REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
Emergency Meeting
March 24, 2020

The Financial Affairs Committee met (via teleconference) at 4:00 p.m. on March 24, 2020.

Participating on the call were Committee members Todd Black (Chair) Kass Ardinger, Christopher Pope, George Hansel, Mike Pilot, Morgan Rutman, Wally Stevens; Trustees Joseph Morone, Amy Begg, Jamie Burnett, Jacqueline Eastwood, Shawn Jasper, David Westover, Cathy Green, Frank Edelblut, Scott Mason, Marjorie Smith, Joseph Scala, President Donald Birx, President James Dean, President Mark Rubinstein, President Melinda Treadwell and Chancellor Todd Leach. Representing the Governor was Rhonda Hensley.

USNH Staff in attendance: Catherine Provencher, Karen Benincasa, Ronald Rodgers and Lorna Jacobsen.

Call to Order: At 4:00 pm, Chair Black called the meeting to order and noted the presence of a quorum sufficient for the conduct of business and confirmed conditions necessary for the conduct of a telephonic meeting:

Under the NH Right to Know Law, RSA 91-a:2, III (b), a governmental body such as this Board of Trustees is authorized to meet by conference call when “immediate action is imperative and the physical presence of a quorum is not reasonably practical within the period of time requiring action.” In consultation with USNH General Counsel, it is my determination that a meeting by conference call is justified on the basis of the following facts:

• The individual members of this Board live and work in locations remote to any single meeting place;

• The Governor’s declaration of emergency and Executive Order 2020-04, dated March 13, 2020, permits and encourages governmental bodies to conduct public meetings on an emergency basis using telephonic communications;

• Given the members’ various professional and personal schedules it is not reasonably practical to gather a quorum of the Board members in a single place for a physical meeting;

• The matter to be considered at this meeting developed only very recently;

• The interests of USNH, its students, faculty, and staff, and the State of New Hampshire will be best served by Board’s expeditious consideration of and decision on the matter presented; and
• The notice of the meeting was posted and members of the public are permitted to listen to the proceedings via dial-in call.

I. **Update from Campus Presidents**

Campus presidents provided status reports on issues relative to the COVID-19 impact and response on their campuses. They reported on the successful implementation of remote learning, current student occupancy and move out, and the commitment to use several of their buildings for overflow medical facilities should they be needed.

II. **Discussion of the Economic Impact of COVID-19**

1. **Non-Public Session**

At 4:22 p.m. the following motion to enter nonpublic session was made by Trustee Pope. The motion was duly seconded and approved by roll call vote. In addition to trustees, system administrators attended the non-public session.

**VOTED,** that the Board of Trustees go into nonpublic session for the purposes of (1) discussing personnel matters including the performance of one or more public employees, (2) confidential, commercial, or financial information, (3) matters of market strategy which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are contrary to those of the general public, (4) matters likely to affect collective bargaining strategy, as authorized by RSA 91-A:2, I (a) and (b); 91-A:3, II (a), (b), and (d); and 91-A:5,

**Return to Public Session**

Upon a motion to exit nonpublic session, made by Chairman Black, duly seconded, and approved, Chairman Black reconvened the public meeting at 5:57 p.m. and announced that the no actions were taken while in nonpublic session.

III. **Action Items for Committee**

A. **Approval of Minutes** (Moved on recommendation of Chairman Black and duly seconded)

**VOTED,** that the Financial Affairs Committee approve the minutes of January 16, 2020.

(The Committee voted unanimously to approve this motion)

B. **Approve refunding of room, board and select student fees** (Moved on recommendation of Chairman Black and duly seconded)

**VOTED,** on recommendation of the Administrative Board that the following motion be presented for consideration by the Board of Trustees on March 26, 2020:
MOVED, on recommendation of the Financial Affairs Committee that a refund of prorated room, board and select student fees be refunded in the amounts on the attached schedule to all students meeting the criteria established by their respective campus; AND FURTHER, that the Administrative Board be authorized to make adjustments to the schedule as needed. (The Committee voted unanimously to approve this motion)

Vice Chancellor Provencher described the process and timing of the refunding of room, board and select fees explaining that it would done via a credit to students’ accounts. If a student wants a refund from their account, they can get one through the established process. Trustees expressed their support for taking this action indicating that it was the right thing to do. Several suggestions were made including messaging students at the time of the refund that the institution is looking forward to their return in the Fall and incorporating a disclaimer saying that it is the student’s responsibility to repay any student loans associated with the refund.

There was discussion on whether the anticipated federal stimulus package would have an impact on this action and the wording of the motion. It was decided that if language needed to be modified it could be done prior to the Executive Committee’s March 26 vote on the motion.

Trustees expressed appreciation to campus and system teams for their hard work and leadership during this crisis.

IV. Other Business

A. New meetings: Board Chair Morone announced two additional meetings with the following agenda items:

Executive Committee meeting on 3/26
1) Chancellor to review provisions of federal stimulus legislation
2) Vice Chancellor Provencher to provide an update on models (to the extent refinement is possible)
3) Discuss specific levers and what action might be taken – especially employment related

Executive Committee on 3/31
1) Fall semester planning
2) Review planning and scenarios

B. Next regularly scheduled meeting date of the FAC is April 23, 2020

C. The Committee adjourned at 6:20 p.m.