

Public Session Minutes

The meeting of the Morgan State University Board of Regents was called to order by Chairman Kweisi Mfume at 12:06 p.m.

Present: Hon. Kweisi Mfume, Chairman, Regent; General (Ret.) Larry Ellis, Vice Chair, Regent; Hon. Tracey Parker-Warren, Secretary, Regent; Mr. Martin Adu-Boahene, Regent; Dr. Harold Carter, Regent; Dr. Linda Gilliam, Regent; Dr. Burney Hollis, Regent; Ms. Emily Hunter, Regent; Mr. Wayne Resnick, Regent; Mr. William Sherman, Regent; Mr. Carl Turnipseed, Regent; Mr. Winston Wilkinson, Regent; Dr. David Wilson, University President; Mr. Thomas Faulk, Principal Counsel for Morgan State University, Office of the Attorney General

Absent: Dr. Shirley Malcom, Regent; Ms. Shelonda Stokes, Regent

Minutes

The Chairman opened the floor for a motion to adopt the minutes from the December 9, 2022 Special Meeting of the Board. It was MOVED by Regent Resnick and SECONDED by Regent Gilliam. The MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming the Regents, university administration, and members of the public in attendance to the first Board meeting of the 2023 calendar year. The Chairman offered an overview of the agenda and stated that following the Public Session, the Board would convene in Closed Session to address the matters identified as such on the agenda.

Chairman Mfume thanked Regents for taking part in several recent events since the last Board meeting to include: the Founders Day Convocation, the Special Board Meeting, the Christmas Choir Concert/Regents' Reception, and Fall Commencement. He extended special thanks to staff members who work very hard to pull these commencement ceremonies together. He and Dr. Wilson also attended the 38th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship Breakfast last month, which is presented by the Howard Cornish Morgan State University Alumni Association.

The Chairman reminded Regents about the discussion during the Special Meeting of the Board on December 9th regarding proposed amendments to the Policy of the Award of Honorary Degrees to establish timelines for recommendations that was referred appropriately to the jurisdiction of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee. At some point in time, perhaps at the next meeting, they will bring forward their work. There was also discussion about possible amendments to the Board bylaws that would eliminate or severely restrict special meetings of the Board (emergency meetings would remain intact). Any amendments will be brought forward pursuant to our operational procedures and will be presented to members of the Board at least 10 days prior to a meeting for a vote. He concluded his remarks by extending thanks to Regent Gilliam, Regent Malcom (in her absence), and Regent Ellis for convening meetings of their respective committees during the time since the last Board meeting in November. He then yielded the floor to Dr. Wilson to share his report.

Report of the President

Dr. Wilson provided a report to the Board covering some major developments that occurred at the University since the last meeting in November 2022. Those highlights include: (a) Founders Day Convocation; (b) Fall Commencement – 1,000th doctorate conferred; (c) Morgan at a Glance; (d) Transformation Morgan 2030; (e) Academic Affairs and new investments; (f) Enrollment Management and Student Success; (g) Research and Economic Development; (h) projects in progress; (i) Morgan as a unique R1; (j) educating the University community; (k) our future; (l) state-supported research centers; and (m) Governor's budget recommendations – FY 2024 operating and capital.

Before moving to the reports of the standing committees, the Chairman noted the absence of Regent Stokes. He shared that the family is dealing with the trial of her late brother who was tragically killed last January. He thanked members of the university community who attended the funeral services. He also asked everyone to keep Regent Stokes and her family in prayer and encouraged those who know her to give her a call.

Report of the Executive Committee

The Chairman provided an update from the February 2, 2023 Executive Committee meeting. He stated that the meeting was informational in nature and there were no items for action.

Report of the Standing Committees

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Regent Gilliam stated that there is one item for action – the revision to the Student Government Association (SGA) Constitution (Article 3, subsection 5), which recommends a change in the grade point average from a 2.5 to a 2.7 for all candidates for appointment, selection and/or election to the SGA. It was approved by the University Council and legal. As such, the Academic and Student Affairs Committee recommends approval.

Chairman Mfume opened the floor for a motion to approve the revision to the SGA Constitution. It was MOVED by Regent Parker Warren and SECONDED by Regent Hollis. The MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

Regent Gilliam highlighted a few informational items. She yielded the floor to Dr. Yu to introduce three faculty members. Dr. Yu presented three slides with photos of the individuals – Dr. Paul Tchounwou, the new dean of the School of Computer, Mathematical and Natural Sciences; Dr. Lisa Brown, Associate Professor of Biology and Director of the Office of Undergraduate Research (created in 2020 and funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) ASCEND); and Dr. Ingrid Tulloch, Assistant Professor of Psychology and Chair of the Institutional Animal Care and User Committee in connection with our animal facility, which received assurance from the NIH Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare to conduct research using laboratory animals. Regent Gilliam noted that the only animals currently being used are mice.

