

RECORD OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN SYSTEM BOARD OF REGENTS

Thursday, June 3, 2021
12:45 p.m.

UW-Milwaukee Student Union
2200 E. Kenwood Boulevard
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

-President Petersen presiding-

CALLING OF THE ROLL	2
DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS	2
INTRODUCTION OF NEWLY-APPOINTED REGENTS	3
OTHER UPDATES AND INTRODUCTIONS	3
APPROVAL OF MEETING RECORDS	4
REPORT OF THE BOARD PRESIDENT	4
Report of the Wisconsin Technical College System Board	4
Remarks by Outgoing President of the Board	4
REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SYSTEM	6
Update on COVID-19 Response.....	6
Legislative Updates	6
Administrative Updates.....	7
HOST-CAMPUS PRESENTATION BY UW-MILWAUKEE CHANCELLOR MARK MONE: “THE IMPACT AND RELEVANCE OF AN ENGAGED TOP-TIER RESEARCH UNIVERSITY”	7
ANNUAL NCAA DIVISION I ATHLETIC REPORT – UW-MILWAUKEE	10
FALL 2021 PLANS TO RETURN TO PRE-PANDEMIC CAMPUS LIFE	11
CLOSED SESSION	12
<i>Closed Session Resolution</i>	13
<i>Approval of Amended Employment and Compensation Agreements with Assistant Coach/Defensive Coordinator James Leonhard, UW-Madison</i>	13
<i>Approval of Amended Employment and Compensation Agreements with Run Game Coordinator/Offensive Line Coach Joe Rudolph, UW-Madison</i>	13

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The recording of this meeting's open session is available at: [June 3, 2021 Webcast](#)

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CALLING OF THE ROLL

[\[Recording: 00:00:01\]](#)

PRESENT: Regents Robert Atwell, Scott Beightol, Amy Bogost, Héctor Colón, Michael Grebe, Mike Jones, Tracey Klein, Becky Levzow, Edmund Manydeeds, John Miller, Andrew Petersen, Cris Peterson, Ashok Rai, Corey Saffold, Carolyn Stanford Taylor, Brianna Tucker, Karen Walsh, and Kyle Weatherly.

UNABLE TO ATTEND: None.

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DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS

[\[Recording: 00:01:10\]](#)

Before considering any items on the open session agenda, President Petersen asked if any Board members wished to declare any conflicts of interest as per Regent Policy Document 2-4, "Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy for the UW System Board of Regents." No conflicts were declared.

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INTRODUCTION OF NEWLY-APPOINTED REGENTS

[\[Recording: 00:01:22\]](#)

President Petersen welcomed two recently-appointed members of the Board of Regents to their first regular meeting: Dr. Ashok Rai, President and CEO of Prevea Health, and Brianna Tucker, a UW-Stevens Point student double-majoring in Political Science and Spanish, with a minor in Criminal Justice.

Recalling his experience as an undergraduate, Regent Rai stated, “It was UW-Milwaukee that truly forged the person before you now. . . It was this campus – part of our UW System that I owe so much to – that allowed me the chance to fall in love with our great state of Wisconsin. . . The service I hope to provide over the next seven years will only be a fraction of paying back what the UW System has done for me.”

Regent Tucker said she was both pleased to be back in her hometown of Milwaukee and excited to work with all of her new colleagues on the Board for the next two years.

President Petersen also noted that after having served the remainder of the late Regent José Delgado’s term, which ended on May 1, 2021, Regent John Miller has been appointed to serve a full term on the Board.

OTHER UPDATES AND INTRODUCTIONS

[\[Recording: 00:06:10\]](#)

President Petersen provided a final update on the UW-River Falls Chancellor Search. Several weeks earlier it was announced that Dr. Maria Gallo, President of Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, had been named the 20th Chancellor of UW-River Falls. Dr. Gallo is expected to start in her new position in early July and will be formally introduced at the Board’s next meeting.

