
METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY of DENVER
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Friday, January 29, 2021
MINUTES
Executive Session: 7:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.
Public/Full Board Meeting: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Zoom Meetings

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairwoman Barb Grogan read the Trustees into Executive Session at 7:30 a.m., and asked for a motion. The motion was made and seconded, and unanimously approved.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Trustees business meeting was called to order at approximately 7:30 a.m. by Chairwoman Grogan. Vice Chairman Russell Noles, Trustee Albus Brooks, Trustee Mario Carrera, Trustee Emily Renwick Garnett, Trustee Kristin Hultquist, Trustee Mike Johnston, Trustee Marissa Molina, Faculty Trustee Bethany Fleck, Faculty Senate President Katia Campbell, Student Trustee Alaura Ward, Alumni Association Trustee Joe Rice, and Student Government Assembly President Braeden Weart were also in attendance, along with President Janine Davidson, Board Secretary David Fine, Vice President/Chief Operating Officer Larry Sampler, Treasurer/CEO George Middlemist, Assistant Secretary Melinda Olivarez, various faculty, administrators, and staff.

III. CHAIR'S WELCOME & REPORT

Chair Grogan opened the meeting and asked for approval of the Consent Agenda.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of September 4, 2020, Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

B. Office of Human Resources report of personnel actions for the Board's information which have occurred since the last Board meeting on Friday, September 4, 2020

Trustee Noles **moved for approval** of the Consent Agenda, with a **second** by Trustee Molina. The motion was **unanimously approved**.

V. REPORTS and ACTION ITEMS

A. President's Report – *President Janine Davidson*

President Davidson expressed her deep admiration of and gratitude for faculty members, staff, students, and alumni. In spite of the many challenges presented by the pandemic and budget constraints, faculty, staff, and students achieved great accomplishments in 2020 and contributed greatly to their communities and country. Among these are:

- Faculty completed over 15,000 hours of training;
- Dr. Aaron Brown and his colleagues and students in the Mechanical Engineering Department used 3D-printing to create PPE, including 3D-printed valves that attach snorkeling masks to ventilators;
- Many students served as nurses and lab technicians;
- MSU Denver alumna Lieutenant Laura Richardson led the U.S. Army's response to the pandemic;
- In response to the severe shortage of PPE, Roadrunners sewed much-needed face masks;
- Students mobilized to engage Coloradans who have typically been difficult to count in the U.S. Census;

- Amid a historic racial justice movement, MSU Denver pledged to adopt a University-wide plan for antiracist initiatives by bringing more diversity and further investing in work already being done by students and staff;
- MSU Denver students led peaceful antiracism protests;
- The Board of Trustees issued an antiracism resolution;
- Education Professor Rosemarie Allen airs a weekly 9News segment on issues of equity, such as talking to children about racism;
- Political Science and Native American Studies Professor David Weiden published *Winter Counts*, one of the first crime novels written by a Native American author to be published by one of the big five publishing houses. The novel made many book-of-the-year lists, including Oprah's in *O Magazine*, and was nominated for several mystery novel awards;
- The economic impact of MSU Denver on local and state economies was measured at \$703.4 million annually;
- A virtual skills lab was launched with three curated trainings in growth industries. To date nearly 1,000 people have completed 7,500 labs;
- Musician-in-residence Ron Miles released his first album with Bluenote Records, *Rainbow Sign*;
- Will Simpkins received the prestigious James Rhatigan Outstanding Dean Award from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators;
- Students ran a campaign to encourage voter registration and turnout among students, who were already voting at some of the highest rates in the nation;
- Former Student Trustee Kat Cammack was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in Florida's 3rd Congressional District;
- The 2030 Strategic Plan was approved last month, representing 18 months of collaborative efforts. The University's vision is to be the nationally recognized leader for social mobility, and the Strategic Plan is its guiding framework;
- More than 4,000 Roadrunners completed their degrees under extraordinary conditions;
- The graduating class included MSU Denver's 100,000th graduate.

President Davidson testified to the Joint Budget Committee and asked legislators to utilize Step 1 of the new higher education funding formula in an effort to correct the longstanding equity gap experienced by MSU Denver which has resulted in MSU Denver receiving 40% less than the average per-student funding for other public universities. President Davidson proposed an installment plan whereby the University's base budget would be increased by \$50 million over five years until MSU Denver attains the average per-student funding received by other public universities in Colorado. MSU Denver did not sign on to a consensus letter put forth by the other state institutions of higher education which advocated for more funding for all schools. MSU Denver is instead working independently to correct its historic underfunding. Leadership agrees that Colorado higher education as a whole is underfunded and it supports efforts to increase funding overall; however, incremental increases do not address in a significant manner the inequities in funding that inhibit the University's ability to serve its students. President Davidson stated that the consensus letter was flawed in three specific ways: 1) the proposed increase to Step 1 base funding was insufficient; 2) the allocation to Step 1 base funding relies on new money, and the inequity in funding to MSU Denver must be addressed first; and 3) the consensus letter did not address the moral imperative to address the longstanding inequity experienced by MSU Denver in the state's allocation of higher education funding.

