

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES
VIA ZOOM TELECOMMUNICATIONS
CONFERENCE CALL
January 27, 2022
4:17 PM**

AGENDA ITEM I – CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Tomlinson called the meeting to order and announces the continued temporary suspension of the Pledge of Allegiance until in-person meetings resume once the COVID-19 Pandemic resolves.

Council members present were Members: Dozor, Fillippo, Franklin, Ireland, Kaliszak, Kinsey, Moskowitz, Schick, Silfa, Tomlinson.

Absent but accounted for were Members: N/A

Chairperson Tomlinson proceeds with the meeting after role call is complete.

**AGENDA ITEM II – APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING
AS DISTRIBUTED TO THE COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES**

MOTION (DOZOR/MOSKOWITZ)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 18, 2021 MEETING AS
PRESENTED**

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED

AGENDA ITEM III – PUBLIC COMMENT: LIMIT OF TEN (10) MINUTES:

Chairperson Tomlinson continues, “We now move into our public comment. At this time, we invite anyone who wishes to address the Council of Trustees to please use the “Raise Hand” feature which will put you into the queue. When it is your turn, we’ll announce your name and we will open your microphone for comment. Please remember to limit your remarks to two minutes. And the only name that I really have right now, and John I’ll ask you to help me in case I don't get any, but I think we have Margaret Ervin to make some comments.

Margaret Ervin replies, Yes, thank you, Senator Tomlinson. That's Margaret Ervin and I'm the President of APSCUF and I welcome an opportunity to say a few words on behalf of our faculty and coaches union. So, this week and next, as you’ve heard, the faculty are teaching remotely, meaning that during a class’s regularly scheduled time, professors are meeting with their students via Zoom and delivering their lectures, or having their discussions or seminars, virtually. So, this pivot to online instruction, it's familiar to us at this point having taught virtually throughout the 2020-2021 school year, but none of us really, during the fall semester, which went so much better than we could have expected in terms of COVID cases could have predicted the OMICRON surge. So, we did not have a chance to plan for online lectures and seminars until a little less than two weeks before the start of the semester. And I think we can be, and you all should be, very proud of my colleagues for their resilience; for their willingness and energy; and especially for always and consistently putting the needs of students first. And listening in on Council of Trustees meetings, I always appreciate hearing from Senator Tomlinson, who attends games and gives a shout out to our wonderful coaches, and I thank Judge Dozor for his comments and support of the Department of Anthropology.

But I also would like to say that when I hear from faculty, some of the things that they talk about really are students and student needs. And I'll always say, well we don't represent the students, and they'll say but really the students are the most important thing. And so in that vein, I just wanted to share that there are concerns for students in terms of their mental health, in terms of their welfare, in terms of what used to be called the digital divide between the haves and have nots when it comes to resources to connect a high speed internet, to connect to zoom calls, to have computers that have the latest operating systems. And my colleagues are consistently expressing that the pandemic has had a really profound impact on the welfare of students. So I just wanted to share that with you. I don't want to always be the downer in the room but, this is something that is not going to go away soon and it's just something that the Council of Trustees and the whole university needs to unfortunately be aware of. It's going to take some time to adjust, it's not going to go back to normal, I'm not sure I would really use the word "new normal" to describe some of the things that are going on for students and for faculty related to the pandemic. I thank you for your time tonight, and I thank you for your attention and giving me the opportunity to address you. Have a great evening.

Chairperson Tomlinson, "Margaret, thank you very much. We really appreciate your comments.

Other any other Members, that would care to address the Council of Trustees that we know of, John.

Seeing none.

AGENDA ITEM IV – REPORT OF THE COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

None

AGENDA ITEM V – REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Chairperson Tomlinson continues, “we’ll move on to the report of the University President. I now call on President Fiorentino for his report, President Fiorentino.”

President Fiorentino proceeds with his report. “Thank you, Senator Tomlinson, and good afternoon everybody; nice to see you all.

Well, you've heard some of the background of what's been going on, and I want to comment on a few of those things and a few other things.

