

**Approved**

OCT 19 2017

**Board of Trustees Finance Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, April 25, 2017  
Fitchburg State University  
Presidents' Hall, Mazzaferro Center  
291 Highland Ave., Fitchburg, MA 01420**

**Fitchburg State University  
Board of Trustees**

**Board members present**

Donald Irving, Michael Mahan, Anthony Mercadante, C. Deborah Phillips

**Also present**

Richard S. Lapidus, Jay Bry, Gail Doiron, Mary Beth McKenzie, Marilyn Siderwicz, Cathy Canney, Alberto Cardelle

**1. Opening of Meeting**

A. Call to Order

Chairman Mercadante called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

**2. Consideration of Minutes**

A. Consideration of Minutes from the November 2, 2016 Board of Trustees Finance Committee meeting VOTE (21-16/17)

Motion: It is requested that the Board of Trustees Finance Committee approve the November 2, 2016 meeting minutes as presented.

Motion by Donald Irving; second by Michael Mahan  
Final Resolution: Motion Carries

**3. FY18 Budget Discussion**

A. FY2018 Budget narrative

President Lapidus presented a budget narrative. He explained that the educational landscape is changing and that demographically there are less students graduating from high school. He talked about increased competition for student enrollment and that students are better informed. He also stated that there are underrepresented populations that continue to be underserved and that the University will need to be more aggressive in promoting the value of education to these groups. He also talked about the University more tightly aligning curriculum to the needs of the marketplace. There are plenty of high paying jobs, it is just those graduating do not always have the necessary skill sets to be competitive when seeking these opportunities. There will continued focus on academic reconfiguring. There was a discussion.

New student applications are strong and trending positively. To date applications are ahead of those at the same time last year. We could be on track for a very healthy incoming class.

Residence hall activity is also strong. The University purchased Simonds Hall; it is now sold-out for next semester.

The University invested heavily on recruiting side with the implementation of Customer Relationship Management software. Processes have been more fully automated helping to expedite information and build stronger relationships with students. It is too early to tell but the Admissions Office believes they are running smoother operationally. Our Student Orientation programs have also been improved. New software packages have also been implemented to track student performance. There was a discussion.

The University has a fully online MBA program. There was a discussion on the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA). SARA is a voluntary agreement among member states and U.S. territories establishing comparable national standards for interstate delivery of postsecondary distance-education courses and programs.

The three bargaining units are beginning contract negotiations. There was a discussion on the early retirement program. The early retirement program gave the University the opportunity to rethink staffing needs.

We have been aggressively improving the campus infrastructure. Windows have been sealed and insulation improved in many buildings. The University is committed to continue working on energy efficiency. The chiller project, and work in residence halls is ongoing. The Theatre project will kick-off soon and the Landry Arena renovations will also begin.

#### B. Annual Operating Budgets FY16-FY18

The president sought approval from the Board for a level funded budget this year.

#### C. FY2018 Fund Change Summary.

Mr. Bry discussed the fund change summary. There was a discussion.

### **4. FY2018 Fees Discussion**

#### A. Student Fee Increase – VOTE (22-16/17)

President Lapidus stated that the increase of 20 dollars is designed to assist in keeping technology up-to-date.

#### B. On-line RN to BSN program fee – VOTE (23-16/17)

President Lapidus stated that the fees are based in part on the recommendation from consultants from Academic Partnerships, to keep the program competitive relative to local and regional pricing. They are asking recommending a small reduction in fees. It positions the program slightly under a competitor, but not necessarily the low cost leader. The president explained Academic Partnerships (AP) is a group that provides backend services to universities. They have no role in curriculum related matters. They provide marketing, recruiting, and customer

management systems functions. He stated that they will be using marketing techniques that are beyond campus capabilities. Aggressively marketing our online programs will increase our national visibility. The campus has been successful at attracting students from many other states which is a form of diversity. AP has been successful in other schools. There was a discussion.

C. On-line M.Ed. Curriculum and Teaching program fee – VOTE (24-16/17)

D. On-line M.Ed. Educational Leadership and Management program fee – VOTE (25-16/17)

E. Extended Campus Programs Fee Increases for the Wilson Language Training Program – VOTE (26-16/17)

F. Extended Campus Programs Fee Increase for Research for Better Teaching (RBT) – VOTE (27-16/17)

Motion: It is requested that the Board of Trustees Finance Committee approve by way of consensus vote, items A. through F. as presented.

Motion by Michael Mahan; second by Donald Irving  
Final Resolution: Motion Carries

## **5. FY18 Budget VOTE**

A. FY2018 Budget- VOTE (28-16/17)

Motion: It is requested that the Board of Trustees Finance Committee approve the FY2018 Budget as presented by the President.

Motion by Donald Irving; second by Michael Mahan  
Final Resolution: Motion Carries

B. Roll forward of funds to FY2018 Budget – VOTE (29-16/17)

Motion: It is requested that the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees Finance Committee vote to recommend that ongoing capital projects roll forward into the FY2018 University Budget.

Motion by Donald Irving; second by Michael Mahan  
Final Resolution: Motion Carries

## **6. Deferred Maintenance VOTE**

A. Deferred Maintenance – VOTE (30-16/17)

Mr. Bry presented the deferred maintenance vote. He asked to take one million dollars from reserves. There was a discussion.

Motion: It is requested that the Fitchburg State University Board of Trustees Finance Committee vote to recommend the president's recommendation to transfer \$1,000,000 from reserves to the capital project fund (CPRO) as a match to Commonwealth deferred maintenance funds.

Motion by Michael Mahan; second by Donald Irving

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

**7. Adjournment**

A. Adjourn the Meeting

Mr. Irving stated that he was impressed with the budget presentation and the narrative.

With no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Anthony Mercadante  
Chair, Finance and Administration Committee