President Davidson reported that AHEC faces severe financial concerns with approaching debt payments. The University is negotiating with the state to help AHEC with this one-time crisis.

Enrollment at MSU Denver is down 9% which is significantly better than the decrease anticipated in December.

President Davidson stated that in order to ensure a safe return to campus the University will be working politically and logistically to have students, staff, and faculty vaccinated.

President Davidson welcomed Dr. Alfred Tatum who joins the University as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Dr. Tatum is, among other things, a preeminent scholar of African American boys' literacy development. President Davidson thanked Dr. Greg Clifton who chaired the search committee and others who served on that committee. President Davidson thanked Dr. Bill Henry who served as interim provost for having done an amazing job in an extraordinary year characterized by budget cuts, new dean searches, COVID-19 classroom planning, changes to the Handbook, and academic realignments.

Accelerated Spring classes will begin in March. The courses are eight-week, three credit courses with many General Studies options designed to help students catch up on their academic progress. Fifty of the classes will be held in person on campus.

1. Higher Learning Commission Comprehensive Evaluation Update

President Davidson stated that the University's accreditation will be reaffirmed in 2021 by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), the regional accrediting agency for 19 states including Colorado. Reaccreditation pertains to the entire university, President Davidson said. MSU Denver depends on accreditation for, among other things, federal Title IV funds. MSU Denver is on what is termed a "standard pathway," a ten-year cycle with comprehensive evaluations every four years and a comprehensive evaluation and reaffirmation of accreditation every ten years. The University's most recent reaffirmation of accreditation was completed in June 2017. MSU Denver is in Year 4 of the ten-year cycle, which includes an HLC student survey which will be distributed between February 8 and 19.

HLC will conduct site visits April 26 and 27. A team of six peer reviewers will visit with select faculty, staff, and administrators. Trustees may be asked to participate in the site visits. Shawn Shaffer is coordinating the University's accreditation committee together with Ed Brown, the President's new Chief of Staff.

The report from the HLC team is expected June 7, 2021.

B. Infrastructure Master Plan Update – *Cathy Lucas, VP of Strategy, Marketing & Communications*

Ms. Lucas explained that the 2030 Infrastructure Strategy is the framework through which the University assesses new and existing opportunities to ensure that its on- and off-campus infrastructure will meet current and emerging needs. The overall strategy is to create a decision space to include evaluation of academic mission, future enrollment needs, and a commitment to serve as an institutional anchor to the community. Three deliverables will result from this work: 1) an overall infrastructure strategy; 2) the University will reach a decision on an anchor institution opportunity at Fox Park; and 3) a new Facilities Master Plan (FMP) will replace the existing one on file with the state. The existing FMP is more of a neighborhood plan.

The needs that contribute to the overall strategy are many, and include:

- Long-deferred maintenance of the West, Arts, and Central Classroom buildings (WAC), which are all core buildings to MSU Denver's students' experience
- The need for the C2 Hub to be a welcoming and inclusive space where employers, faculty, and students can convene and collaborate
- Affordable housing for students and possibly for faculty and staff
- The Health Institute is a key priority for the University. A public-private partnership could enable it to grow on- or off-campus
- An event and conference space for the University and its partners
- Engineering, Nursing, and other academic programs have been unable to keep up with demand due to space limitations

There are also opportunities that the University would like to assess, including:

- The possibility of a presence in Aurora, which is the third largest city in the state. More than 25% of MSU Denver students have an Aurora zip code, and the Superintendent of Aurora Public Schools believes that the University could have much more visibility in the city of Aurora
- Exploring the possibility of an anchor-institution opportunity at Fox Park
- Strong leadership at AHEC and new leadership at the other institutions on the Auraria Campus allow the University to consider innovations utilizing P3s to invest in current and new buildings in partnership with AHEC
- The Johnson & Wales University (JWU) campus may present a housing opportunity. The Urban Land Conservancy has contacted the University regarding partnering on the JWU residency halls, to transform them into an affordable housing option for MSU Denver students.

There are likely other opportunities that have not yet been thought of, Ms. Lucas said.

The challenges and opportunities listed above will be considered in three phases. The first phase begins now and will conclude at the end of March. An external advisory group and internal steering committee will collect and analyze data on enrollment trends and create an inventory of current Auraria facilities and growth needs.

