

**NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING
November 27, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cohen at 4:07 p.m in the Agile Strategy Lab, Central King Building, NJIT Campus. In attendance were: Chair Cohen, Vice-Chairs DeNichilo, Shah, Stamatis and Toft, and Board Members Baynes, Charters, Dahms, Maser and Montalto. Absent: Vice Chair Clayton.

Senior Administration Present: In attendance, President Lim, Provost and Sr. Vice President Pelesko, Sr. Vice President Christ, Sr. Vice President for Finance & Chief Financial Officer Brennan, NJIT President Johnson, Vice Presidents Alexo, Boger, and Wozencroft, Interim Vice President for Human Resources Wilson, Chief of Staff Hageman, Vice President for Communications and Marketing Golden, Chief Diversity Officer Jones and Vice President and Secretary Stern.

1. In accordance with the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, Chair Cohen read the following statement:

“Notice of this Meeting was provided to the public as required by the New Jersey Open Public Meeting Act, in the Schedule of Meeting Dates of the Board of Trustees of the New Jersey Institute of Technology which was sent electronically to the Star Ledger, the Herald News and the Vector on October 9, 2023, and posted on the University website on October 9, 2023 for filing with that office and posting in such public place as designated by said Clerk.”

2. **Minutes:**

BY A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. TOFT, SECONDED BY MR. DAHMS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THOSE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE AT THAT MEETING, THE BOARD APPROVED THE PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 21, 2023.

3. **Public Comments:**

Ms. Stern stated that we have two speakers; the first is Brian O’Donnell, President of United Council of Academics (UCAN). He is also a PhD student in the Physics Department. Brian said we’ve talked a few times this year, as we have been out of contract for 17 months which is a long time to be out of contract. No matter how much we love this place, we are balloting a legal strike ballot at the moment, and we are expecting the results by the end of the week and we are expecting quite a statement margin. That is why our folks are outside today to remind you that could be what NJIT looks like. Or, when the mediators come next week we could reset a little bit and start talking about an actual equal pay or fair pay offer that makes it so we can keep NJIT running for as long as we want. We can continue to be a strong institution together. He thanked the Board for its time. Dr.

Lim thanked Mr. O'Donnell for his comments, and also for everything he and the UCAN members do for NJIT. As Mr. O'Donnell noted, we will be going to mediation next week and Dr. Lim is very hopeful. He agrees that 17 months is a long time and stated that you know you are an integral part of the institution and play a significant role in educating our students. We do want to have a fair and equitable agreement with UCAN. He thanked Mr. O'Donnell and UCAN for everything they do.

The next speaker was Ian Atkins. He introduced himself as the General Manager of WJTB, the on-campus radio station. He got involved in student life in his freshman year to find like-minded people and build friendships on campus. Three years later he found that student life has far more to offer than just clubs; it has allowed him to become a leader among his peers and provided him with invaluable experience in a professional environment. His involvement outside the classroom allowed him develop practical skills, managing teams of his peers and getting hands-on experience in large scale project planning. It was amazing to see student life come back in full swing after Covid. Unfortunately compared to similar universities, NJIT's student activity fee has not grown from events on campus to off-campus. Professional development funding, providing funding to student-run organizations is a direct investment in the student body and allows students to develop skills often impossible to teach within the classroom. The stagnation to the student activity fee is felt directly on the student level. It's undeniable that the budgetary constraints faced by our student organizations have hindered their full potential. As a result of the stagnation, vital opportunities for professional growth and skill development have sometimes been stifled. Allocating adequate resources to our student-run clubs is not merely a financial consideration, it is an investment into nurturing well-rounded capable graduates equipped for the demands of the professional world. Today I stand before you committed to advocating for a more robust budget allocation, to empower our student body and ensure a more comprehensive educational experience at NJIT as the schools continue to grow. I know that conversations have been ongoing regarding increasing the student activity fee, but I stand here to share my experience and the benefits the student activity fee has given me, as well as countless others at NJIT as I advance into my career. He thanked the Board for their time.