President Petersen expressed the Board’s gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Connie Foster, who served as interim Chancellor of UW-River Falls over the past year: “Her experience has been invaluable in navigating the many challenges posed by the pandemic this past year, and the UW-River Falls campus community benefited from her taking the helm at this critical time.”

President Thompson extended gratitude on behalf of the UW System to Laurent Heller, Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration at UW-Madison, who recently accepted a new job opportunity at Johns Hopkins University. He also welcomed back Rob Cramer, former Vice President for Administration at UW System and current interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities Planning & Management at UW-Madison, who will be filling in as

UW-Madison's interim Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration effective May 21, 2021.

APPROVAL OF MEETING RECORDS

[\[Recording: 00:10:36\]](#)

Regent Beightol moved for the approval of the records of the April 8-9, 2021 meeting and the May 11, 2021 special meeting of the Board of Regents. The motion was seconded by Regent Grebe and approved on a voice vote.

REPORT OF THE BOARD PRESIDENT

[\[Recording: 00:10:55\]](#)

Report of the Wisconsin Technical College System Board

The report of the Wisconsin Technical College System Board had been provided. There were no comments or questions.

Remarks by Outgoing President of the Board

In his final report as President of the Board of Regents, President Petersen reflected on the UW System's response to the challenges of the past two years, including the unprecedented COVID-19 public health crisis and the quick pivot to online instruction.

President Petersen recognized UW leadership, faculty, staff, and especially students for their adaptability and for maintaining a "culture of responsibility," noting that the UW System's aggressive testing program for members of the campus communities and surge testing for the general public were important tools for helping to bring the pandemic under control in Wisconsin. He added that the vaccination clinics at 11 campus sites across the state also provide easy access to campus communities and the public, with nearly 1 in 20 of all vaccines in the state having been delivered at UW facilities.

President Petersen stated, "We've gone through some tough times and learned some difficult lessons, but I'm incredibly proud of how the UW System and its people stepped up. As President Thompson likes to say, when the state has a problem, the UW System wants to be part of the solution – and I can confidently say, we undoubtedly have been."

President Petersen remarked on other challenges during his term, including the failed search for a successor to UW System President Ray Cross. Quoting Regent Kyle Weatherly,

who described the outcome as “the most successful failed search in the history of higher education in the United States,” in reference to the Board’s subsequent appointment of former Governor Tommy Thompson as interim System President, President Petersen observed that President Thompson has attacked the challenges of the job with “his characteristic enthusiasm, tenacity, charm and chops.”

President Petersen stated, “It has been my most ardent wish to leave the UW System in a better place than it was when I started my service.” He cited progress in the increased attention to the issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion as a regular focus in the Board’s discussions, as well as the Board’s commitment to providing \$1 million annually to students from underrepresented and underserved populations through the Regents Opportunity Scholarships.

Despite the pandemic, President Petersen said the profile and standing of the UW System is steadily increasing through efforts like the “All in Wisconsin” campaign, which has sought to make closer connections between the businesses, communities, and people of Wisconsin with their public university. He highlighted the value of strong leadership at the System level in advertising the significant role that the UW System plays in Wisconsin.

President Petersen said he was “extremely pleased” with the Joint Finance Committee’s recent recommendations to restore tuition-setting authority to the Board of Regents and end the UW System’s \$45-million annual lapse in state funding.

President Petersen expressed his appreciation to the Chancellors for their tireless efforts to ensure UW universities succeed in providing top-notch educational opportunities and life-changing research. He highlighted their efforts to invest in mental health services for students and faculty, engage the business community, grow student internships, and enhance transparency and public accountability: “I believe these have paid and will continue to pay great dividends for the University of Wisconsin System.”

President Petersen also thanked the staff of UW System Administration who have supported the Board over the years, particularly Executive Director and Corporate Secretary Jess Lathrop, for keeping the Regents “informed, engaged, relevant and productive.”

Finally, President Petersen recognized the members of the Board – past, present, and future – for their collegiality and continuing commitment to putting performance before politics: “At the end of the day, our ‘north star’ will always be what’s in the best interest for the University of Wisconsin System and the people of this state.”

