KENT STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
March 6, 2024
Urban Conference Room, Library, Kent Campus

Board Members Present
Shawn Riley, Chair
Pamela Bobst
Renato Camacho
Haley Dees
Barry Fetterman
Robert Frost
Robin Kilbride
Larry Macon, Jr.
Donald Mason
Christian Palich
Lara Shigo
Sandra Volpe
Ann Womer Benjamin

KSU President’s Cabinet Present
Todd Diacon, President
Sean Broghammer
Doug Delahanty
Nick Gattozzi
Amoaba Gooden
David Ochmann
Mark Polatajko
Ebóni Pringle
John Rathje
Charlene Reed
Randale Richmond
Peggy Shadduck
Valoree Vargo
Stephen Ward

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Shawn Riley called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Trustee Donald Mason called the roll, and a quorum was present.

PROOF OF NOTICE

Chair Riley announced that public notification of the meeting was given pursuant to Ohio law and university policy.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

In accordance with Chapter 121.22, section G of the Ohio Revised Code, the Board has a need to meet in Executive Session for the purposes of: (i) considering the employment and compensation of a public employee or official [121.22(G)(1)]; (ii) considering matters of real estate for public purposes [121.22 (G) (2)]; and (iii) conference with attorney for the public body concerning disputes involving the public body that are the subject of court action [121.22 (G)(3)].

Trustee Pamela Bobst moved, seconded by Trustee Ann Womer Benjamin that the Board retire into Executive Session. By virtue of a unanimous roll call vote taken by Trustee Mason, the Board adjourned into Executive Session at 8:33 a.m. The session concluded at 10:15 a.m.
BOARD BUSINESS MEETING

By approval of a motion duly made and seconded, the Board returned to public session at 10:30 a.m. for the business portion of the meeting.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chair Riley began with the approval of the agenda. He asked if any of the trustees had any further additions or corrections to the agenda. Hearing none, the agenda was adopted by general consent.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Chair Riley asked if trustees had additions or corrections to the minutes of the Board’s December 6, 2023, business meeting. Hearing no additions or corrections, the minutes were added to the consent agenda for approval.

Chair Riley then called on President Diacon to give his report. Dr. Diacon noted that he was ceding his time that day to Undergraduate Student Government (USG) President Juliana Buonaiuto, who would be arriving momentarily. Chair Riley asked President Diacon to present the personnel actions in the meantime.

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

President Diacon asked Associate Provost Kevin West to present the academic personnel actions report. Dr. West said the proposed actions were routine and included emeritus status requests for seven faculty members. President Diacon then turned to Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration Mark Polatajko to present the non-academic personnel actions. Dr. Polatajko said the proposed actions report stood as written and all matters were routine. The personnel actions were added to the consent agenda by general consent.

Chair Riley then asked President Diacon to proceed with his remarks.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

President Diacon thanked USG President Buonaiuto for her leadership, including her tireless efforts to bring together her peers and student organizations on different sides of the issues in the Middle East. He asked her to share a few words. Ms. Buonaiuto introduced herself and then turned to discuss the challenges of the past semester, acknowledging that many different viewpoints are held by members of the student body. From October through early December, key stakeholders including Hillel, Golden I, Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP), Arab Student Association (ASA), and Muslim Students Association (MSA) worked together to develop a joint statement that everyone could agree upon. A draft was written, but ultimately did not receive unanimous approval for its release. The process itself was a testament to the strength of the community and how students were willing to unite during trying times like these, she said.
She then shared some background about USG, which is the liaison between the student body and the university’s administrators and senior leadership. USG represents the student body's interests and the common betterment of the student body in a variety of ways, she said. The group now is focused on projects related to campus change. Depending on the issues of the day, USG considers many resolutions annually, providing advocacy in a legislative way, she said. She thanked all for having her there and said it was an honor to address the Board of Trustees.

President Diacon asked Ms. Buonaiuto to share where she is from and why she chose Kent State. A native of Long Island, New York, Ms. Buonaiuto said early in her senior year she got a gut feeling that her nine submitted college applications were not enough. She went back into a college search engine and identified her preferences such as a medium-sized school and good campus life. Kent State came up as one of the schools recommended for her. She said she had only briefly heard of Kent State but decided to apply on a whim. Kent State replied quickly with an amazing scholarship package, she said. Once she took a closer look at Kent State, she realized that she really liked the campus, which looked beautiful in its fall photos. She was supposed to tour Kent State on March 13, 2020, but her tour was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She committed to Kent State without ever stepping foot in Ohio but has absolutely loved campus life. She is a marketing major who will graduate in May 2024, so she will just miss out on classes in the highly anticipated Crawford Hall. She will return for 2024 Homecoming festivities and hopes to tour the new building, she said. President Diacon saluted Ms. Buonaiuto for her important contributions to Kent State and said he looked forward to celebrating her graduation.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Chair Riley then moved to committee reports and recommendations. He said that the recommendations of the committees would be placed on the consent agenda and acted upon in one motion unless any trustee wished to remove an item for further discussion. At the end of each committee report, he would ask if any trustee wished to remove an item from the consent agenda for further discussion. If there were no objections, the resolutions would be added to the consent agenda by general consent, he said.

Chair Riley first turned to committee chair Trustee Pamela Bobst to present the report of the External Relations and Philanthropy Committee.

**EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND PHILANTHROPY COMMITTEE**

Trustee Bobst reported that the External Relations and Philanthropy Committee met on February 29, 2024, with a very full agenda.

**NAMING OF THE ROLLIE AND FRANCES LAYFIELD CLASSROOM**

She presented the proposed naming of the Rollie and Frances Layfield Classroom in Crawford Hall. Rollie Layfield participated in the university’s Army ROTC program and graduated from Kent State in 1964 with a Bachelor of Business Administration. Mr. and Mrs. Layfield have
supported the Army ROTC program at Kent State through an endowed scholarship and operational funding. It is recommended that a classroom in Crawford Hall be named in recognition of their new gift of $175,000 to the capital endowment for the Ambassador Crawford College of Business and Entrepreneurship. This action is consistent with university naming policy and recommended for approval as part of the board's consent agenda, reported Trustee Bobst.