First of all, I do want to say a few words about the decision that we made regarding starting this semester remotely. It was not a decision that was taken lightly, and we feel, frankly, that it has turned out to be a good idea for us. We just announced that we are planning to return to face-to-face on Monday February 7 as we had originally hoped. But I want to take a moment to give a little background into the process that led to our decision to start remote for two weeks. Essentially, we all saw what was happening with the OMICRON variant. The interesting thing about the variant is that it is significantly more contagious than any of the previous variations of COVID. Although for vaccinated people, all indications are that the symptoms are much less significant. One of the big differences between last semester when we were face-to-face and starting out this semester, is last semester, when the Delta variant was the primary concern, it was if people were vaccinated, they were generally seen as very safe. You know, if they were vaccinated, and hopefully boosted, and wearing masks, were very safe and unable to continue and the risk was really focused on the people who have chosen not to be vaccinated.

We saw that as a personal choice for individuals and not something that we had any control over, and we felt comfortable operating the university face-to-face with the rules that we had imposed. Now, a big difference this time is that there are so many more breakthrough cases for vaccinated people that many of the students and faculty who have done everything that we asked were contracting the virus. And the big issue was not how many cases we had per se, we're hearing, obviously, getting lots of information about this. We knew there would be cases, but the fact that we were concerned about was that according to the CDC guidelines, people who contracted the virus were still going to have to quarantine - whether they be students or faculty or staff. And my big concern was that if we began this semester face-to-face and all of a sudden found a significant percentage of our students contracting the virus and being unable to attend class; and perhaps even more concerning, a significant number of faculty contracting the virus and having to quarantine and then ending up having to cancel a significant percentage of our classes - this was a big concern that we believe could be mitigated by starting out remotely for the first couple of weeks. We had every indication from the modeling that the number of cases would be dropping dramatically within the first couple of weeks. We have seen that, that has been borne out, and as I said, on the basis of what we're seeing, we know already made the announcement that we will switch back to the face-to-face starting on February 7.

And I do want to comment on a couple other things. We made a decision that the classes would be remote, but we did open the campus. And we had some people concerned, "well you know, if you don't want to have classes, why are you opening the campus?" Well, for one thing, that the classes are the activities that are the most concentrated and one of our big concerns actually was the thing that Dr. Ervin raised, and that was the digital divide that we knew we had a lot of students who perhaps didn't have access to high levels of connectivity, and by opening the campus we made the campus connectivity, all

the computer labs, the campus wi-fi, and so forth, all available to our students. So if they they didn't have high powered or reliable connectivity, they could be on the campus and have access to it. So again, not a perfect situation but we felt that that was going to be putting our students in the best position to be successful. So, that was the reasoning and again, we feel that it was a good decision. Even if people look at it in retrospect, and say well gee, you didn't really need to do that, we knew that we were creating a reliable situation for the first two weeks, where faculty, even if they had tested positive and couldn't be on campus, as long as they didn't have a serious case of the virus, they could still conduct their classes remotely, synchronously, and that guaranteed that we had the greatest likelihood that our classes would be held. Dr. Osgood reported that what we've seen is that the faculty have indeed been holding their classes as we expected. So, we were expecting to move through this first two-week period smoothly again, not an ideal situation, but we're doing the best we can to manage our way through it.

And I guess the thing, the last thing that I would say is that we find ourselves in a position where we're making decisions under conditions of uncertainty. We don't know what's going to happen, we've obviously, we've had things move up and down. Back in the summer, we found ourselves in a very low ebb where people were even leaving home without masks anymore, because everything seemed to be under control, and then of course it came back in the fall, and then of course, it came back again here in the spring. So that's why we did what we did, and again we feel that it was the best decision and it was in the best interest of the campus community and as of February 7, we'll be moving forward face-to-face. And I will add that we will be maintaining the masking requirements that we established in the fall, we will continue to do aggressive testing. If you have questions about that all that is explained on the website, I don't want to take up a lot of time today getting into the details of that, but we will continue to be testing the student population, making testing available to the campus community in general, and requiring masks be worn

in the buildings. And I will make one statement about the masking. We learned that the cotton masks that many of us have been wearing, that we've been issuing are the non-surgical and non-KN95 masks, now have been found to not be very useful, so we are requiring that either surgical mask or KN95 or even the extreme N95 masks be worn. We're making them widely available to students faculty staff on the campus and we will continue that requirement through the semester. But we now anticipate we will be able to get back to life as it existed in the fall, where we will be conducting our classes face-to-face, the appropriate classes. And we'll hope that the virus will continue to dissipate and move us to a more stable situation going forward.

So that's my wrap up on that and now I'll stop for a moment to see if there any questions about that, before I complete the rest of my report.