In the second phase, data will be collected in preparation for a half-day workshop. A decision will be reached with regard to the anchor-institution opportunity at Fox Park and the housing opportunity at JWU, as well as plans for the C2 Hub and the Denver Institute for Reconciliation and Racial Equity; a listening tour will be launched to explore MSU Denver's presence in Aurora in partnership with the Aurora Chamber; and a strategy for the DIME Building will be determined. The University is in Year 3 of a ten-year lease on the DIME Building.

In the third phase, concluding by the end of 2022, the University will have established a decision-making model to respond strategically to new ideas and opportunities when they emerge; reach a decision on whether the Health Institute will be on- or off-campus; and determine the University's presence in Aurora. Short-term space solutions could include Fox Park and the DIME Building, and long-term solutions may include space on the Auraria campus. The AHEC Strategic Plan concludes in June 2021 and the Master Plan kicks off in FY'21-'22. The University's new FMP is due with the state by December 2022 and it will aid the University in future Capital Development Committee requests.

Trustee Johnston noted that the potential for program expansion, the Arts Center expansion, C2 Hub's need for additional physical space, housing-related needs, and the strategy to better support Aurora students, all have an overlap in real estate. He inquired how these would play out in the context of the difficult budget decisions faced by the University, while at the same time protecting existing programs. President Davidson responded that the University has a Strategic Plan and a direction to pursue with its programs. The opportunities will be considered strategically. Seventy percent of applicants to the Nursing program were turned away last year due to lack of lab space. The Engineering program has also been unable to meet demand because of space limitations. Even in downturns, President Davidson said, the best corporations try to make investments. Similarly, the University will consider strategic investments in areas that could generate additional enrollments. Trustee Johnston agreed, and stated that program demands and revenue opportunities must be weighed against their cost.

Trustee Noles requested that in pursuing these opportunities, the stress on staff be considered, especially in an environment of declining resources. He cautioned that weighing the different options without burning people out is a balancing act. President Davidson thanked Trustee Noles for his insight, especially given his expertise and background. Other universities have entire offices and dedicated staff that handle the sort of planning that Ms. Lucas and her team are undertaking. MSU Denver does not have those resources, and President Davidson thanked Trustee Noles for his patience and understanding of the University's limitations in this regard.

C. Government Affairs Update – Kaycee Gerhart, Director of Government Affairs

Ms. Gerhart stated that the University's most urgent priorities are at the state level, especially in budget advocacy and closing the funding gap. Trustees will play an important role in core conversations with

elected officials, informing them of how they can support MSU Denver. A cohesive message will come from a variety of perspectives, including that of students and Champions, to ensure that the message aligns with the efforts promoted in targeted outreach.

Funds for capital projects are expected to be limited but Ms. Gerhart cautioned that efforts to procure funding in the future still must be pursued. Formal advocacy began yesterday with the University's request to the JBC to close the funding gap.

Next week a grassroots advocacy effort will be kicked off around the budget request. The University's messaging surrounding it will amplify outreach to JBC members, house and senate leadership, and other key influencers.

The state budget will be finalized by the end of the month. This is only Year 1 of a multi-year plan. Targeted advocacy will continue over the summer.

Ms. Gerhart stated that a bill has been introduced that would change citizenship requirements for some professional licenses currently issued by DORA, which would significantly impact long-term opportunities for many students.

Another bill would create a test-optional policy for Colorado institutions of higher education so that SAT and ACT scores may or may not be considered as an element in admissions, leaving the decision up to the institution to determine its own policy.

The CDC ranks the projects included in the state budget, and Ms. Gerhart said that the University is reaching out to CDC members to advocate for the Health Institute project in hopes of moving it up the priority list and also helping committee members understand its importance. Students, faculty, and staff will testify in support of the Health Institute. Ms. Gerhart stated that the total request for the Health Institute is approximately \$80 million. The request of the CDC for this year is approximately 10% of that amount, which would cover the cost of visioning, planning, and engaging contractors. Although the Governor's recommendation does not allocate dollars for higher education projects, some funding is set aside for critical departmental needs tied to urgent matters that surfaced as a result of the pandemic. Ms. Gerhart said that the funding request of 10% or \$8 million from this year's budget does not guarantee that funds for the remainder of the project would be allocated in future years; however, the CDC generally does not fund only the first year of a multi-year project. Funding granted in this year could come with caveats that would make future funding dependent upon available funds. President Davidson added that the CDC would count the Health Institute as a continuing project which might increase the likelihood of it receiving funding in subsequent years.

