

**NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING  
May 23, 2024**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cohen at 11:12 a.m. in the Agile Strategy Lab, Central King Building, NJIT Campus. In attendance were: Chair Cohen, Vice-Chairs Clayton, DeNichilo, Shah (via Zoom), Stamatis and Toft, and Board Members Baynes, Charters, Dahms, Maser and Montalto.

**Senior Administration Present:** In attendance, President Lim, Sr. Vice Presidents Christ and Brennan, NJIT President Johnson, Vice Presidents Alexo, Boger, Golden and Wozencroft, Interim Vice President for Human Resources Wilson, Chief of Staff Hageman, Chief External Affairs Officer Garretson, 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 May 9, 2024, and posted on the University website on May 9, 2024 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. DeNICHILLO, SECONDED BY MR. TOFT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THOSE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE AT THAT MEETING, THE BOARD APPROVED THE PUBLIC MINUTES OF APRIL 4, 2024.

3. **Public Comments:** Secretary Stern noted that there were two public speakers registered to speak.

Mr. Ahmad Mokhemar introduced himself to the Board. He is a senior student at the Albert Dorman Honors College, in the Pre-Health Program, and President of the United Mission and Relief and non-profit charity organization. He stated he is not here to tell a story but rather the reality to he, his family and his fellow Palestinians have been facing both here and abroad. He is a Palestinian-American, as both his parents are from Palestine. His mother’s family was evacuated into a neighboring Arab Country and his father’s family live as refugees in Gaza after they were exiled in 1948. When his father was still a child, his grandfather’s aunt was killed by Israeli soldiers when they were cleansing the village as she was protecting him, and his father was wounded by the bullet. He presently has 45 relatives who are still remaining in Gaza, including his grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. The last time he was in Gaza was in 2022. It’s very difficult to gain access to Gaza. All

immigration is controlled by the Israeli state, and no Gazans are allowed in except in rare and exceptional circumstances. The conditions in Gaza were difficult even before the ongoing offensive, with high unemployment, hunger and poverty due to year of Israeli siege and blockade, however, the people remained resilient and kept a optimistic attitude and persevering despite the circumstances, always willing to share what little they had. There was a bombing campaign that lasted three days in 2022. These air raids were recurring. He related his experience during the air raid that occurred during that visit, noting that this had become normal for the people in Gaza, including children. After a temporary ceasefire was declared, people began to recoup, rebuild and life went back to normal. He was amazed by the perseverance and patience of the people in Gaza, even though their society was in despair. When the Israeli offensive began last October, his family and other Palestinians were overcome by anxiety of what would happen to their homes and their families. Communications were sparse and they would get updates, hoping that their names would not be mentioned among the martyrs. The news was rarely good, and his family refused to leave their home in Central Gaza, ardent in their commitment to their land and their principles. On January 6<sup>th</sup>, his family received the news they had been dreading, that the IDF had bombed their neighbor's house, severely injuring his uncles and cousins who were doing yard work. One cousin was injured and another killed instantly; his two uncles were severely injured, but unable to receive adequate medical care as the hospitals in Gaza were operating at minimum efficiency with a low level of supplies, personnel and space. Both uncles passed away from their injuries. His cousins and uncles were kind, respected men who deserved to live and cared for their families, and leave behind their children. This leaves him in a position of anguish and guilt. He attends NJIT, which through its investments and partnership with Ben Gurion University, has a hand in the blood that is being spilled and his family members who are being killed. Ben Gurion University plays a critical role in arming the Israeli military with surveillance equipment that is being used to propagate the oppression and slaughter of my people, my family and the families of other Palestinian students all over campus. If the NJIT code of ethics and mission statements are worth anything more than pleasantries and administrative filler, then the Board of the University will move to cut all ties with that institution which props up the Israeli war machine that has caused so much grief to himself and the other Palestinian students. We know you have seen us and heard us. He noted the students who hold up and don symbols of solidarity with the Palestinian students. He also stated that NJIT is the home to some of the most talented and hardworking students he has ever met, so we should be gathering our efforts to help people in need. He urged the Board to make the right decision against forces of oppression and their supporters to preserve an environment of safety, dignity, compassion and respect for everyone at the institution.