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SYSTEM

[\[Recording: 00:22:30\]](#)

President Thompson thanked President Petersen for his leadership, his dedication, and his support for the UW System.

Update on COVID-19 Response

President Thompson reported that the current focus of the UW System's efforts is trying to get as many people vaccinated as possible before the Fall 2021 semester. He announced that Oliva Woodmansee, Regent Emeritus and current UW-La Crosse student, will serve as an emissary to the UW campuses related to the UW System's goal of achieving a 70-percent vaccination rate for students.

President Thompson said that to date, clinics at UW sites have administered more than 225,000 vaccines to both members of university communities and the public. He thanked Regent Rai for his leadership as CEO of Prevea in helping to set up the first UW vaccination clinic at UW-Green Bay.

President Thompson noted that the UW System will not mandate that members of the campus communities be vaccinated, but said the university will continue to mount an aggressive campaign to convince people that vaccination is the most effective tool for returning to pre-pandemic campus life.

President Thompson added that 1,042 UW students have signed up so far for the COVID nursing initiative, which offers a tuition rebate for participating in the administering of vaccines. He announced that the UW System recently extended this initiative through the summer.

Legislative Updates

President Thompson provided an overview of the Joint Finance Committee's recommendations related to the UW System's 2021-2023 budget request.

First, President Thompson said the expiration of the tuition freeze and the return of tuition-setting authority to the Board of Regents is an important step that would restore accountability to the UW System and strengthen the relationship between the Board and the legislature.

Regarding the recommendation to end the \$45 million annual lapse in state funding for the UW System going forward, President Thompson noted that the UW System is one of the only state agencies for which the Joint Finance Committee did not make the FY 2021 lapse a

permanent cut into base funding. The Committee also recommended \$8.25 million in additional GPR, including \$5 million for the Freshwater Collaborative and \$2 million for UW-Extension state agriculture specialists.

Indicating that the Joint Finance Committee will meet later in the process on the UW System's capital budget and compensation plan, President Thompson said he remains firmly committed to advocating for legislation this fall to fund the other initiatives that were included in the UW System's budget request: "When Wisconsin taxpayers invest in the UW System, our universities produce educated, successful graduates who contribute to their communities and to the economy."

Administrative Updates

President Thompson reported that more than \$35 million has been processed through the new Procure-to-Pay project known as ShopUW+, which was launched on April 16, 2021. He said the new tool has helped improve workflows, eliminate paper transactions, and make accounts payable processes more efficient and transparent across the UW System.

Finally, President Thompson announced that UW System Administration employees will begin a phased-in return to working in offices starting in mid-June. He indicated that UW System Administration is following guidelines from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as well as local health departments, and expects to be close to pre-pandemic levels of in-office personnel by early July.

HOST-CAMPUS PRESENTATION BY UW-MILWAUKEE CHANCELLOR MARK MONE: "THE IMPACT AND RELEVANCE OF AN ENGAGED TOP-TIER RESEARCH UNIVERSITY"

[\[Recording: 00:43:28\]](#)

President Petersen invited Chancellor Mark Mone to present to the Board about developments at UW-Milwaukee since the Board's last visit in 2019.

Chancellor Mone discussed UW-Milwaukee's unique position as the most diverse campus in the UW System, and the only UW institution with a dual access and research mission. He provided an overview of the challenges and opportunities UW-Milwaukee faces related to local, state, and regional issues such as the significant economic and health disparities experienced by minority and veteran populations, talent shortages, educational inequities, industry competition, and water resource management.

Chancellor Mone indicated that addressing any of these issues requires the cultivation of strategic partnerships, the investment of time and resources, and committed leadership at all levels. He highlighted several initiatives with UWM as a member, including the Freshwater Collaborative of Wisconsin, the Moonshot for Equity initiative, the Higher Education Regional Alliance, the Milwaukee Anchor Collaborative, and M³ education pipeline initiative.

