**GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Minutes of the December 11, 2015 Meeting**

**Brian D. Mitchell, Chair**

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The December 11, 2015 meeting of the Governors State University Board of Trustees was called to order by Board Vice Chair Eileen Durkin at 8:35 a.m. Also in attendance were Trustees Bruce N. Friefeld, Jack Beaupre, Patrick Ormsby, Lorraine Tyson, Anibal Taboas, and Student Trustee Yolanda Pitts. Board Chair Brian D. Mitchell was absent.

Others in attendance: Elaine P. Maimon, President; Deborah E. Bordelon, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Gebeyehu Ejigu, Acting Executive Vice President; Barbara Winicki, Faculty Senate President; Sheryl Jones-Harper, Civil Service Senate President; Mychael Vanarsdale, Student Senate President; Sondra Estep, GSU UPI President; Jeffrey Slovak, Interim Vice President; Will Davis, Vice President for Development; Alexis Kennedy, General Counsel; Aurelio Valente, Vice President for Student Affairs; Penny Perdue, Executive Assistant to the President; Melinda Gieseke, Assistant Vice President for Finance; Ann Vendrely, Associate Provost; Colleen Sexton, Associate Provost; Reinhold Hill, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences; Andrea Evans, Dean, College of Education; Ellen Foster Curtis, Dean, College of Business; Elizabeth Cada, Dean, College of Health and Human Services; Lydia Morrow-Ruetten, Dean, University Library; Joyce Coleman, Associate Vice President for Human Resources and Diversity; Tracy Sullivan, Assistant Vice President of Procurement; James McGee, Director of Public Safety; Pete Mizera, Associate Vice President of ITS; and Jim Jankowski from CanonDesign Inc.

Durkin welcomed and acknowledged Faculty Senate Representatives to the Board; David Golland, Jelena Radovic-Fanta, Melanie Ellexson, Yonghong Jia, Xinghua Gao and Susan Ji.

**Vice Chair’s Report, Eileen Durkin**

Vice Chair Durkin made the following remarks: Good morning and welcome. I will be chairing today’s meeting in Chair Mitchell’s absence. He is attending the funeral for Matteson firefighter Mark Zielinski, a 13-year veteran of the department, who died in the line of duty. We join the entire Village of Matteson in sending our sympathies to Mr. Zielinski’s family and the Matteson Fire Department.

Today we will be looking at GSU’s past, present and future, which sounds a little like “A Christmas Carol.” On January 1, 1996 the GSU Board was established. GSU has accomplished a lot in the past 20 years with its independent board. The Board has been able to take on the difficult decisions and challenges required to turn GSU into a full service 21st century university. An independent Board can be innovative and nimble, encouraging the University to be a leader among universities. I want to recognize Trustee Bruce Friefeld, who was appointed by Governor Jim Edgar in 1996. In the photo projected on the screen we have the original Board, which included Trustee Friefeld as well as Sally Jackson, the Board’s first Chair, Bill McGee, Vice Chair, Bobbie Peterson, Kristi DeLaurentiis, Fran Grossman, and Maria D’Amezcua. Trustee Friefeld, our current Secretary, was Secretary of that very first Board and also served as Chair for many years.

In the present GSU just celebrated the 5th anniversary of the Dual Degree Program (DDP). The DDP now has an enrollment of over 500 community college students and is an award winning, national model for both transfer and completion. Many thanks to President Maimon, Gebe Ejigu, Deb Bordelon, Linda Uzureau and all those who have worked so hard to make this program a success. During today’s meeting we will once again take up topics made necessary by the ongoing state budget stalemate. We will hear how this situation has affected our Moody’s rating, and we will vote on an FY2016 operating budget without the benefit of a state budget. We will also review reports on financial and compliance audits, program accreditation, and expenditures. These reports indicate that we are doing our best, against great odds, to continue with the orderly functions of the University. And for the future, we will talk about some necessary projects that must move forward for the good of our students and the University community. We cannot be paralyzed by the present to the detriment of the future. The work of the University moves forward because our students deserve no less.

Before I turn the microphone over to Dr. Maimon I want to wish everyone a happy holiday, however you celebrate, and thank you for your hard work and dedication over the past year.

**President’s Report, Dr. Elaine P. Maimon**

President Maimon made the following remarks: Thank you, Vice Chair Durkin. Let me add an expression of sympathy from the entire GSU family to the family of Matteson’s brave firefighter, Mark Zielinski.

