

**East Stroudsburg University  
Council of Trustees Minutes  
March 14, 2024  
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 4:06 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. Paul Shemansky |
| Ms. Tina Nixon (zoom)    | Mr. John Pekarovsky     |                    |
| Ms. Elizabeth O'Brien    | Mr. Patrick Ross (zoom) |                    |

The following members were not present:

|                         |                     |                    |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Mr. Edward Abraham      | Mr. Thomas Grayuski | Ms. Damali Jackson |
| Mr. Marcus Lingenfelter |                     |                    |

3. **Public Comment:**

None

4. **Approval of Minutes:**

**Trustee Shemanski made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 7, 2023, meeting; Trustee Ross seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

5. **President's Report:**

President Long reported as we approached the end of the ninth week of the 2024 Spring Semester, there seems to be non-stop activities in and outside the classroom. From symposiums to creative art to athletics, there is something different happening on-campus almost every day. In the past nine weeks:

- The psychology department hosted the 50th Biannual Research Forum
- We had the 27th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast
- The Madelon Powers Gallery hosted a special Martin Luther King, Jr. gallery exhibition featuring the artwork from Monroe County high school students as part of the Julianna V. Bolt Art contest.
- Five East Stroudsburg University students attended the Washington Center Inside Washington academic seminar. ESU students were part of a group of more than 370 learners from around the country who gathered in-person for a unique insider's view into the state of politics, policy, and diplomacy in our nation's capital.
- The College of Education had PA Teacher of the Year: Ryan Hardesty on-campus to speak with our education students and faculty.
- As shared with you earlier today: Professor Wang from the College of Business and Professor Varkados gave an interactive presentation on Artificial Intelligence in higher education
- The Madelon Powers Gallery held an exhibit titled: Inspired by Women: Bookmaking as Conversation. This exhibit encompasses artistic exchanges in over 30 book structures inspired by women who are artists.
- The campus hosted a number of events throughout February in honor of Black History Month. This year's keynote speaker, Edith King-Lawrence, Class of 2012, gave a presentation on radical self-care and identity development.

There are many more activities and events planned for the semester, next time you are near campus, please go to the university event page to see what's happening.

In early February, the university reported its Spring enrollment freeze numbers for the semester. I am happy to share that ESU once again reported an increase in enrollment over the prior year. Total enrollment is 4,950, which is 3.2% greater than last year and led the State System with the largest year-over-year increase in FTEs. While we are happy with the enrollment increase, we recognize that we still have more work to do. In the meantime, I applaud the efforts of the entire university community for this continued progress in our enrollment efforts. Also, if you have been tracking national news in higher education, you probably have heard that the US Department of Education has had some issues with their roll-up of the New Financial Aid form.

In Athletics, last week we wrapped up the winter season and the spring season is well on its way. Some highlights from Winter includes:

#### Men's Basketball

- We tied with Millersville and Lock Haven for the PSAC East Championship and finished the season with an overall record of 25-5.
- Jeff Wilson earned his No. 400 against Shepherd on Feb. 3.
- Two players reach 1000 points this season: Lakeem McAilley and Justin Paz

#### Women's Wrestling

- Finished the season with an overall record of 13-2. And seven of the eight National Championship qualifiers return next year.

#### Indoor Track & Field

- ESU won four individual PSAC Titles.

#### Swimming

- Closed regular season with a 6-2 overall record

#### In Spring Athletics:

##### Baseball

- Start the season with an 11-3 record and are ranked #24 in the country.
- ESU and Kutztown are set to play a morning game at the Iron Pigs Stadium in Allentown on Thursday, May 2.

##### Softball

- Start the season with a 16-4 record and are currently ranked #15 in the country, this is before this week's double-header of the Wilmington the #20 team in the country. They are on an 11- game winning streak.

##### Lacrosse

- Started the season 3-0 and are ranked #4 in the Intercollegiate Women's Lacrosse Coaches Association poll.

In Other News, East Stroudsburg University Announces Fall 2023 Dean's List - A total of 1,494 students were named to the Dean's List for the Fall 2023 semester.

In February, Governor Shapiro outlined his plan to overhaul PA Higher Education System. Shapiro's first pillar centers around the creation of a new governance system for ten public universities and 15 community colleges in Pennsylvania. The proposal seeks to consolidate operations, reduce program duplication, and establish broader pathways to degrees and postsecondary credentials. By uniting community colleges under the same umbrella as the institutions in the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). Over the past several weeks, the Presidents of the 25 institutions have been meeting with the Department of Education to provide input on this framework.

This year commencement will take place on Friday, May 3rd for Master and Doctoral programs. And Saturday, May 4th during two ceremonies for all undergraduate programs. The undergraduate keynote speaker is Dr. Salome Thomas-EL: award-winning educator, author, and ESU alum. For the graduate and doctorate ceremony Dr. Kerri Green: healthcare professional, educator, and ESU alum.

ESU will host the 11th Economic Outlook Summit on May 17th at Kalahari Resorts.

That concludes my comments. Thank you.

## 6. Chair's Report:

Trustee Ross thanked Trustee Pekarovsky for running today's meeting and welcomed Trustee Elizabeth O'Brien to the Trustee Board who will be an asset for what she has already done for ESU and will continue to do.

Trustee Pekarovsky stated that today was very productive with a lot of positives, there are certainly issues but there are plans in place to improve everything. We need to continue to put the focus on student wellness, improving our facilities, and retention. Trustee Pekarovsky is confident that President Long and his team will continue to keep ESU moving in the right direction.

## 7. Secretary's Report:

No Report. Trustee Shemansky thanked President Long and leadership team on the outstanding work going on at ESU. Very proud to be a part of this institution.