Chancellor Mone introduced a video featuring UW-Milwaukee's 2021 commencement speaker Darian Dixon ('15), a spacecraft operations engineer with Malin Space Science Systems who is working on the lead team for the Perseverance Mars Rover. In the video Mr. Dixon discussed how the opportunities he experienced at UWM's Geosciences Department contributed to his current career success.

Chancellor Mone provided an overview of how UWM is meeting talent needs in four of the fastest growing and highest demand fields: health and human services; business; computer science; and engineering science. He emphasized that the more support UWM receives from the state, the more the university can do to close equity gaps, expand the talent pipeline, and develop new research and innovations that can help grow new industries and maintain the competitiveness of existing industries in Wisconsin.

Highlighting the university's regional impact, Chancellor Mone made a case for why UW-Milwaukee merits greater support and investment from the State of Wisconsin: "As goes Milwaukee, so goes the state." He advocated for additional GPR funding to increase accessibility to higher education for Wisconsin residents; support for the Freshwater Collaborative; and investments to replace and renovate obsolete facilities.

Chancellor Mone noted that the pandemic has accelerated many trends that were already disrupting higher education, including declining enrollment and less funding. He shared the eight priorities identified in UWM's 2030 "blueprint" in response to these disruptive trends: becoming student-centric; revising curriculum; increasing inclusion and diversity; aligning and engaging the workforce; re-assessing unit alignment; refocusing research infrastructure; updating the budget model; and growing endowments to \$500 million.

Several Regents emphasized UW-Milwaukee's importance as an "economic engine" for the state and the region.

Regent Klein expressed her support for the partnership model demonstrated by the Freshwater Collaborative, and also recognized UWM's progress towards closing the achievement gap.

Noting that UWM's high density of low-income undergraduate students and lower GPR per student ratio have resulted in an average unmet financial need of about \$10,000 per student, Regent Beightol observed that UWM's students are likely being saddled with a

higher debt ratio than other UW campuses. He suggested that the Board should have an ongoing discussion about what can be done to improve this situation.

Chancellor Mone said he would like to see additional investment in UW-Milwaukee rather a reallocation of funds from the other UW campuses. He pointed to Cleveland State and Washington State as examples of states making extraordinary investments in public universities that serve larger underrepresented minority populations or produce high-demand professional talent.

Chancellor Mone added that the expansion of Tuition Promise funding which President Thompson has been advocating for would be particularly helpful for students from underrepresented populations.

Regent Colón asked Chancellor Mone to comment on the resources needed to achieve UW-Milwaukee's goal of becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) and the expected benefits of such a designation.

Chancellor Mone observed that the regional economy depends on expanding the talent pipeline to include the growing local Hispanic population. He explained that the direct benefit of the HSI designation is to students, who will be eligible to receive more federal financial aid. He indicated that UWM plans to provide any new resources, such as additional advisors and recruiters, to not just Hispanic students but all underrepresented minority students.

Regent Weatherly shared that fundamental leaders in his own business gained their business knowledge and entrepreneurial skills as undergraduates at UW-Milwaukee.

Responding to a question from Regent Jones about the positions of local legislative representatives on the issue of investing in UW-Milwaukee's initiatives, Chancellor Mone noted that although local representatives are generally supportive of UWM's goals, it is currently difficult to find support among the majority party's leadership for increased funding for higher education. Indicating that some legislators believe federal aid should be used before any additional tax dollars are invested, Chancellor Mone explained that those one-time federal funds are already earmarked for student aid and specific COVID-related expenses.

President Petersen thanked Chancellor Mone for his tenacity in bringing together different constituencies in support of UW-Milwaukee's efforts to improve the conditions in Milwaukee and Wisconsin.

ANNUAL NCAA DIVISION I ATHLETIC REPORT – UW-MILWAUKEE

[\[Recording: 01:51:55\]](#)

Athletic Director Amanda Braun presented UW-Milwaukee's annual NCAA Division I athletic report. The report provided an overview of the department's core values and commitment to diversity and inclusion; the academic and competitive success of UWM student athletes; campus and community engagement activities; and efforts to increase visibility and update branding for Panther Athletics.