The budget stalemate in the State of Illinois continues. Since our last meeting I have had the opportunity to meet with Governor Rauner and the four legislative leaders. In one meeting, with the Governor and four community college presidents, the Governor specifically said he was cautiously optimistic that the State would have a budget by January, and I told him I was holding him to it. We have heard various things. Let me say that January 31 is an important date for us because we have to start planning for FY2017. January 31 is late enough to hear about our current year’s budget when we have to plan for the next fiscal year. This is something that has to happen. Our prudent practice of fiscal and enrollment management depends on appropriate and timely support from the State. As of today, let me put this in very clear terms, we have not received one penny from the State of Illinois for FY2016 - five-and-a-half months into the fiscal year. Therefore, our advocacy continues with the teamwork of all the Illinois public university presidents and chancellors. On January 13 we will all be in Springfield for the first day of the new session. The University of Illinois has taken a leadership position and has been organizing alumni from all the universities to speak up with one voice about the need for a budget. They are also working hard to organize business leaders across the state. We are working to send a clear message—Illinois can no longer abandon its state universities. As good fiscal stewards we must keep funds in reserve to deal with deferred maintenance since the State of Illinois does not provide funds for major repairs. In FY2008 GSU had to borrow money to address the highest priority of deferred facilities maintenance and improve safety and sustainability of the campus. But that was eight years ago and we have continued deferred maintenance needs. One particular area is the underground water pipes, one of which burst on November 30, necessitating the temporary closing of buildings A-F. I have asked Dr. Ejigu to provide a brief report on this and other deferred maintenance needs later in the meeting.

I want to be very clear about the choices we have. First, I will start with the choice we are not recommending—paralysis. If we stop taking bold calculated risks we impede services to our students, hurt enrollment, and create a downward spiral of tuition revenue. The choice we are recommending is to do our best to control our future in the context of unacceptable challenges and come out of this crisis stronger. Let me quote President John F. Kennedy to reiterate this point. He once said, “The Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word ‘crisis.’ One brush stroke stands for danger; the other for opportunity. In a crisis, be aware of the danger—but recognize the opportunity.” It is with this conviction that we are proposing three initiatives that involve significant expenditures. I strongly recommend forward movement on all three initiatives, and I look forward to discussing them with you.

Our academic and administrative units are working on Vision 2020 goals with plans to have it posted on the portal by mid-January. I want to thank Provost Bordelon for leading that effort. Spring enrollment is looking positive. We have worked very hard to protect our students and provide an excellent option for their education.

As we continue to gain recognition among traditional age students, we are building ways to serve our returning adults. The Deans and Chairs are working to provide quality online courses that fit better into students’ lives, so we are going to see increased opportunities for online and hybrid study to address the particular needs of the returning adult students.

Happy birthday to the Dual Degree Program (DDP), a national model, which just won another prize from *University Business Magazine* naming GSU and the DDP a Winter 2015 Model of Excellence. The GSU program stands out for its unique ability to carry students through to completion. Today we will join faculty, staff and students for our annual holiday reception, which has been scaled back, but only in a material way. In this season of hope, universities are distinctly places of hope. We educate for the future and hope is necessary for us to do our job. Let us hope that in early 2016 the State fulfills its responsibility to support its state universities. On a personal note, I want to wish everyone a happy, relaxing holiday, and here’s to 2016.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Durkin requested a motion to go into Executive Session. Pitts made a motion to go into Executive Session pursuant to sections 2(c)1, 2(c)3, and 2(c)11 of the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Tyson seconded. Roll call was taken and Durkin, Friefeld, Beaupre, Ormsby, Tyson, Taboas and Pitts were present. Mitchell was absent. Executive Session commenced at 9:01 a.m. President Maimon, Provost Bordelon, Acting Executive Vice President Ejigu, and General Counsel Kennedy remained in Executive Session, which adjourned at 9:53 a.m. by a motion from Durkin and a second from Taboas, as well as a unanimous roll call. Durkin announced that no final action was taken during Executive Session. Open session resumed at 10:00 a.m.