In response to a question from Trustee Johnston, Ms. Gerhart stated that the \$48 million funding gap was framed to the JBC yesterday in terms of a timeline needed to reconcile the gap. Determining the exact dollar amount in each budget year is the job of the JBC and the University would work with the committee as part of its targeted advocacy efforts. The University will deploy senior leaders and partners in determining a collaborative solution over the next several weeks. President Davidson said that the state has not had a strategy to fund the funding gap. Of the funding that goes to state institutions of higher education, a separate allocation could be made to MSU Denver. Trustee Johnston stated that it would be helpful to know a rule of thumb so that if, for example, \$100 million goes into higher education, the result in net dollars to MSU Denver would be x. President Davidson said that the Hanover Report indicates that Colorado is approximately \$1 billion below its peer states in terms of its investment in higher education. The consensus letter from the other institutions to the Governor proposed adding \$70 million to the state's investment in higher education this year, but the allocation of those dollars was not addressed. Mr. Middlemist said that historically, if \$100 million were added to higher education, MSU Denver would receive 10%. HB 1319 had guardrails which ensured that one institution would not benefit more than another, or be harmed to a greater extent than another. MSU Denver's piece of the pie has always been incremental. President Davidson said that a flat, across-the-board allocation of additional funding to higher education has only increased the gap between MSU Denver's per-pupil funding and that of other state institutions, adding that the same percentage of a small number results in a small number. In order

to have an allocation that works, the base used for funding must be corrected. Mr. Middlemist added that TABOR has resulted in a much smaller pie.

Trustee Johnston summarized the three elements that must be considered as being 1) the amount that comes to MSU Denver through additional allocation in the existing formula; 2) the amount that would come to MSU Denver by way of restructuring the existing formula; and 3) the amount that would come by way of a direct set-aside.

D. State Legislative Update – *Christine Staberg, Founding Partner of The Capstone Group*

Ms. Staberg reported that legislators are currently focused on the budget. An MSU Denver student testified with President Davidson before the JBC as part of the University's public testimony. Senator Marino and Representative Herod, in particular, value hearing from MSU Denver students. The presentation was very well received. Several third-party advocates, including the ACLU, the Young Invincibles, Healthier Colorado, MSU Denver students, Trustee Johnston and other Board members, have all supported MSU Denver at the legislature. These voices are important in helping legislators understand that broad support of higher education is critical, Ms. Staberg said.

The Governor's office recommended an increase of \$492.5 to higher education funding over last year, which is officially where the balanced budget line starts. The other institutions, in their joint request which MSU Denver did not sign onto, asked for an additional infusion of \$141 million and was focused on the core costs in Step 2 of the formula, putting a nominal amount into Step 1. The request suggested a nominal increase in Step 1 funding for first-generation students of \$10 million, but this was again reliant on new/additional money which the JBC is unlikely to have. Of the total \$850 million for higher education, MSU Denver's share is approximately 7% when run through the formula.

Ms. Staberg and her team are working in partnership with AHEC related to AHEC's debt payment of \$5.5 million. The hope is that the JBC will find state funds to help meet that payment. The Governor's office has signaled that it is adamantly opposed to the funding, but some JBC members are willing to have the state contribute a portion of the payment. The proposal would run as a JBC bill when the legislature meets on February 16.

Last week Ms. Staberg and her team presented a supplemental request for the AES Building. The proposal would not bring additional funds to the University but it would relieve MSU Denver from the obligation to repay \$2.2 million to the state. Approval from the CDC and JBC for that request was received and it will run as a separate piece of legislation when the legislature reconvenes on February 16.

An initial vote will be held next Wednesday in the CDC on ranking of higher education projects. Ms. Staberg and her team have been working on the Health Institute, both with OSPB and to educate the Governor's office and legislators. Legislators supported moving the Health Institute up the list in comparison with where OSPB had ranked the project. Because OSPB did not recommend funding for any higher education projects, they did not renumber them because they were under the line, so efforts with the CDC are now being made to move the project back up the list in the future. If stimulus funds become available for these types of programs, the Health Institute could be a great candidate and Ms. Staberg and her team are working to position it as favorably as possible.

Ms. Staberg stated that the state is scrutinizing projects that would commit it to provide funding in subsequent years. Last year the state ran out of money due to COVID-19 and budget cuts and incurred debt to finish out some multiple-year projects. This new scrutiny could impact the request to fund the Health Institute. The overall request is \$80 million but the initial request is for \$8 million. Ms. Staberg said that legislators understand the importance of the project, but the overall request is significant.