Director Braun noted that, despite the challenges and uncertainty of the pandemic, UWM student athletes maintained high graduation rates and grade point averages in 2020-21 and the athletic program overall had its best competitive performance in seven years. She also indicated that Panther Athletics has received \$1.3 million to date this fiscal year and is on pace to hit its highest ever total of donations.

Regent Grebe commended Director Braun for finding a niche for Panther Athletics in a big market that also includes a professional basketball team, a major league baseball team, and a semi-pro hockey team.

Director Braun reflected that the size and culture of UWM's athletic department allows staff to personally engage with student athletes around issues like racial justice.

Regent Grebe noted that this year's report reflects a substantial reduction in the athletic department's historic operating debt which preceded Director Braun's tenure at UWM. Director Braun credited Chancellor Mone and Vice Chancellor Robin Van Harpen for finding ways to help the department make progress in eliminating the debt.

Recalling the previous year's controversy regarding differences between the NCAA men's and women's basketball tournaments, Regent Walsh asked Director Braun about how the UWM athletics department will ensure equity in access to its new practice facilities.

Noting that she was appointed to the NCAA Division I Women's Basketball Committee right around the time of that controversy, Director Braun said that she is excited to be "in the trenches" working on equity issues. She added that equity was a focus of the design process for UWM's new practice facility, which was led by Cathy Rossi, Deputy Athletic Director and a former women's basketball player, with input from both men's and women's basketball coaches.

Observing that it was a very challenging year for college athletics, President Petersen thanked and congratulated Director Braun for one of the best reports the Board has received on the Panther Athletics program.

FALL 2021 PLANS TO RETURN TO PRE-PANDEMIC CAMPUS LIFE

[\[Recording: 02:15:45\]](#)

Noting that the UW System is actively preparing for a full return to pre-pandemic life on the campuses in Fall 2021, President Petersen welcomed a panel of three Chancellors – Dennis Shields of UW-Platteville, Joe Gow of UW-La Crosse, and Debbie Ford of UW-Parkside – who reflected on lessons learned over the past year and their preparations for offering in-person classes and more face-to-face experiences in the fall, including at residence halls and dining halls, athletic events, concerts, and other social gatherings.

Chancellor Shields highlighted the additional time and effort faculty and staff put in over the past year amidst furloughs and pay cuts. He also noted that despite planning to return to in-person instruction in the fall, UW-Platteville faculty and staff plan to continue applying the lessons learned about how to deliver hybrid and online instruction, which will remain an option for many general education courses.

Chancellor Gow indicated that UW-La Crosse will continue to provide space and resources for COVID-19 testing, isolation, and quarantine as needed in the fall. He also discussed the importance of prioritizing the residential campus experience for current and incoming students who have had limited opportunities to meet with their peers over the past year.

Chancellor Ford provided an overview of UW-Parkside's summer preparations for the fall semester, including resetting facilities from the current socially distanced staging to their normal, pre-pandemic set-ups, as well as resuming in-person campus tours and orientation activities. She said UW-Parkside also plans to bring back its student workforce and increase efforts related to equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Chancellor Ford emphasized the need for faculty and staff to take time before the fall semester to reflect and recharge after living and working under constant pressure for the past 15 months. She also addressed the longer-term impacts of the pandemic on students, including learning loss for those who had difficulty adapting to online instruction and the increased levels of anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues.

President Petersen thanked the chancellors and provosts for their leadership and recognized faculty and staff across the UW System for their resilience throughout the pandemic.

Regent Beightol noted that the public workforce did not experience the same rebound in pay and benefits as the private workforce as the economy began to recover from the pandemic: "Kudos to the fine men and women within the university system who educate our students and do good work for our state. There was a sacrifice made, and I'm not going to forget it."