**Resolution 2024-1**

**NAMING OF THE ROLLIE AND FRANCES LAYFIELD CLASSROOM**

WHEREAS, Rollie and Frances Layfield recognize Kent State University as a leader in higher education and excellence in Northeast Ohio and beyond; and

WHEREAS, Mr. and Mrs. Layfield value the role that the Kent State University plays in the training and preparation of entrepreneurs and Army ROTC cadets; and

WHEREAS, Rollie Layfield earned a Bachelor of Business Administration from Kent State University in 1964; and

WHEREAS, Rollie and Frances Layfield are successful entrepreneurs and generous supporters of communities and causes throughout Northeast Ohio; and

WHEREAS, through this proposed naming action, the university wishes to recognize the generosity of Rollie and Frances Layfield in providing new gifts totaling $175,000 to benefit the Ambassador Crawford College of Business and Entrepreneurship at Kent State University; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees, on behalf of the Ambassador Crawford College of Business and Entrepreneurship and the Army ROTC Program as well as the current and future students enrolled in these programs, expresses sincere appreciation to Rollie and Frances Layfield for their generosity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees, in accordance with university policy, hereby names a classroom in Crawford Hall the Rollie and Frances Layfield Classroom.

The committee also heard two information items, the first of which was a fundraising update from Vice President Valoree Vargo. As of February 29, 2024, Kent State raised more than $18.8 million toward its goal of $30 million for fiscal year 2024. The Forever Brighter campaign stood at $375.6 million, well above the campaign goal of $350 million. This total included $152.5 million in direct support of student success, noted Trustee Bobst.

The committee also was informed of the Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement’s progress since 2020 toward four key recommendations for improvement: address staffing levels, lower fundraising costs, improve the university’s return on investment, and fundraise more
efficiently. Trustees also discussed a recent report by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), which demonstrated the importance of engaging new generations particularly Millennials and Generation Z and women, who often make the philanthropic decisions in their households.

The committee also received State of Ohio updates including the upcoming capital bill, President Diacon’s April 10th testimony to the Ohio Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee, and Trustee Haley Dees’ leadership in organizing a statewide meeting of public university student trustees. Kent State submitted $29.1 million in state capital budget requests to meet urgent deferred maintenance needs across its campuses, which Dr. Diacon will present in his legislative testimony. The capital budget process will continue over the next several months, she noted. The April 19th student trustee meeting will feature an impressive list of guest speakers and provide networking opportunities. She congratulated Trustee Dees upon this achievement.

This concluded Trustee Bobst’s report on behalf of the External Relations and Philanthropy Committee.

Chair Riley thanked Trustee Bobst and asked whether any trustee wished to remove the naming resolution from the consent agenda. Hearing no such requests, the resolution was added to the consent agenda.

He then called on committee chair Trustee Robert Frost to provide the report of the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee.

**ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT SUCCESS COMMITTEE**

Trustee Frost reported that the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee met on February 27, 2024. The committee considered seven action items, all of which were recommended for inclusion on the Board’s consent agenda.

The academic personnel actions were routine in nature and already have been recommended for inclusion on the consent agenda, he said.

**CONFERRAL OF DEGREES - Fall 2023**

Trustee Frost presented the committee’s recommendation for the conferral of 2,175 degrees for Fall 2023.

**Resolution 2024-2**

**CONFERRAL OF DEGREES**

**Fall 2023**

WHEREAS, Section 3341.05 of The Revised Code of Ohio provides that "...On the recommendation of the (KSU) faculty, the (KSU) Board of Trustees may confer"
such honorary and academic degrees as are customarily conferred by colleges and universities in the United States..."; and

WHEREAS, the faculties, deans and directors of Kent State University's colleges and schools recommend that appropriate degrees be conferred on those Kent State students who completed – during the period of August 19, 2023 to December 17, 2023 – the various requirements of the respective programs of study they pursued; and

WHEREAS, the university has recognized completion of said programs of study by awarding diplomas as appropriate at a suitable time, during the period cited, upon such persons listed in the accompanying Summary of Candidates for Degrees; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby confirms the conferral of their respective degrees upon those persons who have been officially recorded by the Kent State University Registrar as having completed the requirements during said period of August 19, 2023 to December 17, 2023.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE APPLIED MEDIA MAJOR WITHIN THE BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE

Trustee Frost next presented the proposed establishment of the Applied Media major within the Bachelor of Arts degree. The proposed degree is tailored for students who have amassed credits within the College of Communication and Information but have left the university without a degree or cannot continue in their current program. The proposed program gives students a pathway to a degree preparing students for careers in media, he said.

Resolution 2024-3

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE APPLIED MEDIA MAJOR WITHIN THE BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE

WHEREAS, the College of Communication and Information seeks approval for the establishment of the Applied Media major within the Bachelor of Arts degree; and

WHEREAS, the proposed degree program will be tailored for students who have amassed many credits in a degree program in the college but either have left the university without a degree or cannot continue in their current program; and

WHEREAS, part of the mission of the College in Communication and Information is to assist students to achieve the college’s learning outcomes, graduate and contribute in more impactful ways to Ohio’s communication, information and media landscape; and
WHEREAS, the proposed program has been crafted as a completer program in order to provide these students a pathway to a degree; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Applied Media major prepares students for jobs in all sectors of the media and for positions in a range of jobs that hire dedicated media professionals including entertainment, sports, travel, government, health, and education; and

WHEREAS, the proposed establishment has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate department and college faculty and curriculum committees, the Educational Policies Council, and the Faculty Senate, and carries the endorsement of the Provost and the President; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby approves the establishment of the Applied Media major within the Bachelor of Arts degree, effective Fall 2024, pending Ohio Department of Higher Education approval.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BIOSTATISTICS MAJOR WITHIN THE MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE

Trustee Frost also presented the proposed establishment of the Biostatistics major within the Master of Public Health degree. The College of Public Health has offered a biostatistics concentration since 2010 that has yielded consistent enrollment. Students learn advanced methods of public health data analysis and understand disease prevention, development, and treatment. Graduates can find careers in practice at a hospital, public health department, or as a part of research teams at pharmaceutical companies, for example, noted Trustee Frost.