Dr. Lim thanked Ian Atkins for his time and comments noting that he does regularly meet with the student Senate and the student body president, Lauren Azer and she has brought this to his attention as well and we will continue discussion with her on that topic. Dr. Lim agrees that student activity brings richness to the experience of students on this campus, because the student activity is holistic, not just on campus but also outside the campus. He will continue to work with Lauren Azer, as with Cathy Brennan, our CFO. Chair Cohen asked for clarity on the issue of the application of the student fee; it is his understanding that the fee is funding a lot of things, but it has been flat for some time. Ms. Brennan noted that she and Dean Boger recently met with the students; it is her understanding that the students are actually asking for an increase in student activity fees because it has been stagnant for some time. Dean Boger concurred noting that on average, other universities charge \$90 for students. All the funds currently collected go to the student clubs and the Student Senate manages the distribution. Ian clarified that the student activity fee is currently \$31. In comparison to other universities, NJIT actually reduced its fee from around \$50 pre-Covid. We've grown considerably since then, and introduced countless new clubs and they all need funding. The amount of money for signature events is starting

to get cut because we need to put money into those clubs and organizations. The Senate is working on a financing plan to predict growth. The student activity fee goes to students raising the student activity and is a direct investment in student leadership on campus. WJTB, the organization he runs, receives funding directly as a university-serving organization. He concluded that raising the fee would allow more professional development and allow us to get more outside speakers, have more meetings, and go to more conferences. Currently they have to raise money to go professional development events. Chair Cohen thanked him, and thanked him for his passion, noting the challenge of balancing costs, and our awareness with regard to increasing student expenses, although maybe we have been too cautious. We will work with CFO Brennan on this.

4. **Presentations:** Introduction of BoT Scholars Evan Correa, Anna Maria DiBrita, Sriya Jidugo and Aliza Mujahid.

Provost Pelesko introduced the students being recognized as Board of Trustees Scholars. It is his pleasure to introduce the students, present them with their certificates, and allow them to tell us more about themselves.

The first scholar is Evan Correa, a second-year student in the ADHC, pursuing a dual major in biological sciences and applied mathematics. He is at a physics conference today.

The second student is Aliza Mujahid, a third-year student in the AHDC, pursuing a degree in biomedical engineering. She expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to share a glimpse of her journey. In addition to biomedical engineering, she is minoring in chemistry. She was born and raised in Pakistan, and witnessed inadequate medical equipment and personally experienced misdiagnoses, which led her commitment to developing life-saving technologies and leading her to pursue her current field. Immigrating to the United States and joining the NJIT community marked a significant chapter in her life. She thanked Dr. Paul, her honors advisor and Dr. Fried, her research PI, whom she had the privilege to participate with in research in her sophomore year. She received hands-on experience in biomedical instruments, including the opportunity to make carbon fiber electrodes for brain stimulation, as well as to work in the efficacy of skin grafting, where she invented techniques to make it more effective. The outcome of her research journey resulted in her first publication at the end of her sophomore year. It also helped her in securing the NSF iCorps program to commercialize the technique. She is currently applying for a national NSF iCorp grant and serve as the entrepreneur lead for her invention. She cited her diverse experience around the campus, including the president of the Entrepreneurship Society, outreach Chair of the Society of Women Engineers, math tutor, resident assistant, entrepreneur associate and more. None of this would have been possible without the support of Honors College administration and the Highlander community which she proudly calls home. The scholarship bestowed upon her by the Board is more than the financial aid; it's an award and a catalyst for her to work harder and achieve her goals of being an exemplary figure, especially for women in STEM. She expressed her gratitude to the Board.

