

**UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE**

Urbana Senate Observer
(Final; Information)

SC.19.07 Report on the 27 September 2018 Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois System

The open segment of the Board of Trustees meeting began at 9:30 with the singing of the state song, Illinois, by the UIUC women's glee club. Lawrence McKeever was introduced as the newly confirmed treasurer for the Board of Trustees.

President Killeen reported that current enrollment is up across the System, and should reach the 2021 target of 93,000 for the System. Other areas where progress is meeting expectations include the Distinguished Faculty Hiring Program and the fund-raising campaign, which has reached a total of \$3.1 billion in one year. An interim director, William Sanders of Electrical Engineering, has been appointed for DPI. He noted that both DPI and IIN (Illinois Innovation Network) are progressing well. The chancellors of each university noted the strengths that each university brings to DPI and IIN, and through them, to the state of Illinois. Chancellor Jones also showed an amusing video highlighting the emptiness of the UIUC campus without students, and the welcome return of students at the start of the fall semester.

Board of Trustees Chair, Timothy Koritz, commented on the need to collect data on students who receive free tuition under the Illinois Commitment Program, emphasizing that they would be held to the same admission standards as all other students. He also noted that, in addition to the good news presented by the President and the Chancellors, there was also the disappointment that the continuation of the Blue Waters supercomputer grant was not awarded to Illinois, but to Texas (UT, Austin).

President Killeen noted that the UI System is a key driver of prosperity in Illinois, accounting for one of every 46 jobs in the state. Moreover, Moody's has raised its bond rating of the System. In a more detailed report, Hannah Roughridge, from the analytics firm MC, presented data showing that the impact of the UI System on the state economy is enormous, adding \$17.5 billion to the state GDP. Research contributes \$1.2 billion to the state economy; the hospital, \$1.5 billion; paying employees, \$3.7 billion. She calculated that, while their education costs students a total of \$2.1 billion in actual costs plus foregone earnings, their future benefits – in terms of increased wage, etc., runs to \$10.4 billion, for a return rate of 15.4%.

Avijit Ghosh presented the capital development plan in some detail, noting that we shape our buildings, and thereafter they shape us. He reiterated his comment from the July meeting that, of 340 projects expected to cost a total of \$4 billion, 72% cost less than \$5 million, mostly in deferred maintenance; however, 12% of the projects cost over \$25 million each; these account for most of the costs.

Funding will come from various sources, including some moneys from the state, but also from auxiliary capital reserves, gift funds, and maintenance funds.

The Board of Trustees will review the annual planning list each year, in the context of the entire plan (not one by one, in isolation). Among the 1st projects are the feed mill at UIUC; the Information Science building and the Student Success Center at UIS; several items at the UIC hospital.

Public/private partnerships will be used where possible: the first example is a new dorm at UIC. Two others are planned for Urbana. The advantage of these partnerships is that the debt is off our books; the risk is on the developer; private expertise is available for the planning.

In response to a question from Trustee Perl about how priorities will be set for the projects at the separate universities, Ghosh said that the chancellors and the president are all heavily involved in those decisions. Moreover, Amiridis notes, each university finances its own projects, so the ability to pay plays a significant role.

Only the bond rating is common to all the universities. Thus, the System would veto a project only if the total breaks through the ceiling of debt that the System estimates it can carry.

The FY19 budget for the System is \$6.83 billion: \$300 million higher than last year. Current and legacy costs (pensions) account for \$1,768 million; restricted funds (i.e., the hospital, \$2.8 billion, up 5.1%. Tuition income increased by 5%; it accounts for 58% of unrestricted funds. Gifts increased by 22%. In general, the report was upbeat.

Joyce Tolliver reviewed the functions of the University Senates Conference. There were no questions.

Committee reports were presented by the chairs of the respective committees. There were 3 public comments.

Dr. Susan Kies spoke about food insecurity among students as well as in the community in general. She noted that to some extent it is a pipeline problem: people do not know what resources are available. The organization "Feed Our Kids" is a program that packs accessible food for kids. It has been incorporated as a 501c charity, and feeds 900 children and youths (up to age 21) in Champaign County. She estimated that 20-40% of UI students are at risk of food insecurity; she encouraged coordination of multiple programs, and suggested that student groups looking for a worthy fundraising cause should consider this one. She also asked that the universities support student affairs programming that deal with hunger, and that the chancellors report on issues and needs – and include food in budget planning.

Hailey Nickleberg reported that she (among others) has repeatedly encountered anti-Semitism on the Urbana campus, including both in person and online harassment, and even threats. She said that, despite 30 unique complaints of anti-Semitism, as well as meeting with vice chancellors and the chancellor, nothing has been done; their complaints are not heard. She said that there is a particular dereliction of duty with respect to anti-Semitism by the campus; therefore they have come to the Board of Trustees. She notes that ignoring anti-Semitism is a violation of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and requested that anti-Semitism training be required. She also recommended that a uniform definition of anti-Semitism be adopted.

Tony Henson argued for a reincarnation of the "three in one", saying that the report leading to the removal of Chief Illiniwek from half time was skewed toward the views of the faculty. He said his solution would be approved by 95% of the university, but that the other 5% would refuse it, saying "it is the Chief".

[Unfortunately, I cannot explain his solution, because I am not familiar with the half-time performances involving Chief Illiniwek, and his solution was not clear without such familiarity.] He reiterated that most stakeholders support his solution, and considers that faculty are blocking its implementation. He further observed that Native American enrollment has dropped by 95% since Chief Illiniwek was banned, and blames the Chancellor for keeping his solution "off the table" despite the

"Chancellor's claim that the majority rule should win". He ended by requesting that power be returned to the people: the trustees ended the Chief tradition, and should now support the "new majority tradition".

After the public comments, trustee Koritz noted that the next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be in Chicago on 31 January 2019, and stated that the Board would now convene in executive sessions. He added that they would return to the open meeting session only to adjourn. The public meeting ended shortly before noon.

Respectfully submitted by Bettina Francis, USC Observer