Ms. Staberg and her team are working on two IT requests with the Joint Technology Committee. Last year the University made a \$3 million request that was going to be funded, but then budget cuts caused the projects to be defunded. That single request has been split into two requests this year. Although the balanced budget submitted by the Governor did not include money for any higher education capital

project, work is being done now so that the projects are well positioned when matters begin to shift back to normal.

Ms. Staberg discussed the impacts of making SAT and ACT testing optional in college admissions. MSU Denver is required by statute to collect those test scores but since it is an open-access institution, the test scores are not considered as part of admissions assessments. Mr. Simpkins and his team feel that the tests may be perceived by potential students as a barrier to admission and that access to the University would be enhanced if admission were test-optional. Ms. Staberg stated that all the institutions of higher education have signed on in support of the bill, which is written so that each institution is able to independently decide whether to collect the test scores. Ms. Staberg said that those arguing for and those arguing against the bill are on the side of the same students and are working to ensure access and equity for underserved students trying to get into higher education.

E. Student Government Report – *Braeden Weart, Student Government Assembly President,* and Student Trustee Report – *Alaura Ward, Student Trustee*

Mr. Weart stated that since the last presentation to the Board, Student Government operations have been virtual, and SGA has been working to keep communication lines with students open.

SGA strives to provide the most up-to-date information, meeting minutes, survey results, and contact forms so that students are able to easily reach out to SGA. SGA also connects effectively with students through online events such as town halls.

Goals which SGA has set include bringing students' perspectives to the Board and working to ensure that the University takes action with regard to its antiracism commitment and the BIPOC resolution, and in particular, hiring more faculty of color. SGA supports antiracism and the antiracism resolution passed by the Board of Trustees. Students hold Student Government accountable for working with the Board of Trustees and senior leadership to make policy changes that will ensure the University is committed to fulfilling the intent of the antiracism resolution.

Among other pressures, students are feeling the financial pinch as a result of loss of workhours, whether they work on or off campus. Also due to the pandemic, many students are concerned about future prospects for employment and are wondering what "normal" will look like.

Ms. Ward reported that MSU Denver, UC Denver, and CCD are working with Colleen Walker, President of AHEC, on a shared vision of the Tivoli as a space that will serve the entire campus.

SGA representatives are working with Dr. Benitez and Mr. Simpkins to have more SGA representatives serve on diversity, equity, and inclusion committees.

SGA will participate in Welcome Week virtually. It recently held a virtual Trivia Night. Its town halls were very effective.

In response to a question from Trustee Garnett, Mr. Weart stated that students have pressed SGA representatives to ensure that the Board of Trustees and senior leadership are taking actions that will result in more faculty of color being hired, and that the antiracism resolution results in action and results and is not simply a static statement of intentions. Ms. Ward added that higher education has historically been racist. Students want to know how to change the University's policies to make MSU Denver more equitable, and they would like to hear about specific actions being taken to make the University an antiracist institution. Students are concerned with the ways in which security and policing on campus might change when there is a return to campus. Ms. Ward stated that students feel disconnected from the processes of the Board of Trustees, and believe that some policies of the University may still be essentially racist.

Trustee Carrera thanked Ms. Ward and Mr. Weart for bringing the feedback from the students. He said that the Board will welcome additional precise suggestions from students as to how they believe the issue of racism should be addressed. Trustee Carrera stated that the campus climate survey currently being conducted may be a helpful tool in this regard, along with the charter that was adopted by the Sustained

Racial Justice Committee. The Board of Trustees made the Sustained Racial Justice Committee a standing committee for the very fact raised by the students, which is that higher education has been plagued by entrenched racism, but the Board of Trustees recognize the work to be undertaken and intend to persist in their efforts to undo the harms of racism and will carry out their work for as long as necessary. Ms. Ward thanked Trustee Carrera, and stated that it would be helpful to the students to know what is being done currently and what can be expected down the road. SGA would like to help the students understand SGA's role and relationship with the Board of Trustees, and how it is holding itself and the institution accountable in this regard.

(A 10-minute break was taken.)

F. Governance Committee Report – Trustee Kristin Hultquist

Trustee Hultquist reported that the Governance Committee met and discussed the orientation process for new Trustees. Because of the many changes occurring in the current environment, the Committee would like all Trustees to participate in the orientation.

The conflict of interest policy is the responsibility of the Governance Committee. The Committee is asking that the full Board renew the declaration of conflicts of interest at the beginning of each year.

Governance Committee discussed and drafted its charter, which describes the responsibilities related to governance of the Board.

Trustee Hultquist asked for a motion to approve the new charter for the Governance Committee.

Trustee Brooks **moved for approval** of the charter for the Governance Committee, with a **second** by Vice Chairman Noles. The motion was **unanimously approved**.