Vice Chair Dozor comments, "Chris you're doing a marvelous job we're really very, very proud of you."

President Fiorentino continues his report, "Thank you Barry I appreciate that. We're trying to make decisions in the best interest of the students, you know, again, as Margaret Ervin reflected, that's our focus. We appreciate the work of our faculty, we did throw them a curveball, we tried to give them as much lead time as possible to prepare, but it was not very much lead time and they have absolutely stepped up and done what we needed them to do as we continue to work our way through this absolutely extraordinary time.

So, moving on with some other things. Obviously, the circumstances around the pandemic continue to impact other campus activities beyond just the classroom. We do have a lot of events planned face-to-face for the spring semester. We're trying to take this a little at a time, obviously we had hoped

after our last COT meeting to have this one face-to-face and realized that was probably not a great idea, under the circumstances. We've had some events for example, we had a Tanglewood Dinner that was planned for next week and we decided to postpone that. As we move through late February and into March, we continue to hope that we're going to be able to conduct our events and activities face-to-face. But we'll play it by ear, we'll see how things progress, and will adapt as we get better information.

As of now John Villella mentioned the Gala on April 2 where we're hoping very much that we'll be able to have that face-to-face at Longwood Gardens. It's the "All President Gala," we'll remind you that we've invited all of the all of the living Presidents, both permanent and interim, back to celebrate with us and Madeline Adler and Greg Weinstein have both accepted our invitation and are planning to attend. Stanley Yarosewick and Linda Lammers who served as interim Presidents have also indicated that they're happy to attend so, we're looking forward to that. It'll be a great event; sort of a reunion, for many of us to see some of the former leaders who we haven't seen for some time. And again, hopefully, the pandemic will cooperate with that.

We're also planning for our spring graduations to be face-to-face. As of now, we'll move ahead with those plans and we were successful last year, and as long as the circumstances allow it, we will again hold our commencement ceremonies face-to-face.

An update on the SECC building. We've continued to be frustrated by delays, but I received a report from Todd Murphy earlier today that we are, as of today, going through some of the file inspections, the certificate of occupancy, L&I inspections, the public health inspections, and we're looking forward to having access to the full building and parking in the near future.

So again, the building is coming along, it's spectacular. The dining side of the building is really virtually finished again, we're just going through the final

inspections to make sure that it's ready for food service, food service inspections are critical. And at this point we have what Todd characterized as a punch list of things that we have to try to accomplish between now and early next week, and we're optimistic that those things are going to be accomplished. There are still some additional parts of the building that we're going to be finishing up over the course of the semester and we are very much looking forward to being able to open it after spring break this year. Work on the new garage continues, and again, we're again hopeful that it's going to be completed sometime around the middle of this semester. But I'm not prepared to make that announcement at this point, the progress is being made and we're looking forward to having that additional garage with another 400+ spaces on the campus.

The work related to Sturzebecker, the renovations down there. The work has started in earnest in the planning phase of things, making sure that the things that we're going to do are going to meet the needs of those who are going to be in the building. Athletics, kinesiology, and sports medicine are the programs that are going to be down there, and of course there are lots of other events and activities down there that support the community, and also provide needed resources to support our athletic program. So, we're looking forward to that work being undertaken, full bore in terms of the actual physical work and ultimately getting that building back into operation.

We've had some conversation already about the 150th anniversary. To some extent I'm disappointed that the 150th has been in this crazy year of the pandemic but, we're making the best of it! We've had some great events, great videos, and we continue to have additional events planned over the spring semester that hopefully, we'll be able to hold face-to-face. So, again, the great traditions of this institution and we're delighted to be celebrating them with everybody.

Also, John commented on the work in the Foundation. We're in the capital campaign and making progress towards the goal. There was a Foundation Board meeting held Tuesday of this week, and they rolled out some of the fundraising videos that that they have produced and they're absolutely terrific! We had comments from the three co-chairs of the of the campaign and we're very optimistic about the upcoming success of the fundraising effort. The campaign at this point is, is at about almost 70% of goal and we still have time to continue to raise funds to complete that goal of \$65 million.

We're rolling into some facilities master planning, I just want to mention that, again, this is something, of course, that will be involving the COT going forward and it's time for us to really step back. Dr. Bernotsky mentioned that some of the recent things that have occurred in terms of refunds and other challenges related to the pandemic. We've stepped back and put some things on hold, but our planning continues as we move forward into the future for the institution. And, as several have mentioned things are tracking well for next year, so far, so we're looking forward to things getting back to normal in the next academic year.