The next scholar is Anna Maria DiBrita, a fourth-year biomedical engineering student in the ADHC. She thanked everyone for the opportunity to speak today and for the scholarship nomination. She arrived at NJIT as a transfer student in the middle of her sophomore year, not predicting the impact NJIT would have, citing the inspiring professors promoting her success, to volunteering at open houses in the summertime and on weekends as an honor student ambassador, to connecting with first year students as a peer mentor and teaching assistant to her most recent senior capstone design project. She recently applied for a Fulbright scholarship with the help of the ADHC staff, an opportunity she could never have imagined. Everyone she has crossed paths with, from professors to fellow students, to advisors has believed in her since she arrived, and she is immensely grateful for that. The scholarship means more than just money, and she looks forward to meeting and speaking with everyone. Chair Cohen asked about her plans, given her background. She answered that if she receives the Fulbright, that would go for a teaching assistant. If not, she plans to pursue an MBA while interning in the biomedical industry, and work on medical devices and contribute to the growing field.

The next scholar is Shriya Jidugu, a second-year student in the ADHC, pursuing a degree in biochemistry. She explained that in addition to her major, she decided to do a concentration in neurobiology and minor in Spanish at Rutgers-Newark. As can be seen from her introduction, she loves trying different things, and NJIT has facilitated all of that, including doing research with Dr. Ozludil. She loves history and is interested in learning Turkish, and both of these got her to do HSRI over the summer where she learned more about the research process and do a deep dive into history, architecture and how that incorporates with psychiatric institutions. She learned more about connecting with people and communicating effectively in emotional settings as part of the dance team. Right now, she's a production chair at the Rutgers dance team and we love making wonderful productions during the semester. She is interested in learning what other people have to say which is important in many settings. She is now part of the Student Senate as a biochemistry representative and is learning to be a role model for her constituency and trying to fix problems from an administrative perspective. NJIT has connected those passions and those interests, whether its with academics or extracurricular activities. NJIT is the best place she could be to reach her goals. She thanked the Board for giving her this opportunity to learn and be here today.

The scholars were presented with their certificates by Dr. Pelesko and Dean Hamilton.

5. BY A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. STAMATIS, SECONDED BY MS. MONTALTO AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, THE BOARD VOTED TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION TO AWARD ENTERPRISE IT OPERATIONS AND SECURITY MOMITORING CLOUD SOFTWARE.
6. BY A MOTION DULY MADE BY MS. CHARTERS, AND SECONDED BY MR. DeNICHILLO AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, THE BOARD VOTED TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION TO AWARD A GENERAL CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT FOR GITC 2ND FLOOR DATA SCIENCE SUITE.