G. Academic and Student Affairs (ASA) Committee Report – Trustee Marissa Molina

1. Approval of Change in Presidential Authority over Personnel Matters Policy – Sabbaticals
Trustee Molina reported that the ASA Committee met and welcomed Dr. Tatum to the University. The Committee discussed a policy change with regard to the current delegation of sabbatical applications. The Committee believes that final authority to approve or deny sabbatical applications should be delegated to the provost, thus making a clearer delineation of roles.

2. Approval of New Programs
Shawn Shaffer led the Committee in a conversation regarding additional programs and specifically the Bachelor of Science in Real Estate. The Committee will return in March to ensure that that program has a professor and the necessary staff to operate.

3. Approval of Discontinued Programs
Some programs will be discontinued going forward based on review by faculty, deans, and the Provost. These programs are listed in the meeting packet.

Trustee Copp **moved to approve** the change in Presidential Authority over Personnel Matters Policy – Sabbaticals; **to approve** New Programs; and **to approve** Discontinued Programs, with a **second** by Trustee Brooks. The motion was **unanimously approved**.

H. Finance Committee Report – Trustee Russell Noles

Trustee Noles reported that the Finance Committee's discussions included an enrollment update from Mary Saucedo. For the Spring semester, enrollments are down 9% in terms of FTEs and by roughly 7.75% in headcount. These numbers represent a 2.5% decline in enrollment from the Fall semester. Enrollments at the University's peer institutions in this area are down by approximately 8%. Colorado Mesa's enrollments are down 4%, but the university's local economy has dissimilar dynamics.

The Enrollment Management Team is continuing its efforts to stabilize enrollment and have identified several priorities for Fall 2021:

1. Approval of Fiscal Year (FY) 2020-21 Phase III Budget

The budget is impacted by the enrollment numbers. Mr. Sampler and Mr. Middlemist provided an update on the budget, tied in with the decline in Spring enrollments. The University is anticipating an additional \$1 million shortfall in the education general fund budget. Staff recommend using \$1 million of the University's \$7.8 million reserve funds.

Business Enterprise programs are currently operating with a \$7.5 million revenue shortfall compared to last year. Staff will return in March to update the Committee on steps being taken to cover those losses.

Trustee Copp **moved to approve** the Fiscal Year 2020-21 Phase III Budget, with a **second** by Trustee Carrera. The motion was **unanimously approved**.

2. Approval of Amendment XIX of the State Universities in Colorado Defined Contribution Retirement Plan

Trustee Noles explained that MSU Denver is part of a state universities Defined Contribution Retirement Plan, together with Adams State and Western State University. Many faculty and professional staff participate in this Defined Contribution Retirement Plan. An overall summary plan document governs the plan and the University must ensure that it stays current with respect to what the participant institutions are doing. Because of the budget crisis, Adams State plans to decrease its employer contribution to the plan from 11.4% to 9.4%, and move part-time employees into the plan. MSU Denver is maintaining its contribution level and is not moving any employees into the plan, but because Adams State is making changes, the overall plan summary document must be amended.

Trustee Molina **moved to approve** Amendment XIX to the State Universities in Colorado Defined Contribution Retirement Plan, with a **second** by Trustee Hultquist. The motion was **unanimously approved**.

Sean Petranovich and Kori Thompson provided an update on the Board of Trustees Data Dashboard and the Enterprise Data Warehouse Dashboard, which is already being used by deans, chairs, faculty, and data analysts. The hope is that Trustees will soon have easy access to the same University data. The tool is still being built for the Board of Trustees. The Dashboard provides a high-level view of University activity, the incoming pipeline of students, patterns of degrees, administrative operational data, fee revenue, and other data. The data is automatically updated so that each time a user logs in they are viewing up-to-date data.

I. Sustained Racial Justice (SRJ) Committee Report – *Trustee Albus Brooks*

Trustee Brooks stated that the Sustained Racial Justice Committee adopted its charter. He stated that the Board hears the students and hears their concerns. The actual work of being antiracist involves the dismantling of systems and policies that have been used against people of color, and that is the work of the SRJ Committee. With the assistance of Dr. Michael Benitez and President Davidson, the Committee is first turning its attention internally.

The City has announced that MSU Denver will be the anchor institution to hold the Diverse Equity and Inclusion Center, which will become a national model for cities. The center will draft an agreement with the City.

Dr. Benitez reviewed the Strategic Plan for the University and the Campus Climate Survey which will be used receive critical feedback from students and ultimately to adjust University policies and practices. The feedback received from the Campus Climate Survey will be acted upon, Trustee Brooks stated.