And I do want to just make a comment, Dr. Osgood mentioned the transition of West Chester University to become a research II doctoral institution. This, this is not actually something that we had as a strategic goal it's just something that was accomplished by the hard work, primarily of the Faculty on the campus in terms of their research efforts, but also the administrators and staff supporting the Faculty. I do want to stress the fact that while we have qualified as a research II institution, we are still committed to the to the teaching mission in this mission of this institution. That is not changing and we remain focused on that. But, as of this time we also can boast the fact that we have an incredible faculty who are not only outstanding, dedicated teachers, but also collectively outstanding researchers. And a kudos to them for this outstanding accomplishment for the institution!

Work continues on the system efforts on integration thanks to several members of the Cabinet, who are very involved in the leadership at the system level, Dr. Davenport, Dr. Robinson played key roles, as well as Mr. Murphy, and Dr. Bernotsky, Dr. Osgood, everybody's playing roles. I have to give an extra shout out to Laurie, she's very involved in assisting schools involved in the integration processes. She and I are working with Matt Delaney, the Provost from Kutztown, to provide support to the Penn-West integration to try to help them assemble a plan that's going to maximize the likelihood of success.

And also I'll mentioned that I continue to be involved in the system wide collective bargaining activities that are going on in support of trying to make sure that the factors that are related to the integrations that don't fit well with the existing collective bargaining agreement are being considered and being worked out in negotiations with .

So with that Senator, that completes my remarks and I will ask for the approval of the Purchase Orders and Contracts for October through November 30, 2021.

MOTION (FRANKLIN/IRELAND):

**APPROVAL OF PURCHASE ORDERS AND CONTRACTS FOR
OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2021.**

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

AGENDA ITEM VI – REPORT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT:

None.

AGENDA ITEM VII – REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

None

AGENDA ITEM VIII – REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES:

Chairperson Tomlinson continues the meeting, “Would a member of each committee please report that the committee has met, provide a summary of your committee meeting, and present resolutions for consideration? First is Finance and Administration resolution, Chris Franklin.”

Member Franklin proceeds, “Thank you, Chairman. The committee has met, thoroughly reviewed the financials and all related materials, and we have no real resolutions to present today.”

Chairperson Tomlinson continues, “Academic and Student Affairs, Sue Schick.”

Member Schick reports, “Yes, Hello. Zeb and Todd and I met and we discussed future ways that I can contribute in an even bigger way to the Academic and Student Affairs, so I really appreciated their feedback. And we'll be bringing some topics to future meetings to kind of deep dive further. And we have no resolutions today.”

Chairperson Tomlinson continues, “Thank you, Sue. University Affairs, Jon Ireland?”

Member Ireland proceeds, "I'm having technical difficulties I apologize, my mic is not working. For the sake of time, maybe John you can read this for me."

Dr. Vilella responds for Member Ireland, "I'm happy to. No resolutions for University Affairs for this time around, and then everything that that Jon had in his report is listed in the actual materials that have been given to each of the Members. So, I think we could probably suspend with any more time on today's meeting. Thank you Jon appreciate your help, though."

Chairperson Tomlinson thanks Dr. Vilella.

AGENDA ITEM IX – REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE:

None

AGENDA ITEM X – REPORT OF LIASON PERSON TO CONSTITUENCIES:

Chairperson Tomlinson continues, "Erin Kaliszak, would you please give us your report on Student Liaison?"

Member Erin Kaliszak gives her report, "Yep, absolutely! Well, good evening everyone. With the spring 2022 semester upon us, there are a lot of different student initiatives happening. So, first to kick off this semester, the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement will be hosting a virtual involvement fair, via RamConnect starting on Tuesday, February 1 and running until Friday, February 18. The Office is encouraging student organizations to be active via video chat at some point during the window of 11am to 2pm on Tuesday,

February 3 to answer students' questions and to assist in facilitating student involvement among our 300+ student organizations.

Additionally, the Office of Student Leadership and Involvement will be hosting a four session spring organization refresh meeting via Zoom within the first few weeks of classes where there will be a member of each organization required to attend. This meeting will be utilized for mind organizations of the various policies and procedures that we have in place to assist in their overall success.

And, finally, they will be running a positive mask reinforcement campaign led by the Office of Student Affairs to reward students who are wearing their masks correctly in and out and around Sykes.

