

**East Stroudsburg University  
Council of Trustees Minutes  
September 22, 2021  
In Person and Via Zoom**

1. **Call to Order:** The regular meeting of the East Stroudsburg University Council of Trustees was called to order at 4:04 p.m. by Chair Pat Ross.

2. **Roll Call:** Completed by the Recording Secretary Marcy L. Cetnar, the following members were present:

Mr. Frank Epifano	Mr. Bruno Klaus	Ms. Tameko Patterson
Mr. Thomas Grayuski	Mr. Marcus Lingenfelter (Zoom)	Mr. Pat Ross
Mr. William Green	Ms. Tina Nixon (Zoom)	Mr. Paul Shemansky

The following members were not present:

Mr. Edward Abraham	Mr. John Pekarovsky III
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3. **Public Comment:**

**None**

4. **Approval of Minutes:**

**Trustee Grayuski made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 29, 2021 meeting; Trustee Epifano seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

5. **Interim President's Report:**

Interim President Long reported we enter this academic year with great optimism and anxiety. Optimism because we were able to effectively bring all our students, faculty, and staff back to campus after nearly 18 months with most of the campus operating primarily remotely. Anxiety because we return to campus with many unknown and uncertainty.

Since the Council's last meeting, much has happened both at ESU and within the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. At the end of the Spring 2021 semester, the university conducted six commencement ceremonies, including a separate ceremony for doctoral graduates, a Nursing Pinning ceremony, and numerous other ends of the year celebrations. The separate ceremony for the doctoral graduate was held in Abeloff, where recipients were joined by their entire immediate family; it was truly special to have, spouses, children, parents and even grandparent attend this special occasion. All other ceremonies were held in Eiler-Martin Stadium, something that was done in more than 30 years.

Also, at the end of the Spring semester, a few of our athletic programs and athletes had good seasons, including:

- Men's Outdoor Track and Field finished second at the PSAC Championship.
- Softball completed the regular season with a 26-14 record and receive a bid to the NCAA Tournament ultimately coming up short in the regional finals.
- Women's Lacrosse finished the season with a 10-3 overall record and for the 4th consecutive season earning a NCAA Tournament bid. ESU advanced to tournament semi-finals before losing.
- Women's wrestler Mia Macaluso won the USA Junior National Championship and represented the United States on the Junior World Team and competed this summer in 2021 Junior World Championships in Russia

During the summer, the Pennsylvania State System Board of Governor voted to approve a 3rd consecutive year of no change in undergraduate tuition; while many of us welcomed this effort to maintain public higher education

affordability in the Commonwealth, this action put additional strain on universities because of contractual salary increases and general inflation. Also, this summer, the Board of Governors approved the integration of: California, Clarion and Edinboro forming the Western Integration; and Bloomsburg, Lock Haven and Mansfield forming the Northeast Integration. These six universities are working feverously to be integrated by Fall 2022. It was my expectation that by this time most of the country would be vaccinated and COVID-19 would be much like a bad flu season and masks would not a requirement to keep our campus safe. Despite the continued impact of COVID-19, we can't let it change our commitment as educators and must continue to provide our students with the best education and college experience possible. We must accept the possibility that the new normal will be much different from the past.

At start this new academic year, we recognized Dr. Shala Davis and Dr. Nancy Van Arsdale as Distinguished Faculty. We have Family Weekend last weekend. And to kick off it, we recognized Representative Peter Schweyer from the 22nd district as legislative fellow.

We continue to face many other challenges that have nothing to do with the COVID-19 pandemic. As students returned to campus four weeks ago, move-in weekend was so unlike past year. Not only were there first year students moving into residential halls for the first time, but we also welcomed all of 2nd year student that were remote last year, now living on-campus; during move-in, I wasn't sure who was more excited that we were allowing students to reside on campus, the students, or the parents.

Despite the excitement of having everyone back at ESU, we have a decrease in Fall-to-Fall enrollment. For Fall 2021, we have slightly more than 5100 students enrolled, a decrease of 12% from last year. While we recognize that demographic shifts in the traditional college age student and declines in the number of high school graduates both have had an impact on college enrollment, but neither of these factors, at least from where we historically recruit students, are at the scale of our enrollment drop. I am convinced that most of our enrollment woes are self-inflicted, therefore we can fix it. We must get doing the things that made ESU a school of choice in our region. We must get back to the basics: These basics include being in the high schools, on the phone, responding promptly to inquiries, and today, effectively using social media. Regardless of all the other noise, whether it's the pandemic, system redesign or integration, student success must be and remain everyone's top priority. Every employee at ESU, from student support services, facilities, campus safety, IT, athletics, along with all our faculty, staff, and administrators, play an important role in making our enrollment and retention efforts successful in the end. Fortunately, we have the financial resources to immediately act. ESU is one of the financially healthiest universities within the State System. And we will rely on some of these financial resources to strengthen our recruitment operations, better leverage student aid and address other deficiencies that have inhibited our ability to attract and retain students.

That concludes the Interim President's report.