J. Hotel/Hospitality Learning Center (HLC) Update – *Larry Sampler, VP of Administration/COO*

Trustee Grogan thanked Mr. Sampler for the efforts he is taking with regard to a safe return to campus.

Mr. Sampler stated that the HLC board met earlier this week. The Hotel is not currently profitable, although prospects are improving. The Convention Center, which was being used as surplus hospital space, is being returned to its intended use and there is pent-up demand for events.

The Hotel leadership team received a Diamond Award. The management team was recognized as one of Marriott's best-managed hotels nationally.

The University's relationship with the Hotel changed dramatically last year when the Hotel's accounts were transferred into the University as part of a transfer into a bond swap. The move provided a modest break with respect to debt payments, and it also revealed a material weakness in the HLC audit done for FY'20. The consequences of this particular material weakness were insignificant. Staff recorded the \$11 million of debt during the swap on the books of the Hotel; and the auditor felt it should have been recorded on the books of the University.

Trustee Grogan said that even a small profit in 2020 in the hotel industry is a huge accomplishment and asked that that message be taken back to management. She also stated that Trustee Noles discussed the material weakness finding at Finance Committee, and the Committee members agree that staff's handling of the matter was appropriate.

K. Foundation Report – Christine Márquez-Hudson, Vice President University Advancement & MSU Denver Foundation

Ms. Marquez-Hudson reported that total fundraising to date is \$3.4 million. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the fundraising goal was lowered to \$5 million.

Also because of the pandemic, the number of students staffing the call center has been reduced. The number of engaged alumni is also down.

Between 2018 and 2020 the value of the University's endowment has doubled and is now at nearly \$20 million. Total assets as of November 30, 2020, are \$34 million.

As was suggested by Trustee Noles, a search for an investment advisor has been launched. The search committee issued eight invitations. The committee is in the process of reviewing the three finalists and will bring their recommendation to the full Board in March. The Foundation hopes to align its investments with the core values of the University, and is looking for an entity with experience in environment, social issues, and government.

The Foundation received recent gifts which include:

1. The first capital gift to the Health Institute from the Laguardia Foundation in the amount of \$300,000 for capital support;
2. A planned gift from James Patton who graduated in 1984; the first installment of his estate gift of \$250,000 was received;
3. Ruthie Jordan and her siblings made a one-time contribution from the estate of one of their siblings of \$75,000 to be used for scholarships for students with a history of domestic violence and scholarships to veterans;
4. A gift from Judy Joseph was received for the Lifestyle Medicine Student Competition in the amount of \$39,200.

The Campaign Planning progress has been ongoing over the last two years and is in the process of reviewing the Strategic Plan and determining how its projects align and which have the best support from the community and which are the most transformational. A steering committee and a planning committee will provide feedback on the project and both will be involved in solicitations. The Advancement Office is in the process of conducting a feasibility study and has taken ideas to the donor community. The feedback received will be incorporated into the final shaping of this campaign. Findings will be shared at the next meeting. One important role of the Board of Trustees will be to affirm with President Davidson that the campaign initiatives are the ones the Board wishes to focus on. The Foundation board will establish funding targets, but the Board of Trustees will affirm priority.

The MSU Denver Day of Giving is March 18, 2021. This is a giving opportunity for Trustees who have not yet made a gift. The event will be virtual but there is a University-wide crowdfunding effort that will include many small programs as well as larger initiatives. In addition to the Day of Giving, gifts made to the Philanthropy Fund will be matched. Ms. Marquez-Hudson encouraged promotion of the MSU Denver Day of Giving through Trustees' various social media channels.

The Foundation board was inspired by the Board of Trustees antiracism resolution. At its retreat, the Foundation board identified the following goals to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion:

1. The composition of the board, as well as the education regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion provided to the board;
2. Ensuring that the Foundation board is supporting the University's vision and Strategic Plan which include its diversity, equity, and inclusion goals as well as the University's HSI status and student diversity as the Foundation shapes the message around the campaign;
3. Explore with its new investment manager how best to align the full investment portfolio of the University's \$20 million endowment with the core values of the University, which include diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Trustee Noles congratulated the Foundation board on its goals, and said that there are some very talented minority investment managers who could work with Advancement in this regard, representing another opportunity to demonstrate the action the University is taking toward diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Chair Grogan stated that part of the job of a Board member is to plug into their social network and actually raise funds. There are many valuable talking points that align with the state's goals, such as the Health Institute, the Cyber Innovation Center, and the C2Hub, which can all be used to make a very compelling case.

L. Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC) Board Report – *Albus Brooks, Trustee*

Trustee Brooks reported that the AHEC board has three new members: Kate Barton, president of the Downtown Denver Partnership; Dr. Marlana DeSantis who has over 22 years of experience in education and is focused on workforce development; and Norbert Chavez, who serves on the CU Board of Regents and is chief of external initiatives and executive director of UC Denver.

