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Joseph F. Matthews '80
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**The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees
Academic Affairs and Research Committee Meeting
Monday, June 17, 2024 · 12:00 p.m. EDT**

**The University of Rhode Island
Beagle Board Room, Alumni Center
73 Upper College Road, Kingston, RI 02881**

OFFICIAL MINUTES

The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee meeting was held in person, with committee members participating remotely. Virtual public access to meeting was available via the YouTube video platform and is available for viewing at <https://web.uri.edu/trustees/meetings/>.

Committee Chair Kerwin welcomed everyone to the June 17, 2024, meeting of the URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee. He conducted a roll call attendance and determined that a quorum of members was present. He called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

The URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee members in attendance:

- Dr. Neil Kerwin, Committee Chair (remote)
- Hon. Charles Fogarty, Committee Vice Chair (remote) (arrived at 12:05 pm)
- Ms. Maria Ducharme (remote)
- Ms. Monica Garnes (remote)
- Mr. David Martirano (remote)
- Mr. Joseph Matthews (remote)
- Dr. Melissa Sutherland (non-voting) (remote)
- Dr. Marc B. Parlange, President (ex officio, non-voting) (remote)

URI Board Chair Margo Cook also participated remotely.

URI President's Stewardship Council members in attendance:

- Ms. Abby Benson, Vice President, Administration and Finance (remote)
- Ms. Chelsea Berry, Senior Advisor to the President and Chief of Staff (remote)
- Dr. Matthew Bodah, Vice Provost for Academic Performance and Budget (remote)
- Ms. Alyssa Boss, General Counsel (remote)
- Ms. Jeanne Hruska, Senior Advisor to the Provost and Chief of Staff (remote)
- Dr. Bethany Jenkins, Vice President for Research and Economic Development (remote)
- Dr. Dean Libutti, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Success (remote)
- Ms. Markeisha Miner, Vice President, Community, Equity and Diversity (remote)
- Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (remote)

URI staff members in attendance:

- Ms. Michelle Curreri, Secretary, Board of Trustees (in person)
- Ms. Lauren Jensen, Associate General Counsel (remote)
- Ms. Lynn Owens, Associate Secretary, Board of Trustees (in person)
- Ms. Shawn Simmons, Executive Assistant, Office of the Provost (remote)

Committee Chair Kerwin welcomed the group and acknowledged that the University of Rhode Island occupies the traditional stomping ground of the Narragansett Nation and the Niantic People. He recognized the appointment of Dr. Bethany Jenkins to Vice President for Research and Economic Development.

Committee Chair Kerwin asked if there were any amendments to the meeting agenda. There were none.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes of the April 10, 2024, Academic Affairs and Research Committee Meeting [Enclosure 1.a.](#)

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion, and on a motion duly made by Monica Garnes and seconded by David Martirano, and hearing no discussion, it was

VOTED THAT: The Academic Affairs and Research Committee
approve the minutes of the April 10, 2024, meeting of the
Committee.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the
negative.

YEAS: Maria Ducharme, Charles Fogarty, Monica Garnes, David Martirano, Joseph Matthews, Neil Kerwin

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

2. REPORT OF THE CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER [Enclosure](#)

Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

- a. Academic Year Recap**
- b. 2024 Spring Commencement**

Provost Wolfe provided updates on faculty, enrollment, undergraduate advising, and academic year highlights. (See presentation slides in the enclosure.)

3. REPORT OF THE CHIEF RESEARCH OFFICER [Enclosure](#)

Dr. Bethany Jenkins, Vice President for Research and Economic Development

- a. URI Research Foundation (URIRF) enabling legislation**

Vice President Jenkins provided an update on the URI Research Foundation. (See presentation slides in the enclosure.)

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Review enrollment management activities, outcomes, and initial enrollment projections for 2024-2025 academic year.**

- (i) Update on the Hope Scholarship and the Promise Scholarship (informational)**

Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

Dr. Dean Libutti, Associate Vice President, Enrollment and Student Success

Dr. Libutti shared that URI's summer enrollment is up 8% (over 4,500 students). He said that Fall 2024 new student applications hit a record 26,945 – over 1,500 more than last year. URI has awarded financial aid to over 13,000 students/families so far. Regarding Fall enrollment, URI has over 3,170 enrolled so far, and the target is 3,235. Dr. Libutti reported that the transfer student enrollment target is 520; the pool develops over the summer and is moving forward as planned.