**BUDGET AND FINANCE**

Budget and Finance Committee Chair, Patrick Ormsby, presented the following items:

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**Report on Moody’s Downgrade**

Ejigu reported that Moody’s Investment Service recently announced a series of grading actions pertaining to the Illinois public universities. GSU went from BAA1 down to BAA3. Following that President Maimon immediately alerted the Board via email, with a follow-up on October 27th in which she provided specifics about the downgrade. As indicated in the Moody’s action itself, “the downgrade reflects GSU’s significant exposure to the State of Illinois which is BAA1. The State contributes a large portion of its operating revenue. Given the lack of appropriations thus far for FY16, the University’s exposure to the State will put a strain on their operating budget/abilities.” All public state universities were downgraded except for the University of Illinois and Illinois State University. GSU immediately contacted its financial advisor, Columbia Capital, which stated, “Moody’s action did not provide any new information to the market and was likely expected given the existing budget impasse in the State of Illinois. In addition, Moody’s action did not single out GSU from other state universities.” The overall conclusion from Columbia Capital was that they do not believe Moody’s recent action will affect GSU’s borrowing ability or interest rates in any significant way. Tyson asked if Columbia Capital provided any rationale on future borrowing such as penalties. Ejigu responded that was actually the primary reason for contacting them, with a series of questions focused on what this will mean to GSU if the University wanted to access the credit market for additional growth. In summary, the Administration feels comfortable that the impact of this downgrade is minimal.

**Report on Budget vs. Actual Operating Budget**

Slovak reported, pointing out the table in the Board Book. The budget displayed in the first column of the table represents operating budgets approved by the Board in both May and October, which are a reflection of the FY2015 budget with a listing of expenses and encumbrances. Looking down to the lowest right hand cell of the table, which is as of November 30, the University was operating with a reasonably healthy balance when expenses were compared to the FY2015 budget. That number will shrink over the coming months because there are a number of expenses that will occur with winter, etc. Nevertheless, it is expected that the budget to actual reports that will be presented to the Board in March and May 2016 will come to a zero sum. Ormsby asked if the encumbrance column can be impacted by actions that might be taken in addition to already committed expenditures. Ejigu responded that contracts currently in place and payroll are already encumbered; however, there are unknowns that come up that will affect the expenditure column.

**Report on Purchases $50,000-$99,999**

Ejigu stated the report is in the Board book per Board Bylaws. There were no questions.

**Report on FY2014 Financial Audit**

Ejigu introduced Gieseke. She noted this report is for the fiscal year that ended 17 months ago. The Auditor General, as a constitutional officer, is required by the Illinois State Auditing Act to conduct a financial audit and a compliance examination of every State agency. These audits and examinations inform the public, the Legislature, and State officers about the obligations, expenditures, receipts, and use of agency funds, and provide state agencies with specific recommendations to help ensure compliance with State and federal statues, rules, and regulations. GSU has been working with the independent auditing firm of E.C. Ortiz & Co. on behalf of the Illinois Auditor General.

The financial audit document begins with the auditor’s report. The primary purpose of this audit and the resulting report is to express an opinion on the University’s FY2014 financial statements. Based on their audit, the auditors have “expressed an unqualified opinion on the University’s basic financial statements.” The financial statements present fairly in all material respects the financial position of the University as of June 30, 2014. The net position increased by $2.5M in FY2014, while operating revenue decreased by $2.2M, mostly attributable to the decrease in grants and contracts as a number of grants had ended and not been renewed. Operating expenses increased by $6.6M, mostly attributable to negotiated salary increases and the transition to a four-year institution. Non-operating revenue decreased $6.7M, mostly due to a decline in funding from the Capital Development Board (CDB). This trend will continue in FY2015 as no new projects have been approved by the CDB. The University’s year-end cash position decreased by $15M, primarily due to the use of cash from the revenue bonds for the construction of Prairie Place.

**Report on FY14 Compliance Audit**

Gieseke reported. The purpose of this examination is to ensure GSU complied, in all material respects, with 1) Governmental Accounting Standards Compliance; 2) Federal Compliance; and 3) State Compliance. For FY2014 GSU had six audit findings, which is five less than the previous year.

