

SPECIAL TELEPHONE MEETING

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT BOARD OF TRUSTEES COMMITTEE FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY and INCLUSION

MINUTES

June 10, 2020

Public Call-in Number:

(415) 655-0002 US Toll

Access Code: 629 930 823##, later changed to 647 393 273##

(Note that the meeting was recorded.)

Participants:

COMMITTEE TRUSTEES:

Andrea Dennis-LaVigne (Vice-Chair)

Andy Bessette

Charles Bunnell

Shari Cantor

Sanford Cloud, Jr.

Marilda Gandara

Rebecca Lobo

Bryan Pollard

Renukanandan (Nandan) Tumu

ADDITIONAL TRUSTEES:

Daniel D. Toscano (Chairman)

Jeanine Gouin

STAFF:

Rachel Rubin (Executive Secretary to Board)

Thomas Katsouleas (President)

Carl Lejuez (Provost)

Dana Wilder

Jonelle Reynolds

UNIVERSITY SENATE REPRESENTATIVE:

Maria-Luz Fernandez

GUEST:

Frank Tuitt

OPEN SESSION

1. Public Participation (limited to agenda items)

There were no members of the public who wished to address the Committee.

2. Welcome and Introductions of Committee Members – Dr. Andrea Dennis-LaVigne, Committee Chair

Vice-Chair Dennis-LaVigne convened the meeting of the Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at 11:06am.

Introductions listed in speaking order:

- Trustee Charles Bunnell
- Trustee Shari Cantor
- Trustee Sanford Cloud, Jr.

- Trustee Marilda Gandara
- Trustee Andy Bessette
- Trustee Bryan Pollard
- Trustee Rebecca Lobo
- Student Trustee Renukanandan (Nandan) Tumu
- University Senate Representative Maria Luz-Fernandez

3. Opening Statement - Daniel D. Toscano, Chairman | Board of Trustees

Chairman Toscano welcomed Provost Carl Lejuez and Incoming Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer Frank Tuitt to UConn.

4. Chief Diversity Officer Introduction – Dr. Frank Tuitt

President Katsouleas introduced Dr. Frank Tuitt as incoming Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer.

Dr. Tuitt thanked the President and Board of Trustees for the warm welcome and expressed his gratitude for the Committee.

Vice-Chair Dennis-LaVigne committed the support of the Committee to Dr. Frank Tuitt and the Office for Diversity and Inclusion. She recognized Dana Wilder, Interim CDO, for his many years of service as well as Rachel Rubin, Executive Secretary to Board of Trustees, for her assistance in bringing this Committee together.

5. Committee Role | Board of Trustees Resolution (Attachment 1)

Vice-Chair Dennis-LaVigne referred to resolution document for review. No comments or actions were made.

6. Key Focal Points and Time Frame

Vice-Chair Dennis-LaVigne invited Trustee Pollard to speak. He spoke to the importance of building an open and inclusive environment with strong policy and measures to make sure everyone is represented.

Dr. Dennis-LaVigne proposed that the Committee build a Diversity and Inclusion strategic plan or “State of the Union/University” in support of incoming CDO Tuitt. She stated that the Committee will meet 3-4 times per year, but to expect a Call to Meet in another 6 weeks to get started.

7. Provost Update – Dr. Carl Lejuez

Provost Lejuez spoke about potential opportunities for policy and procedure changes as well as an upcoming Senate Diversity Committee proposal to build an academic component in classwork and programming. He believed our overall strategic plan should allow a clear sense of how DEI is aligned with President Katsouleas' three top priorities as well as identify where we are making mistakes and limiting access and utilize resources to help versus making further inequities.

Trustee Lobo asked if there was a Diversity class offered. Provost Lejuez responded that he would work with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to see if there is a way to integrate a DEI Course to mirror the COVID-19 Course created in past months in addition to the online Welcome to the Pack Diversity module. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

Trustee Cloud asked if the Provost envisioned that each of the schools have a DEI plan. In response, President Katsouleas referred to how Interim CDO Dana Wilder led an exercise for each of the units and gave a structure to follow to the Deans at a Leadership Retreat. The Deans' Diversity and Inclusion progress will be compiled and given to Provost Lejuez to start building a D&I Strategy.

Chairman Toscano asked an assessment for hiring and retention. Provost Lejuez responded that UConn will provide information using exit interviews over commonly assessed Climate Surveys, aligning in a more targeted way where there are the biggest issues and providing a pathway for disciplinary follow-up actions. Vice-Chair Dennis-LaVigne proposed that the Dean from the Neag School of Education be invited to speak at the next Committee meeting on hiring and retention. Dr. Tuitt agreed with Provost Lejuez about his ideas for exit strategies as well as suggested follow up with employees who had left within the past 5 years to see how we can make UConn the preferred place to work.

8. Adjournment

There being no further business appearing, Vice-Chair Dennis-LaVigne adjourned the Committee meeting at 12:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jen Newman, Secretary to the Committee