UC Denver is awaiting information from DOE regarding their designation as an HSI, and would join MSU Denver and CCD in having achieved the designation.

Colleen Walker updated the board on many AHEC initiatives. The campus police department is doing diversity, equity, and inclusion training, adopting best practices from other departments with regard to community policing and on how to relate to the campus's community of students.

The campus has entered into a partnership with Barnes & Noble College to assume operation of the Tivoli Station Bookstore effective April 19, 2021. As a national leader in the campus bookstore industry, Barnes & Noble College has the largest inventory of used, rental, and digital textbooks available, providing a wide range of cost-saving options. Barnes & Noble College is also able to offer a wide variety of school and spirit apparel merchandise as well as introduce new vendors with additional product offerings.

The Reimagining the Tivoli effort is nearing the findings phase and the AHEC board will receive an update on the final piece of that.

Steve Monaco, director of the Health Center at Auraria, has been working with AHEC to establish a partnership with COVID Check Colorado, which will manage vaccinations on campus using the Fifth

Street Garage as a vaccination site. Once vaccinations can be ordered through CDPHE, the point of distribution can open, following state guidelines as to prioritization of groups.

M. Alumni Representative Report – Joe Rice, Alumni Trustee

Alumni Trustee Rice reported that the Alumni Association board continues to meet virtually and has sponsored virtual events. The board is recruiting new members and Trustee Rice encouraged applicants to contact either him or the office. Travis Luther recently resigned from the board, and made a \$25,000 gift in support of the Alumni Association Finish Line Scholarship, which is the scholarship that encourages students who left the University with only a few credits needed to graduate, to return and complete their degree.

In furtherance of the diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts of the Foundation board and the Board of Trustees, the Alumni Association is launching a Black Alumni group, with additional groups such as veterans, Hispanic alumni, and LGBTQ alumni being considered.

The Ambassadors Program has 15 alumni Ambassadors who have volunteered to be mentors to prospective and beginning students.

N. Faculty Trustee Report – Bethany Fleck, Faculty Trustee

Faculty Trustee Fleck stated that a record number of students voted in the presidential election. The MSU Denver community is committed to civic engagement. Activism efforts of the student body with regard to social justice have ramped up. Faculty have been interviewed by news channels and have used their own platforms to disseminate knowledge that is factual, credible, and respectable.

Faculty have made extraordinary efforts to develop, refine, and execute online courses in response to the shift to online learning due to the pandemic. Logistics included moving research and other experiential learning opportunities into online space. Dr. Fleck stated that she is very proud of the quality of the classes and experience that her colleagues across the University are providing.

Faculty continues to participate in service roles. Two new task forces were formed to address two major resolutions passed by Faculty Senate, the Liberal Arts resolution and the Diverse Faculty resolution, reflecting faculty's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

In spite of the challenges presented by COVID-19, online teaching, and social and political upheaval, faculty continue to maintain scholarship by conducting research, publishing, and presenting at virtual conferences. The *Early Bird* publishes faculty citations monthly.

Faculty workload is immense, Trustee Fleck said. The Faculty Welfare Committee, President Davidson, and Dr. Henry have met and discussed the possibilities for redistributing workloads so faculty can better support students and MSU Denver's mission, and work to create a post-COVID-19 environment.

Chair Grogan asked that faculty be informed of the Board's appreciation for their extraordinary efforts in this difficult year. The Board supports Faculty Senate's work to redistribute workloads.

O. Faculty Senate Report – Katia Campbell, Faculty Senate President

Faculty Senate President Campbell stated that the passage of the Diverse Faculty resolution and the Liberal Arts resolution referred to by Dr. Fleck indicate faculty's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in support of the University's antiracism efforts. Trustee Campbell thanked Student Trustee Alaura Ward and SGA Trustee Braedan Weart for their work, and said that Faculty Senate is working to move the BIPOC resolution forward. She stated that racism is so embedded that it will take everyone working together to move forward. It is unfortunate that racial and social justice have been politicized to such a great extent and that not all faculty members are on board with equal opportunity policies, but the majority are. She affirmed Ms. Ward's comment that the narrative on racial justice must be reframed from politics to one grounded in ethics and human rights so that people feel less defensive or threatened. Faculty Senate will continue to work on that.

VI. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Human Resources report of personnel actions for the Board's information, which have occurred since the last Board meeting on Friday, September 4, 2020.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Trustee Grogan, seconded by Trustee Noles and unanimously adopted. The Board of Trustees meeting was duly adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.