

**East Stroudsburg University
Council of Trustees Minutes
October 5, 2023
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 4:20 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 (zoom) Ms. Tameko Patterson Mr. Pat Ross (Zoom)
Mr. Thomas Grayuski Mr. John Pekarovsky III Mr. Paul Shemansky
Ms. Damali Jackson

The following members were not present:

Mr. Edward Abraham Mr. Bruno Klaus Mr. Marcus Lingenfelter
Ms. Tina Nixon

3. **Public Comment:**
None
4. **Approval of Minutes:**
Trustee Patterson made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 7, 2023, meeting; Trustee Pekarovsky seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.
5. **President's Report:**
President Long reported we are wrapping-up the six weeks of the Fall 2023 semester and the university has not been this active in several years.

In addition to the rash of Facility and IT projects, which took place during the summer, between May and August, the University hosted sixty-five internal and external camp groups, totally nearly fifty-five hundred campers; 8 New Student Orientations and 5 Apply in July events. Couple this with Year-end closing and Fall planning, it would be an understatement to just say this summer was very busy. Some of the notable projects completed include upgrades of technology in classrooms; replacement of the elevators in Denike ad Gessner; installation of a new video board and LED lights in the stadium and a video board in at Whitenight Field; and digital scoreboards at Creekview Park for baseball and softball. As you drive through campus you cannot miss the steel beams being installed for the University Center.

The State budget was passed in August and provided the State System with a historic 6.1% increase in appropriate, resulting in a 4.4% increase for ESU. The State budget also included some debt relief funding for the integrating universities. At the Start of the Summer the State and AFSCME agreed on a new four-year contract, which included a 19.25% pay increase over four years. The State System and Faculty Union met throughout the summer and continue to meet on a new contract for APSCUF.

For the current semester. It started with the move-in of more than 2300 students into our residential halls: representing a 95% occupancy rate. Unlike last year where there were several hiccups with during move-in, including traffic backed-up to route 80; there was none of that this year thanks to diligent planning by the residential life team and the support of the entire campus community, especially, athletes, student organizations, campus police, staff, and alumni. We even received assistance from PennDOT with traffic alerts on route 80 a week before move-in.

Residential life was not the only place we experienced an increase in students. Two weeks ago, the University reported total enrollment for Fall 2023 up a little more than 6 percent over last year driven by a 21% increase in

New Students. This represents the second consecutive year of an enrollment increase, something we have not seen since 2015 and the largest new student numbers since 2014. While we are pleased with the current enrollment trajectory, we still have a long way to go before we get back to where we were before the pandemic.

The six weeks of this semester have been filled with activities, which was kicked-off with the Inaugural Red & Black Breakfast. Other events include Convocation, Family Weekend, the Provost Colloquium, College of Education and College of Business Speaker Series, Infinity Group Mixers, several events to celebrate Latin Heritage Month, and still showing an ESU-County College of Morris Collaborative Art Exhibit.

With the increased number of students in the residence hall, also comes some challenges. Over the past few weeks, we have experienced several circumstances where a few students were involved in situations that could have been avoided with better judgement. Campus Life and University Police are working together to implement strategies to enhance campus safety and help with better decision making.

In other news, work continues the development of a new strategic plan; I would like to again thank Michael Sachs and Associate Professor Artress White, for their leadership; as well as the Strategic Planning committee and vice presidents for the great dialogue and outcomes stemming from the four goal groups that continue to meet. Along with the Strategic Plan, we are also revisiting our Mission Statement to ensure that it is current and reflects the direction of ESU.

For the ninth year, we conducted our Good Neighbors Visit. This year 78 students, faculty, coaches, staff, police, and administrators went door-to door to introduce us and meet the residence around the university. We spoke with many people and for those not home we left literature and informational pieces to assist them with questions they might have.

ESU is currently working on our Middle States Self-Study process. I would like to thank Michael Sach for serving as our Middle States contact and Kizzy Morris and Associate Professor Chris Dudley for agreeing to co-chair the Self-Study Steering Committee. The co-chairs of each of the seven standards have been identified and we are in the process of confirming their participation.