And next, I have a report from Cara Jenkins, who is the Director of Sorority and Fraternity Life regarding panhellenic recruitment. So during the 2020-2021 academic year, the university's fraternities and sororities transitioned recruitment online to accommodate for the health and safety concerns created by the pandemic. This past fall, they were back in person and had a 74% increase of new members from fall 2020. For this semester, the timing of panhellenic recruitment being during the OMICRON meant that woman had to again pivot the conduct of recruitment events via Zoom. And approximately 300 women are proud of a part of this process as potential members and an additional 500 students are current members doing the recruiting and serving on the panhellenic recruitment staff. The Inner Fraternity Council recruitment process kicks off on February 15 and numbers are looking ahead of this time last year.

And, and the national panhellenic and counsel and multicultural Greek Council chapters will all be conducting their individual intake processes this semester as well. Overall, fraternity and sorority membership remains consistent with 1,689 as compared to the 1,697 from previous fall semesters.

Given the transition from remote to in person learning and the transient nature of fraternity and sorority membership, the sustainability of these organizations remains extremely remarkable which will also have a lasting impact on overall retention.

And then, finally, I just have a quick update on the Student Trustee search process. We're in the process of scheduling and conducting interviews with potential candidates and once the search committee has made their recommendation, it will be sent over to the President's Office for approval and then from there to the Board of Governors. And then I'll be using the remainder of the semester to train and introduce the next Trustee to all of you.

And with that that's the end of my report.”

Chairperson Tomlinson thanks Member Kaliszak for her report.

AGENDA ITEM XI – OLD BUSINESS:

None

AGENDA ITEM XII – NEW BUSINESS:

Vice Chairperson Dozor proceeds, “I just want to report on two things. As a follow up of my participation and just listening in on the Chancellor's report to the Trustees yesterday. It was so obvious to me that virtually all the major challenges to these schools, that West Chester is saved in a lot of different ways for a lot of good reasons. But it's obvious that, and I just wanted all the Trustees to appreciate as I appreciate that you know, having Tommy Tomlinson

and Marian Moskowitz and State Representative Stephen Kinsey you know lobbying on our behalf at Harrisburg, and in the government, and the Board of Governors. It really really really makes a heck of a difference. And our President is so blessed having the three of them, you know advocating, as we all do, but they're in a special position to do it and it's so obvious to me that we're so well served and I just want to mention that to you.

Also, if I might ask, at our next meeting, maybe again it's time to return to campus? And maybe we would consider returning to campus that our next meeting, of course we're in masks. And also maybe at a later time when the school thinks it's appropriate, maybe one of our Trustee meetings can be in this new building. You know, I think, having a Trustee meeting in this brand new beautiful building that's almost up, you know, almost ready to go at the appropriate time in 2022, would be really fantastic.

President Fiorentino replies, "I think that's a great idea."

Chairperson Tomlinson continues, "thank you for your comments, and I actually agree with you, Barr. Let's hope in two months things are good enough that we can maybe get back on campus for an in person meeting, and even still maybe offer the Zoom option. We're still doing that in Harrisburg, we're in person, we have a few Members that have some health issues so, we allow them to Zoom even though we're in session. We're not going full Zoom, but we do allow certain Members to Zoom. So I think, maybe being back on campus would be a good thing. And in two months, it might work out well, so thank you very much for that comment, and I join you in that and Chris will see if we can't make that work.

And, with that yeah, just to add to it, evaluations for our President, and even talking with other Members that we talked with, the Chancellor, we're doing a

great job here. To our leadership team and the administration and our board, it's pretty easy to pick up that West Chester's in a pretty good position and our leadership team here under Chris's leadership is doing a good job. So, I'm very proud to be your president of the Board, because you make it very easy for me. So thank you for that.

AGENDA ITEM XII – ADJOURNMENT:

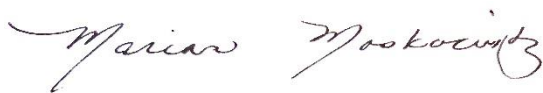
Chairperson Tomlinson, “And with that this ends our Council of Trustees meeting. Thank you for joining us and I want to send everyone the best wishes in good health, safe, and pleasant holidays, I now ask for motion to adjourn.”

MOTION (MOSKOWITZ/DOZOR)

MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 5:21 P.M.

MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Respectfully submitted,



Marian Moskowitz