7. BY A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. TOFT, SECONDED BY MR. STAMATIS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, THE BOARD VOTED TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.
8. BY A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. TOFT, SECONDED BY MR. DAHMS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, THE BOARD VOTED TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION TO AWARD ONLINE VENDOR MARKETING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION SERVICES.
9. **Chair's Report:** Chair Cohen noted that he will be brief, in the interests of time. He noted that at this point in time, we now have a President, a Provost and our NJII President officially in place, so it feels good having all the seats filled. We had a period of uncertainty with the changes, and he thanked the faculty, staff and administration who rose to the occasion, understood we were in a period of transition, and have given us time to get this right. It's now time to activate, and we look forward to all the great things that they are going to do. You've seen everything come together and it is a credit as well to Drs. Joel and Diane Bloom who were at Celebration. The mood at Celebration was one of the best he's seen at a Celebration event. Between the alumni dinners, the WEC naming, and events like that, there is a positivity around here that is a credit to a lot of people. On behalf of the Board, you have our thanks.
10. **President's Report:** President Lim also noted that he will keep his remarks brief. With gratitude, he thanked the dedicated Board members, administrators, faculty, staff and students for all they do for NJIT. He'd like to share some recent points of pride related to rankings, students success, scholarship and research. The reputation of NJIT continues to climb in recent rankings by the Wall Street Journal, US News, New York Times, Higher Ed and many others. Here are three additional notable ones that you may not be aware of. NJIT is now ranked in the top 50 nationwide for both graduate and undergraduate entrepreneurship education, according to a joint survey from Princeton Review and Entrepreneurial. Secondly, for the third straight year, NJIT has made the Princeton Review's guide to Green Colleges. Thirdly, NJIT was recognized at the Emerging Influencer Award – some of you were at that event at the DEI Trailblazer Award Ceremony, held by the African American Chamber of Commerce and the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce. Many of our students excel in and outside the classroom. You saw some through our Board of Trustees scholars today; in addition, 8 Ying Wu College of Computing Sciences students begin their journey as members of the elite cyber cops scholarship for service program. This Fall, through the NJIT Secure Computing initiative, funded by the National Science Foundation, each recipient is awarded a scholarship covering full tuition and fees, a generous stipend, allowance for professional development and summer internship for three years. You will also be pleased about the success of our annual Celebration gala, that raised more than \$370,000 this year for scholarship funds. At the same time we were able to honor two notable individuals, alumna Regina Schulzberger ('62 and '66, retired director of Engineering for North American Reliability Corporation was presented with the Edward F. Weston medal for professional achievement by an alum. Secondly, Overseer Paul Profeta, businessman, educator, and philanthropist was recognized with a special friend of the university award. Our research portfolio and activities continue

to expand. There are two notable achievements, one by Dr. Atam Dhawan, Senior Vice Provost for Research, led a team to secure a \$6 million grant from the NSF to translate science and engineering discoveries into market-ready technologies that will improve the quality of life ranging from healthcare to sustainable energy to data privacy. Equally impressive is Dr. Aritra Dasgupta); he is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Data Science and has won 2 collaborative NSF grants totaling \$2.8 million to design solutions for responsible artificial intelligence. That's incredible for a young assistant professor coming to NJIT. Dr. Lim thanked everyone on behalf of himself and First Lady Gina Lim for the spectacular experience he has had at NJIT for the past 17 months, and we look forward to many more wonderful memories and collaboration with all of you for years to come.

11. **University Senate Report:**

Dr. Pelesko updated the Board with a report on the University Senate, which had its first meeting of the academic year on October 18th, and accomplished three things: First, we held the elections for the Executive Committee for the coming year. Second, we had reports from each of the standing committees. Finally, we shared the Fall 2023 Enrollment update, that was shared with this Board at the previous meeting. The second meeting of the semester will be on December 11, 2023; at that meeting we will be voting on a bylaws change. We are looking to add an additional standing committee to the University Senate, which would be the Committee on Inclusive Excellence led by Dr. David Jones. David gave an update on that committee, which has already started its work, and at the December meeting, it will be formalized. Chair Cohen asked if any trend or concern came forth from the October 18th meeting, and Dr. Pelesko stated that no concerns were raised.

12. **FY24 Engagement and Fundraising Progress to Date:**

Dr. Alexo reported on FY 24 engagement and fundraising progress to date as of November 1st, referencing the material in the meeting packets at beginning on p. 35. There is good news in that we are on target toward all our top level goals and KPI's. In terms of overall gifts and pledges, we are running about even with where we were last year. And again about a third of the way toward our \$20 million goal for the year. We are up in the number of alumni donors; the percentage of alumni who are engaged with the university continues to rise nicely. We just completed our first comprehensive survey of the alumni population, the first one since the last one was early 2017, and he is happy to share the results with the Board at a later meeting, which are actually quite encouraging in terms of the types of programming and activities that we're offering to alums and how they want to engage with their alma mater. He invited questions from the Board. Chair Cohen was asked if there were any concerns. Dr. Alexo stated that he has no concerns relative to the economy; people with significant means still have those means even when the economy is uncertain. The bigger concern is people at the lower and mid-levels of giving; inflation hits them harder, which impacts discretionary income and their ability to make philanthropic gifts and engage in alumni activities. We do see a positive change in engagement over the past 18 months, and the survey he referenced confirms that.

