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Student Representative

**The University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees
Student Life and Athletics Committee Meeting
June 27, 2023, 9:00 a.m. EDT**

**The University of Rhode Island
Meeting Room 207 – Avedisian Hall
7 Greenhouse Road, Kingston, RI 02881**

OFFICIAL MINUTES

Committee Vice Chair Jay Placencia welcomed everyone to the June 27, 2023, meeting of the University of Rhode Island Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee and noted that the meeting was being held in person with board members participating remotely. Virtual access to the meeting was available via the YouTube video platform and is available for viewing at <https://web.uri.edu/trustees/meetings/>

Committee Vice Chair Jay Placencia conducted a formal roll call and confirmed that a quorum of members was present. She welcomed new committee member Robert Weygand and new student representative Revaa Goyal. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m.

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

- Ms. Jay Placencia, Vice Chair (remote)
- Mr. Armand Sabitoni (remote)
- Honorable Robert Weygand (remote)
- Dr. Marc B. Parlange, President (ex officio, non-voting) (in person)
- Ms. Revaa Goyal, Student Representative (non-voting) (remote)

The URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee members not in attendance:

- Mr. Thomas Ryan, Chair
- Mr. Roby Luna

URI President's Leadership Council members in attendance:

- Mr. Thorr Bjorn, Athletics Director (in person)
- Ms. Alyssa Boss, General Council (remote)
- Ms. Ellen Reynolds, Vice President for Student Affairs (in person)

URI Staff members in attendance:

- Mr. Jeff Johnson, Associate Director, Athletics Student Development (in person)
- Ms. Michelle Curreri, Secretary to the Board of Trustees (in person)
- Ms. Lynn Owens, Associate Secretary (in person)
- Ms. Carol Pegg, M.Ed., Executive Assistant II (remote)

URI Students in attendance:

- Ms. Julia Al-Amir (in person)
- Mr. Steven Cirella (in person)
- Ms. Trinity Smith (in person)
- Mr. Kennique Bonner-Steward (in person)

Committee Vice Chair Placencia acknowledged that the University of Rhode Island occupies the traditional homeland of the Narragansett Nation and the Niantic People.

1. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

a. Minutes of the April 6, 2023, Student Life and Athletics Committee Meeting. [Enclosure 1.a.](#)

Vice Chair Placencia called for a motion that the Student Life and Athletics Committee of the URI Board of Trustees approve the minutes of the April 6, 2023, meeting of the committee.

On a motion duly made by Armand Sabitoni, seconded by Vice Chair Placencia, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee
approve the minutes of the April 6, 2023, meeting of the Committee.

VOTE: 2 members voted in the affirmative and 0 members
voted in the negative.

YEAS: Armand Sabitoni, Jay Placencia

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: Robert Weygand

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. Year-end review of metrics and key performance indicators, including academic progress of student-athletes, compliance with applicable regulations, and success in team and individual competition. [Enclosure 2.a.](#)

- Thor Bjorn, Athletics Director

Athletic Director Thor Bjorn's report began with the introduction of student-athletes Steven Cirella, Trinity Smith, and Kennique Bonner-Steward. Trinity Smith began the year-end review by providing an overview of teams in the Atlantic10, along with the number of coaches and student-athletes at URI. It was also reported that the average team grade point average (GPA) is 3.25 and a graduation rate of 83 percent across a variety of majors.

Steve Cirella reported that there are three types of scholarships available based on student athletes' academic performance.

Kennique Bonner-Steward reported that the student-athlete graduation success rate is over the required 90 percent rating, which is important because it impacts URI's Academic Enhancement Fund.

In accordance with the University of Rhode Island's Strategic Plan, it was reported that they have devised Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Athletics. The University's plan is to have 12 sports win their conference championships within the next ten years. This season, two KPIs have been achieved with wins by men's track and field and women's basketball.

The presentation went on to address Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) and focused on programs that the Athletics Department partners with (opendorse™, Launch Lab, Rhode to Excellence Collective) to monetize student-athletes' NIL or pursue entrepreneurship. Also, the Athletics Department has implemented several other collaborative initiatives to create a holistic approach for excellence for student-athletes.

The presentation continued by reporting on new construction and shared how the State of Rhode Island's approval to fund 80 percent of construction for upgrades to athletic facilities, including Meade Stadium, outdoor track and field, and natatorium repairs, will have a positive impact on URI and the larger community. The presentation concluded by showing the departmental financial report highlighting a five-year breakdown of revenue and expenses.

b. Year-end review of student life goals and key performance indicators, including engagement, satisfaction, and academic progress as appropriate to department mission. [Enclosure 2.b.](#)

- Dr. Ellen Reynolds, Vice President, Student Affairs

Vice President Reynolds began by introducing Julia "Juju" Al-Amir, who co-presented with Dr. Reynolds. She continued by offering an overview of the departments that represent the Division of Student Affairs and provided a breakdown of the number of staff and students employed by Student Affairs.