4. Chair Cohen thanked Mr. Mokhemar for his comments and invited the next speaker. Mr. Ahmad Jamhour. He is a recent graduate of NJIT. He stated that it was hard to continue speaking after hearing about the atrocities that Mr. Mokhemar and his family faced first hand, but he is not alone, stating there are hundreds at NJIT, and present at the meeting today, with discrete ties to what's been going on in the last year and 75 years prior. The partnership NJIT and Ben Gurion University poses severe and problematic moral questions.

BGU develops technology for the IDF which is used indiscriminately against families such as Ahmad's, himself and the students in the back of the room. The Israeli Government imposes conditions upon Palestinians in the West Bank that directly result in famine and epidemics, resulting in war crimes according to international law. The United States is extremely complicit in crimes by the IDF. This is highlighted by the acknowledgment of its private role in technological development for the IDF, which views BGU as central to its technological development. Continuation of this partnership would not only undermine the integrity of our institution but also exacerbated the suffering of those afflicted and suffering by these violations of international law. The impact that this has had on the mental health of himself and his fellow colleagues is immense and indescribable. He is from the West Bank, not Gaza, but has lost countless family members, have had members of his family unjustly incarcerated without trial, for no reason. He has a cousin who has not had any contact with for the past six months since his arrest, and don't know whether he is alive. This is the reality for all of the Palestinians before you attending the university. This has been going on for 75 years, and created generational trauma for the Palestinians at NJIT. The Palestinian struggle for self-determination is not a one-off struggle, it is a struggle felt by the Black community, by the Latin American community, by the Italian-American community and by many other communities throughout the course of American history, and ours is no different from theirs. We seek nothing but self-determination. When you have been viewed as subhuman for so long, it is only right that you feel the anguish and do everything in your power to make sure that moral obligations are met by those institutions you are part of. It is our collective responsibility as NJIT members to not contribute to or endorse these actions, atrocities, war crimes as deemed by the United Nations ongoing against Palestinian people and the community at NJIT and their families. As members of the NJIT community, we must stand united with our commitment to uphold the most ethical and moral standards as we possibly can, and we dismiss any gray areas. He is urging the Board and all the members in front of me to add a divestment resolution from Ben Gurion University as an agenda item to the next Board of Trustees meeting to be held on July 25<sup>th</sup>. He thanked the Board for its time. Chair Cohen thanked Mr. Jamhour for his comments.

5. **Pre-College/EOP Program Student Experience:** Dr. Jacqueline Cusack thanked the Board for the opportunity to celebrate student success through the Math Success Initiative and the Forensic Science Initiative. Our students' achievements were fostered by the support they receive from the collaboration between the staff of the Center for Pre-College Programs and faculty and staff from the Department of Mathematical Sciences in the College of Science and Liberal Arts. Leadership is crucial to any impactful effort, such as MSI and FSI. She stated she was privileged to have Dean Kevin Belfield as an all-in partner in both of these initiatives. She also acknowledged those members of the MSI internal team who are present to stand, and thanked them. She then introduced Elliot Ampofo, a member of the first cohort of student in the FSI from July 2022 to May 2023, and he's featured in a video about the research projects he was engaged in during that timeframe. She called everyone's attention to his background, which was outlined in the Board materials, and then asked Mr. Ampofo to introduce himself to tell his story.

Mr. Ampofo stated he was originally born and raised in Ghana, and came to America four years ago, starting high school within a week. His guidance counselor provided him with the opportunity to sign up for the FSI program. Then this summer they did a lot of projects. They got to learn more about forensic science, such as how to get fingerprints, and DNA using hair. They got to do a lot of lab work, which was amazing. And they basically introduced them to NJIT in general. They got to work with professors who are working on different research efforts. They used cyclic volumetry to detect dopamine in the blood which was eye-opening. It was amazing and he was introduced to biomedical engineering. This made him apply to NJIT to study biomedical engineering and through the process, thanks to Dr. Weller and other people with the pre-college program, who helped them with their applications and the students received a one-on-one interview with the admissions board. That helped him get into this awesome school. This past summer, he went to basic training, so he did not get to start in the Fall semester, but he came in January and dove right in. He hopes to come back next Fall as well. Through the program, they would introduce them to all the departments in the school and showed them where to get help when they need tutoring. They met most of the Deans in the school, and were welcomed with open arms, and introduced them to a lot of stuff that makes the school more interesting to come to. From the one semester he has attended, he loves this school. He was also taught how to succeed by building links, getting to know people, and getting study groups. They gave them helpful tips on how to succeed at NJIT. Chair Cohen asked questions, highlighting his US Army basic training; Mr. Ampofo replied that it helped him pay for school, where he wants to major in biomedical engineering. He then plans to go to medical school and become a cardiothoracic surgeon. He added that most of the students don't have as much information as he received, and it would be helpful if there were a class to get to know the nooks and crannies of NJIT to help them succeed; many would benefit from forensic science as well. Once you get to experience everything, you want to come here. Chair Cohen thanked him for being this model student as he is starting off, and wished him success in his career.

