

COUNCIL MINUTES

February 17, 2023

Present from Council: Chair Kathryn Grant Madigan, Avery Benzaken (via zoom), Linda Biemer, Anthony Fiala, Jr. (via zoom), Dennis McCabe, James Orband (via zoom), Matthew Salanger (via zoom), and Maureen Wilson

Present from the Community: President Stenger, Professor Bohan, Mr. Brhel (via Zoom), Ms. Curtin, Vice President Delviscio, Ms. Ellis, Ms. Fauci, Ms. Gahring (via Zoom), Provost Hall, Ms. Ignarri, Vice President Jones, Vice President Koch, Vice Provost Lees, Ms. Legette (via Zoom), Director Marshall, Ms. Milligan (via Zoom), Ms. Mousseau, Ombudsman Mthombeni, Vice President Navarro, Ms. Reuther (via Zoom), Vice President Rose, Chief Rossie, Vice President Sammakia, Dr. Smith, Mr. Winston, Ms. Vavra, and Mr. Yarosh

CALL TO ORDER

The Binghamton University Council meeting was called to order at 9:19 a.m. on Friday, February 17, 2023 by Chair Madigan. Chair Madigan welcomed the new Athletic Director, Eugene Marshall, to the Council meeting.

The minutes of the November 19, 2022 Binghamton University Council meeting were approved.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

President Stenger reported that Eugene "Gene" Marshall joined the University at the beginning of the spring semester. Gene came to Binghamton with a lot of Division 1 experience, most recently serving as the Athletic Director at Hampton University. Binghamton University is on a performance streak academically and athletically, and Gene will help to keep that momentum moving forward.

Academically, a breakfast is held each semester to honor all student athletes who achieve a 4.0 GPA during the semester. The recent breakfast recognized 40 of the 400 student athletes. It is incredible to see their work ethic recognized and rewarded.

Athletically, Binghamton University is on a roll, too! The women's volleyball team ended their fall season as America East season champions. This was a last place to a first place move for the

team with a new coach. The women's soccer team finished as America East season champions, only to lose the America East championship game in a penalty shootout.

Last spring, the men's baseball team won the America East Championship and went to Stanford to play in the NCAA championship. A lot of things are happening very positively for our athletic teams.

The men's basketball team has been successful in conference play this season, and are now 8 and 4, and in sole possession of second place. This is the best start in 13 years for the team. A lot of the credit goes to Coach Levell Sanders, his recruiting, and his assistant coaching staff. The team's success has brought in more community and student fans to watch the games with attendance between 3 and 4 thousand recently. There are still about 2,000 seats to fill the Events Center and we are working hard to fill the stands for a sellout. There are only 2 more home games before the playoffs.

In December, the SUNY Board of Trustees announced John B. King, Jr. was selected as SUNY's 15th Chancellor. Chancellor King visited our campus in January, and many had the opportunity to meet him during his visit. He has had a great career thus far, and most notably served as New York State's Commissioner of Education for three years, and Secretary of Education under President Obama. Chancellor King understands higher education and has already visited about half of the SUNY campuses.

It is that time of year when Albany is in the process of developing its budget for the next fiscal year. There is some good news, but there is also some uncertainties in the proposed budget. There is usually good news around capital infrastructure which means that the projects that we have in place, such as the Lecture Hall, Science 3, and the third floor of the Library, will continue as planned. There may be funds available for other building projects that we could propose if the budget is approved.

Most promising in the budget is that the Governor is proposing a predictable tuition plan that would increase tuition by 3%. In addition, she is suggesting that University Research Centers, including Binghamton, be allowed to increase tuition by 6% for the next five years. This is important to fund contractual salary increases, which has been about 3% per year, and to maintain our faculty to student ratio. We are hoping that the proposal will be viewed positively and we are asking our legislative representatives to look at this carefully.

Another very exciting budget proposal is the plan to provide matching funds of \$1 of state funds for every \$2 of private contributions to the universities' endowment, up to \$500 million in total State funds. We recently received two additional endowments from the anonymous donor that supported the construction of our new baseball complex and fieldhouse. We will submit them for a match if this proposal is passed. For now, the Foundation is holding these gifts in cash until we know that the proposal has passed. One of the new endowments will provide \$12.5 million to support Graduate Students of the Arts scholarships for master's students in our new School of Arts. The gift came at the perfect time because we are interviewing the final, fourth, candidate for the Director of the School of Arts today. The candidates are excited that they have the ability to support master's students with this endowment.

This is a busy time of year for admissions. We have received over 49,000 undergraduate applications to date, up 19% over last year. This year there was a two-week period that SUNY accepted applications without an application fee; we received a lot of applications during that time. Applications for out-of-state are up 28%, while international applications are up 11%, and fall transfer applications are up 19%. Across the board, we are doing better. We are in the process of making offers to students and receiving deposits, and while it is still early, we are ahead of last year at this time by all measures.

If you drove in on the main entrance to campus on Bartle Drive, you saw the work that has been completed on the new Charlene and Roger Kramer Welcome Center. The 2,000 square foot space will be a multi-purpose space for functions and events, but it is also a place for people to pull off, watch videos, speak with a receptionist, pick up information, and use the restrooms. Campus tours can also start at the Welcome Center. We are excited about the new Center which is expected to be completed early next year.

The University received notice that our request for funding to build a new \$60 million Lecture Hall and classroom facility has been approved by the SUNY Construction Fund. The design phase for the building will begin soon. The building will be located across the street from the current Lecture Hall, on the outside of the brain.

President Stenger paused to pay respect for students' family members in Turkey. We have over 130 Turkish students at Binghamton, both undergraduates and graduates, and many have lost family members in the devastating earthquake. We are supporting the students, and there have been fundraising drives, and drives to collect materials to ship to Turkey. This will help to provide some positivity as the students move through this horrific experience.

STUDENT REPORT

Mr. Benzaken apologized for not being in-person for today's meeting. He is at home for a weekend wedding.

The March Council meeting will be one week away from the elections for the next student representative to Council. It has been an honor to work alongside stakeholders at Binghamton University who are serving the student body. It has also been a challenge to juggle the responsibilities of being a master's student and being the student representative to Council. He will work harder during the remaining term of the position to represent his constituents and move forward with his work.

There are many challenges that students face, especially as we learned of another school shooting at Michigan State University earlier this week. It is overwhelming to think and talk about a year that has seen the most mass shootings year-to-date than any other year. Students wonder if they are safe on our campus, in their dorms, in the classrooms, and walking on campus at night. We all have a huge role to play in making sure that students feel safe, physically and mentally. Without the reassurance that we have the resources to provide physical and mental resources, our students fall through the cracks and find themselves struggling and not knowing

where to find support. Binghamton has so many different resources on campus, and many people work hard to provide an outreach. As great as we are at Binghamton in this regard, we can always do better. Hopefully, what happened at Michigan State University will never be experienced on our campus.

Despite the challenges, Binghamton University continues to exceed expectations and excel in many areas. The recent State of the University address highlighted expanded opportunities for students by removing financial barriers and making physical improvements on campus that will improve student life and academics.

REPORT ON ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Dr. Donald Hall, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, presented the report.

REPORT ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Dr. Karen A. Jones, Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, presented the report.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:24 a.m.

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