In the area of federal compliance, the number of audit findings decreased from eight in FY2013 to three in FY2014. The first two listed are repeat findings and the third one is new. The University attributes this dramatic improvement in compliance to the investment GSU has made in experienced people, processes and technology over the last few years. Federal compliance is such that even a minor error will trigger a finding. While findings remain, the processes that have been put in place during the last couple of years provide a high level of confidence that records are substantially accurate. In the area of State compliance, the number of audit findings stayed the same with three in both FY2013 and FY2014. The first one is a repeat and the other two are new. The University again has a finding related to faculty non-compliance with timesheets. This finding will likely continue unless State mandates are changed. The other two findings are related to inadequate controls over verification of job applicant’s information and weakness in controls in regards to payment card industry data security standards. Actions have been taken to address these areas.

Looking forward, the University anticipates the FY2015 audits will be completed on schedule. In addition, the Administration is confident that by strengthening various University departments and processes it will continue to minimize the number of audit findings in the future. Finally, it should be noted that audits provide the University an opportunity for continuous growth and improvement. This is the last year working with E.C. Ortiz & Co. as their contract has ended. Ejigu stated that since Gieseke has been with GSU the audits have improved, and having three certified public accountants has greatly strengthened GSU’s staff. Ormsby agreed that the Financial Services Office has worked hard to improve the audit process, and Tyson echoed his sentiments.

**Internal Auditor’s Annual Report**

Slovak presented, reminding the Board that at the October meeting tribute was paid to David Dixon, GSU’s long time Internal Auditor, who has since retired. Slovak summarized his final report consisting of 82 audits during the last fiscal year, including follow-up on all the compliance audit findings to ensure the proper corrective action was taken. With the exception of the faculty timesheet item, Dixon’s report states that in his opinion as a professional auditor GSU has corrected everything identified in the private audits. Maimon pointed out that GSU takes the audit finding for faculty timesheets because each and every year the University reiterates to the State legislature that faculty members work 24/7 and it is not feasible to fill out timesheets in 15 minute increments. She stated she wanted the faculty members present to be clear on that issue and the fact that the Administration will continue to accept the audit finding on behalf of the faculty.

Maimon asked Ejigu to brief the Board on recent events regarding a broken water pipeline. Ejigu explained that in 2008 the University took care of a deferred maintenance backlog, focusing on building systems such as electrical, plumbing, and fire protection. On November 30 the campus experienced the rupture of a domestic water line right in the middle of D building, under the Academic Resource Center. Facilities Development Management staff responded very quickly; however, water fell onto electrical systems and most of the campus was evacuated. Temporary solutions were put in place in order to open the next day although the flooding caused significant damage in several areas. This event served as a reminder that deferred maintenance is an ongoing issue. The campus’ domestic underground water lines, for example, are original to the buildings and are over 45 years old and therefore past their useful lives. The President’s emergency powers were utilized for corrective measures, estimated at approximately $200,000. The University does have flood insurance and all expenses will be filed with the insurance company. It is important to note that just one waterline broke; however there are many more that could break at any time. Therefore, the University has commissioned an inspection that is expected to be complete in a month or so, to be followed by corrective actions. All actions taken and expenditures made will be reported to the Board at the March 2016 meeting.

**Action Items:**

***Resolution 16—13: Authorization to Contract with the University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC) for a Grant Funded Program***

Ormsby requested a motion to approve Resolution 16-13. Tyson made a motion. Durkin seconded. Bordelon reported this is part of a $2M Title III federal grant spanning over three years. The University is required to have external evaluators and UIC was chosen. No University funds will be expended. UIC will be on campus meeting with GSU’s grants staff and participants and will submit reports each year that will be included in GSU’s reports to the federal government. There were no questions. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

***Resolution 16-14: Authorization to Contract with CanonDesign Inc. for Phase II of Campus Housing***

Ejigu pointed out the resolution was amended to a reflect a not-to-exceed amount of $125,000. Ormsby requested a motion to approve Resolution 16-14. Beaupre made a motion. Durkin seconded. Ejigu reported this study is being contracted in anticipation of the second phase of GSU’s student housing complex. It will raise the question not if, but when the University should continue with this initiative. He noted that Prairie Place 1 has been successful beyond expectations, now at full capacity in only its second year of operation, with a waiting list. Meetings have been held with Columbia Capital Management which included discussions about the current state of the credit market as it relates to the State of Illinois’ financial condition as well as the financial feasibility for debt financing of such a project under current and near term conditions. Ejigu reported that GSU Administration has been affirmed by Columbia Capital. A cross-functional internal team has been formed to initiate the planning with an architecture and engineering (A/E) firm which will include a feasibility study and commencement of construction. The bidding process proved to be very successful and the Administration held on-campus interviews with three firms, recommending CanonDesign Inc. of Chicago, IL. A principal of that firm, Jim Jankowski, is present at the meeting today.