The Chairman asked if we were in compliance with existing PETA guidelines. Dr. Yu responded affirmatively. Dr. May added that NIH is currently looking at that to determine how they are going to react. The biggest thing for us is that our facility is now certified for use. We can do research that we could not do before. And so this enables us to expose undergraduate students to more research. We will be able to bring in more research dollars because there are certain things we could not offer proposals on because we could not do the research. This really enables us to expand our research program.

Chairman Mfume commented that it might be useful to have an official statement on hand by the University with respect to the research that we do, the permissible aspects of it through NIH, and our respect for persons who disagree.

Regent Gilliam added that Academic Affairs is offering ongoing training for deans and chairs, which started a year ago. She stated that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee received an enthusiastic report from Dr. Alao about comprehensive learner records, which deals with the issues of traditional transcripts moving towards digital credentials. There will be more to come on this matter. Dr. Turner provided an enrollment update (increases in full-time undergraduate, and full and part-time graduate). Ms. Freeman-Patton gave a great overview on how our student-athletes are doing. There was a lot of discussion about GPAs (department GPA is 2.93, the goal is 3.0) as well as those teams that need more attention to bring up their grades (track & field, football and men's basketball). The takeaway is that our student-athletes are doing very well overall. With regard to Student Affairs, we have a little over 170 students in hotels right now. Many students were moved to campus housing. There is a new push for students to request housing sooner (before they leave in May instead of during the summer). The Committee also talked about mental health and the major areas of concern reported by students using the online service were stress (78%), anxiety (72%), and depression (61%). The Counseling Center has a full staff with one vacancy (assistant director position). Consideration is being given to possibly hiring an alcohol and drug counselor. It was noted that Human Resources has expanded counseling available to employees.

Finance and Facilities Committee

Regent Turnipseed stated that the Finance and Facilities Committee received presentations on information items from Design and Construction, Research and Economic Development, Institutional Advancement, Enrollment Management, Student Housing, Finance and Administration (budget and procurement – security camera upgrades), and the IT Commission. Dr. Wilson addressed a number of issues and elements in his President's Report earlier. There is one item for action – increases in tuition, room, and board for fiscal year 2024, which the Committee approved and is recommending consideration by the full Board for ratification. He applauded Dr. Wilson and his executive team for the tremendous amount of work that is underway here at the University and the comprehensive progress that was reported and discussed at the Committee level. He yielded the floor to Dr. Wilson and Mr. Evans to report on a few budget and housing items, which he believes would be worthwhile for the full Board to hear.

Mr. Evans provided a brief overview on (i) the University's strategic financial goals, (ii) FY 2023 second quarter review, (iii) the Governor's FY 2024 appropriation recommendations – \$184.9 million for operating and \$84.9 million for capital, (iv) student housing plan – phases I, II and III, and (v) off-campus housing leases – 4,600 beds required for FY 23-24 with leases at Towson Town Place, the Altus, Marylander (new), and HH Midtown.

Chairman Mfume asked for clarification regarding the various pots of money – HBCU money and Chapter 41 funds. Mr. Evans stated that the loan from the Department of Education’s HBCU Capital Loan Program was previously forgiven. The funds from the HBCU lawsuit settlement are referred to as Fund 41 and is in the Governor’s operating budget as a line item.

The Chairman asked whether the dollar amount is an approximation based on 10 years. Dr. Wilson responded that the case settled for \$577,000,000 over ten years, which is \$57 million that the state has agreed to appropriate each year to the four HBCUs for ten years. The amount going to each HBCU can never be less than \$9 million because the thought was that the Legislature did not want to harm Coppin or UMES, whose enrollments were teetering around 2,000. Therefore, they set a floor. The exact amount is determined by a formula in connection with each institution’s enrollment over the combined enrollment of all four institutions.

The Chairman asked for clarification as it relates to Fund 41 money being invested wisely. Are we going to use some of the Foundation's investment policies or are we developing a separate set? Dr. Wilson responded that as we build the budget each year for these funds, we have to ensure that those funds are invested wisely in our programs and centers, etc. In essence, a whole new legislative strategy will have to be developed. We have to think very strategically about this.