Resolution 2024-4

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BIOSTATISTICS MAJOR WITHIN THE MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE

WHEREAS, the College of Public Health seeks approval for the establishment of the Biostatistics major within the Master of Public Health degree; and

WHEREAS, the college has offered a biostatistics concentration since 2010 that has yielded consistent enrollment; and

WHEREAS, students will learn advanced methods of public health data analysis and understand disease prevention, development, prognosis, and treatment; and

WHEREAS, students who complete the proposed degree will work in practice at hospitals, public health departments, pharmaceutical companies and other settings or continue their education to pursue a research or professional doctorate; and
WHEREAS, health commissioners, researchers, and research directors at Northeast Ohio hospitals have indicated a need for graduates trained in biostatistics; and

WHEREAS, the proposed establishment has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate department and college faculty and curriculum committees, the Educational Policies Council, and the Faculty Senate, and carries the endorsement of the Provost and the President; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby approves the establishment of the Biostatistics major within the Master of Public Health Degree, effective Fall 2024, pending Ohio Department of Higher Education approval.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EPIDEMIOLOGY MAJOR WITHIN THE MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE

Trustee Frost then recommended the establishment of the Epidemiology major within the Master of Public Health degree. The College of Public Health has offered an epidemiology concentration since 2010 that also has yielded consistent enrollment. He added that the proposed curriculum prepares students to analyze the distribution of determinants of disease, disabilities, and death in populations.

Resolution 2024-5

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EPIDEMIOLOGY MAJOR WITHIN THE MASTER OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEGREE

WHEREAS, the College of Public Health seeks approval for the establishment of the Epidemiology major within the Master of Public Health degree; and

WHEREAS, the college has offered an epidemiology concentration since 2010, which has yielded consistent enrollment; and

WHEREAS, proposed curriculum of the program prepares students to analyze the distribution and determinants of disease, disabilities, and death in populations; and

WHEREAS, graduates of the program will have diverse career opportunities including research positions in universities, medical schools, and pharmaceutical companies; disease prevention specialists in hospitals; and surveillance managers in state and local health departments; or they may choose to continue their educations to pursue a research or professional doctorate; and

WHEREAS, health commissioners, researchers, and research directors at Northeast Ohio hospitals have indicated a need for graduates trained in Epidemiology methods; and
WHEREAS, the proposed establishment has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate department and college faculty and curriculum committees, the Educational Policies Council, and the Faculty Senate, and also carries the endorsement of the Provost and the President; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby approves the establishment of the Epidemiology major within the Master of Public Health degree, effective Fall 2024, pending Ohio Department of Education approval.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE JOURNALISM EDUCATION MAJOR WITHIN THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE

Trustee Frost presented the committee’s recommendation to establish the Journalism Education major within the Master of Arts degree. The proposed program will provide continuing education opportunities to high school teachers who are responsible for teaching and advising an array of student media. Graduates of the program will be able to apply for certification to become designated as a “certified journalism educator,” he said.

Resolution 2024-6

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE JOURNALISM EDUCATION MAJOR WITHIN THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE

WHEREAS, the College of Communication and Information seeks approval for the establishment of the Journalism Education major within the Master of Arts degree; and

WHEREAS, the School of Media and Journalism has offered a journalism education concentration since 2007, which has consistently yielded steady enrollment; and

WHEREAS, students of the proposed program will learn foundational knowledge in media and journalism as well as pedagogical practices that can be applied to secondary and post-secondary teaching environments; and

WHEREAS, the proposed program’s curriculum aligns with the standards of the Journalism Education Association, which will allow program graduates to apply for certification and be designated as a “certified journalism educator;” and

WHEREAS, the proposed establishment has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate department and college faculty and curriculum committees, the Educational Policies Council, and the Faculty Senate, and also carries the endorsement of the Provost and the President; now, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby approves the establishment of the Journalism Education major within the Master of Arts degree, effective Fall 2024, pending Ohio Department of Education approval.

INACTIVATION OF THE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION – EXECUTIVE MAJOR WITHIN THE MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEGREE

Next, Trustee Frost presented the proposed inactivation of the Business Administration-Executive major, known as the Executive M.B.A., within the Master of Business Administration degree, which has experienced declining enrollment over the years. The decline in enrollment is consistent with that experienced in other Executive M.B.A. programs across the country. The proposed action only affects the Executive option – other online and in-person M.B.A. offerings will not be affected, he reported.

Resolution 2024-7

INACTIVATION OF THE BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION – EXECUTIVE MAJOR WITHIN THE MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEGREE

WHEREAS, the Ambassador Crawford College of Business and Entrepreneurship requests the inactivation of the Business Administration-Executive major within the Master of Business Administration degree; and

WHEREAS, the degree program, known as the Executive M.B.A., has had declining enrollment over the years, from 83 enrolled students in Fall 2012 to 11 students in 2022; and

WHEREAS, the decline in enrollment is consistent with other Executive M.B.A programs across the country; and

WHEREAS, the college will continue to offer its Master of Business Administration degree fully online and in person as well as adapt its post-undergraduate offerings, all of which will meet the needs of students who may have selected the Executive M.B.A. in the past; and

WHEREAS, the proposed inactivation of the Business Administration-Executive major within the Master of Business Administration degree has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate college faculty and curriculum committees, the Educational Policies Council, and the Faculty Senate, and also carries the endorsement of the Provost and the President; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby approves the inactivation of the Business Administration-Executive major within the Master of Business Administration degree, effective Fall 2024.
Finally, Trustee Frost recommended the proposed establishment of University Policy 3342-6-27 Regarding Graduate Assistantships. This policy formally adopts clear procedures for the administration of graduate assistantships including requirements, benefits, reappointment, termination, and appeals, he said.

Resolution 2024-8

ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIVERSITY POLICY 3342-6-27 REGARDING GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

WHEREAS, the Constitution of Kent State University requires the university to maintain a register of policies and procedures (University Policy Register); and

WHEREAS, proposed University Policy 3342-6-27 identifies guidelines for the administration of graduate assistantships at Kent State University; and

WHEREAS, the proposed policy will provide clear guidelines for the administration of graduate assistantships; and

WHEREAS, the proposed policy recommended by the Graduate Deans Advisory Council, has been reviewed and approved by the Faculty Senate, Office of General Counsel, and the President’s Cabinet, and carries the endorsement of the Provost and the President; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Kent State University Board of Trustees approves the establishment of University Policy 3342-6-27 Regarding Graduate Assistantships, effective August 19, 2024.

Trustee Frost stated that it was the recommendation of the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee that the management decision items be placed on the consent agenda.

Trustee Frost further presented the revision of Administrative Policy 3342-3-01.8 Regarding Cheating and Plagiarism. Language had been added regarding plagiarizing content created by internet-based generative artificial intelligence programs. The committee had a robust discussion of AI and looks forward to learning more about this topic in future meetings, he stated.

