



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

USNH SYSTEM OFFICE  
FARNUM HALL  
28 COLLEGE DRIVE, CONCORD, NH

MEETING MINUTES  
**February 26, 2026**  
*Draft for Approval*

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**Attendance**

Committee members present at meeting location: Chair Mike Pilot, Kass Ardinger, Peter Paul

Committee members participating remotely: Kevin Knarr (out-of-state travel), Patrick Griffin (out-of-state travel), Gregg Tewksbury (unavoidable scheduling conflict)

Committee members absent: Jamie Burnett

Other trustees participating: Maureen Beauregard (remote), Donald Birx, Elizabeth Chilton, James Gray (remote), Tim Hoheneder, Shawn Jasper, Joël Nkounkou (remote), Catherine Provencher, Wayne Semprini (remote), David Westover

Others participating: USNH Vice Chancellor and Treasurer Karen Benincasa

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**Call to Order**

Committee Chair Pilot called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum sufficient to do business.

**Approval of Minutes**

The following motion was moved by Trustee Ardinger, seconded by Trustee Paul, and approved by roll call with no dissenting votes:

***VOTED**, that the Executive Committee approve the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting on December 18, 2025, as presented.*

**Revision to BOT Capital Planning Policy**

Treasurer Benincasa presented this item, which is designed to address an unintended consequence of the Board's decision to combine its former Investment Committee and Capital Planning Committee into a single committee. By statute, the USNH Treasurer must serve on the Investment Committee. However, the Treasurer role has no direct authority over capital projects. By combining the committees, the Treasurer became obligated to vote on those projects. This item would address this issue by clarifying that the Treasurer will not vote on capital projects.

Following discussion, the following motion was moved by Trustee Knarr, seconded by Trustee Paul, and approved by roll call with no dissenting votes:

**VOTED**, that BOT Policy VI.A regarding capital planning and budgeting is hereby revised to make the USNH Treasurer a non-voting member of the Investment and Capital Planning Committee (ICPC) for purposes of capital-related matters. Pursuant to NH State Statute RSA 187-A:17, the USNH Treasurer will remain a voting member of ICPC for only treasury-related matters as originally intended.

### **Approval of PSU PE Center HVAC and Life Safety Project**

PSU President Birx gave an overview of the project, which encompasses needed life safety and abatement work on the building. The institution has received a federal earmark for part of the cost of the project and must proceed quickly in order to access the funds. The project will return to the Investment and Capital Planning Committee for consideration in March.

### **Nonpublic Session**

At 4:15 p.m., on motion moved by Trustee Griffin and seconded by Trustee Paul, the Committee voted unanimously by roll call to go into nonpublic session for the purposes indicated:

**VOTED**, that the Executive Committee go into nonpublic session for the purposes of discussing (1) personnel matters including the performance and compensation of one or more public employees, (2) the hiring of any person as a public employee, (3) discussion of labor negotiations/strategy and (4) consultation with legal counsel as authorized by RSA 91-A:2.I (a)-(b) and 91-A:3.II (a)-(b).

### **Return to Public Session**

At 5:16 p.m., on motion duly moved and seconded, the Committee voted unanimously to return to public session.

### **Nonpublic Session Report**

System Secretary Chad Pimentel reported that in nonpublic session the Committee took the following actions:

#### **Appointment of UNH Executive Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration**

The following motion was moved by Trustee Ardinger, seconded by Trustee Paul, and approved by roll call with no dissenting votes:

**VOTED**, on recommendation of Elizabeth Chilton, President of the University of New Hampshire, with endorsement of Chancellor Provencher and the Executive Compensation and Performance Review Committee, that the Executive Committee hereby approve the appointment of Robert A. Watling, CPA, MBA to the position of Executive Vice President for Finance & Administration at the University of New Hampshire, contingent upon his acceptance of the appointment, under the terms outlined in the meeting materials.

#### **Appointment of Keene State College Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs**

The following motion was moved by Trustee Tewksbury, seconded by Trustee Paul, and approved by roll call with no dissenting votes:

***VOTED**, on recommendation of Don Birx, Interim President of Keene State College, with endorsement of Chancellor Provencher and the Executive Compensation and Performance Review Committee, that the Executive Committee hereby approves the appointment of Dr. Kirsti Sandy to the position of Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs at Keene State College, upon the terms outlined in the meeting materials.*

### **Sealing of Remainder of Nonpublic Session Minutes**

Following the report by the Secretary, the following motion was moved by Trustee Ardinger, seconded by Trustee Griffin, and approved by roll call with no dissenting votes:

***VOTED**, pursuant to RSA 91-A:3.III, that, except for matters already reported, the minutes of the nonpublic session be sealed until such time as the KSC Interim President determines that disclosure will no longer render the purpose of the nonpublic session ineffective.*

### **Other Business**

Chair Pilot and the institutional leaders shared summaries of their recent meetings with the Governor. The Governor has expressed an interest in regular meetings with System leadership with a particular focus on workforce development. The discussion was positive and productive. The System also shared its position on pending legislation, including campus carry.

Chair Pilot then shared that early indications are that FY26 budget results at Keene and Plymouth could be challenging, and that UNH may face challenges in FY27. The full Board will hear more in March before being brought a proposed FY 27 budget for consideration in June. Chair Pilot asked for additional data regarding facilities usage along with the budget update

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.