In Athletics, we welcome three new head coaches. Meagan DeWan, as head Women's Soccer Coach, Meagan was the assistant coach for the past few years. ESU alum and former volunteer Assistant Coach under Jerry Sheska and Rob Berkowitz, Tom Mustac took over as Men's Soccer Head Coach. And Troy Haas, former assistant racquets director and tennis coach of Lehigh Valley Country Club was appointed ESU Head Tennis Coach. Also, for Tennis, we are working to bring back six courts on Smith Street to regrow our tennis program and better compete.

Finally, tonight is the kickoff of Homecoming Weekend. If you still have a little energy after Harvest Fest, please swing by the field house to catch a little Warrior Madness: Dunk Contest, 3-Point Shooting, and a lot of fun. Tomorrow, we have Remembrance Day in the morning, The Class of 1973 Reception, Alumni Awards Banquet, and the Bonfire. And on Saturday, we have a Swimming Meet, Men's and Women's Soccer, Field Hockey, Football, Volleyball, Men's Basketball Alumni Event, Tailgating, and the President's Tent.

That concludes my report.

6. **Chair's Report:**

Trustee Ross welcomed and congratulated Andea "Andi" McClanahan on her new role as President of APSCUF. Trustee Ross is very confident communication will continue to strengthen between APSCUF and the administration as it has in the past few years. Trustee Ross also thanked the administration, faculty, and staff for their continued hard work which shows with the great trajectory of our incoming students and looks forward to continuing to work together to keep ESU moving forward and being the best university in the PASSHE system.

7. Secretary's Report:

No correspondence, no report

8. Committee Reports

A. University Affairs Committee:

Trustee Grayuski provided an overview of the committee meeting.

Dr. Yvonne Catino, director of HR, provided an update on labor relations. APSCUF and SCUPA are still negotiating where AFSCME's contract was signed and ratified which will provide an 11.25% increase in 4 years in addition to annual step increases. Police and Sergeants is also signed and ratified with new wage scaling decreasing the number of steps from 10 to 7 and distance between steps is 5 to 5.5%. The summer pilot for ½ day Fridays was very successful and will likely continue next year after incorporating some employee suggestions and lessons learned. The employee handbook is near completion and once approved it will be provided to all employees. As we see all over, ESU has staffing challenges and are working on reducing the time to fill positions. Also because of staffing challenges, reskilling and upskilling workforce is necessary and they are doing so by establishing an online professional learning community, creating a culture that is based on accountability and services, creating a management foundation learning journey, and building "learning ladders" for career paths. Trustee Grayuski expressed everyone is doing their best making ESU a university our sister universities inspire to be. Not just one person or area but a full team of faculty, staff, and students. We want ES to be sustainable and everyone is helping that happen and succeeding.

Dr. Lorna Hunter, Vice President of Enrollment Management provided an admissions update. 2023 enrollment is on a great upward trajectory and our freshman class continues to grow, this year admitting 1400 first time students and 361 transfer students, 8.4% over last year. Admissions event attendance has been growing with almost 4,000 attending the 2022-2023. Fall admission events which included the accepted student reception, campus tour information sessions, instant decision days, open houses, and weekend campus days. These events contribute to the class we have entering this year. Admissions has been busy since the start of the new semester with events and will continue through the academic year. Looking forward to seeing attendance numbers grow. The first Open House scheduled for October 14 is already full and a second one scheduled in November. Will be adding on nine additional orientations, a dedicated transfer student orientation, and piloting a Spanish speaking program. One of the exciting programs is the VIP High School visits and lunch with President Long. Currently nine school districts are attending: Pocono Mountain East and West, East Penn, Boonton Town, Wilkes Barre, East Stroudsburg North and South, Stroudsburg, and Scranton.

CFO, Donna Bulzoni, Robert Smith, CIO/CTO, and Margaret Ball, Provost provided an update on the Comprehensive Planning Process (CPP) submission. A new timeline for the (CPP) was shared with the Committee which now begins with the preparation and submission of the full CPP in May and a mid-year CPP with a submission date to be determined. We are currently in the middle of a transition year from the old to the new cycle. The transition year began with the submission of a short CPP in May. An update to the May submission was made in September and was presented to the committee. Student FTEs for Fall 2023 were reported to be 4832, up 7.9% from Fall 2022. We are expecting that positive trend to continue into Fall 2024. There was also a slight improvement in the Student to Faculty Ratio with an increase from 18.3 to 18.7. Like the Student FTEs, we expect this positive trend to also continue into the next fiscal year. Financial projections for the current fiscal year (2023-2024) indicate an E&G budget deficit of \$3.3M while the auxiliary budget anticipates a surplus of \$619k.