Steph Pitti was the next student to speak. He was a participant in the first cohort of the Math Success Initiative, from 2019 to May 2020, and he was in the graduating class of NJIT last week. He is a graduate of the Hillier College of Architecture and Design, and will share details of his experience at NJIT. He related his experience as a student who was born and raised in Newark, and shared a story of what happened to him today on his way to campus, when he was asked for directions by a driver of a passing vehicle. He rode with the woman driving in order to assist her in making her appointment, even though it was out of the way, and they shared stories. At the end of the ride, the woman was amazed that he was an NJIT student from Newark. Newark students have different life experiences and backgrounds, with many having limited opportunities. The pre-college MSI give students opportunities that see them as more than statistics. He has already made connections on campus, and met Dr. Lim a couple of times already. These connections have enabled him to become the person he is today, and he has several advisors from HCAD. MSI assisted with the FAFSA forms, which was important because their parents were not familiar with those. The NJIT help really pushed us along the way. There are now more than 100 Newark students. He thanked the university for creating a safe space and an environment where the students of Newark can have opportunities that their high school classmates didn't, and that allowed him to focus in school where other people cannot.

Chair Cohen thanked him, noting that a lot of us have been doing this for a long time. We do this to serve the mission of this university, which is over 100 years old. Part of our mission is to serve the City of Newark, and we are not going to forget about Newark now. When you see the 2030 Strategic Plan, Newark is very prominent. We are not satisfied with our success to date, but want to double down and do more. Mr. Pitti agreed that while the program sounded interesting when he became aware of this in high school, he never thought at the time it would run this deep into his life. He was prepared for college readiness during the summer, and was taught the hints and clues of what it means to be a college student even before going to class, which levelled the playing field. Mr. Cohen mentioned that he may have seen him at a robotics event at Newark Technology High School, a very STEM-based school. Mr. Cohen commended the students and the faculty, and expressed a wish for more students to come here. He noted that we could talk about what we want for the success of this university, but it is about the students, and how students lead the university. He expressed appreciation for his comments and wished him luck. Mr. Cohen also thanked Dr. Cusack and the team, remarking that the pre-college program is one of the crown jewels of the university, and a lot of credit is due to her and her selfless efforts, as well as the efforts of the team she built, which is one of the pride and joys of the university.

6. BY A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. STAMATIS, SECONDED BY MR. DeNICHILLO AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, THE BOARD APPROVED A RESOLUTION FOR NJII TO HOLD ANNUAL MEETING PRECEDING THE NJIT ANNUAL MEETING.
7. BY A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. TOFT AND SECONDED BY MR. MASER AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, THE BOARD VOTED TO ADOPT THE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING REVISIONS TO AMENDMENT TO AGREEMENT BETWEEN NEW JERSEY INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND TATWEER MISR FOR UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONS.
8. BY A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. DAHMS AND SECONDED BY MR. DeNICHILLO AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, THE BOARD VOTED TO APPROVE A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURES FOR ELECTRICITY AND NATURAL GAS FOR FY 2025.
9. BY A MOTION DULY MADE BY DR. BAYNES, AND SECONDED BY MR. DAHMS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, THE BOARD VOTED TO APPROVE A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE RENOVATIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE TIERNAN 109/206 MATERIALS ENGINEERING LAB.
10. BY A MOTION DULY MADE BY MR. MASER AND SECONDED BY MR. DAHMS AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED, THE BOARD VOTED TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO RENEW WORKERS COMPENSATION/EMPLOYEE LIABILITY AND AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE.
11. **Chair Report:** Chair Cohen noted that in the interests of time, he will keep his remarks brief. He commended all those involved in the graduation events, including students, faculty and administration as well as our Public Safety Department. The graduation went on for quite a period of time, and family, friends and those who went enjoyed it. We had spectacular people that we gave honorary degrees to. When we do everything we do, and