13. **Chief Financial Officer Report:**

CFO Brennan called the Board's attention to the Board materials containing the CFO report. The current value of the endowment as of the October close was \$147.5 million, compared to \$139.5 million over from last year. That's up a little over 5% month-over-month. We are slightly below the benchmark. We've gone through a procurement process, and we'll be engaging a vendor on looking at best practices of the JIC and the investment, the spend-down of the endowment, etc. So, there will be more information to come, as we head into the New Year. Secondly, on our cash balances, we are also up year-over-year. We currently have about \$174.6 million on hand, which is also up above 5% over last year. And then regarding our budget year to date, it is on track. We expect to be slightly net positive by the end of the fiscal year, though not as significantly net positive as we were from last year. We are tracking in a good position. She referenced the State budget submission in the Board package, you'll be familiar with the public polytech aid request for \$10 million, Phase One of the SEE Center (Tiernan Hall) is in that request, and there are repeated requests related to fringe support to the State. She invited questions from the Board. Chair Cohen asked about the reference to healthcare grants for NJII, asking if they were delayed. Ms. Brennan stated that actually the money is coming. Tom Nehila, NJII's CFO is optimistic that the money is forthcoming and the NJII budget is still on track relative to the grants from the State. We have been working closely with NJII, and believe that the cash on hand could cover a delay.

14. **Clery Crime Data:**

Sr. Vice President Christ gave an update on the Clery Crime data statistics. This continues to be a challenge for us in terms of theft from auto; in September we had 17 incidents, and in October we had 7. However, we are trending in a direction whereby at the year's end, we will have the second lowest reported crime statistics in the history of our recording, so we are still trending in a very good place, as it relates to overall crime on campus, while still having challenges related to the number of vacancies for officer positions. So, we are working to close that gap, with some members in the Academy, and some lateral transfers we are working towards. Mr. Christ took the opportunity to congratulate the NJIT Police department on the news this morning that they were reaccredited by the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs, and they had their exit interview this morning. That is a huge step in the right direction, showing that we are following best practices and procedures. He offered his congratulations to the Department. Mr. Christ was asked about the theft data (whether it was on or off campus). He noted that they are predominantly off campus, parking in the neighborhood, but it still becomes our statistic due to the proximity. We will continue the community outreach and engagement efforts to get people to understand that they need to hide property in their trunks and lock cars. Chair Cohen asked if the new building going up will have parking, and Mr. Christ confirmed that it will not, which is the trend. He noted that the 240 King Building, which we continue to work on with our development partner, will be putting parking in, but only ½ spot per unit.