- b. 2024 URI Annual Diversity Report, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 16-32-2.1. Diversity efforts and progress related to student, staff, and faculty recruitment and retention at URI.**

[Enclosure](#)

Ms. Markeisha Miner, Vice President, Community, Equity, and Diversity

Vice President Miner informed the committee that URI has made significant progress regarding faculty, staff, and student diversity over the past year. The allocation of critical resources, dedicated staffing, and inclusive outreach programs have contributed to this progress. She explained that this annual report focuses on the dimensions of race and gender diversity, and that as we celebrate URI's progress over the last decade, URI continues to invest in its greatest asset, its people. And, through continued enhancements to the University's human resources organization, we will continue to build a workforce that reflects the broad diversity of all learners as the state's land grant, public research university.

5. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approval of the annual granting of tenure for University of Rhode Island faculty members, effective July 1, 2024, or as specified, and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees.

[Enclosure](#) (See enclosed list)

Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion, and on a motion duly made by David Martirano and seconded by Maria Ducharme, and hearing no discussion it was:

VOTED THAT: The Academic Affairs and Research Committee recommend that the Board of Trustees approve the granting of tenure, effective July 1, 2024, or as specified, to the designated faculty members who have met the requirements for tenure at the University of Rhode Island, as recommended and presented in the enclosure.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Maria Ducharme, Charles Fogarty, Monica Garnes, David Martirano, Joseph Matthews, Neil Kerwin

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

b. Approval of legislation recommended by the Faculty Senate and the President providing a new degree opportunity, and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees [Enclosure](#)

(i) Graduate Council Report 2023-2024-11C: Master of Science in Mental & Behavioral Health Counseling

Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion, and on a motion made by Joseph Matthews and seconded by Monica Garnes, and hearing no discussion it was:

VOTED THAT: The Academic Affairs and Research Committee recommend that the URI Board of Trustees approve legislation recommended by the Faculty Senate and the President, referenced in Graduate Council Report 2023-2024-11C, providing a new Master of Science in Mental & Behavioral Health Counseling degree, as recommended and presented in the enclosure.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Maria Ducharme, Charles Fogarty, Monica Garnes, David Martirano, Joseph Matthews, Neil Kerwin

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

c. Approval of the awarding of a posthumous academic degree, and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees. [Enclosure](#)

Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion, and on a motion duly made by Maria Ducharme and seconded by Charlie Fogarty, and hearing no discussion, it was:

VOTED THAT: The Academic Affairs and Research Committee recommend that the URI Board of Trustees approve the awarding of a posthumous academic degree to the student listed below, as presented in the enclosure:
Mr. Nicolas D'Antillo, College of the Environment & Life Sciences

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Maria Ducharme, Charles Fogarty, Monica Garnes, David Martirano, Joseph Matthews, Neil Kerwin

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

6. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- a. **Discussion pertaining to collective bargaining or potential litigation, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(2).**

Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

- b. **Discussion regarding matters related to the question of the investment of public funds, which includes any investment plan or matter related thereto, where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(7); specifically,**

- **Investment in potential programming**

Dr. Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President, Academic Affairs

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion, and on a motion duly made by Monica Garnes and seconded by David Martirano, and hearing no discussion, it was

VOTED THAT: The Academic Affairs and Research Committee convene into executive session to discuss collective bargaining or potential litigation, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(2), and matters related to the question of the investment of public funds, which includes any investment plan or matter related thereto, where the premature disclosure would adversely affect the public interest, pursuant to R.I.G.L. § 42-46-5(a)(7); specifically, investment in potential programming.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Maria Ducharme, Charles Fogarty, Monica Garnes, David Martirano, Joseph Matthews, Neil Kerwin

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

At 1:03 p.m., upon confirmation from remote committee members that no other persons were present or able to hear the executive session, the Academic Affairs and Research Committee convened into Executive Session. Virtual public access was paused.

At 1:17 p.m., the Academic Affairs and Research Committee returned to Open Session. Virtual public access resumed.

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion, and on a motion duly made by Joseph Matthews and seconded by Maria Ducharme, and hearing no discussion it was:

VOTED: THAT The Academic Affairs and Research Committee seal the minutes of the Executive Session that took place on June 17, 2024.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Neil Kerwin, Maria Ducharme, Charles Fogarty, Monica Garnes, David Martirano, Joseph Matthews

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

7. ADJOURN

Committee Chair Kerwin called for a motion, and on a motion duly made by Monica Garnes and seconded by David Martirano, and hearing no discussion it was:

VOTED: THAT The Academic Affairs and Research Committee adjourn the June 17, 2024, meeting.

VOTE: 6 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Neil Kerwin, Maria Ducharme, Charles Fogarty, Monica Garnes, David Martirano, Joseph Matthews

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

The next URI Board of Trustees Academic Affairs and Research Committee meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2024.