BOARD OF TRUSTEES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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

MEETING MINUTES
April 16, 2026

Attendance

Committee members present at meeting location: Kass Ardinger, Peter Paul, Gregg Tewksbury

Committee members participating remotely: Kevin Knarr (out-of-state travel), Patrick Griffin (out-of-state travel), Mike Pilot (medical necessity)

Committee members absent: Jamie Burnett

Other trustees participating: Maureen Beauregard (remote), Donald Birx (remote), Elizabeth Chilton, James Gray (remote), Tim Hoheneder, Brian McCabe (remote), Jennifer Higgins Pitre (remote), Catherine Provencher, David Westover (remote)

Others participating: USNH Vice Chancellor and Treasurer Karen Benincase; UNH Chief of Staff Tom Cronin

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Call to Order

Acting Chair Ardinger called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and noted the presence of a quorum sufficient to do business.

Approval of Minutes

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

> ***VOTED**, that the Executive Committee approves the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting on February 26, 2026, as presented.*

Approval of State Capital Budget Request

Chancellor Provencher and Karen Benincasa presented this item. Biennially, the System is required to submit a capital funding request to the State for consideration in its budgeting process. Under the current capital budget, the System received eight million dollars for use by Keene State and Plymouth State. The Presidents' Council has compiled a six-year, 20 million dollar annual block grant request for the upcoming capital budget. The proposed budget would allocate fifteen million annually to UNH because UNH received no funding under the current budget, with the rest divided equally between PSU

and KSC. Proposed projects include space transformation at Diamond Library and needed work at Morse Hall. Trustees discussed the budget creation process, and asked questions regarding the planned projects and the likelihood of the state awarding the full amount of the request.

Following discussion, 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 the Chancellor, that the six-year capital projects plan for FY28-FY33 as described in the materials for this meeting are approved;
>
> ***AND FURTHER***, that the Chancellor is authorized to adjust the request, if needed, after consultation with the Presidents' Council and BOT leadership, as well as to prepare the final documents for submission to the NH Department of Administrative Services in April 2026.

Pre-Development Agreement for UNH Project at The Edge

UNH President Elizabeth Chilton introduced this item. At its last meeting, the Board received an update update on the project writ large; this item is brought for information so that trustees are fully informed about the planned immediate next stage of the project. Tom Cronin then reviewed that next stage, a pre-development agreement with Ryan & Company. The agreement would involve a full analysis of the proposed site needs and a full market analysis so that UNH can have the cost and revenue information needed to decide whether and how to proceed with the project. The pre-development work would also include pursuing any needed regulatory approval for the proposed project.

The cost of the work is $1.6 million dollars, to be funded through existing unrestricted gift funds and expended over the next eight to twelve months. Ryan will rebate those pre-development costs to UNH if the project proceeds, and UNH would have the right to cancel the arrangement on 60 days' notice. After questions and discussion, trustees expressed support for this phase of the project.

FY27 Budget and Enrollment Update

Chancellor Provencher introduced this item. The Chancellor noted that while effort are still ongoing, the likelihood is that the FY 27 budget that will be presented to the Board in June will reflect a negative operating margin. President Chilton noted that early enrollment data is unusually volatile this year. UNH's deposit deadline is May 1, at which point the data should become more clear. President Don Birx noted that the situation is similar at KSC and PSU. Both presidents noted that attendance at admitted student days on campus has been strong, which is usually a positive indicator.

Legislative Update

Chancellor Provencher updated the Committee on a number of legislative issues. First, trustees Jamie Burnett and Pat Griffin have been put forward by the Governor for renewed terms on the Board. Second, earlier this week a Senate committee held a hearing on a proposed bill that would eliminate the System's ability to regulate firearms on campus. The hearing saw significant public attendance and participation, a majority of which was opposed to the bill. The System also opposes the bill. The Senate committee is expected to vote on the bill next week. The System is also tracking a bill that would create a new, legislatively mandated graduation requirement that System students either pass the test given to those seeking to become naturalized citizens or pass a class on foundational American documents. The System opposes the bill but is also working on amendments that could better align the requirement with existing courses offered by the System. Finally, legislative leadership will tour UNH in the upcoming weeks.

Other Business

President Chilton introduced Robert Watling, the new Vice President for Finance and Administration at UNH. Robert expressed his happiness at taking the position and his readiness to take on the needed work at UNH.

Adjournment

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.