Durkin asked if lessons learned from Prairie Place 1 (PP1) will be incorporated into the planning of Prairie Place 2. Ejigu responded that the first phase, (PP1), provided many valuable lessons, especially what kind of units to design. He added that Betsy Joseph, Director of Student Housing, and her staff will be at the core of this study. Tyson asked for more information on the experience of CanonDesign Inc. Ejigu explained that one of the reasons CanonDesign was chosen was the diversity of the subcontractors they have brought together for this project. They have a dining group, a nationwide housing group, it is one of the largest A/E firms in the region, and all of them have worked together on similar projects in the past. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

***Resolution 16—15: Approval of FY2016 Operating Budget***

Ormsby requested a motion to approve Resolution 16-15. Friefeld made a motion. Durkin seconded. Slovak reminded the Board that they approved preliminary core operating budgets at the May 8, 2015 and the October 2, 2015 meetings, both of which reflected the uncertainty of the FY2016 state appropriations process. The proposed core operating budget of $52.76 million for FY2016 constitutes a 4.4% decrease from the original FY2015 budgeted level of $55.19 million, and a 5.0% decrease from the preliminary budget of $55.59 million approved on October 2, 2015. This reduction directly reflects our expectation of an operating appropriation significantly smaller than the one legislated for the prior fiscal year. There were no questions. Ormsby thanked the Administration for the comprehensive reporting and analysis. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

***Resolution 16—16: Approval of a Contract for the Purchase and Installation of Kitchen Equipment***

Ormsby requested a motion to approve Resolution 16-16. Friefeld made a motion. Durkin seconded. Ejigu reported this proposed project came before the Board in October 2014 with the presentation of a feasibility study. At the time it was decided to hold off on the project; however, since then considerable concerns about the mechanical and plumbing systems of the 45-year-old kitchen have developed and it is being revisited. There are indications from Facilities Development Management (FDM) that systems could break down at any time and the entire kitchen would have to be shut down. Therefore, the Administration is now recommending that the project commence and is asking the Board for its approval. The plan is to undertake the major construction work during the summer, but there are a number of procurement items that require long lead times which would necessitate ordering them within the next month or so. Today the Administration is seeking authorization to spend up to $650,000 now for the long lead items, and come back to the Board for award of a construction contract at the March meeting. Ejigu reported the total cost of the kitchen renovation project is approximately $3.8M.

Ormsby asked for clarification as to whether the Administration is asking for just $650,000 now, or the entire $3.8M. Ejigu explained that some equipment items, valued at approximately $650,000, require long lead times and therefore need to be ordered soon; however, the Administration is asking for approval of the entire project in the amount of approximately $3.8M. Tyson asked how the project would be funded. Ejigu replied the funding source is the pool of carryforward funds the University has been able to accumulate. Tyson asked if the expectation was to have the kitchen completed by the fall 2016 semester. Ejigu stated that if the orders for the long lead items are placed soon it is expected the project will be completed before the fall 2016 semester begins. Ejigu added that if the resolution is approved the Administration will seek bids for construction in the next couple of months and will recommend the award of a construction contract to the Board at the March meeting. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

***Resolution 16—17: Approval of a Contract for the Purchase of Digital Imaging Software***

Ormsby requested a motion to approve Resolution 16-17. Taboas made a motion. Pitts seconded. Ejigu explained that the digital imaging software is used in the admissions process. The current product, Singularity, was purchased nine years ago and is being phased out after being purchased by a competitor. This now puts the University at a disadvantage because admissions applications cannot be processed efficiently. In some instances, the application process can take up to two months. He added there are a number of products in the marketplace and the University has received proposals that are now being analyzed. The Administration is asking for authorization to contract with the lowest and most responsive vendor for the purchase and installation of a document imaging system for an amount not to exceed $500,000. There were no questions. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

Human Resources Committee Chair, Lorraine Tyson, presented the following items:

