



## BOARD OF TRUSTEES STRATEGIC PLANNING RETREAT

Meeting Held at UNH-Manchester  
88 Commercial Street, Manchester, NH  
(September 16, 2022)

### **Meeting Minutes** (*DRAFT for review and approval*)

**In Attendance:** Trustees present at meeting location: Chair Alex Walker, Vice Chair Jamie Burnett, Secretary Kass Ardinger, Donald Birx, Jamie Burnett, Zachary Christie, James Dean, Jackie Eastwood, Frank Edelblut, James Gray, Cathy Green, Shawn Jasper, Rick Ladd, Christian Mehreb, Mackenzie Murphy, Joel Nkounkou, Peter Paul, Mike Pilot, Morgan Rutman, Gregg Tewksbury, Christiana Thornton, Melinda Treadwell, and David Westover. Trustees participating by videoconference: Amy Begg and Kevin Knarr.

**Call to Order:** At 8:32 am, Chair Walker called the meeting to order and noted the presence of a quorum sufficient for the conduct of business.

**Chair's Remarks:** Chair Walker welcomed the new trustees and noted the importance of the discussions on the agenda.

**Building Teamwork/Community Among Board Members:** Interim Chancellor Dean led the Board in small group discussions. The discussions encompassed the purpose of the system and the trustees' personal experiences with higher education, motivation for service on the Board, and goals as trustees. Trustees shared out summaries of their group discussions, which highlighted the transformative potential of public higher education.

**Update on Strategic Task Force:** The Board previously charged the Presidents' Council to convene a strategic task force to examine the system's response to its long-term needs and challenges. Chief Administrative Officer Cathy Provencher and Keene State College President Melinda Treadwell updated the Committee on the Task Force's progress to date. Topics covered included the current financial forecasting models, preliminary findings on overlaps in each institution's academic offerings, and the ongoing survey of facilities usage. Trustees asked questions and discussed the assumptions underlying the budget models and academic program work. Trustees also emphasized the need for the task force's work to focus on the student experience. The Board will receive further updates on the task force at upcoming meetings.

**USNH's Role in New Hampshire/Government Relations Plan:** CAO Provencher and Executive Director for Government Relations Tom Cronin presented on a planned campaign to raise awareness of the work of the system and the value of public higher education. Trustees asked questions and provided comments regarding the scope, goals, and timeline of the campaign. Cronin and CAO

Provencher then reviewed the system's upcoming state funding request as previously vetted by the Presidents' Council.

**Governance/Consensus on Strategic Directions for 2022-23:** Former Trustee Bill Ardinger presented to the Board on the history of the system's governance structure and the various allocations of authority under which the system has operated at different times. The presentation noted that the structure of the system and its authorizing charter empowers and requires the Board to periodically consider how to order the governance of the system. Board members asked questions and engaged in a candid, wide-ranging discussion of more than two hours regarding the role of the Board, Interim Chancellor, Presidents' Council, and institutional Presidents for the coming governance year. The discussions led to a consensus reaffirming the Board's March 4, 2022 resolution that the chief institutional officers, through the Presidents' Council, should assume greater responsibility for the management of the system as a whole, with the Board providing strategic oversight and advice. The Board also accepted the Presidents' Council's recommendation that each institution be given time to present on relevant issues at each Board meeting.

**Adjourn:** At 3:35 pm, Chair Walker called for further business and, hearing none, adjourned the meeting.