 2023 and new students in the pipeline for fall 2023.

- Winter session credit hour generated came in slightly down at -2.70% and spring total credit hours earned were reported at +.4% up.
- Freshman applications, offers, and deposits are up for fall 2023. Currently deposits are up by 55 students. Nearly 920 students of the 1147 deposits are already signed up for one of the seven orientation sessions. Of these students over 850 are already registered for the fall term. The first and second orientation programs, which commence April 1st, are already at capacity. Pell eligible deposits are up by 16%.
- Transfer applications, offers and deposits are also up for fall 2023. It is early in the process for transfer students. Currently total deposits are up by 31 and domestic deposits are up by 14. About 55% of all domestic deposits are from a Pennsylvania Community College.
- Graduate deposits are up by 14 for summer 2023 and down slightly for fall by -12.
- On student persistence, first to second term retention is at 92.5% vs 91.7% last year and underrepresented student retention is currently at 91.3% vs 87.7% last year.

Dr. David Wilmes, chief student affairs officer, provided an update on the Rock Life program for Fall 2023. The target goal was 15 participants and we are on track for 21 participants, exceeding our goal by 6 students.

Chair Ionta, this concludes my report.

Finance and Administrative Affairs Committee (Agenda, Appendix E)

Trustee Dan Lavalley chairs the Finance and Administrative Affairs Committee. In Trustee Lavalley’s absence, Trustee McCarrier provided the following report on his behalf.

The Finance and Administrative Affairs Committee met with the Council of Trustees Thursday afternoon and discussed several topics:

Mr. Scott Albert, associate vice president, Facilities, Environmental Safety and Sustainability, presented information on the Green Fund.

Ms. Carrie Birckbichler presented the Capital Budget which reflected the same priorities as last year, including the renovation of Morrow Field House with funding received in FY 2025-26, renovation of McKay Education in FY 2027-28, and renovation of Eisenberg Classroom Building in FY 2029-30.

Construction estimates were updated to reflect the recent increases in inflation and additional funding for the Morrow Field House renovation and the request and recommendation of the System.

Ms. Birckbichler, chief financial officer, presented the Financial and Budget Update for the second quarter of FY 2022-23. The University is projected to end the 2022-23 fiscal year in a positive position due to a combination of lower operating expenditure activity and receipt of Community and Local State Fiscal Recovery Funds (CSFRF).

The FY 2022-23 budget projections are currently under review and updated as part of the interim budget process. The approved FY 2022-23 budget originally projected a \$3 million deficit; however, \$3 million was allocated through the use of reserves for strategic initiatives including: one-time funding for student success initiatives, RCAP match, McKeever sprinkler debt and engineering lab equipment.

The University has also recognized financial benefits from a new allocation formula that was put in place for FY 2022-23.

The following action item was approved to move forward for consideration by the full Board:

- Capital Budget Submission (FY 23–24)

Information items included:

- Functional Costs 2021-2022 by Department and Academic Program
- Report of contracts and purchases issued from October 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022
- December 2022 Financial Report
- Facilities and Planning Project Lists
- Human Resources Personnel Items
- Divisional Report

Chair Ionta, this concludes my report.

University Advancement Committee (Agenda, Appendix F)

Trustee Joshua Young, committee chairperson, provided the following report.

The University Advancement Committee met this morning.

Interim Vice President Samantha Swift presented the advancement update for the first half of the 2022-23 fiscal year. The development staff had 72 meetings, 40 proposals resulting in 22 new or increased scholarships.

In December, in addition to year-end solicitations, stewardship was at the forefront. More than 550 scholarship reports were generated and provided to their donors, providing financial updates and thanks for their generosity. And on December 3, a Celebration of Giving was held here in the Alumni House to thank our most generous supporters.

We reviewed the Gift Income Report, which stated that \$1.24 million was raised as of December 31. This is a decrease from last year of approximately \$800,000. However, that gap is narrowing and as you should know, today is Giving Day. You can make your gift right now using the QR code on the back of the postcard in front of you. I hope the Council will achieve 100% participation.

Kelly Bailey, director of Alumni Engagement, provided an update on Alumni Association activities. The team recently hosted a series of events in Florida, with stops in Boca Raton, Bradenton, The Villages, Dunedin and Tampa. Over 130 alumni came out to participate in the various events. Plans are currently underway for additional spring events, including Countdown to Cap and Gown, a Philadelphia Alumni Event, the Alumni Speaker Series. Summer event planning is also in full swing with a Pirates Game, Alumni Weekend and annual the SRU Alumni & Friends Golf outing on the horizon.

The recipients of the Rock Solid 10 Under 10 Award were selected and will be recognized during a special brunch held during Alumni Weekend.

David Hollenbaugh, executive director of the SRU Foundation, discussed Foundation activities and collaboration with University Advancement, including the scholarship report project. He and AVP Scott Albert provided new information about the Police/ROTC building and Technology Park. Dave also reviewed the Balance Sheet Summaries for the Foundation and the housing LLC and the investment portfolio.

Chair Ionta, this concludes my report.

Governance Committee (Agenda, Appendix G)

Trustee Alfonso Angelucci, chair of the Governance Committee, provided the following report. Items addressed for action, discussion, and information were:

- Trustee Jeffrey Smith shared a brief PACT Update.
 - Annual PACT Spring Conference is scheduled May 3 via ZOOM.
 - There will be no PACT annual dues this year.
- Trustee Brooklyn Graham provided an update to the student trustee selection process. Trustee Graham chaired the selection committee which included union and SGA representation. Trustee Ionta served as the Council representative on the committee.
- Discussion ensued regarding ways to recruit a larger applicant pool of student trustee candidates and engage faculty in the process.
- Presented a Commendation of Service to Trustee Brooklyn Graham
- Call for Nominations: the slate of officers presented for action in June are:
 - Domenic Ionta, chair
 - Joshua Young, vice-chair
 - Student Trustee, secretary
- Discussed scheduling a summer workshop with incoming President Karen Riley.
- Calendar mentions (spring/summer 2023)
- Enrollment Management Recruitment/Career Fairs/Events (spring/summer 2023)
- SRU Council bylaws were included in the materials as information.

Chair Ionta, this concludes my report.

Executive Session (Agenda, Appendix H)

Council met this morning in executive session with President Behre and University Legal Counsel. No report; closed session.

ITEMS FOR COUNCIL ACTION

Capital Budget Submission FY 23-24 (TAB 7) (Appendix I)

Trustee Young moved, second by Trustee Angelucci, approval of the Capital Budget Submission (FY 23-24). Motion carries.

INFORMATION ITEMS

Meeting Dates:

June 8-9, 2023

HR Personnel Items (Tab 14) (Appendix J)

- Instructional Appointments: Effective Academic Year 2022-2023
- Administrator Appointment
- Management Appointments
- Support Staff Appointments
- Retirements
- Resignations
- Emeritus Status

Budget/Financial Update (TAB 12) (Appendix K)

Functional Costs: 2021-2022 (TAB 10) (Appendix L)

Contracts, Fixed Assets, Service and Supply Purchase Orders (TAB 11) (Appendix M)

Facilities & Planning Active Project List (TAB 13) (Appendix N)

Committee Presentations (TAB 9)

Divisional Reports (TAB 17)

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

With no further business, Trustee Young moved, Trustee Michaux second, to adjourn the Slippery Rock University Council of Trustees business meeting. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted: 

Tina L. Moser, Administrative Liaison to the SRU Council of Trustees