**ACTION ITEMS**

***Resolution 16—19: Approval to Transfer Tenure for Dr. Farouk Shaaban***

Tyson requested a motion to approve Resolution 16-19. Ormsby made a motion. Friefeld seconded. Bordelon stated a request to transfer Dr. Shaaban’s tenure from the College of Business to the College of Arts and Sciences is being made in order to address program and accreditation needs, as well as to meet the program needs of the interdisciplinary leadership program in the College of Arts and Sciences. This transfer would take effect January 4, 2016. There were no questions. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

Academic Affairs Committee Chair, Anibal Taboas, presented the following items:

**INFORMATION ITEMS**

**Program Accreditation Status Summary**

Bordelon reported on the summary, which is in the Board Book. She noted that in October site visits took place by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) and the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology (ASHA). Bordelon commended the faculty, staff, and Colleges for their hard work and dedication because both visits were very successful. The College of Business met 17 of 20 standards, which for an initial visit is very commendable. In fall 2016 the AACSB will return to campus at which time it will be possible to move forward with full accreditation. The Communication Disorders program met all standards for accreditation. The final report will be available in February. Bordelon went on to report the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) mid-cycle visit will take place on February 22-23, 2016. The Provost’s Office is currently working on the assurance argument, and has asked for feedback from the GSU community which will be incorporated into the report. The Board will be part of this visit and an invitation will be extended to Board members soon.

**IBHE Cyclical Program Reviews for AY2015-2016**

Bordelon explained these reviews are a cyclical reporting system put in place by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE). The programs noted in the chart will be reviewed by University committees in February, looking at a variety of factors including enrollment, graduation rates, and goals for those programs. These reviews will be shared with the Board at the May meeting. Taboas asked if the IBHE continues to operate despite the State’s financial woes, to which Bordelon reported they are.

**ACTION ITEMS**

***Resolution 16—18: Award of Professor Emeritus Status***

Taboas requested a motion to approve Resolution 16-18. Ormsby made a motion. Pitts seconded. Bordelon stated she was very pleased to bring forward the awarding of Professor Emeritus status to Dr. Jon Carlson, who was on the faculty for 25 years before retiring at the end of the 2014-2015 academic year. Dr. Carlson has a long history of mentoring faculty and students, and he did a phenomenal job of promoting the field of counseling. He was recognized by the American Psychological Association (APA) as a living legend and won numerous other awards. Dr. Carlson has been published widely and has helped colleagues and students publish. He is someone who is really dedicated to GSU and has told the University’s story well to the population and beyond. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**FULL BOARD**

**ACTION ITEMS**

**Approval of Minutes**

Vice Chair Durkin requested a motion to approve the minutes of the August 9-10, 2015 Board Retreat. Tyson made a motion. Friefeld seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote. Durkin then requested a motion to approve the minutes of the October 2, 2015 Board Meeting. Taboas made a motion. Friefeld seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Approval of** **Consent Agenda**

***Resolution 16—13:*** Authorization to Contract with the University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC) for a Grant Funded Program

***Resolution 16—14:*** Authorization to Contract with an Architectural and Engineering Firm for

Phase II of Campus Housing

***Resolution 16—15:*** Approval of FY2016 Operating Budget

***Resolution 16—16:*** Approval of a Contract for the Purchase and Installation of Kitchen

Equipment

***Resolution 16—17:*** Approval of a Contract for the Purchase of Digital Imaging Software

***Resolution 16—18:*** Award of Professor Emeritus Status – Dr. Jon Carlson

***Resolution 16—19:*** Approval to Transfer Tenure for Dr. Farouk Shaaban

Durkin asked the Board if there were any resolutions they wished removed from the Consent Agenda. There were no requests. Durkin requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Taboas made a motion. Friefeld seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Senate Reports**

**Barbara Winicki, Faculty Senate President**

Dr. Winicki made the following remarks: Thank you Provost Bordelon and Associate Provosts Sexton and Vendrely for attending the Faculty Senate and standing committee meetings. They have provided a great deal of help and information that we need to do our work. I would also like to thank Dean of Students Aurelio Valente for his willingness to discuss faculty involvement in student support services and student conduct policies.

During the Fall 2015 semester, as always, the Faculty Senate and its standing committees have worked on reviewing proposals for new policies, new programs, and changes in existing policies and programs. These reviews often take longer than any of us ever wish. I know, as a member of the Educational Policies Committee, that I do not enjoy reviewing long and complicated policies. But we take our work seriously and we know that doing our work carefully is important to the integrity of the University. Even during these “interesting times,” when innovation and the unique budget situation are on everyone’s minds, our goal is to ensure GSU students have academic experiences that are on par with those they would have in Hyde Park or Evanston.

