

**THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**COMMITTEE ON OUTREACH, DEVELOPMENT, AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS
MINUTES OF MEETING
VOLUME ODCR 47**

January 18, 2024

A meeting of the Committee on Outreach, Development, and Community Relations (ODCR) was held via video conference at 3:15 p.m. on Thursday, January 18, 2024.

The following committee members, constituting a quorum, were present: Chair Sokolov, Vice Chair Amoros, Dietrich, Hasenkopf, Lynch, Paterno, and Wagman. Also attending were Board Chair Schuyler (Ex Officio), Vice Chair Kleppinger, the Governor's non-voting representative Myers, and Constituent Representatives Duffey, Egolf, Miller, Serfass, Seymour, Stine, and Wede. Also present were staff members Ayers, Colbourn, Engel, Harlow, Harvey, Lieb, Moore, Oman, Oziemblowsky, Pell, Simcox, Schwartz, Smith, and Terry.

Chair Sokolov called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. Oziemblowsky confirmed a quorum was present. Chair Sokolov welcomed all attendees and reminded those attending via Microsoft Livestream the agenda and supporting materials was available at <https://trustees.psu.edu/>.

Chair Sokolov called for a motion for the Committee to approve the Minutes of the October 19, 2023 committee meeting, which was forwarded by Trustee Wagman, seconded by Trustee Amoros, and unanimously approved.

Chair Sokolov called upon the executives responsible for achieving the Committee's goals to provide an update on progress toward the 2023-2024 goals. He noted each of the 23-24 goals were available for review in the Goal Tracker included in the Committee materials available online.

Shannon S. Harvey, Assistant Vice President, Board of Trustees and University Secretary, provided the Committee an update on enhancements to the Alumni Trustee and Alumni Council election processes. She discussed measures the Board Office, Penn State Alumni Association, and Strategic Communications collaboratively took in 2023 to increase alumni engagement in the annual election process, to include development of a more robust communication plan, leveraging social media and alumni chapter engagement, instituting a WPSU-hosted candidate forum, and communications at graduation events from Trustee commencement speakers. She provided an overview of the Request for Proposal (RFP) undertaken in 2023 to solicit a new vendor to administer the Alumni Trustee and Alumni Council annual elections, and she noted YesElections was chosen as the election vendor. YesElections optimized the voting process by enhancing ballot delivery and tracking to enable alumni to vote by a new URL weblink and improving customer support with the establishment of a 24/7 customer support center. Alumni will be sent a ballot to their email on file with Penn State, and they can navigate to PennStateVotes.com to authenticate their credentials against a database of over 720,000 living alumni and access their ballot after answering a series of challenge questions or logging into the ballot using their Penn State Access identification and YesElections proprietary Web Bridge application. Alumni can also be mailed a paper ballot with a QR code to access the ballot online if they desire or they can return their completed ballot by mail. These enhanced ballot distribution and customer support measures are intended to increase overall alumni engagement and participation in the annual Alumni Trustee and Alumni Council elections by making it easier for alumni to access their ballot and cast their vote.

David J. Lieb, Interim Vice President for Development, reported on behalf of Paul J. Clifford, Associate Vice President and Chief Executive Officer of the Penn State Alumni Association, and provided the Committee an update on the Penn State Alumni Association. He stated PSAA continues to track towards its membership goals, being at 98 percent of goal, with over 600 new life members. PSAA had more than 70,000 engagements this year, including over 6,000 attendance at the Peach Bowl pep rally. The Membership and Enterprise Constituent Relationship Management (ECRM) program implementation continues to progress. A beta group of ten affiliate groups were identified in the Fall 2023 semester, and those groups will help define and prioritize requirements for

initial solutions used by those affiliate groups. Regarding Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB), PSAA continues to collaborate with university colleagues working in this space to develop a new baseline Advancement Inclusion Index, a tool for measuring DEIB progress across four major categories of advancement, policy, practice, and demographic information. PSAA continues to partner with the Board Office to promote the Alumni Trustee and Alumni Council elections, to include advertisements in the January/February and March/April editions of the Penn Stater magazine.

Lieb discussed progress to date on the Development fundraising and campaign progress. He noted the campaign began on July 1st, 2023, and for this fiscal year totaled \$181 million dollars in commitments, or 45 percent of commitments goal, \$135 million dollars, or 50 percent of receipts goal, and 94,876 total donors participating, or 41 percent of donors goal. The overall alumni donor count is 29,396, or 49 percent towards goal. He stated Development raised \$62.5 million dollars in December, its seventh best month ever. Lieb outlined pipeline engagement efforts, to include contracting with third party vendor Ruffalo Noel Levitz to help with engagement of high-level prospects using Lion Line Telefund resources. Development will leverage Ruffalo Noel Levitz' identification of prospects by conducting surveys and channeling communications based on their interests in parallel with digital gift officers contacting them by phone or electronic means. Trustee Sokolov invited Lieb to give an update to the Board of Trustees at their February meeting. Deans, Chancellors, and Development and campaign leaders will inform Lieb's presentation in alignment with President Bendapudi's vision and goals. He observed Development would solicit Board participation in actively supporting the campaign going forward.