Dr. Reynolds continued by emphasizing the Division's Strategic Action Plan in alignment with the goals of the URI Strategic Plan (Health and Well-Being, DEI, Partnerships for Community Development & Student Success, Impact, Value, and Efficiency).

Dr. Reynolds highlighted the ongoing satisfaction with Health Services by students in their assessment of the services they receive, with 95 percent of students saying they would recommend Health Services to other students.

Regarding the Counseling Center, Vice President Reynolds reported that while there was a high volume of students utilizing their services, students reported satisfaction with the help they received, especially with the implementation of the MySSP App, a student support program application.

Next, Julia Al-Amir reported on the Talent Development (TD) program. Ms. Amir, who is a TD Scholar graduate, reported that there are currently 1,001 students enrolled in the TD program, with 336 students enrolled for the first time. She also shared that 82 percent of TD scholars are first-generation students in a wide variety of majors.

Ms. Al-Amir also provided a snapshot of the Center for Student Leadership and Development and shared that the Center welcomed 102 first-year students to the 2022 Leadership Institute, and the 2023 graduating Leadership minor students had an average GPA of 3.53.

Dr. Reynolds reported that Campus Recreation continues to have a very high positive impact on URI students. Campus Recreation employs 340 students, 111,589 students used the Anna Fascitelli Fitness & Wellness Center, 52 percent of Club Sports teams made it to the playoffs, and there are 711 Intermural teams. She further reported that the median GPA for student-athletes participating in Club Sports is 3.39, and 64 percent of Club Sports athletes made the Dean's list. Also of note, the URI Sailing Team won the McMillan Cup for the first time in 52 years, and the Women's Crew Club won first place in the Grand Final.

Continuing her report, Dr. Reynolds reported on Housing and Residential Life (HRL). She stated that HRL houses 5,373 undergraduates, 3,485 of whom are first-year students in 26 residence halls. HRL will soon oversee the construction of a 500-bed new undergraduate residence hall.

Dr. Reynolds shared information on Greek Life which continues to be a robust program with 24% of undergraduate students participating. Greek Life also focuses on philanthropic efforts, raising \$300,000 for local charities this past academic year.

Dr. Reynolds also reported on the Student Support and Advocacy Services (SSAS) and the Disability, Access and Inclusion (DAI) Offices. The Student Support and Advocacy Services provides outreach to students with financial, personal, and emotional hardships. They also

provide a food pantry (Rhody Outpost) to help students facing food insecurity, and the Rhody Outpost helps to meet the needs of students struggling to afford nutritious food.

DAI has seen a 75% increase in appointments and a 246% increase in course accommodations.

Dr. Reynolds reported that Dining Services staff served over 8,000 students per day across four dining halls; created additional space in the dining warehouse to house the Rhody Outpost; changed purchasing quantities procedures, which saved the department nearly \$4,000, and partnered with Conference Services to execute 50 conferences, creating a gross revenue of over \$700,000.

Dr. Reynolds concluded with information regarding the Memorial Union and Student Involvement. They are pleased to announce that they have partnered with Anthology Engage, a data-driven assessment platform that tracks student engagement and belonging.

3. ACTION ITEMS

a. Review of amendments to the Student Life and Athletics Committee Charter and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees [Enclosure 3.a.](#)

Committee Vice Chair Jay Placencia called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee recommend that the Board of Trustees approve amendments to the Committee Charter, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.a.

On a motion duly made by Armand Sabitoni and seconded by Robert Weygand, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee recommend that the Board of Trustees approve amendments to the Committee Charter, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.a.

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

YEAS: Armand Sabitoni, Jay Placencia, Robert Weygand

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

b. Review of amendments to the Student Life and Athletics Committee Calendar and recommendation to the URI Board of Trustees. [Enclosure 3.b.](#)

Committee Vice Chair Jay Placencia called for a motion that the URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee recommend that the Board of Trustees approve amendments to the Committee Calendar, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.b.

On a motion duly made by Armand Sabitoni and seconded by Robert Weygand, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee recommend that the Board of Trustees approve amendments to the Committee Calendar, as recommended and presented in Enclosure 3.b.

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

YEAS: Armand Sabitoni, Jay Placencia, Robert Weygand

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

4. ADJOURN

Committee Vice Chair Jay Placencia called for a motion to adjourn the June 27, 2023, meeting.

On a motion duly made by Robert Weygand and seconded by Armand Sabitoni, it was

VOTED: THAT The URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee adjourn the meeting of June 27, 2023.

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

YEAS: Armand Sabitoni, Jay Placencia, Robert Weygand

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINS: 0

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 a.m.

UPCOMING MEETING

The next URI Board of Trustees Student Life and Athletics Committee Meeting is scheduled for September 2023.