then you see the students, and where they are heading post graduation, it does give us a sense of pride to be a part of this university, and quite often is a good motivator for himself. We are in a very good place at this university. We strive into the future as we move forward with the Strategic Plan, but to all those involved with the graduation, and the preparation that take place months in advance, the Board offers a hearty thank you.

12. **President's Report:** Dr. Lim noted that he will also be brief in his remarks. He reported that we enjoyed four uplifting commencement ceremonies recently, including honoring Masters and PhD students on campus. We celebrated the undergraduate Commencement exercises at the Prudential Center. We had approximately 3,500 students graduate in the Class of 2024, 2,000 undergraduate and about 1,500 MS and PhD students who walked during the commencement last week. He thanked all the trustees, faculty, administrators and staff who made this ceremony very special for all our students. He is very happy to share that we have named Dr. Jamie Payton, Professor and Chair of the Department of Computer and Information Sciences at Temple University as our next Dean of the Ying Wu College of Computing. She will join NJIT on July 1, 2024. Dr. Payton will be charged with supporting NJIT's 2030 Strategic Plan by driving enrollment and growth, deepening research and curriculum partnership with NJIT's other colleges, further diversifying the student body, faculty and staff and managing alumni, donor and corporations. We continue our search for the Vice President of Human Resources, General Counsel and the HCAD Dean as well. One of the main priorities of the Strategic Plan 2030 (as you all know) is student success. That our first and foremost priority. We are moving forward with several initiatives under the priority, including a student success nexus which will be launched by the Provost and Dean of Students this summer. The creation and enhancement of the Student Space will also be accomplished, made possible by relocating several non-student facing administrative offices to 494 Broad Street in Newark. This will optimize resources and hence operational efficiencies and provide a cutting-edge environment for the academic units. Dr. Lim reported that NJIT has the best return on investment for graduates of any public college in the State of New Jersey, at just under a quarter million dollars within a decade of graduation, according to an analysis of Bloomberg News. Bloomberg placed NJIT at second among all Garden State colleges, behind only Princeton University. With respect to Goldwater Scholars, from an estimated pool of over 5,000 college sophomores and juniors, two NJIT students – Danna Valentina Sanchez Hernandez and Owen West – have been named Goldwater Scholars this year by the Barry Goldwater Scholarship and Excellence in Education Foundation. The scholarship is recognized as among the country's most prestigious for STEM undergraduates pursuing research careers. Dr. Lim also offered congratulations to our Chair, Robert Cohen, who will be honored with three awards this year, two of which he can share: early next month, as the STEM Distinguished Honoree from the Northern New Jersey Council of the Boy Scouts of American, and as a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors in June.
13. **FY2024 Engagement and Fundraising Progress to Date:** Vice President Alexo congratulated Chair Cohen, and thanked him for bringing greater visibility to the university. The reports are found beginning at p. 36 in the Board materials; in the interests of time, he will give a quick thumbnail sketch of where we are in the last months of FY 2024. We in very good shape in terms of new gifts and pledges, and we've already surpassed where we finished in FY 2023. We've got a little more than \$16 million in the bank, as of April 30<sup>th</sup>. We had a very good month of April. Our President secured a very significant gift to support our research efforts in AI and we received a few other significant gifts from alumni and

friends. We are also tracking ahead of where we were last year at this time, and are on our way to hitting our goal of \$13.5 million for the year. We've essentially achieved our goal for new gifts and pledges to the endowment, thanks to one of those gifts that came in April. We have a goal of hitting \$7.5 million. We're at \$7.467 million and there have been some gifts that came in this month which are not reflected here, which put us well over that number. We are also tracking towards surpassing our goals for increasing the number of alumni donors giving to their alma and alumni engagement. We have about a half a point to go to hit our goal. Dr. Alexo invited questions and comments.

