

COUNCIL MINUTES

March 17, 2023

Present from Council: Chair Kathryn Grant Madigan, Avery Benzaken, Linda Biemer, Anthony Fiala, Jr. (via Zoom), Jennifer Lesko, Dennis McCabe, and James Orband (via Zoom)

Present from the Community: President Stenger, Ms. Barics, Ms. Bello, Professor Bohan, Mr. Brhel (via Zoom), Ms. Curtin, Vice President Delviscio, Ms. Doyle, Ms. Ellis, Ms. Fauci, Provost Hall, Ms. Ignarri (via Zoom), Vice President Jones, Vice President Koch, Vice Provost Lees, Ms. Legette (via Zoom), Director Marshall, Mr. McQuilkin, Professor Mijatovic, Ms. Monasheri, Vice President Navarro, Ms. Nirmal, Ms. Reuther (via Zoom), Chief Rossie, Vice President Sammakia, Mr. Yarosh, and Ms. Zwierlein (via Zoom)

CALL TO ORDER

The Binghamton University Council meeting was called to order at 9:25 AM on Friday, March 17, 2023 by Chair Madigan.

The minutes of the February 17, 2023 Binghamton University Council meeting were approved.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Stenger reported that there are a lot of good things happening on campus. Commencement is coming up May 12–14. While May seems a long way away, students need to register for Commencement now so we have a seat available for them, we know that they are coming, and we have their name programmed into our system so it is read and shown properly on the screen at Commencement.

Last week we hosted the annual Grad Fest on campus. Attendance was very good with about 1,500 students in attendance, or about 1/3 of the students who will graduate in May. The students attended Grad Fest to purchase their cap and gown, get questions answered about Commencement, tickets, and long their ceremony might last. The Fleishman Center staff was on hand to help students with their postgraduate plans, and staff from the Alumni office were on hand to inform students about how they can stay connected with the University post-graduation.

The School of Management has done it again! They ranked in the top-ten among public business schools in the country, and placed 26th overall among an impressive list of Universities, moving up a spot from 2022. The School was also recognized by *Insight into Diversity* magazine for their Transformational Leaders program, which awarded the School their 2023 Inspiring Programs in Business Award. The Transformational Leaders program was established in 2021 by the late Dean Upinder Dhillon. The program has about 39 students who receive training in communication, accountability, teamwork, and mentoring to build their leadership qualities.

A recent study from Stanford University looked at the citation history of all University Professors in the U.S. The study showed that Binghamton University had 27 professors who ranked in the top 2% of their peers for citations. The study represented a large variety of disciplines and is another indication of the University's growing reputation.

In February, Governor Hochul came to Johnson City to announce that the village was awarded a \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Award. The village will now go through the planning process and decide exactly how they will spend the money. In their proposal, the village emphasized upgrades to the facades of buildings on Main Street in Johnson City. The \$10 million award will go a long way to improve the village.

During the Governor's visit, she also announced a \$400,000 grant to the Harriet Tubman Center for Freedom and Equity at Binghamton University. This grant will support the Center's Harriet Tubman Freedom Trail project, and will help to erect a Harriet Tubman statue at the University's Downtown Center. The grant will also support marking 13 historical locations around downtown Binghamton which were Underground Railroad stops. On National Harriett Tubman Day, we had a celebration at the Downtown Center to unveil the first marker. Over the next year, other locations will be marked and hopefully, within a year or so, the statue will be complete. At the celebration, Mayor Jared Kraham surprised attendees by announcing a \$100,000 city grant to support the Freedom Trail project. The city's grant will support programming for five local K-12 public schools.

We are waiting to hear from the legislators on next year's budget which is due on April 1. We are watching very carefully and hoping that the initiatives that the Governor put into her budget will make it through the approval process. We continue to work with SUNY's Government Relations office to make sure that SUNY and Binghamton University's interests are protected.

We are in the design phase for our new Lecture Hall which will be discussed further during the Physical Facilities and Capital Planning report this morning. There have been some listening sessions on campus to gather input on features that faculty would like to see in the new building. We also are very close to announcing the new School of Arts Director. Next week, we will be conducting on campus interviews for the new Dean of the Library.

STUDENT REPORT

Mr. Benzaken reported that he recently met with President Stenger to discuss a number of issues that the student body has been talking about. Two important issues discussed were:

- Scheduling a day off for students to celebrate the Lunar New Year, and the following day where faculty would not assign tests or homework. This legislation was passed by the Student Association (SA) Congress last semester. As a diverse university, it is important that Binghamton University recognize the traditions and cultures of the student body. Scheduling a day off is a meaningful way to demonstrate the campus' respect for their culture and allow them to celebrate without the stress of classes.
- Recognizing Black Solidarity Day as a day that students can take off with advance notice. This is something that is done at other SUNY schools, as researched by the SA. As a diverse university and a Premier Public University, it is important to set the bar high to recognize and empower students and give them the opportunity to celebrate.

Mr. Benzaken continues work on his Health and Wellness initiative, and thanked Greg Delviscio, Vice President of Communications and Marketing, who helped finalize a draft of his health and wellness brochure. The brochure includes telephone numbers and email addresses for students to contact important departments and resources, and is user friendly. He will distribute the brochures to the SA and to the Graduate Student Organization (GSO) once they are in print.

At a recent SA meeting there was a discussion about the tobacco free policy on campus, and it is something that the students are talking about. There are now designated smoking areas on campus, instead of being a tobacco free campus. As the students tackle the issue, we want to find effective ways to implement the policy. Avery will work with his successor on the issue.

Another issue that was brought up during the SA meeting was regarding fire inspections in student dorms. A student reported aggressive banging on his door at 8 AM. It turned out to be an operations assistant that was conducting fire inspections in the dorm. Previously, fire inspections were done by the RA, but now they are conducted by an operations assistant. With random people coming into the dorms, students feel uncomfortable especially because the inspections often happen early in the morning. The SA has proposed legislation for fire inspections in dorms to take place between the hours of 12 and 8 PM. The legislation will be voted on in the next couple weeks. Avery will follow this closely and will work with residential life to see if there is anything that can be done.

The SA and GSO elections were recently held. There are no confirmations yet, but two of the candidates for the Student Representative to Council for 2023-2024 are in attendance today. The candidates are Nora Monasheri and Victoria Barics. Nora is a senior majoring in Finance and MIS and will be staying at Binghamton next year to work on her MBA. She is also a RoadMap Intern working with President Stenger. Victoria is a senior and a 4+1 student in the Master of Public Administration program majoring in psychology. The elections should be confirmed before the April Council meeting.

REPORT ON ADVANCEMENT

Ms. Sheila Doyle, Executive Director of the Binghamton University Foundation, and Mr. John Koch, Vice President for Advancement, presented the report.

REPORT ON PHYSICAL FACILITIES AND CAPITAL PLANNING

Ms. JoAnn Navarro, Vice President for Operations, and Mr. Al McQuilkin, Associate Vice President for Facilities Management, presented the report.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 AM.

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