The committee also was provided with two informational presentations.

Provost Tankersley provided a report on online education, highlighting Kent State’s growth in both the number of fully online programs offered and the enrollment of students taking online courses. She also spotlighted numerous national rankings for the university’s online programs as well as growth opportunities in the international market Kent State is pursuing, he said.
Vice President for Enrollment Management Sean Broghammer also presented an update on current enrollment trends, the university’s Fall 2024 recruitment, and challenges caused by federal delays in implementing the new FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), Trustee Frost reported.

With that, Trustee Frost concluded his report for the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee.

Chair Riley thanked Trustee Frost and asked whether any trustee wished to remove any of the seven management decision items from the consent agenda for further discussion. Hearing no requests, the resolutions were added to the consent agenda by general consent.

Chair Riley then called on committee chair Trustee Donald Mason to provide the report of the Audit and Compliance Committee.

AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

Trustee Mason reported that members of the Audit and Compliance Committee met with the university’s leadership electronically on February 26, 2024.

He began by stating that Director of Internal Audit Sarah Gampo provided the committee with a summary of the second quarter Fiscal Year 2024 internal audit plan as well as in-process, active and completed activities. There were no unusual items to report, he said.

Ms. Gampo then discussed the recently completed Quality Assurance Review (QAR). The purpose of the QAR was to assess the internal audit function’s conformance to the Institute of Internal Auditor’s International Professional Practices Framework and to assist in identifying opportunities for continuous improvements within the internal audit operations, procedures, and processes, said Trustee Mason. A self-assessment was completed by the Internal Audit team, followed by independent validation completed by external reviewers Christine Ackerman of the University of Cincinnati and David Cutri of the University of Toledo. Their review confirmed Kent State’s internal audit function “generally conforms,” which means the charter, policies and processes are in conformance with the Standards and Code of Ethics, Trustee Mason reported. Overall, “generally conforms” is the highest rating the internal audit function could have received, he added. The review team noted several successful audit practices along with a few opportunities for continued improvements. Three areas were identified as “partially conformed.” There were no areas noted as “does not conform,” reported Trustee Mason. He congratulated Director Gampo and team upon this excellent review.

That concluded Trustee Mason’s report of the Audit and Compliance Committee.

Chair Riley thanked Trustee Mason for his report and then called on committee chair Trustee Ann Womer Benjamin to present the report of the Finance and Administration Committee.
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Trustee Womer Benjamin reported that the Finance and Administration Committee met electronically on February 28, 2024, and discussed several items to be considered by the Board. In addition to the non-academic personnel actions, approval was requested for eight management decision items to be placed on the consent agenda, she said.

APPROVAL OF VENDOR SELECTION FOR KENT CAMPUS SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING CONTRACT

Trustee Womer Benjamin first presented the committee’s recommendation for approval of the vendor selection for Kent Campus solid waste and recycling contract. The university’s current contract expires on March 15, 2024, and a competitive process was undertaken to source the new contract for services. Through a competitive process, Kimble Recycling and Disposal, Inc., was selected as the service provider that offered the best overall value, she said. The proposed contract will be for an initial term of three years with the university’s option to renew up to two additional one-year terms, for a potential total contract duration of five years at a not-to-exceed amount of $2.66 million.

Resolution 2024-9

APPROVAL OF VENDOR SELECTION FOR KENT CAMPUS SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING CONTRACT

WHEREAS, University Policy 3342-7-12 requires Board of Trustees approval of any single agreement to purchase goods and/or services with an estimated total cost of $1 million or more, including the initial term and any optional renewals; and

WHEREAS, Kent State University desires to contract with a qualified provider for the collection, transfer, processing and disposal of solid waste and the processing of recyclable materials from the Kent Campus; and

WHEREAS, the estimated cost for these services is a three-year initial term of $531,536 per year, with the potential of two, one-year extensions at $531,536 each year; and

WHEREAS, in response to a request for proposal issued by the Kent State University Procurement Department, Kimble Recycling and Disposal, Inc., provided the proposal with the best overall value; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration to enter into a contract with Kimble Recycling and Disposal, Inc., to provide recycling and refuse collection services for the Kent Campus for three years plus a university option to renew up to two additional one-year periods in accordance with University Policy 3342-7-12.
Next, Trustee Womer Benjamin presented the request for approval of vendor selection for Kent Campus roofing maintenance contract. The proposed agreement will establish a three-year contract plus two optional annual renewals, with a supplier who can assist the university with the overall management of its roof assets through semi-annual inspections, preventative maintenance, light repair services, and reporting. Through a competitive process, Building Management Consultants was selected as the proposal offering the best overall value, she stated. The proposed contract includes an initial three-year term at $182,000 per year for inspection and preventative maintenance as well as $75,000 per year for immediate on-site repairs as needed. The annual renewal for years four and five includes an estimated inflationary factor of 3.1% per year for a total cost not to exceed $1.3 million, said Trustee Womer Benjamin.

Resolution 2024-10

APPROVAL OF VENDOR SELECTION FOR KENT CAMPUS ROOFING MAINTENANCE CONTRACT

WHEREAS, University Policy 3342-7-12 requires Board of Trustees approval of any single agreement to purchase goods and/or services with an estimated total cost of $1 million or more, including the initial term and any optional renewals; and

WHEREAS, the Kent Campus has approximately 150 buildings with approximately 2.6 million square feet of roofs; and,

WHEREAS, these roofs require a minimum of two inspections, assessment, and maintenance each year to maintain current warranties as applicable and ensure the integrity of the roofing assemblies; and,

WHEREAS, in response to a request for proposal issued by Kent State University, Building Management Consultants provided the proposal with the best overall value; and,

WHEREAS, the maintenance contract will be for an initial three-year period, with two annual renewal options at the university’s discretion for a total term of up to five years and a total value not to exceed $1.3 million to be funded by the university facilities operating budget; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration to enter into a contract with Building Management Consultants for a roofing maintenance contract in accordance with University Policy 3342-7-12.
Trustee Womer Benjamin said the committee received an update on Phase 1 projects of the Gateway to a Distinctive Kent State facilities master plan prior to considering three resolutions for the East Main Street project. The committee was briefed on construction progress to date for Crawford Hall, the Ice Arena/Band Educational Facility, and the East Main Street improvements project. Following the update, the committee reviewed and recommended three resolutions for the East Main Street project, which are presented below.