Mr. Michael Sachs, Interim VP of Administration and Accreditation provided an update on the upcoming Middle States Self-Study visit including the process to become reaccredited. Mr. Sachs also shared the Self Study Executive Team members and leadership for each of the 7 standards and provided a brief look into the two-year process.

B. Campus Environment Committee:

Trustee Jackson provided an overview of the committee meeting.

Mr. Curtis Dugar is back with us here at ESU serving as Special Assistant to the Vice President of Campus Life Inclusive Excellence providing an update on residential life and housing. With our enrollment on an upward trajectory, this is the same for our housing numbers and most dorms and the University Ridge are over 95% capacity. Laurel and Minsi are at half occupancy and University Apartments are around 80% capacity. Mr. Dugar reviewed the second-year residency requirement which started with the first-year class in 2023. The reopening of the University Ridge Student Center is slated for December 2023 with some exciting enhancements. The center closed in early March of 2022 due to flooding. The residential and learning communities for Business Management and Education are housed in both Hawthorn Suites and Lenape. The STEM and Honors Communities are housed on the third and fourth floors of Sycamore Suites, and Nursing and Health Sciences are housed on the first and second floors of Sycamore Suites. These living-learning communities offer students the benefit of living with others who share similar academic or special interests, promote student engagement, and serve as a hub of activities beyond the classroom.

Mr. Joe Akob, Executive Director of Student Activity Association provided an overview of move-in days for over 2,350 students in a four-day timespan. Emphasized 500 students move in early, August to assist. 153 faculty and staff and 300 student-athletes, assist with move-in. Family Weekend 2023 event highlights: Family Feud, Planetarium, Gen-One Experience, Legacy Pinning Ceremony, and the Football game which was very well attended. Homecoming starts tonight and some highlights include the Pink Light Walk, Warrior Madness, Bon Fire, Fan Zone, many athletic competitions, and Alumni banquet celebrating the 50th anniversary of the class of 1973 and the annual tailgate. It's going to be a great weekend of activity so come out and enjoy the activities.

Dr. Allen Snook, Athletic Director and Sarah Ross, Associate Director shared academic achievements for Spring 23 which were very impressive with a department GPA of 3.4, 72% of athletes having a 3.0 or higher, and 11% having a 4.0. Women's GPA 3.4 and Men's GPA 3.088. Team high GPAs were Lacrosse with a 3.687 GPA and Men's cross country 3.558 GPA. 265 student athletes earned a PSAC Scholar-Athlete award and 3 academic All-Americans. Spring athletics highlights were shared which included softball's first world series appearance and regional title, and a single season win record. Their coaching staff was named regional coaching staff of the Year. Baseball back-to-back NCAA tournament appearance, Lacrosse made their 5th consecutive NCAA Atlantic Regional Championship appearance, Men's basketball reached their 8th NCAA tournament, Tennis had East Player of the Year Award and two former ESU athletes were drafted professionally: Carlos Pepin (basketball) and Tom Reisinger (baseball). Other notable department updates were also shared.

C. Finance Committee:

Trustee Pekarovsky provided an overview of the committee meeting.

Mr. Richard Santor, Executive Director of the ESU Foundation reported on the final 2023 results, ending the year with over \$9.5 million in gifts and pledges which includes a generous one-time gift of \$4 million, over \$197 thousand in unrestricted, and 3.76% alumni participation which is always a challenge. Some 2023 fiscal highlights include the highest number of scholarships awarded, two ribbon cutting ceremonies, the Inaugural Dinner for President Kenneth Long, and the Soccer Stadium campaign. Some 2024 initiatives include providing even more scholarships to students, completing the Soccer Stadium campaign, and other new initiatives that will help to provide the foundation with further success. 2024 fiscal goals include \$5 million in total gifts and pledges, \$225 thousand unrestricted, and aiming for 5% alumni participation.