Regent Turnipseed stated that the Finance and Facilities Committee also received an IT Commission Update from co-chairs Dr. Alao and Dean Westrick, who provided a very clear and coherent status report on the charge of the IT Commission. He yielded the floor to Dr. Wilson and Dean Westrick to provide a brief overview to the full Board. Dr. Westrick summarized the Commission’s two goals (assess current state and recommend enhancements) and timeline (initiation, Nov. - Dec. 2022; planning and research, Dec. 2022 - Feb. 2023; data collection and analysis, Feb. - April 2023; and report of recommendations, April - July 2023).

Regent Turnipseed commended Ms. McCalla and her team who, in addition to having to deal with building new buildings and deferred maintenance, recently had to tackle some really challenging emergencies and have done so with aplomb.

Regent Turnipseed stated that there is one item for action – approval of tuition, housing and board rate adjustments for FY 2024. He yielded the floor to Dr. Wilson and Mr. Evans to summarize the proposed increases. Dr. Wilson stated that the University has brought forth recommendations for increases in tuition (2%), housing (4%) and board (6%). It was approved by the Finance and Facilities Committee, and the administration is seeking Board approval.

Regent Parker Warren commented that it seems like we regularly have such increases, although she understands that we also have increases in the amount of money needed to do business in terms of our operating costs. However, as noted by Mr. Evans, inflation is indeed real. And as our own expenses go up so do the expenses of our students (e.g., food, gas, how much it costs them to get here, and how much it costs them to live, etc.). While she is happy to hear that the University is strategizing about different revenue streams and trying to be more strategic; it would be awesome if whenever we have an increase in expenses that those increases are not directly passed on to students to bear. Therefore, she stated that she plans to abstain from the vote.

Regent Turnipseed commented that the Committee, in its deliberation, concluded that the recommendations were totally reasonable, especially since there has not been any increases in tuition and fees in the last three years. Even though the cost of education and inflation continue to rise, our tuition is the second lowest in the state. There are also provisions to increase financial aid this year (approximately \$4 million set aside to help buffer some of the hardships that students may incur). The Committee is aware that 90% of our students receive some form of financial aid and that 25% are first generation college students.

Regent Gilliam asked what is the percent increase for scholarship. Is it the same as the proposed increase for tuition? Mr. Evans responded that it is far greater than 2%. The University has already increased financial aid by \$6 million. The proposed 2% increase in tuition will generate an additional \$1.5 million in revenue for the University. We are proposing to increase financial aid by \$4 million for next year.

Regent Gilliam expressed uncertainty in terms of the justification of increasing tuition if we have the funds. Mr. Evans stated that the University’s costs are projected to rise. Dr. Wilson commented that there are different pockets from which we provide financial aid to our students. Along the way, the state has provided us with specialized allocations for that purpose. We do something called tuition discounting, where you raise the tuition on your general student population, but you also set aside a certain percent of the revenue for those students who can ill afford it, which is another pocket. We are also using a substantial amount of the Chapter 41 funds for financial aid as well. He added that he can say with a high degree of certainty that when you look at the percent of our appropriation, we are allocating institutional aid back to the University in support of our students, which is the largest percent of any public institution in the state of Maryland.

Regent Adu-Boahene commented that he is curious to hear more about the additional financial aid that will be given to students. He inquired about the awarding criteria that will be applied. Is it going to be equal amounts for every student or is it going to be based on financial need? Dr. Turner responded we are about to go into year four of what we call financial aid optimization, which allows us to give new students an award based on how they did in high school. So, for new students, they are now coming in with merit aid and some out-of-state students with need-based aid. It is a combination of need-based and recruitment money.

Regent Hunter asked where will the increase leave us as it relates to other universities in the area. Mr. Evans responded that we will remain at the same position (second lowest in the state) because the other public universities increased tuition during the three-year period, and Morgan did not.

Regent Parker Warren circled back to the earlier discussion regarding the various pots of money, in particular the pot totaling \$185M. Mr. Evans clarified that this funding is appropriated by the state to help run the institution. Dr. Wilson added that the state may allocate a certain amount of dollars for student financial aid, then once that gets into the operating budget, it stays there and used for that purpose.

With regard to housing, Regent Resnick asked whether consideration is being given to the privatized sector building dorms at the Lake Clifton site. Mr. Evans responded affirmatively and noted that the P3 financial structure has been recommended. He reiterated that one of the University's strategic goals is to bring housing rates to a level comparable with peer institutions as renovations and new construction are completed.