I really believe that the faculty and administration here at GSU work together to ensure that courses and programs do just that. One specific example is the development of guidelines for capstone courses and projects for undergraduate and graduate degree programs by the General Education Council and the Graduate Studies Council, respectively. These degree capstones will document our students’ and our institution’s successes. They also will demonstrate to students—and the world—that a GSU degree is earned and not purchased.

Of course, the members of the Faculty Senate are worried about hiring freezes, lack of funds for travel to professional conferences and other restrictions, but please understand that these concerns are, in great part, because the freezes and other funding cuts will make maintaining high-quality degree programs more difficult. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak.

**Sheryl Jones-Harper, Civil Service Senate President**

Ms. Jones-Harper made the following remarks: The Civil Service Senate is alive and well. On Wednesday, December 9, we celebrated our 32nd Civil Service Day. The theme was GSU LIVE! and Associate Vice President for Human Resources, Joyce Coleman, was our emcee. The day featured a variety of live entertainment including the Southland College Prep Jazz Band, a comedian, and several of GSU’s own performers including the Acapella Choir, Transformational Choir, and the GSU Dance Company. Lunch was served by President Maimon, Provost Bordelon, college deans and several other administrative staff. Door and raffle prizes were donated by employees and several departments including the Provost’s Office, Center for Performing Arts, and the GSU Foundation.

Recipients of the Choice Awards, who are voted on by their peers, were honored, and Donald Washington of ITS was named Employee of the Year. Student Trustee Yolanda Pitts extended her thanks and holiday greetings to all on behalf of the GSU Board of Trustees. A great time was had by those in attendance.

Our Civil Service employees continue to bring a dedicated work ethic to their departments, in whatever capacity they serve, while remaining positive during these times of austerity. Due to the lack of current budget allocations all of the events and activities, including condolence arrangements for deceased employees and family members, and Educational Assistance Awards, are being paid for from resources earned by senate fundraising events and donations. Some of these events include a Taffy Apple Sale and an outside vendor fair. The Civil Service Senate is also working with Human Resources to develop some professional development opportunities and possibly a professional development day.

On behalf of the Civil Service Senate I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season.

**Mychael Vanarsdale, Student Senate President**

Mr. Vanarsdale made the following remarks: On October 20 the Student Senate attended the Illinois Public University Rally in Springfield at the capitol building, where students from across the State worked together to communicate how the budget impasse is affecting students. On October 24 Senators Marie Penny, Evan Nave, David Gethers and Yolanda Pitts attended the ASGA Conference at Malcolm X College, and on November 5 Student Senate President Mychael Vanarsdale delivered a speech at Northern Illinois University for their rally for the MAP grant cuts, in particular how MAP grants affect lower income students at all universities.

On November 10 we held a higher education media day for students to produce a tweet to the Governor consisting of student testimonials to be released at the January 13 legislative session. On November 20th the Student Senate inducted four new senators: Jessica Love-Jordan, Moriah Hampton, Timothy Hinton and Hilary Cherdere. The Student Senate has been in constant communication with Community Alliance to gain awareness and information about the state budget crisis and how each sector of government services is being effected by the budget holdout. GSU’s Student Senate is currently in talks with SGA’s across Illinois in an effort to form a forum for student leadership to meet with the Governor and Lieutenant Governor. The Student Senate is also planning a forum and panel for February, March and April to discuss issues on and off campus. Finally, the Senate held training for voter registration to make Governors State University a public polling site. Thank you.

**NEW BUSINESS**

***Resolution 16—20: Release of Executive Session Minutes***

Vice Chair Durkin requested a motion to approve Resolution 16-20. Friefeld made a motion. Tyson seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

***Resolution 16—21: Appointment of a Treasurer***

Durkin requested a motion to approve Resolution 16-21. Friefeld made a motion. Tyson seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

***Resolution 16—22: Resolution on the State of Illinois Budget***

Durkin requested a motion to approve Resolution 16-22. Tyson made a motion. Beaupre seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Trustee Tyson left the meeting at 11:29 a.m.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Natasha Dillard, GSU graduate student**

