BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Sustainable Finance Committee Meeting
April 13, 2023 – 11:00 AM

MINUTES

In Attendance:
Trustee William Fisher, Committee Chair
Trustee John Bartow (Virtual via Zoom – left meeting at 11:58 AM)
Trustee Vita DeMarchi
Ragan Squier, Board Secretary

Invited Guests:
Kelly Berger, College Counsel
Nichole Dougherty, Administrative Assistant II
Susan Head, Chief Financial Officer
Mark Lichtenstein, Executive Operating Officer (joined at 11:03 AM)
Matthew Millea, Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives
James Sahm, Chief Information Officer

Call to Order:
Committee Chair Fisher called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. Secretary Squier took the roll call. With two voting members of the Sustainable Finance Committee in attendance, Trustee Fisher confirmed a quorum.

1. **Approval of Minutes from the February 22, 2023 Meeting**
Chair Fisher called for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 22, 2023 meeting of the Sustainable Finance Committee. A motion was made by Trustee DeMarchi, seconded by Trustee Bartow. The Committee unanimously passed the motion to approve the February 22, 2023 minutes.

Chair Fisher noted the following:
- Committee Charter: Review finances and make recommendations.
- NYS budget: many unknowns at time of the February meeting, Committee hoped to

have more information, but budget has not been finalized.

2. **Review of Services received from Syracuse University under the Services Agreement**
   - Review of Information Technology (IT) Services and Instructional Services received from Syracuse University under the Services Agreement expiring on May 13, 2024 (see Services Agreement, Section 7) during the 2021-22 and 2022-23 Academic Years.
     - Information Technology Services
     - Instructional Services – accessory instruction.
     - Student Services
       - 5-year agreement started with discounts, discounts have been reduced or eliminated.
       - $1.9M instructional services, $1.7M IT services.
       - Each year, we should receive a report detailing our charges for IT services.
       - Provisions allow us to make changes to a la carte items, each year we should receive a report and can make changes.
       - Review charges and alternatives
         - We may opt to get some services from SUNY ESF
         - Need to review and evaluate the pros and cons

Chair Fisher inquired how IT decisions are made and communicated to President Mahoney. M. Millea noted that IT had recently transitioned under his leadership (formerly under M. Lichtenstein), he and the CIO, J. Sahm have met once since transition and will be developing their process for decision making and communication with the President. He also provided the following information:
- ESF will focus on becoming a more digital campus, including the digitization of services.
- ESF is fortunate to have partnership with Syracuse University
  - Tremendous value from SU, would cost a lot in the near term to replicate, worth more than what we are paying.
  - SU provides an equitable level of service to ESF as its own colleges.
  - Like Colleges within Syracuse University, we get to determine some of our own needs, systems.
- ESF will look to build out some of our own systems, we will use cloud systems and look for more tech partnerships.

S. Head provided a 2022-2023 summary of expenses associated with the Syracuse University contract: $4.4 M total cost, $2.7M net cost.
- $1.9M Accessory Instruction (not covered by fees)
- $1.6M IT Services ($899K covered by fee, net cost $713K)
- $757K Student Services (100% covered by fees)
  - Student Service Fee Revenue $1.6M – students are billed $485/semester, fee for part-time students is pro-rated.

M. Lichtenstein would like additional information on how the technology fee is used.

The Committee discussed several IT expenses and services, including ESF's own IT services, they

concluded that ESF needs to request the detailed report of IT services that SU provides, and review it, along with any other IT service expenses and formulate a comprehensive analysis of the expenses associated with IT at ESF.

- ESF will need to provide justification of the IT expenses paid to SU to SUNY.
- ESF should look to identify expenses that we are not using and can opt out of.
- Focus on items over $50K
  - One example of a service to evaluate is PeopleSoft, we pay for this service from SU but as part of the SUNY system, we are unable to utilize the payroll function which we may be able to opt out of for a large savings.

Chair Fisher discussed Instructional Services.

- ESF policy limits the number of credits that each student can take at SU.
- When ESF transitioned to Banner, we lost the ability to enforce credit limitations for SU course registration.
  - ESF needs a registration process that allows us to identify ESF/SU schedule conflicts and reinstitute guardrails for both limiting total SU credits and credits that do not advance a student's degree.
    - J. Sahm noted that it is possible to transition to a seamless cross registration using Banner, it would require cooperation from SU.
    - Review with Financial Aid and Registrar will be necessary to avoid any unintended consequences (such as courses showing as transfer credit on transcript).

Issues and complexities with ID management were discussed, ESF was encouraged to look for ways to mitigate issues with the following:

- Dual identities (including email addresses).
- Security compliance and IT Trust.

The Committee would like the Board to endorse moving to single identity authentication, J. Sahm has a meeting scheduled to discuss what ESF can do to move away from dual identities for our students.

Chair Fisher noted that the relationship between ESF and Syracuse University is a priority for both institutions and that there is an opportunity to negotiate a new contract that will be mutually beneficial and strengthen the ESF/SU partnership. It will also be imperative for ESF to identify money-saving opportunities as the new contract is being negotiated.

- Cost of IT expenses may be a good value, ESF will need to confirm and provide evidence for justification to SUNY.
  - Many additional benefits come with the IT services (example: research software access).

Trustee Bartow noted that he needed to attend a New York State budget meeting and questioned if there were any items that required a vote. No items for vote, Trustee Bartow left

the meeting at 11:58 AM.

3. **CFO Update on 2022-23 Academic Year Financial Results**

S. Head provided an update on the academic year finances.

- Merged cash with budget.
- Started with negative $4.8M/Operating revenue $45.9M.
- Expenses projected at $52.8M resulting in a $6.9M deficit, deficit was previously projected at $12M.
  - $17M available for 4th quarter spending.
    - Likely to spend more, will increase the deficit.
- Current fiscal year will remain open until September, final numbers will be available then.

4. **CFO Update on Planning Underway for 2023-24 Academic Year Budget**

S. Head noted that a draft 2023-2024 budget will be ready for sharing in June, with a final ready by July 1, departments will know their budget by September.

5. **Committee Meeting Schedule**

Chair Fisher requested that the Committee meet to review the draft budget in June and open the meeting to all trustees.

Chair Fisher noted that the next Facilities Committee meeting will be held on May 9th at 1:00 p.m. and that all trustees will be invited to participate.

6. **New Business**

No new business.

Trustee DeMarchi motioned to adjourned, Chair Fisher seconded. Meeting adjourned at 12:28 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ragan Squier with assistance from Nichole Dougherty.