15. Report of Athletics:

Associate Vice President Kaplan gave a presentation regarding Athletics. He showed a slide demonstrating the profile of our athletes and where they come from. Currently, we have 350 student athletes, which is probably as large as we can get as a department, and we do well with our out-of-state and international students. About 55% of the kids that are here are out of state/international and have strong academic credentials (3.37 overall GPA) for 29 straight semesters, especially because what we study is not that easy. Our kids are able to maintain this and work really hard while having some success on the field. He also showed slides depicting where we recruit, and where our competition is in the America East. The students that we get come as freshman and are pretty well established. Chair Cohen asked Mr. Kaplan about recruiting, and how many students go to our competitors in America East. Mr. Kaplan acknowledged that we lose students due to our limited and difficult majors and our high standards for academics. We do lose potential students to the Ivy League. It is tough to get transfer students in, due in part because the transfer portal is wreaking havoc on college athletics right now. He has discussed this briefly with Dr. Pelesko, and we will continue working on this. Last year the NCAA went through a transformational committee model, and one of the outcomes was the holistic student athlete model. He is proud to say that we have been doing these things for years. We've stepped it up now to meet the demands of the NCAA, and the improvements are done with NCAA development money. The academic support, the wellness, the leadership, the community engagement and the emphasis on graduation is the big component. Our alumni are very engaged. This past homecoming weekend, we had about 6 different events that brought in about 250 athletic alumni. We have events all over the country, and our fundraising last year was a record, hitting the \$2 million mark. Two points of pride are that (1) 100% of the staff participate in the campaign, and (2) 50% of our former athletes donate back to athletics. The \$1 million gift from USI, a university vendor, helped us achieve that. He expressed his appreciation for our agreement with Montclair State for the Yogi Berra Stadium, which should be a huge help and we are excited to get going there. The first game is in March and everyone is welcome to be in attendance. Through social media and streaming, we've now hit 70,000 followers through our NJIT athletics channels. One student alone, from the United Arab Emirates had 675,000 views on an Instagram reel of a race he ran. Our basketball visibility was great, we were able to host two power 6 teams which is not easy to do. We hosted Seton Hall in an exhibition game, and over 1,000 people for that, and Notre Dame on the women's side, with 1,600 people in attendance. He discussed our other regional visibility efforts included Jersey City, where the Jerry Walker Foundation is located. We were fortunate to be able to host a one day leadership conference for athletics personnel regionally (previous schools included Baylor and Tennessee) as well as the Newark Regional Business Partnership, to help get some local businesses to help our sports sponsorship. We signed Bechtel and Konica to two new contracts. Our students are out and about with over 3,000 hours in community engagement annually. He also discussed the budget report for Athletics; our revenue last year grew by about \$900,000, the support of Athletics grew by \$1.2 million, but decreased as a percentage of net support from 63 to 62% of total expenses. The personnel was most of that at \$1.18 million and \$500,000 in fringe benefits. Chair Cohen asked if the care and upkeep of the WEC was included in the budget; Mr. Kaplan stated it was under Mr. Christ's budget. He explained that most of the WEC is public space, with Athletics having dedicated offices, locker rooms and the downstairs weight room. Mr. Kaplan emphasized

that for the most part, spaces are open to all students. Chair Cohen discussed the need to get more revenue out of the building by having more events and maximizing its capability to bring in some dollars. He suggested that a meeting coordinator could possibly go out to industry. Mr. Kaplan stated we are in the black. He is happy with the Conference we are in, but would like to be more competitive, but we will get there. Mr. Kaplan discussed developments in the NCAA landscape, such as payments for name/image/likeness and collectives. The big thing for us will be student-athletes as employees and what kind of effect that will have. The NLRB is taking that on as a conversation. Next up for us is strategic planning, student athletic experience, athletic success, and keep growing some things like intramurals and recreation. Increased revenue is always part of the financial equation. We've done it, and think we can maintain a \$1 million plus in revenue, we need to figure out how we can grow it and fundraising revenue. He speaks with Mr. Christ all the time, if we are building a building, what can we put on top. For example, 8 courts, including pickleball courts can fit on top of the old parking deck. There is a group of 400 people at Montclair that play regularly, and we may be able to rent out space to them. In concluding his remarks, he called the Board's attention to last year's annual report. Chair Cohen thanked Mr. Kaplan for everything he does for the school.

16. Report of Upcoming Calendar of Events:

Chair Cohen called the Board's attention to the Calendar of Upcoming Events, encouraging people to attend.

17. Chair Cohen announced that the next regularly scheduled Closed Session, will convene on February 8, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. to discuss personnel, real estate, legal and contractual matters. The following resolution was read and approved by all Trustees present:

WHEREAS, there are matters that require consideration by the Board of Trustees that qualify under the Open Public Meetings Act for discussion at a Closed Session;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees shall have a Closed Session to discuss matters involving personnel, real estate, legal and contractual matters on Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

The next regularly scheduled Public Session of the Board will take place on Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.

18. The Public Session was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.