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**The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees
Student Life and Athletics Committee Meeting
Thursday, September 18, 2025 · 8:30 a.m. EDT**

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

OFFICIAL MINUTES

Board Secretary Michelle Curreri welcomed everyone to the URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee meeting. The meeting was held in person with Committee members participating remotely. Public access to the meeting was available via the YouTube video platform and can be viewed at <https://web.uri.edu/trustees/meetings/>.

At 8:32 a.m., Board Secretary Curreri conducted the roll call and reported that a quorum was not present. The meeting was called to order. The Committee considered the Vice Presidents' reports prior to considering approval of the April 15, 2025 Committee meeting minutes. Upon Trustee Luna's arrival at 8:35 a.m., a quorum was present.

The URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee members in attendance:

- Jay Placencia, Committee Vice Chair (remote)
- Roby Luna (remote) (arrived at 8:35 a.m.)
- Armand Sabitoni (remote)
- Marc B. Parlange, President (ex officio, non-voting) (remote)
- Ryan Estus, Student Representative (non-voting) (remote)

URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee members not present:

- Michael Grey
- Tom Ryan

URI Board of Trustees Chair Margo Cook also participated remotely.

URI President's Executive Council members in attendance:

- Mark Antonucci, Vice President for Advancement, Chief Executive Officer, URI Foundation (remote)
- Chelsea Berry, Senior Advisor to the President and Chief of Staff (remote)
- Thorr Bjorn, Vice President and Director of Athletics (in person)
- Alyssa Boss, Vice President and General Counsel (remote)
- Ellen Reynolds, Vice President for Student Affairs (remote)
- Matthew McDonald, Vice President, Communications and Marketing (remote)
- Markeisha Miner, Vice President, Community, Equity, and Diversity (remote)
- Barbara Wolfe, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (remote)

URI staff members in attendance:

- Trish Casey, Chief Business Officer, Athletics (in person)
- Michelle Curreri, Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)
- Emily Diomandes, Deputy Chief of Staff (in person)
- Lauren Jensen, Deputy General Counsel (remote)
- Jeff Johnson, Associate Director, Athletic Student Development (in person)
- Kacey Light, Chief NCAA Compliance Officer (in person)
- Lynn Owens, Associate Secretary, Board of Trustees (in person)
- Carol Pegg, M.Ed., Executive Assistant II (remote)

URI Student in attendance:

- Lily Stasaitis, MBA graduate student and coxswain on the URI Rowing Team (in person)

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Action on this item was taken up following the DISCUSSION ITEMS.

a. Minutes of the April 15, 2025, Student Life and Athletics Committee Meeting. [Enclosure](#)

Board Secretary Curreri called for a motion that the Student Life and Athletics Committee approve the minutes of the April 15, 2025, Committee meeting.

On a motion duly made by Roby Luna and seconded by Jay Placencia, and hearing no discussion, it was

VOTED: That the URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee approve the minutes of the April 15, 2025, meeting of the Committee.

VOTE: 3 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Jay Placencia, Roby Luna, Armand Sabitoni

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Athletics Presentation [Enclosure](#)

Review of Athletics Department performance for 2024 – 2025 sports, key performance indicator (KPI) synopsis, fundraising and athletics capital projects update, and NCAA/NIL updates.

Thorr Bjorn, Vice President and Athletic Director

Vice President and Athletic Director Bjorn provided a strong FY2025 update, highlighting the continued academic growth of the men's and women's student-athletes, with increasing GPAs across various majors. Board Chair Margo Cook emphasized that the strong growth continues to be a great accomplishment and noted the academic strength of the women athletes.

He also reviewed several key performance indicators (KPIs), including:

- URI has won 11 conference championships since 2022.
- Three years into the 10-year KPI cycle, URI is already halfway toward the goal of securing league titles in 12 different sports. Recent championships include Baseball, Football, Track & Field (three consecutive years), and Rowing (two consecutive years).
- Within the Atlantic 10, only Virginia Commonwealth University (17) has more championships over this period.
- In 2024–25, 14 of URI's 19 sports either maintained or improved their league standings.

Vice President Bjorn also updated the Committee on the substantial fundraising efforts in FY25, which exceeded expectations and will support various athletic projects. He also provided an update on the Meade Stadium construction project. A flyover video of the Athletics construction project was added to the presentation and is [linked here](#).