Ms. Dillard made the following remarks: My question to the Board is I am seeking an answer for instructors to put grades into Blackboard in a timely manner. (Dillard provided a handout to the Board.) I am currently a suspended graduate student. My emails have been frozen. I had already started the summer session when I was suspended out of that class. I began to call my advisor. I had difficulties finding the proper procedures on the website, as did she, for grievance of a grade. On September 15 I received my final grade, a C, and proceeded with the grievance process. I asked for an extension because I was not able to get into my emails. I was then given permission by the Dean of the College of Education to receive my emails. I returned to my advisor who indicated the correspondence I needed in order to pass. I contacted Dean Evans and she took the time to meet with me. I have been at GSU since 2010. I was supposed to be the next president of the Student Senate, but my mother became ill, and then I became homeless. Dean Evans did take time out to meet with me. Her response is in the folder, stating she agreed about the grade. I put my attention to the Associate Provost, the Provost and the President. I began to again get the same response that I was not able to meet with them. The only thing I wanted was to be able to have the opportunity to withdraw from the class or the opportunity to meet with my instructor so I would not be dropped from the program. I was not given that opportunity. Even though me standing here may never change this, I ask the Board to consider my plight. I’m proactive for GSU as the day is long. Now that I’m no longer here I am no longer receiving support.

Vice Chair Durkin agreed to refer this matter to the Administration.

**Charles Dieringer, community member**

Mr. Dieringer made the following remarks: I previously addressed the Board of Trustees about community issues and the way we run our board meetings here. My background includes participation on many boards. The sanitation district did not allow public participation at their meetings, but eventually they came to allow this which I think is very beneficial. The information I received today was very informative. Along that same item, you just approved your minutes for the last couple of meetings and I think it would be helpful for the community to see a draft form of the minutes prior to approval. Otherwise there are real serious issues facing our community and I don’t think GSU is adequately involved. Yesterday we had 450 citizens involved in a healthcare issue in the area, and if you’re going to have an inefficient healthcare facility on campus you are not serving the community. I think more community input would help you get through this mess.

**Sondra Estep, GSU UPI President**

Dr. Estep made the following remarks: GSU employs 260 faculty and academic support professionals. I would like to follow up on your last resolution (*Resolution 16-22: Resolution on the State of Illinois Budget*). UPI statewide has entered into a *Fund Our Future* program initiative on three levels. First, we want MAP grant funding released to our students and the universities. As you know some institutions have declared they will not take registration from students with MAP funding because they can’t afford to. (Estep provided a handout to the Board). GSU is owed $2.5M, which doesn’t look like that much compared to other universities, but that’s a huge chunk of money, affecting one-quarter of our students and the University. Adequate funding of higher education in the State of Illinois is needed. We started a postcard campaign, but unfortunately our postcards got lost in the mail and we only got ours last Tuesday. A couple of the universities partnered with administrators and they were able to get 10,000 postcards signed. I’m giving you postcards so you can provide your support. They will be dumped on the Governor’s desk, and the legislators, demanding that MAP funding be released now. I will provide cards to everyone who is willing to fill one out.

As for the award of Professor Emeritus to Dr. Jon Carlson today, no professor deserved emeritus status more than he. It should be noted that the vote for emeritus status has to be a majority of the faculty, not a majority of those who participated. The process was botched and had to be repeated. We should not treat our best and brightest that way. Such things happen for a number of reasons, including young faculty that may not have known the candidate and therefore don’t vote, but we should not let this happen again.

**Alyse Zieman, community member**

Ms. Zieman made the following remarks: Thank you for the energy summit held on campus this past fall, which had 150 participants including Senator Anthony DeLuca and Park Forest Village President John Ostenburg. I’m grateful that it was very close to home. I have some questions about the Audubon people that survey this area, who are doing a bird count, and I think GSU would be a good starting point. So perhaps someone could tell me why some of the grounds are being dug up. Both my parents were professors here and I appreciate GSU.

**TRUSTEE COMMENTS**

Durkin thanked each and every one, emphasizing how important each individual at GSU is to the University. She stated that President Maimon is the face of the University, appearing on television and in print, but she would not be able to do that without the faculty, administration and staff behind her. She wished everyone a wonderful December.

Durkin requested a motion to adjourn. Taboas made a motion. Friefeld seconded. The meeting of the Governors State University Board of Trustees was adjourned at 11:45 a.m. by unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Johns Maloney