Regent Walsh asked the chancellors if there was anything they would have done differently in hindsight. Noting that he was initially skeptical about resuming WIAC athletic competition, Chancellor Gow recognized student athletes for acting as leaders in getting tested and staying safe. Chancellor Ford said she wished UW-Parkside had been better prepared to respond to the need for more intensive support for students who struggled with online instruction. Chancellor Shields said he would have pursued much stronger investments in addressing students' mental health issues.

Having worked with multiple campuses on COVID testing plans and vaccination clinics in his role as CEO of Prevea Health, Regent Rai stated, "The System saved the state in its responsibility and its actions."

Looking ahead, Regent Rai observed, "You will now see the most trauma-affected freshman class of probably our lifetime, outside of when we've gone to war." He noted that, through no fault of their own, the Class of 2025 will likely be the least prepared freshman class the UW System has ever seen. He added that the incoming freshman class will also come to campus with higher rates of mental health issues, especially for black and brown students whose families experience greater levels of death in Wisconsin. He said he would like to see campuses make more investments in helping students reacclimate to society, with the understanding that there may be adjustment issues for several months after the start of the fall semester.

Regent Atwell thanked the Chancellors and UW System leadership for their commitment to returning to in-person instruction in the fall: "Overall, when I look at the scale of what we've been dealing with, I'm just really impressed and really grateful for what people have done."

President Thompson and President Petersen each commended the Chancellors and their leadership teams, faculty, and staff for their efforts.

CLOSED SESSION

[\[Recording: 02:56:21\]](#)

President Petersen called upon Vice President Grebe to read the motion to move into closed session. The motion was seconded by Regent Bogost and adopted on a roll-call vote, with Regents Atwell, Beightol, Bogost, Colón, Grebe, Jones, Lezow, Miller, Petersen, Peterson, Rai, Saffold, Stanford Taylor, Tucker, Walsh, and Weatherly voting in the affirmative. There were no dissenting votes and no abstentions. (Regents Klein and Manydeeds rejoined the meeting following the vote to move into closed session.)

Closed Session Resolution

Resolution 11624 That the Board of Regents move into closed session to: a) consider four UW-Milwaukee honorary degree nominations, as permitted by s. 19.85(1)(f), Wis. Stats.; b) consider amended employment and additional compensation agreements for UW-Madison associate head football coach-offensive coordinator, as permitted by s. 19.85(1)(c) and (e), Wis. Stats.; c) consider amended employment and additional compensation agreements for UW-Madison assistant football coach-defensive coordinator, as permitted by s. 19.85(1)(c) and (e), Wis. Stats.; and d) consider personnel evaluations of chancellors, as permitted by s. 19.85(1)(c), Wis. Stats.

Before considering any items on the closed session agenda, President Petersen asked if any Board members wished to declare any conflicts of interest as per Regent Policy Document 2-4, "Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy for the UW System Board of Regents."

During the closed session, adoption of Resolution 11625 was moved by Regent Jones, seconded by Regent Rai, and approved on a voice vote.

Approval of Amended Employment and Compensation Agreements with Assistant Coach/Defensive Coordinator James Leonhard, UW-Madison

Resolution 11625 That, upon recommendation of the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the President of the University of Wisconsin System, the Board of Regents approves the attached Fourth Amendment to Employment Agreement and Second Amended and Restated Additional Compensation Agreement for football coach James Leonhard, effective June 4, 2021.

Adoption of Resolution 11626 was moved by Regent Walsh, seconded by Regent Weatherly, and approved on a voice vote.

Approval of Amended Employment and Compensation Agreements with Run Game Coordinator/Offensive Line Coach Joe Rudolph, UW-Madison

Resolution 11626 That, upon recommendation of the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the President of the University of Wisconsin

System, the Board of Regents approves the attached Fifth Amendment to Employment Agreement and Fourth Amended and Restated Additional Compensation Agreements for football coach Joe Rudolph, effective June 4, 2021.

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The meeting was adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Submitted by:

/s/ Jess Lathrop_____

Jess Lathrop
Executive Director & Corporate Secretary
Office of the Board of Regents
University of Wisconsin System