

Meeting of the Board of Trustees
Tuesday, April 21, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.

Trustees Present:

Christopher Bell, Chair
Elaine Crider, Vice-Chair
Jerome Shelton, Treasurer
Esther Barazzone, Secretary
Ronald Mason, President, ex-officio
Ken Grossinger, Trustee
Charlene Drew Jarvis, Trustee
Joella Roberts, Trustee
Barrington Scott, Trustee
Anthony Tardd, Trustee
Errol Schwartz, Trustee
Carolyn Rudd, Trustee

Trustees Absent:

Executive Cabinet Present:

Lawrence Potter, Chief Academic Officer
Evola Bates, Chief of Staff
William Latham, Chief Student Development and Success Officer
Troy Lemaile-Stovall, Chief Operating Officer
Avis Russell, Acting General Counsel
Tony Summers, Chief Community College Officer

Staff Participants:

Patrick Gusman, Executive Director, Strategic Initiatives
Frenika Rivers, Executive Secretary, Office of the Board of Trustees
Beverly Franklin, Retiring Executive Secretary, Office of the Board of Trustees

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Bell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Ms. Franklin called the roll, and a quorum was found to be present.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the March 3, 2020, Board of Trustees' meeting minutes was presented. Trustee Tardd made the motion, and Trustee Schwartz seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, and the minutes were approved.

Opening Remarks

Chair Bell welcomed all to the first online Board of Trustees meeting. He reminded all to share their names before speaking. The meeting was open to the public, however the online format did not allow public comments.

Action Items

Notice of Final Rulemaking: Modifications to the University Rules Regarding Non-Bargaining Unit Grievances

Chair Bell read the modifications, and no discussion followed. Trustee Jarvis made a motion to approve the modification, and Trustee Crider seconded the motion. In a roll call vote, the Notice of Final Rulemaking was approved unanimously.

Approval of Reductions to the FY2021 Budget

Chair Bell read the ratification of reductions to the FY 2021 Budget. There was no further discussion of the ratification. Trustee Shelton made a motion to approve the ratification. Trustee Schwartz seconded the motion. In a roll call vote, the motion carried, and the ratification was approved unanimously. Chair Bell extended thanks to both President Mason and Mr. LeMaile-Stovall for their diligence in working on this in response to the Mayor.

Conferral of Honorary Degree Upon Ahmed Ali, Prime Minister of Ethiopia

Trustee Tardd shared the biography of Prime Minister Ali, which included a 2019 Nobel Peace Prize. Trustee Tardd moved that Prime Minister Ali be awarded the Doctorate of Human Letters. Trustee Schwartz seconded the motion. Chair Bell read the recommendation of the conferral of the degree. In a roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously, and the resolution was approved.

Operations Committee: Proposed Contract – Replacement of Roof on Building #32/42, Succession Plan, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Meetings of the Board Of Trustees During an Emergency

The Operations Committee recommended approval of all three items, and Trustee Shelton moved that they be approved en bloc. Ms. Russell clarified to the board that amendments to the Succession Plan needed to be approved before the vote. Chair Bell shared that Trustee Grossinger asked that clarification be made to the appointment process and timing with respect to presidential succession if the president were temporarily unable to fulfill duties. Ms. Russell read the resolution amendment. Trustee Ball clarified that it is an acting role, and that the board has the ability to choose another successor and limit the duties of the acting role. Trustee Crider moved to approve the three matters brought forth by the Operations Committee. Trustee Schwartz seconded that motion. Trustee Barazzone commented that the decision should be made by the Board of Trustees within 24 hours. Ms. Russell clarified that the amendment's language asks for the decision to be made immediately. The amendment to the Succession Plan was brought forth for the vote. Chair Bell read the Success Plan and the amendment. Trustee Shelton read the resolution. All three resolutions were approved unanimously in a roll call vote.

Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, Implement UDC Student Transportation Fee (UPASS)

Trustee Tardd read the resolution to implement a UDC Student Transportation Fee that would reduce transportation costs for students on MetroRail and MetroBus. Students overwhelmingly voted to adopt the UPASS program, and therefore it was accepted by the committee to move forward. Trustee Tardd made a motion that the transportation fee be approved, and Trustee Shelton seconded the recommendation. Trustee Jarvis raised a concern that workforce students were not included in the transportation support. Trustee Shelton shared that workforce development students receive support from that program. Trustee Shelton read a portion of the resolution into the official record. A roll call vote approved the resolution unanimously.

Election of Officers

Chair Bell shared that he was happy to continue as chair, but also welcomed those who would like to move into other roles. Trustee Jarvis recommended that nominations be closed. Trustee Tardd seconded that motion. In a roll call vote, Chair Bell was unanimously chosen to serve another year as Board Chair, for which he shared his appreciation. Vice-Chair Crider, Secretary Barazzone, and Treasurer Shelton were unanimously approved by roll call vote to serve additional one-year terms.

Report of the Chairperson

Chair Bell thanked Ms. Franklin for all the tremendous work that she has done. Ms. Franklin extended her thanks to the Board, and said she had enjoyed her work with them. Chair Bell welcomed Frenika Rivers, who recently joined the University as Executive Secretary to the Board of Trustees. Chair Bell thanked Trustee Roberts for her hard work, service, and contributions to the Board. He said he looked forward to working with the incoming student trustee Chair Bell shared that he had attended the UDC Town Hall, and he voiced appreciation to Dr. Latham and others for their time and work on the event. Chair Bell said he wanted students to know that their concerns were heard.

Report of the President

President Mason voiced appreciation of Ms. Franklin and Trustee Roberts, and their service to the Board of Trustees. It was the last Board Meeting for Mr. Tony Summers, and President Mason thanked him for his service, knowledge, and advice to the Board, and to the University of the District of Columbia. Mr. Summers shared that it had been a pleasure to serve. President Mason shared a written report that addressed what the University is confronted with, how the University is organized to deal with challenges, and how the University made it through the transition. He shared that UDC is facing an unprecedented chain of events that will change the world, and that Institutions that figure out how to navigate those events will be successful. All thoughts were welcomed, as to how to navigate these new times. He shared that he is assessing UDC's capacity, and how to be competitive in an online environment. President Mason welcomed comments from the Board.

Trustee Barazzone shared what Beloit College is doing to minimize in-person class meetings by breaking the semester into two parts. Trustee Schwartz asked if there are challenges for faculty as they have moved online, and if there has been help for faculty to transition to online courses. President Mason shared that a large percentage of faculty have the capacity to work in an online environment, and that all faculty will be certified in online course delivery. There is a May training planned in which faculty are encouraged to participate. The survey that went out regarding online courses had 1,400 responses. Dr. Potter shared that UDC is looking forward to what the fall will hold. Fortunately, a number of faculty are trained to build and offer courses online. Training is a fully online model. Trustee Schwartz asked if there are students who do not have access to the technological needs of online courses. President Mason shared that the issue for students is that they are members of an older student body with families, jobs, and eliminated jobs. Life challenges are factors, too. Comcast is working with the University to expand bandwidth. Federal funds allow students through the CARES Act to purchase computers. However, it seems many students have devices that they can use. Challenges seem to be the exception. Dr. Potter shared with the Board that student challenges include bandwidth concerns, and competition at home for use of a single device. The University has tried to be as responsive as possible. At the Town Hall, Mr. Latham said he observed that most student challenges were life challenges, and not necessarily technological ones.

Trustee Scott asked for feedback about students who are homeless. President Mason said he had not had specific inquiries from homeless students. The University was working on a DC liaison for homeless students, but the process was stopped because of COVID-19. Devices are available for students from both faculty and the library.