Resolution 2024-11

APPROVAL OF AMENDED PROJECT AUTHORIZATION AND MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT WITH CITY OF KENT AND PARTA FOR EAST MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENTS

WHEREAS, East Main Street is a primary corridor and gateway for accessing the Kent State University Kent Campus, buildings, parking, and primary activity centers along the north boundary of campus; and

WHEREAS, on March 4, 2020, the Kent State University Board of Trustees adopted Resolution 2020-25 approving a memorandum of understanding and project authorization for East Main Street improvements in partnership with the City of Kent and the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA); and

WHEREAS, total funding for the estimated $26.04 million capital improvement project (“East Main Street Project”) has been secured through state and federal transportation grants with the required local match of $4.9 million to be equally shared by Kent State University and the City of Kent (each to provide $2.45 million); and

WHEREAS, the university also seeks authorization to enter into an ongoing maintenance agreement with the City of Kent and PARTA that will assign to Kent State the maintenance of sidewalks, ramps, EV charging stations, driveways, side streets owned by Kent State University (Hilltop Drive, Midway Drive, Theatre Drive, and Loop Road), lawns, pedestrian lighting, water quality and water quantity ponds within the property frontage on East Main Street as well as specified items within the right of way including median lawns and landscaping, wayfinding signs, pedestrian lighting, branding items including signs and walls, Kent State University street name signs, thermoplastic markings specific to Kent State, and banners as provided for on the approved project plans; and

WHEREAS, the design, bidding and construction of this project will follow all state laws and regulations; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration to proceed with this project as amended and in accordance with University Policy 3342-7-04; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration is authorized to enter into a maintenance agreement with the City of Kent and PARTA consistent with the amended authorization.

Resolution 2024-12

APPROVAL OF TRANSFER OF JURISDICTION TO OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

WHEREAS, East Main Street is a primary corridor and gateway for accessing the Kent State University Kent Campus, buildings, parking, and primary activity centers along the north boundary of campus; and

WHEREAS, the university has been working with its partners, the City of Kent and the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA), to provide a better experience for both motorists and pedestrians by calming the vehicular traffic along East Main Street and improving pedestrian safety and transit movements along the corridor; and

WHEREAS, an estimated $26.04 million capital improvement project (“East Main Street Project”), funded by state and federal transportation grants with the local match equally shared by the university and the City of Kent, will significantly improve traffic and safety near the campus; and

WHEREAS, in order to meet funding requirements, the university must agree to transfer control of approximately 1.5372 acres (“the property”) along East Main Street from Haymaker Parkway to Horning Road to the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), which is part of the Right of Way plan for the East Main Street Project; and

WHEREAS, the university has no greater need for the property other than the East Main Street project; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration to enter into a Transfer of Jurisdiction Agreement with the Department of Administrative Services and the Ohio Department of Transportation to allow ODOT to maintain and control the property.
Resolution 2024-13

APPROVAL OF TEMPORARY EASEMENT TO THE CITY OF KENT FOR EAST MAIN STREET PROJECT

WHEREAS, East Main Street is a primary corridor and gateway for accessing the Kent State University Kent Campus, buildings, parking, and primary activity centers along the north boundary of campus; and

WHEREAS, the university has been working with its partners, the City of Kent and the Portage Area Regional Transportation Authority (PARTA), to provide a better experience for both motorists and pedestrians by calming the vehicular traffic along East Main Street and improving pedestrian safety and transit movements along the corridor; and

WHEREAS, an estimated $26.04 million capital improvement project ("East Main Street Project"), funded by state and federal transportation grants with the local match equally shared by the university and the City of Kent, will significantly improve traffic and safety near the campus; and

WHEREAS, the City of Kent has requested a non-exclusive temporary easement over university property to permit the installation, construction, reconstruction, and improvements associated with the Summit Street Project; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration to enter into an agreement to grant the City of Kent a non-exclusive temporary easement commencing October 1, 2025, for a period of four years or until completion of the East Main Street Project, whichever is sooner.

APPROVAL OF CENTENNIAL COURTS A AND B ROOF, HVAC EQUIPMENT AND EXTERIOR ENVELOPE REPAIR PROJECT

Trustee Womer Benjamin then presented the committee’s request for approval of the Centennial Courts A and B roof, HVAC equipment and exterior envelope repair project. She explained that the Centennial Courts A and B residence halls are more than 20 years old and have deferred maintenance issues that require attention. The proposed requests are to replace the roofing systems, make exterior envelope repairs, and replace the rooftop HVAC equipment. This project is estimated at a cost of $3 million, which will be funded by university housing renewal and replacement funds. Construction will be limited to summer periods to minimize disruption to student residents, she said.
Resolution 2024-14

APPROVAL OF CENTENNIAL COURTS A AND B ROOF, HVAC EQUIPMENT AND EXTERIOR ENVELOPE REPAIR PROJECT

WHEREAS, Centennial Courts A and B have roof systems and rooftop equipment nearing the end of useful life and other deferred maintenance items requiring repair within the exterior envelope; and

WHEREAS, the proposed exterior repairs and rooftop equipment replacement will greatly extend the life of these buildings; and

WHEREAS, the university has budgeted $3 million in local funds to address this project; and

WHEREAS, the design, bidding and construction of this project will follow all state laws and regulations; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration to proceed with this project in accordance with University Policy 3342-7-04.

AMENDMENT OF UNIVERSITY POLICY 3342-9-03 REGARDING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

She presented proposed amendments to University Policy 3342-9-03 Regarding Information Technology Security Administration, which would allow the university’s chief information officer (CIO) to assign responsibilities for the implementation of security policies and practices to appropriate delegates as necessary.

Resolution 2024-15

AMENDMENT OF UNIVERSITY POLICY 3342-9-03 REGARDING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

WHEREAS, the Constitution of Kent State University requires the university to maintain a register of policies and procedures (University Policy Register); and

WHEREAS, in accordance with its periodic review of institutional policies, the Division of Information Technology proposes an amendment of the policy pertinent to technology security administration within Chapter 9; and

WHEREAS, the amendments will provide clarity regarding delegation of authority related to implementation of security policies and practices; now, therefore,
BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby approves the attached language changes to University Policy 3342-9-03 Regarding Information Technology Security Administration.

ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIVERSITY POLICY 3342-9-04 REGARDING DATA HANDLING

Trustee Womer Benjamin also recommended approval of University Policy 3342-9-04 Regarding Data Handling, which was created to delegate authority over policies, processes, and procedures related to data handling, privacy, and classification to the university’s Vice President for Information Technology and CIO. Under the proposed policy, the vice president may delegate certain responsibilities as appropriate, she noted.

Resolution 2024-16

ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIVERSITY POLICY 3342-9-04 REGARDING DATA HANDLING

WHEREAS, the Constitution of Kent State University requires the university to maintain a register of policies and procedures (University Policy Register); and

WHEREAS, in accordance with its periodic review of institutional policies, the Division of Information Technology proposes approval of a new university policy regarding data handling within Chapter 9 to improve guidance and clarity regarding the proper handling, classification, and privacy of institutional data policies and practices; and

WHEREAS, the Division of Information Technology is identified as the responsible office for managing and protecting institutional data; and

WHEREAS, the Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer (CIO) is responsible for developing and implementing information technology policies, standards, and practices in furtherance of the university’s mission, and may delegate certain responsibilities to the chief data officer or other appropriate delegate; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees hereby approves the establishment of University Policy 3342-9-04 Regarding Data Handling.

The eight resolutions were added to the consent agenda.

She next noted that Chair Donald Mason shared an informational report of the investment committee meeting held on February 14, 2024. The committee also received several informational reports routinely provided to the Board for its review and consideration.
With that, Trustee Womer Benjamin concluded her report for the Finance and Administration Committee.

Chair Riley thanked Trustee Womer Benjamin for her report and then asked whether any trustees wished to remove any of the proposed resolutions from the consent agenda for further discussion. Hearing none, the resolutions were added to the consent agenda by general consent.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Riley announced that there were several items of new business to come before the Board that day. Turning to the first item of new business, President Diacon has recommended the awarding of honorary degrees to three extraordinary individuals who have achieved eminence in their chosen fields and brought distinction to Kent State University, Chair Riley said.

President Diacon stated that the two best days at Kent State are Commencement and the freshmen move-in. The third best day of the year, he said, is when he calls recipients of honorary degrees and informs them of this achievement. It is so touching to hear their usually tear-filled responses, he remarked. These are wonderful people that have gone on to do wonderful things and it really was his pleasure to recommend three such individuals today, he said.

CONFERRAL OF THE HONORARY DEGREE UPON FONDA ELLIOT

President Diacon first presented the recommendation of the conferral of an honorary degree upon Fonda Elliot. For four decades, Fonda Elliot was co-founder, co-owner, and co-operator of American Medical Facilities Management, LLC (AMFM), a nationally recognized skilled nursing, rehabilitation and long-term care services company with 19 sites throughout West Virginia. She and her husband John Elliot have been very generous supporters of Kent State, giving more than $12 million for many programs including the Elliot Professorship in Health Care Design. Their generosity brought to reality the magnificent building that houses our Architecture and Environmental Design program – the John Elliot Center for Architecture and Environmental Design, he said. With the concurrence of the Citation and Recognition Committee, President Diacon requested Board approval that the Doctor of Humane Letters degree, *honoris causa*, be conferred upon Fonda Elliot for her extraordinary contributions to the field of health care and for her contributions to Kent State University.

Resolution 2024-17

CONFERRAL OF THE HONORARY DEGREE UPON FONDA ELLIOT

WHEREAS, Kent State University awards the honorary degree to persons “who have clearly and unmistakably demonstrated achievement in a field of endeavor, and have contributed to the advancement of the university, or whose contributions are so significant that the benefits are recognized and acknowledged on a state, national, or international level;” and
WHEREAS, Elliot is an entrepreneur and major influencer in the worlds of healthcare, education, and cultural life whose philanthropy is shaping the field of modern healthcare design on a national scale; and

WHEREAS, she is widely lauded as a national leader in quality care – co-founding, owning, and operating American Medical Facilities Management, LLC (AMFM), a top-rated skilled nursing, rehabilitation and long-term care services company with 19 sites throughout West Virginia, for four decades; and

WHEREAS, a certified nurse by training, Fonda and her husband John Elliot have helped shape the field of modern healthcare design and supported student success through their transformational giving of more than $12 million to Kent State University supporting the Elliot Professorship in Health Care Design, The John and Fonda Elliot Endowed Visiting Professorship, The Elliot Studios for Design, The Elliot Scholars, The Elliot Family Foundation Architectural Scholarship, The John and Fonda Elliot Design Innovation Fellows, The John and Fonda Elliot Designer in Residence, the John and Fonda Elliot Family Student Travel Fund, and other university needs; and

WHEREAS, Kent State University honored the couple in 2018 with the naming of the John Elliot Center for Architecture and Environmental Design and the John and Fonda Design Studios; and

WHEREAS, through her expertise, vision, and dedicated service to improve the quality of life and educational opportunities for others, Fonda Elliot has built a career and a legacy that Kent State University is proud to support and honor; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Kent State University, upon the recommendation of the Citation and Recognition Committee, with the full concurrence of the President, hereby approves that the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, \textit{honoris causa}, be conferred upon Fonda Elliot for her extraordinary contributions to the field of health care and to Kent State University, and wishes her continued success and happiness.

\textit{CONFERRAL OF THE HONORARY DEGREE UPON JOHN ELLIOT}

Next, President Diacon presented the proposed conferral of an honorary degree upon John Elliot. In addition to being the other co-founder, co-owner and co-operator of American Medical Facilities Management, LLC (AMFM), Mr. Elliot has served tirelessly as past chair and a longtime member of the Kent State University Foundation Board of Directors and a member of the Forever Brighter Campaign Executive Committee. President Diacon called special attention to the fact that during the first few months and year of COVID-19, Mr. Elliot was chair of the Foundation Board. In this role he provided great service to the university and gave great counsel and advice to President Diacon, which was much appreciated. Mr. Elliot’s generosity along with his wife Fonda has contributed immensely to the College of Architecture and Environmental
Design’s increase in stature and quality of its programs, faculty, and facilities. With the concurrence of the Citation and Recognition Committee, President Diacon recommended the Board’s approval that the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, be conferred upon John Elliot for his extraordinary contributions and generosity.