Chairman Mfume thanked Mr. Evans and his team for laying out the explanation and fiscal impact. He also noted that this is the first tuition increase in three years. As previously mentioned by Regent Turnipseed and others, we are almost at rock bottom in terms of tuition costs (second lowest among four-year public institutions in the state). Finally, the proposed increases pertain to tuition and housing (room and board) but does not deal with fees. It was noted that discussions regarding fees would occur at a later date.

The Chairman opened the floor for a motion to approve the Tuition, Housing and Board Rate Adjustments for FY 2024. It was MOVED by Regent Carter and SECONDED by Regent Hollis. Regent Parker Warren ABSTAINED. The MOTION CARRIED.

Audit and Institutional Assessment Committee

Regent Ellis stated that there were no items for action. The Committee received updates on Enterprise Risk Management (three candidates were interviewed for the Enterprise Risk Management Executive Director position and, pending the completion of successful negotiations, Dr. Wilson will announce the appointment in the coming weeks) and Cyber Security Governance Committee. In Closed Session, the Committee received an update from the Office of Internal Audit regarding the resolution of the OLA Audit findings. He noted that there are a few issues that need to be resolved. There was a fruitful discussion and things are moving along in a positive direction.

New Business

There were no new business items brought forward for the Board's consideration.

Before adjourning the Public Session, the Chairman reported that the Negotiation Committee has been negotiating with Dr. Wilson for several months to work out the terms of his tenure going forward. The Committee indicated that it wanted and would recommend the reappointment of Dr. Wilson. Those negotiations are ongoing. He stated that it is his hope and expectation that the first item on the May meeting agenda will be the Committee's final report and subsequent adoption by the full Board. At that time, we will welcome in the press, who may be in attendance, for an official statement.

Adjournment of the Public Session

Chairman Mfume announced that the Board of Regents would convene in Closed Session to consider items specifically exempted from public consideration under § 3-305(b)(1)(7)(8) of the Open Meetings Act. In Closed Session, the Board of Regents will receive an EEO Report, a Litigation Update, and a Negotiation Committee Report. The Board may reconvene in Public Session at the conclusion of the Closed Session, if necessary.

After reading the citation into the record, the Chairman opened the floor for a motion to adjourn the PUBLIC SESSION to move into CLOSED SESSION. It was MOVED by Regent Gilliam and SECONDED by Regent Turnipseed to adjourn the PUBLIC SESSION. The MOTION CARRIED unanimously.

The PUBLIC SESSION adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

**MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
CITATION OF AUTHORITY FOR CLOSING A MEETING
UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT
BOARD OF REGENTS MEETING**

Date: Tuesday, February 7, 2023

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Location: Richardson Library
Boardroom

Motion to close meeting made by: Regent Gilliam

Seconded by: Regent Turnipseed

Members voting in favor: All Regents in attendance

Opposed:

Abstaining:

Absent: Regents Malcom and Stokes

THE STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO CLOSE THIS MEETING CAN BE FOUND AT (check all that apply):

General Provisions Article, § 3-305 (b)(1)(7)(8):

(1) (i) To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or (ii) any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals;

(2) To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business;

(3) To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto;

(4) To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State;

(5) To consider the investment of public funds;

____ (6) To consider the marketing of public securities;

(7) To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice on a legal matter;

(8) To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation;

____ (9) To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations;

____ (10) To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or to public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans;

____ (11) To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination;

____ (12) To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct;

____ (13) To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter;

____ (14) Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiating strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process.

General Provisions Article, § 3-103 (a):

____ (1) To carry out an administrative function;

____ (2) To carry out a judicial function;

____ (3) To carry out a quasi-judicial function.

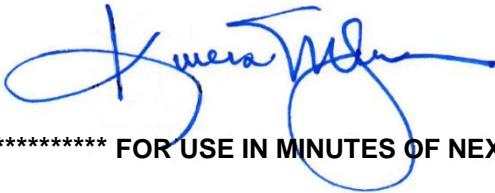
FOR EACH CITATION CHECKED ABOVE, THE REASONS FOR CLOSING AND TOPICS TO BE DISCUSSED:

1. To receive an EEO Report.
2. To receive a Litigation Report.
3. To receive a Report from the Negotiation Committee.

THE BOARD MAY RECONVENE IN PUBLIC SESSION AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CLOSED SESSION IF NECESSARY TO TAKE ANY FINAL AND BINDING ACTION.

This statement is made by Kweisi Mfume
Chairman of the Board of Regents

SIGNATURE:



***** FOR USE IN MINUTES OF NEXT REGULAR MEETING: *****

TOPICS DISCUSSED AND ACTION(S) TAKEN (IF ANY):