Trustee Roberts asked if there are any cost adjustments for students due to courses moving online, or from faculty who are taking more training. President Mason responded that the planned salary raise for faculty still will occur. He noted that the Student Center is closed, and that calculations are being made to determine how much money will be returned to students. With the CARES Act legislation, the funds may only be used for students who receive federal aid. Undocumented students cannot receive those funds. He spoke about pooling the fees for students who are not eligible for federal aid. Trustee Roberts thanked President Mason for bringing up assistance for undocumented and ineligible students.

Trustee Scott asked if there was any indication from the Town Hall that enrollment will increase because of UDC tuition rates vs. more expensive rates at other DC schools. President Mason agreed that UDC has great tuition rates for DC residents, and said students from other schools may find they attend schools that do not have strong online capacity. UDC is a competitive university, and markets its online capabilities. He noted it was too soon to determine if that will make a difference.

Trustee Jarvis asked if there is an option for certification programs to become a larger revenue stream to generate income for the University. President Mason shared that UDC offers certifications at no cost for District residents. Though there are about 200 organizations that have workforce training programs in DC, the University is positioned as a leader. Trustee Scott asked about progress on the nursing program. Dr. Summers shared that the program received accreditation until 2024.

President Mason said he asked Chairman Mendelson if the DC Council would adjust their matching funds for the University's campaign. In the Council's emergency bill that was recently passed, the match was converted to one dollar for every dollar raised.

Trustee Scott shared that UDC should find ways to market the mortuary science and nursing programs. President Mason shared that UDC is the backup morgue for the District, and that the gymnasium is being prepared if it is needed as a temporary hospital.

Trustee Jarvis asked about current marketing efforts. President Mason said commercials are airing, and there are conversations about how to pivot to marketing online offerings. Trustee Roberts suggested utilizing social media to advertise. Mr. LeMaile-Stovall shared that in the last month, UDC has launched aggressive campaigns on social media, and would like to leverage analytics to a future social media campaign. He also shared that beginning April 22 or April 23, the Backus campus parking lot will be used for COVID testing in the District.

Chair Bell asked for the status of Eaton Elementary and continued use of the fields, and Mr. Stovall replied that contractually the school is staying until the Summer 2021.

President Mason conveyed his thanks for the expertise of the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Barazzone brought up how liberal arts colleges are taking English majors and pairing them with minors/certifications that give workforce-ready skills, and asked if that was something UDC could also offer. Trustee Shelton said he saw that as marketing to service the city through commingling liberal arts

and workforce training to enhance student skills. He said he would like to see UDC as a center for everything that DC needs.

Dr. Summers mentioned that there are some students enrolled for credit and also taking workforce development courses. Not large numbers, but some students do take advantage of that. Alumni also come back and enroll in workforce training courses to enhance their skills.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee

Chair Bell asked for the continuing flexibility of the Executive Committee during these times.

Committee of the Whole

No committee report.

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

No committee report.

Alumni Taskforce

No committee report.

Communication Taskforce

Trustee Roberts increased notifications of Board meetings for students by passing out flyers to raise student engagement. She suggested meetings be streamed, so that more students are able to participate. She encouraged a Board meet and greet to be hosted by the next Student Representative. Chair Bell thanked Trustee Roberts for her service. He announced that Chavar Henry is the new student representative

Audit Budget Finance Committee and Operations Committee

Trustee Shelton shared that the Audit, Budget, and Finance Committee, and the Operations Committee, now meet jointly. The committees are looking at tuition models. The master plan has been deferred until a later time.

Community College Committee

No committee report.

Student Outcomes Committee

Chair Bell reported that the taskforce will continue, and a chair will be selected soon. He noted there is a continued interest from the Mayor's office to fill open Trustee positions.

President Mason reported that he would circulate the Equity Imperative, and that any questions may be directed to him.

New Business

No new business.

Closing Remarks

Chair Bell thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting. He recognized and thanked members of the public who joined the meeting to listen.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Franklin called roll on the motion to adjourn. The motion was approved unanimously.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

DRAFT