**Resolution 2024-18**

**CONFERRAL OF THE HONORARY DEGREE UPON JOHN ELLIOT**

WHEREAS, Kent State University awards the honorary degree to persons “who have clearly and unmistakably demonstrated achievement in a field of endeavor, and have contributed to the advancement of the university, or whose contributions are so significant that the benefits are recognized and acknowledged on a state, national, or international level;” and

WHEREAS, a Kent State alumnus who earned his Bachelor of Science in Architecture in 1970, John Elliot is an entrepreneur and major influencer in the worlds of healthcare, education, and cultural life whose philanthropy is shaping the field of modern healthcare design on a national scale; and

WHEREAS, he is widely lauded as a national leader in quality care – co-founding, owning, and operating American Medical Facilities Management, LLC (AMFM), a top-ranked skilled nursing, rehabilitation and long-term care services company for four decades, and serving as president of the West Virginia Health Care Association and secretary of the American Health Care Association; and

WHEREAS, a past chair and longtime member of the Kent State University Foundation Board of Directors and member of the Forever Brighter Campaign Executive Committee, John and his wife Fonda Elliot have helped shape the field of modern healthcare design and supported student success through their transformational giving of more than $12 million to Kent State University supporting the Elliot Professorship in Health Care Design, The John and Fonda Elliot Endowed Visiting Professorship, The Elliot Studios for Design, The Elliot Scholars, The Elliot Family Foundation Architectural Scholarship, The John and Fonda Elliot Design Innovation Fellows, The John and Fonda Elliot Designer in Residence, the John and Fonda Elliot Family Student Travel Fund, and other university needs; and

WHEREAS, Kent State University honored the couple in 2018 with the naming of the John Elliot Center for Architecture and Environmental Design and the John and Fonda Design Studios; and

WHEREAS, through his expertise, vision, and dedicated service to improve the quality of life and educational opportunities for others, John Elliot has built a career
and a legacy that Kent State University is proud to support and honor; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Kent State University, upon the recommendation of the Citation and Recognition Committee, with the full concurrence of the President, hereby approves that the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, be conferred upon John Elliot for his extraordinary contributions to the field of health care and to Kent State University, and wishes him continued success and happiness.

**CONFERRAL OF THE HONORARY DEGREE UPON WILLARD JENKINS**

Finally, President Diacon recommended the conferral of the honorary degree upon Willard Jenkins. A Cleveland native, Willard Jenkins earned his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology in 1973 under the mentorship of Dr. Oscar Ritchie and went on to have a tremendous impact on jazz and the field of jazz music as an artistic director, as a writer, journalist, broadcaster, educator, and advocate. He is an oral historian of jazz and has a distinguished national career that spans five decades. His many awards include the 2013 Jazz Award for Lifetime Achievement in Journalism and most prominently in 2024, he was named a recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts Jazz Master Award, which is the highest award you can receive in the nation upon jazz artists, noted President Diacon. Mr. Jenkins serves as the artistic director of the DC Jazz Festival; hosts a regular program on WPFW radio in Washington D.C.; conducts oral history interviews for the Smithsonian Institution podcast, radio and television shows; and serves as an independent art consultant and producer. With concurrence of the Citation and Recognition Committee, President Diacon recommended Board approval that the Doctor of Humane Letters degree, *honoris causa*, be conferred upon Willard Jenkins for his extraordinary contributions in promulgating jazz music, its importance to American culture and in advancing Kent State music, he said.

Resolution 2024-19

**CONFERRAL OF THE HONORARY DEGREE UPON WILLARD JENKINS**

WHEREAS, Kent State University awards the honorary degree to persons “who have clearly and unmistakably demonstrated achievement in a field of endeavor, and have contributed to the advancement of the university, or whose contributions are so significant that the benefits are recognized and acknowledged on a state, national, or international level;” and

WHEREAS, a Kent State alumnus who earned his Bachelor of Arts in Sociology in 1973 under the mentorship of Dr. Oscar Ritchie, Willard Jenkins has made a tremendous impact on the jazz field as an artistic director, writer, broadcaster, educator, arts advocate, and oral historian, distinguishing himself nationally over a career spanning more than five decades; and
WHEREAS, his profound impact in jazz has been recognized with prestigious awards including the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives Award for Excellence (2011), the Jazz Journalists Association Jazz Hero Award (2013), the Jazz Awards Lifetime Achievement in Journalism (2013), and most recently as a 2024 recipient of the A.B. Spellman National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Jazz Masters Fellowship for Jazz Advocacy – the highest honor the nation bestows upon jazz artists; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Jenkins currently serves as artistic director for the DC Jazz Festival and as host of the Ancient/Future program on WPFW radio in Washington, DC, but his work across diverse media and channels – from writing, to oral history interviews for the Smithsonian Institution, to podcasts, to radio and television, to serving as an independent art consultant and producer– is far too prolific to cite here; and

WHEREAS, through his vision, expertise, and dedication to the advancement of the arts, Willard Jenkins has built a career and a legacy that Kent State University is proud to support and honor; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Kent State University, upon the recommendation of the Citation and Recognition Committee, with the full concurrence of the President, hereby approves that the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa, be conferred upon Willard Jenkins for his extraordinary contributions in promulgating jazz music and its importance to American culture and in advancing Kent State University, and wishes him continued success and happiness.

Chair Riley asked whether any trustee wished to remove these resolutions from the consent agenda. Hearing none, the three honorary degree resolutions were added to the consent agenda.

Chair Riley then presented two resolutions of appreciation for retiring members of the Board. The resolutions first would be recommended and approved on the consent agenda, and then the group would return to the recognition of these two valued colleagues whose Board terms expire on May 16, 2024, he said.

The two resolutions of appreciation were added to the consent agenda.

Chair Riley then moved to approval of the consent agenda that included approval of the minutes of the December 6, 2023, Board business meeting; proposed personnel actions; recommendations from the standing committees; conferral of honorary degrees upon Fonda Elliot, John Elliot, and Willard Jenkins; and approval of resolutions of appreciation for retiring trustees Haley Dees and Robin Kilbridge.

ACTION: Trustee Bobst moved, seconded by Trustee Frost, that the motion be approved. There were no objections. Trustee Mason took a roll call vote of the membership. By virtue of a unanimous roll call vote, the motion passed.
Chair Riley then stated that the Board was pleased to turn attention to two outstanding colleagues being honored with resolutions of appreciation.

He first asked Trustee Lara Shigo to present the resolution honoring Undergraduate Student Trustee Haley Dees.

**RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO HALEY DEES**

Trustee Shigo read the resolution of appreciation to Trustee Dees.