14. Chair Cohen noted this was impressive, and the alumni engagement seems to be getting better and better, asking Dr. Alexo what he attributes this to. Dr. Alexo replied that it has to do with offering a diversity of programming, rather than doing the same types of activities. They sought the input of alumni as to what they wanted to see, and what would get alums to engage with their alma mater. Then we listen and plan accordingly. By doing a greater variety of events, attendance is up. Dr. Lim acknowledged the efforts of First Lady Gina Lim, who is present today at the meeting. Dr. Alexo was asked how we are tracking graduates. Dr. Alexo explained that we have their contact information and activity, and have the young alumni group to focus on their needs. We actually created a position about a year ago that focuses on student engagement and young alumni relations. That position seeks to connect our current students, treating them essentially as alumni who are still in residence with our most recent graduates. We've done a lot of activities, and secured a lot of the contact information so we have their NJIT email addresses. We have done a better job in the last couple years especially in the last 12 months of garnering that type of information, as we go forward to make sure that our communications are being received by our newly minted alumni. The sooner we get them engaged in activities, the better. He mentioned the upcoming day at the races at Monmouth Park on June 15<sup>th</sup> as an example, noting tickets are still available.

15. **Chief Financial Officer Report:** Sr. Vice President Brennan reported that we will be ending the year with a much smaller margin relative to last year, and that is a result of the contracts and retroactive payments that have been paid out this current fiscal year. For that reason, our cash balance year-over-year is also down, although we are in a relatively solid position, with our cash at about \$175 million for the month close. Again, that is down over last year, due to the retroactive payments due under the negotiated labor agreements, and those number will continue to trend down through the end of the fiscal year through summer until our case is replenished. As Dr. Alexo reported earlier, while our endowment is down over last month, at \$166.8 million, we are up \$17 million over this time last year. Ms. Brennan was asked if there are any concerns we should know about? She replied that for FY 2025, our biggest concern right now are enrollment deposits. There is some vulnerability just because of the national FAFSA situation affecting all colleges and universities. Our deposits for Fall are fluid, and we are running behind targets. Associate Provost Gross can better speak better to that. In terms of budget development, we are continuing to watch the situation, and that's where we have some vulnerability. But, as we sit here today, our projected enrollment is a good number, and if we hit our enrollment targets, our budget development is moving along. Dr. Gross noted that the FAFSA situation has delayed some of their approvals, and as a result, students are delaying their decision. Nationally, the FAFSA

situation was caused by the implementation of the FAFSA Simplification Act. That Act reduced the number of questions from hundreds, to just under a hundred so that families didn't have to manually input their tax information. However, while the form was supposed to be available to families in December, this didn't happen, causing the current problem. Ultimately, how it impacts us is just a matter of timing, as opposed to a financial risk.

16. **Clery Crime Data:**

Sr. Vice President Christ reviewed the Clery Crime Statistics, which are included in the Board materials. In terms of part one offenses, we are down 80% year over year. Overall, we are down 38%, a continuing good news story on the part 2 offenses. We are down year over year from a Clery perspective, and we are up just 4% from the uniform crime report. That's driven by the criminal mischief incidents that we talked about last meeting. Kia and Hyundai have fixed the issue with their vehicles, easing the number of thefts from their vehicles, so when cars are broken into, the perpetrators realize that they can't steal them – but instead, damage the vehicle. So, now it becomes a criminal mischief complaint rather than a theft by auto. And, to clarify, this is not happening on campus, but in the surrounding areas which we are still required to include in our reports. Mr. Christ was asked to what he attributes these drops in incidents. Mr. Christ answered that this is due to full staffing within the Public Safety Department. We have an incredible team of people that you see around us today, and we are nearly at full staff. We have a tremendous culture within the Department that are working extremely hard to make sure we are safe 24/7/365. It is an absolutely remarkable group.

17. **Report of Upcoming Calendar of Events:** Chair Cohen reviewed the upcoming Calendar of Events for the Board, encouraging attendance by all.

18. Chair Cohen announced that the next regularly scheduled Closed Session, will convene on July 25, 2024 at 2:00 p.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, July 25, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled Public Session of the Board will take place on Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

19. The Public Session was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.