## 8. Committee Reports

### A. University Affairs Committee:

Trustee Pekarovsky reported Interim VP Michael Sachs and Dr. Kizzy Morris provided an update on the Middle States Institutional Accreditation Self-Study progress. Items discussed included an update on the work that has been done to date, the final institutional priorities, the final self-study outcomes, working groups' line of inquiry, and the 12 elements of producing the self-study design. With leadership of Michael Sachs, Kizzy Morris, Chris Dudley, and the working groups, we are confident we will have positive outcomes with this accreditation.

Dr. Rob Smith provided an update on the freeze date numbers and projections for 2024. As of now our total numbers are higher than Spring 2023 continuing an upward trajectory from the pandemic decline. We continue to replenish and continue to grow, with the graduate numbers continue to maintain. We also looked at the projected enrollment for Fall 2024 and Fall 2025 based off the actual enrollment numbers from the previous years with future numbers continuing to increase. Key elements to track retention.

CFO Donna Bulzoni provided a mid-year budget update. One concern discussed was Fiscal Year 23-24 - Spring FTE Enrollment drop to 4,354 (a loss of 478) which is a 9.89% decrease.

President Long provided a brief update of the Governor's Blueprint for Higher Education which has been shared recently which will combine all PASSHE schools and community colleges.

Interim VP Michael Sachs and Amy Colwell, Assistant Director of Facilities Management provided a status update on current construction projects including the new university center, Minsi residence hall receiving lifecycle renovations, some upcoming projects in Abeloff where they are updating ADA accessibility to the stage and restrooms, and Zimbar gym will be receiving a facelift with some great Warrior branding.

### B. Campus Environment Committee:

Trustee Shemansky reported Athletic Director, Dr. Allen Snook provided some amazing academic information on our student-athletes which included a total all-around GPA of 3.282 which is the highest recorded Fall GAP since 2003, which shows the coaches are recruiting the right individuals. The highest women's team GPA was in golf with 3.712 and the highest men's team GPA was in track and field with a 3.283. Dr. Snook also provided an update on the conclusion of fall and winter sports which ended with some great PSAC standings. The start of the spring sports season is off to a great start with three of our teams nationally ranked and some early records being broken. After hearing the presentation, athletics is strong. Strong student in and out the classroom, winning, and competitive. Everyone at ESU should be proud. Congratulations to Jeff Wilson on his 400th win, a tremendous achievement. Congratulations to all coaches that put so much time and effort into our student-athletes.

Dr. Brittany Powers, who is the new director of health and wellness, provided an overview of the current work being done in the health and wellness center and some of her goals and future directions she will undertake. Excellent report on initiatives she has taken upon herself to improve student life at ESU and keep us competitive.

#### C. Finance Committee:

Trustee Pekarovsky reported Richard Santoro, Director of the ESU Foundation provided an update on their activities to date and the goals for the remainder of the fiscal year. Total fundraising is at \$2.1 million, they met their goal of \$225 thousand in unrestricted gifts and are almost half-way to their alumni participation of 5%. They have awarded 712 scholarships totaling \$1.2 million. Busy with upcoming events and positive news on finalizing staffing in the Alumni and Foundation offices.

Dr. Lorna Hunter, VP of enrollment management provided an update on 2024 fall enrollment which is a little down from last year, but she is cautiously optimistic that we will reach our enrollment goal. Dr. Hunter also discussed the challenges and solutions of FASFA since the rollout of the new application. Also shared highlights of the upcoming admitted student celebration on March 23, 2024, which looks to be a great event planned to welcome our newest Warriors.

Trustee Pekarovsky presented the following action items:

- (1) The Committee reviewed the proposed local fees for the fiscal year 2024-2025 as presented by CFO Donna Bulzoni. The Committee reviewed and discussed the proposed fees, and all questions and concerns were answered satisfactorily. **Trustee Nixon made a motion to approve the local fees for the fiscal year 2024-2025; Trustee Patterson seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**
- (2) The Committee reviewed the Cash Disbursement Reports for November 1, 2023, through January 31, 2024, and found that all were handled appropriately and were in order. All questions and concerns were answered satisfactorily. **Trustee Patterson made a motion for the approval of the Cash Disbursement Reports for November 1, 2023, through January 31, 2024; Trustee Shemansky seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

Informational items discussed included the Procurement Activity Report, 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 Grayuski reported the committee was presented with a recommendation from President Long to approve the following retired faculty for emeritus/emmerita status:

Stephanie French, Theatre Department, 21 years of service

Ray Muller, Sociology, Social Work & Criminal Justice Department, 21 years of service

**Trustee Shemansky made a motion to approve the faculty recommended by the President for faculty emeritus/emmerita, seconded by Trustee Nixon; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

Drs. Patsie Varkados and Daisy Wang presented Cohabitate with AI: Enhancing Higher Education for All. Discussed how AI is growing in popularity and the use of AI within higher education and how students are using it for good. Also discussed ethics concerning AI, preserving legitimate online education, removing incentive to cheat, and shared the pros and cons using AI in the classroom.

Dr. Nieves Gruneiro-Roadcap provided a very informative overview of the Gardner Institute Retention Performance Management Study.

Dr. Brook Langan shared information on the upcoming Aspiring Educator Pathway Projects – Wednesday, April 10, 2024.

**8. Old Business:**

A. None

**9. New Business:**

A. Trustee Pekarovsky noted the Graduate and Undergraduate commencement ceremonies will be held on Friday, May 3, 2024, and Saturday, May 4, 2024, respectively. Please consider being present at these significant events celebrating our newest Warrior graduates. RSVP to the President’s Office.

10. The next meeting of the East Stroudsburg University Council of Trustees is scheduled for Thursday, June 6, 2024.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Shemansky  
Council Secretary

Recording Secretary: Marcy L. Cetnar