**Resolution 2024-20**

**RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO HALEY DEES**

WHEREAS, Haley Dees was appointed to the Kent State University Board of Trustees by Governor Mike DeWine on June 17, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Trustee Dees has served as a member of the Board’s Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee, Finance and Administration Committee, Audit and Compliance Committee, and External Relations and Philanthropy Committee; and

WHEREAS, she is respected by her Board colleagues as a highly motivated, thoughtful, and principled individual who is well prepared and professional in her conduct and participates actively in all aspects of the trustee role; and

WHEREAS, along with fulfilling her responsibilities as Undergraduate Student Trustee, she excels in her studies as an Aerospace Engineering major and Applied Mathematics minor, with her anticipated graduation in May 2025; and

WHEREAS, Trustee Dees also is a high achiever beyond the classroom, co-founding the university’s Women in Engineering Club, serving as a tutor with Kent State’s Academic Success Center, participating in the Summer Undergraduate Research Experience, and organizing a statewide meeting of Ohio’s public university student trustees that will occur in April 2024; and

WHEREAS, her term on the Kent State University Board of Trustees expires May 16, 2024; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Kent State University expresses sincere gratitude to Haley Dees for her outstanding service and wishes her the very best in her future pursuits.

Trustee Dees expressed that she was incredibly grateful for the time that she spent on the Board, feeling as though it had gone by so fast, and for the opportunity to learn and grow in this space alongside such amazing colleagues, and under such fantastic leadership. She said that she could
not physically put into words how much she appreciated all of the trustees and leaders she worked with throughout the last two years and looked forward to staying in touch.

President Diacon saluted Trustee Dees’ organizational skills and initiative. President Diacon said Trustee Dees and he will always have the memory of that dinner in Columbus where they realized the magnitude of the challenges and the need for telling Kent State University’s story better. During that visit and throughout her tenure, Trustee Dees has been so good at telling her story and demonstrating the excellence, high potential, and passion of our students. He expressed his appreciation and thanked her for sharing her experiences with the trustees. He observed that given Kent State’s deep commitment to being a students-first university, the trustees pay particular attention to the undergraduate trustees’ experiences and comments.

He then asked Trustee Dees to speak about why she chose Kent State and something about her major. Trustee Dees shared that her father worked at Kent State and thus she grew up in the Kent State community. Of all the schools that she looked into and toured, nowhere felt like such a home as Kent State. Learning that Kent State had launched an aerospace engineering program and being relatively young and new in the program has given her the opportunity to shape the program as it grew with her. She has had extraordinary experiences early in her undergraduate career such as founding the Women in Engineering Club and serving as a trustee, which are opportunities she would not have received anywhere else, noted Trustee Dees. She said she is so thankful that the opportunity to apply for the student trustee position popped up on her radar and she is incredibly grateful for this opportunity to learn and work alongside all of you. President Diacon then presented Trustee Dees with gifts of appreciation.

Chair Riley next moved to expressing appreciation to Trustee Robin Kilbride and called on Trustee Mason to present the resolution.

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO ROBIN KILBRIDE

Trustee Mason read the resolution of appreciation to Trustee Kilbride.

Resolution 2024-21

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO ROBIN KILBRIDE

WHEREAS, Robin Kilbride was appointed to the Kent State University Board of Trustees by Governor John Kasich on April 18, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Trustee Kilbride has given outstanding service as Board Secretary, Chair of the External Relations and Philanthropy Committee, and member of the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee, Audit and Compliance Committee, and Investment Committee; and

WHEREAS, she has been a strong voice on the Board for the alignment of the university’s strategic priorities and its resources, the optimization of university
investments, and the urgency of supporting all students reach the finish line of a college degree; and

WHEREAS, Kent State University also applauds and honors Trustee Kilbride for her superb leadership as president, chief executive officer, and chairman of the board of the Smithers-Oasis Corporation, the global leader in manufacturing and marketing of floral foam and other products serving the floriculture industry, which operates on seven continents from its international headquarters in downtown Kent; and

WHEREAS, Trustee Kilbride’s term on the Kent State Board of Trustees expires May 16, 2024; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Kent State University Board of Trustees expresses its deep appreciation to Robin Kilbride for her distinguished stewardship; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that because of her deep commitment and contributions to the advancement of Kent State, Trustee Kilbride is hereby designated Trustee Emeritus of Kent State University with all the rights and privileges pertaining thereto.

Trustee Kilbride said that her fellow trustees may not know that she did not attend Kent State, as many who have served on the Board over the years have done. She shared that she had been driving to Kent, Ohio for 40 years, since she accepted employment at the Smithers-Oasis Corporation. When she was approached by Trustee Emeritus Virginia Addicott about her possible interest in serving as a trustee of Kent State, she was really excited to join and learn more about what was going on in the university and the community. The experience has been absolutely fantastic and an honor to work with such a talented, dedicated group of people, she said. When you serve in these types of positions, you get more than you give, she observed. It has been such an honor to be able to help the university and to learn. At the same time, she has taken so much knowledge back to her business and to different boards that she serves on in terms of how things are done here at Kent State. She remarked that great things are happening in Kent, Ohio and expressed her thanks.

President Diacon said he has always appreciated the easygoing, transparent and productive rapport with Trustee Kilbride and has appreciated the strategic insights she brings as the leader of an international corporation. He shared a fond memory of visiting her office as the university and the world were coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Trustee Kilbride’s discussion of how Smithers-Oasis was successfully reopening its facilities worldwide was very helpful and also gave him confidence that our society and organizations would make it.

President Diacon further remarked how that morning, Trustee Kilbride told him an interesting story. After she was appointed by Governor John Kasich, she met with university officials and asked about the time commitment of a university trustee. She had asked others before appointment about what trustees do but had forgotten to ask how long she would serve. Imagine her surprise to learn the term was nine years, he said. President Diacon commented that the
university community has enjoyed working with her for those nine years and thanks her for her many contributions. With that, President Diacon presented Trustee Kilbride with gifts of appreciation.

Chair Riley commented that it was always good to end the meeting on a very positive note and thanked both Trustee Dees and Trustee Kilbride for their outstanding service to Kent State.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Riley announced that the next regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was scheduled for May 22, 2024, at a location to be determined.

He then stated that the Board and Cabinet members looked forward to meeting students from the cast of the production “Rent” as well as faculty and administrators from the College of the Arts, for a social luncheon at 11:45 a.m. in the Schwebel Room, Kent Student Center, third floor.

On motion duly noted, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.