The Committee discussed the ongoing challenges related to the new NCAA regulations on athlete compensation and roster limits. Vice President Bjorn spoke about the Student Compensation and Opportunity through Rights Endorsements (SCORE) Act, a House of Representatives bill currently before Congress. Chair Cook asked how this bill would benefit the University of Rhode Island's athletic program. Vice President Bjorn responded that the SCORE Act would be important for antitrust protection and would also promote uniform rules across all colleges and universities. Trustee Roby Luna inquired how decisions made by the Power 4 conferences (Big Ten, SEC, ACC, and Big 12) could reshape college athletics, especially for schools like the University of Rhode Island that are outside those major leagues. Vice President Bjorn emphasized key concerns, such as the Power 4 holding 65% of the vote in NCAA governance; the Power 4 pushing for models that direct more NCAA revenue to their own institutions, potentially reducing financial support for mid-major programs like URI; and the possibility that they may seek exclusive or tiered access to NCAA championships and advocate for higher minimum standards, which could force schools like URI to increase spending.

At the close of Vice President Bjorn's presentation, President Marc Parlange suggested that the Committee hear from student-athlete Lily Stasaitis, an MBA graduate student and coxswain on the URI Rowing team, as well as the president of the Student Athlete Advisory Committee.

Lily Stasaitis expressed deep appreciation for the support provided to her and other student-athletes, stating that the support allows athletes to focus on their sport and academics. She highlighted her positive relationships with coaches, pride in completing her undergraduate degree early, and her continued pursuit of an MBA.

Chair Cook noted that she was inspired by the video of the rowing team winning the championship and how the team works together, especially the coxswain.

Committee Vice Chair Placencia asked Lily why she chose the University of Rhode Island and what her plan is after completing her MBA. Lily Stasaitis replied that she chose the University of Rhode Island because of its recruitment process, team dynamic, and all-female coaching staff. Although she is unsure of her specific plans, she is interested in serving as a graduate coach for the team.

b. Student Affairs Presentation [Enclosure](#)

Review of Student Affairs performance for 2024-2025, including department engagement, satisfaction, and student success in support of strategic goals.

Ellen Reynolds, Vice President, Student Affairs

Ellen Reynolds, Vice President of Student Affairs, opened by welcoming Ryan Estus as the new student representative to the Board and reported on a successful move-in, with more than 6,000 students settling into residence halls and Greek housing this fall.

Vice President Reynolds provided a comprehensive update on the Division's FY25 activities and impact. Highlights from the past year which included strong student engagement across residential life, dining, recreation, wellness, and leadership initiatives.

The Vice President reported on the successful Move-In weekend, during which 6,000 new students were welcomed to the University with organized and community engagement activities that foster student success by creating a sense of belonging.

Vice President Reynolds emphasized that mental health support remains a critical concern for students, with a growing demand for student advocacy services. Additionally, she shared that health services had received a \$285,000 grant to establish the first Collegiate Recovery Center on a Rhode Island campus, focusing on students in substance abuse recovery or those who wish to become substance-free. Chair Cook asked where the grant originated, to which Vice President Reynolds replied that it came from the Rhode Island Department of Health through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which was part of the opioid settlement funds allocated to Rhode Island.

The Vice President reported that Housing and Residential Life advanced key capital priorities, including plans for two new undergraduate residence halls on Flagg Road that will add over 900 beds by Fall 2028. In the meantime, the team delivered \$2.3M in renovations to the University Gateway Apartments,

improved security and common spaces, and hosted numerous student engagement events. Also noteworthy, Vice President Reynolds highlighted the continued excellence in Club Sports, with 43% of teams advancing to postseason play and 60% of student-athletes earning Dean's List honors.

Vice President Reynolds provided an update on the Campus Store, reporting the successful transition of the URI Campus Store to Follett Higher Education management in July, along with refreshed offerings and a complete renovation planned for next year.

Across all areas, Student Affairs emphasized transparency, equity, and student-centered service delivery, demonstrating measurable contributions to URI's Strategic Plan and reinforcing the University's reputation as a student-focused R1 institution.

3. ADJOURN

Board Secretary Michelle Curreri called for a motion to adjourn the September 18, 2025, meeting.

On a motion duly made by Jay Placencia and seconded by Roby Luna, it was

VOTED: THAT the URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee adjourn the meeting of September 18, 2025.

VOTE: 3 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members voted in the negative.

YEAS: Jay Placencia, Roby Luna, Armand Sabitoni

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

The next URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee Meeting is tentatively scheduled for April 2026.