#### **6. Chair's Report:**

Trustee Ross thanked the Trustees in attendance today as this is the first face-to-face meeting since February 2019. Trustee Ross thanked the President and all ESU faculty and staff for working together and moving forward with the successful reopening and he has the utmost confidence that ESU will return full force. Trustee Ross offered congratulations to Dr.'s Nancy Van Arsdale and Shala Davis being awarded Distinguished Professor. Trustee Ross provided an update on the Presidential search which started in 2020 and has been suspended and currently on hold. The Search Committee is working with the Chancellor who will let the them know when to restart. President Long has done a great job going through the pandemic and ESU could not have anyone better in leading us. Former Trustee Amy Welsh is undergoing some medical issues, please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.

#### **7. Secretary's Report:**

Trustee Shemansky reported the Trustees have received corresponds through the ESUCOT mailbox from students. All correspondence has been directed to the appropriate divisions and or individuals to respond to all questions and concerns. A new ESU sign has been installed on the Veteran's Memorial Bridge.

## 8. Committee Reports

### A. University Affairs Committee:

President Long shared the committee heard from each of the divisional heads who provided an update on the actions taking place in their area. Highlights included discussion of the System Redesign and the Comprehensive Planning Process which involves all 14 universities providing strategic direction, financial sustainability, and important goals and objectives for the institution not just for the current year but for multiple years. Admission and Finance provided an update on our financial sustainability as well as projects we are working on and moving forward. Enrollment management provided an update on current enrollment which is down and also shared some of the actions that are taking place to address the enrollment decline. Campus Life and Inclusive Excellence discussed the activities taking place in residence halls and dining services with an emphasis on the number of vacant positions in dining services due to inability to find people to work. Also discussed were efforts they are making to help with DEI across the campus, particularly on the hiring of faculty. Intercollegiate Athletics reported fall sports is back in action and looking forward to all winter and spring sports to be ready for competition. The Committee's questions and concerns were satisfactorily answered.

### B. Campus Environment Committee:

VP Santiago Solis provided an update on Campus Life & Inclusive Excellence including conversation about health and wellness across campus and the hiring of two new counselors for the Counseling Center which is now fully staffed. A COVID-19 Reporting Dashboard update and how the pandemic is affecting students. Also discussed the testing taking place and vaccination clinics provided across campus. DEI programming taking place throughout the semester and updates on residential and dining services. The committee reviewed of the Time, Place, and Manner Policy. The Committee's questions and concerns were satisfactorily answered.

### C. Finance Committee:

Trustee Grayuski reported department heads provided comprehensive reports on their financial areas. The Foundation reported that considering the extraordinary challenges faced with COVID, they were successful with fundraising efforts and realize there is a way to go and they have plans in place to increase level of giving. Enrollment continues to be a challenge, there is a plan in place to increase enrollment that we feel will be sustainable in the future. Areas of consideration are campus tours, visits to schools especially local districts, and focusing on online apps to reach perspective students. Discussed the FY 2021 Preliminary Audit result. Certainly COVID had an adverse financial impact but despite, we are doing well with our financial ratios, cash balances, and managing our debt appropriately. In doing so we are on sound financial footing compared to some peer institutions which is encouraging as well.

Trustee Grayuski presented the following action items:

- (1) CFO, Donna Bulzoni presented the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget. The Committee's questions and concerns were satisfactorily answered. **Trustee Patterson made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget; Trustee Shemansky seconded; a roll-call vote was taken. All yay votes from the Trustees. The motion carried.**
- (2) The Committee reviewed the Cash Disbursement Reports for April 1 through August 31, 2021, and found that all were handled appropriately and were in order. All questions and concerns were answered satisfactorily. **Trustee Nixon made a motion for the approval of the Cash Disbursement Reports for April 1 through August 31, 2021; Trustee Epifano seconded; a roll-call vote was taken. Eight yay, 1 abstention. The motion carried.**

- (3) The Committee reviewed the listing of non-bid purchases made under authority of Act 57 from April 7 through August 13, 2021, and found that all were handled appropriately and were in order. All questions and concerns were answered satisfactorily. **Trustee Shemansky made a motion to approve the Act 57 purchases report from April 7 through August 13, 2021; Trustee Patterson seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

Informational items discussed included Facilities Project Status Update and the Report of Notice to Proceed on Construction Contracts. The Committee's questions and concerns were satisfactorily answered.

**D. Strategic Initiatives Committee:**

Trustee Lingenfelter thanked and welcomed Interim Provost Dr. Margaret Ball for assuming the post and for leading us through these difficult times. Dr. Ball provided a very informative briefing on best practices used to continuously improve student learning outcomes. She also provided an updated on the successful opening for the institution for the semester and provided a briefing on the Provost Colloquium Series demonstrating we are an influential asset of the Pocono's and the role we play. The Committee's questions and concerns were satisfactorily answered.

**9. Old Business:**

- A. None

**10. New Business:**

- B. **Appointing Interim and Acting Chief Executive Officers:** Trustee Ross asked for a motion to accept the Appointing of Campus Interim and Acting Chief Executive Officers for the 2021-2022 Academic Year as required by the PASSHE BOG Policy 1983-14-A. **Trustee Green made a motion to approve the Appointing Interim and Acting Chief Executive Officers for the 2021-2022 Academic Year according to BOG Policy 1983-14-A; Trustee Nixon seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**
- C. Next meeting of the East Stroudsburg University Council of Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, December 2, 2021.

**11. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned by Trustee Ross at 4:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Shemansky  
Council Secretary

Recording Secretary: Marcy L. Cetnar