Zack Moore, Vice President for Government and Community Relations, gave the Committee an update on progress against established goals, including cultivation of grass tops third party validators who will support Penn State advocacy efforts. He said progress was made on state funding which resulted in securing level funding for the university, Agricultural Sciences Research Extension, and Penn State Health, and an increase for Penn College of Technology after Governor Shapiro signed Act 11A into law on Nov 16, 2023. He believed they would receive funding for Invent Penn State launchbox and innovation hub initiatives through a Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) grant. The Governor's budget address is on February 6, 2024, the House appropriations committee holds hearings on February 29, 2024, and Senate appropriations committee meeting date and time will be determined later. Moore's office is collaborating with Larry Terry's Outreach team to engage influencers and develop an impact map to focus relationship-building efforts. Capital Day in Harrisburg on March 18th will include students, faculty, and alumni to advocate for Penn State to Pennsylvania legislators.

Renata S. Engel, Vice Provost for Online Education, updated the Committee on World Campus enrollment and retention goals, which have been notionally reached. She noted her team is focusing on retention efforts and aligning them with President Bendapudi's goals of student success and changing baseline measurements to coincide with yield measurements over different stages in student academic journeys. They are shifting to cultivating prospects to apply, which has resulted in 15 percent increase in applications, and a 24 percent in new enrolled students in Spring 2024 from May 2023, an increase in applications of 35 percent relative to last year, and an increase in newly enrolled graduate students of 26 percent. Early indicators for Summer and Fall 2024 suggest these higher application and retention trends are robust and ongoing.

Larry D. Terry II, Vice President for Outreach, discussed regional impact of outreach and engagement and highlighted a community impact mapping project to create a data visualization tool of Outreach efforts across a broad range of indicators such as economic impact, rural health, public safety, transportation, broadband access, and other areas of Penn State's engagement across the Commonwealth as part of its Land Grant mission. The tool can spark new ideas, collaboration, and advocacy amongst a broad range of stakeholders. Terry reflected on Outreach progress during his tenure, including creating of a unified outreach approach across all campuses, building financial resiliency, and aligning Outreach initiatives with President Bendapudi's vision and goals.

Rachel A. Pell, Vice President for Strategic Communications, gave a holistic report on the integrated work her team is doing to strengthen the University's reputation for academic, research, and service excellence in support of President Bendapudi's vision and priorities for the University. Pell leads the University's award-winning central communications division, which consists of University Public Relations, University Marketing, Campus and Community Events, and Licensing and Visual Identity Programs.

Pell outlined Strategic Communications substantive approach to enhance the reputation and value of a Penn

State degree. Her unit's strategic focus includes strengthening the university's reputation for academic, research, and service excellence; protecting and advancing the university's reputation; nurturing pride and attachment to the university; driving support for the university's major leadership needs and priorities, such as enrollment and research impact; and growing awareness of the value of a Penn State degree. Outcomes sought toward these ends include recruitment of the best students, faculty, and staff; expanding volunteer, donor, and advocacy support; enhancing reputation for excellence at-scale; increasing awareness and support for leadership priorities; and increasing the value of a Penn State degree. These focus areas and outcomes shape brand identity, content, and storytelling to improve relationships and integrate messaging through internal communications, campus and community events, social media, advertising efforts, digital productions, top tier media, and licensing. Strategic Communications aligns them across venues to augment the Penn State brand. Pell noted success stories such as the President's vision (for example, "A Note from Neeli" news stories) and thought leadership, student experiences and successes, supporting enrollment across twenty Penn State campuses, promoting research excellence, and raising the national media profile of Penn State's research enterprise, leading to over 2.4 million impressions and 1,986 placements. Strategic Communications has aligned research storytelling with trending topics to engage audiences effectively, showcase Penn State's relevance, and elevate faculty experts. This positions Penn State as a top research institution that publicly supports industry partnerships and research commercialization. Pell stated Penn State's brand health is strong in terms of favorability, familiarity, uniqueness, advocacy, and likelihood to recommend Penn State as an educational institution or graduates for employment.

The meeting is available in its entirety [here](#).

Chair Sokolov noted the next meeting of the Committee on ODCR is scheduled for March 21, 2024 with agenda topics featuring an update from David Lieb on the status of the university-wide campaign priorities, the build-out of the campaign infrastructure, and the Pipeline Engagement Project along with an update on Alumni Association activities and programs focused on connecting alumni and alumni chapters to the University. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Thomas J. Oziemblowsky
Associate Director
Office of the Board of Trustees