Dr. Lorna Hunter, Vice President of Enrollment Management updated the committee on new student recruitment. Retention rates for first-time full degree students fell a little from last year but are still at 71%. New student recruitment is underway and focusing on territory aligned recruitment targeting counties in

Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Maryland, Virginia, and Delaware. Communication recruiting tools being used are email messages, postcards, and text messages.

The Committee reviewed the Cash Disbursement Reports for May 1, 2023, through August 31, 2023, and found that all were handled appropriately and were in order. All questions and concerns were answered satisfactorily. **Trustee Shemansky made a motion for the approval of the Cash Disbursement Reports for May 1, 2023, through August 31, 2023; Trustee Patterson seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

Mr. Gregory Bleakley, Director of Budget & Special Accounting provided an update on the proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Budget providing information on the E&G funds and total university budget in all funds. The Committee's questions and concerns were satisfactorily answered. Trustee Pekarovsky asked for a motion to accept the Fiscal Year 2024 budget as presented. **Trustee Ross made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget; Trustee Grayuski seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

CFO, Donna Bulzoni, presented to the committee the preliminary audit results of FY 23 which in the end shows an increase in the cash balance from June, 2022 of \$4.4 million. The CFO also presented the Board of Governor's approved financial sustainability indicators for FY2023 where ESU shows to be above the State System Requirements on all indicators.

John Bloshinski, Director of Facilities Management opened his presentation with a video timeline of the construction of the new University Center. Things are really progressing, and it is great to see how far we have come since breaking ground. Mr. Bloshinski also presented the Facilities Project Status Review and the Report of Notice to Proceed on Construction Contracts. The Committee's questions and concerns were satisfactorily answered.

C. Strategic Initiatives Committee:

Trustee Patterson provided an overview of the committee meeting.

Dr. Kimberly Adams, professor of Political Science presented her Washington, D.C. Summer Internship Program in which ESU partners with two DC non-profits to enhance student experiences outside the classroom. These experiential learning experiences are helping our students to gain knowledge in the field in some impressive areas of government. Dr. Adams is the campus liaison and faculty leader for both the Washington Center and the Osgood Center Programs. Our own Trustee Damali Jackson was one of this summer's interns and expressed her appreciation for the opportunity and shared her experience with us along with 3 other students. We were quite impressed by their presentation, experience, and enthusiasm, of the opportunities afforded through these programs. Dr. Adams is currently recruiting for the 2024 programs and will have a recruiter from The Washington Center on campus October 18th speaking to classes and there will also be a panel discussion from 2 – 3:30 pm of alums who will share their experiences.

Elizabeth Richardson, director of Marketing & Communications and Greg Knowlden, Assistant Director of Marketing & Communications presented to the committee what MarCom has been doing to enhance our marketing both on campus and throughout the Commonwealth and neighboring states. Not only through publication, press releases, and signage, but also through social media which has really taken off these past months. The branding messages that we are currently using truly represents ESU and the Warrior aspect... Where courage finds confidence. Where courage finds opportunity. Where courage finds community.

9. Old Business:

A. None

10. New Business:

A. **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 Shemansky made a motion to approve the Appointing Interim and Acting Chief Executive Officers for the 2023-2024 Academic Year according to BOG Policy 1983-14-A; Trustee Patterson seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

- B. The next meeting of the Council of Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, December 7, 2023, at the ESU Lehigh Valley Center.

11. Executive Session:

Trustee Ross called for an executive session at 4:54 p.m. for a discussion on personnel matters.

Trustee Ross re-entered into regular session at 5:03 p.m.

- A. **Presidential Annual Review:** Trustee Ross thanked the Trustee annual review committee for their time and attention in providing an in-depth review of President Long. Trustee Ross asked for a motion to approve the Presidential Annual Review for President Kenneth Long and move forward sending a letter of approval to the Chancellor. **Trustee Grayuski made a motion to approve the Annual Review of President Kenneth Long and move forward in sending a letter of approval to the Chancellor; Trustee Shemansky seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

- 13. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned by Trustee Ross at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Shemansky
Council Secretary

Recording Secretary: Marcy L. Cetnar