

APPROVED

DECEMBER 8, 2020

Item #G-6
December 8, 2020

**MINUTES – STRATEGIC PLAN BOARD MEETING
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
November 16, 2020**

Submitted for: Action.

Summary: Minutes of the November 16, 2020 Strategic Plan meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education Executive Committee held via telephone and video conference as permitted by Public Act 101-0640 enacted June 12, 2020, the Illinois Governor’s Disaster Proclamation dated November 13, 2020, and Executive Order 2020-71.

Action Requested: That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approve the minutes of the November 16, 2020, Strategic Plan Illinois Board of Higher Education Executive Committee meeting.



STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**MINUTES – STRATEGIC PLAN BOARD MEETING
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
November 16, 2020**

A meeting of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Executive Committee was called to order at 3 p.m. via telephone and video conference as permitted by Public Act 101-0640 enacted June 12, 2020, the Illinois Governor’s Disaster Proclamation dated November 13, 2020, and Executive Order 2020-71.

The following Board members were present: John Atkinson, Chair, Jennifer Delaney, Jennifer Garrison, Veronica Herrero, and Pranav Kothari.

Others present: Mark S. Jamil, Burke, Burns & Pinelli, LTD.; Ms. Ginger Ostro, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Lisa Freeman, Northern Illinois University; Dr. Gloria Gibson, Northeastern Illinois University; Dr. Brian Durham, Illinois Community College Board; Dr. Shawn Schumacher, Faculty Advisory Council; Dr. Stephanie Bernoteit, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Ms. Melissa Hahn, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Ms. Karen Helland, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Eric Lichtenberger, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Ms. Jaimee Ray, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Mr. Nyle Robinson, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dr. Arthur Sutton, Illinois Board of Higher Education; and Ms. Tracy Rembusch, Illinois Board of Higher Education.

A. Call to Order/Roll Call

- **Call Meeting to Order, Chair John Atkinson**

Chair John Atkinson called the meeting to order. Interim Board Secretary Rembusch took roll call. A quorum was present.

- **Welcome and Remarks by Chair John Atkinson**

Chair John Atkinson reported on the last Strategic Plan Board meeting on October 26, 2020. At that meeting the Board reviewed the preliminary results from early outreach and engagement, including the stakeholder survey and the results of the Phase I focus groups. The Board then reviewed the working vision statement for the Strategic Plan, contextual information, core principles, and priorities, all referred to as the “Strategic Direction.” He noted the Board had a rich discussion on each of these components with opportunity to hear perspectives from Board members on multiple topics. And that the draft Strategic Direction would be posted for public comment on the IBHE website.

Chair Atkinson then stated that the agency accepted comments on the website through November 12, 2020 and that we have also heard from others who provided verbal feedback.

Chair Atkinson stated that today the Executive Committee will review the changes resulting from that feedback, make any additional adjustments, and confirm the Strategic Direction. He stated the Strategic Direction will be provided to the Strategic Plan Advisory Committee with a charge to develop the highest leverage strategies, aligned with our core principles to achieve each priority. Chair Atkinson said the work we do today will become the foundation of the Strategic Plan.

B. Presentation and Discussion

Chair Atkinson asked Ms. Ginger Ostro to present the changes for the Strategic Direction and the feedback received.

Ms. Ostro gave an update of the timeline showing we are on track for the Strategic Plan. She stated we are asking the Executive Committee to confirm the context, vision, core principles, and three priority areas. We are also beginning Phase 2 of the engagement process with the regional and stakeholder focus groups starting this week.

Ms. Ostro stated that changes have been made throughout the working document since it was presented to the Board in October. Ms. Ostro stated that these changes have come from feedback received from the Board and other individuals, written feedback through the IBHE website, and comments provided by stakeholders at various meetings. She informed the group that no changes were made if related to a specific policy decision as that would be included later in the process through the actual strategic planning.

She reviewed the context first, noting the first change relates to COVID-19 and the focus on the importance of the student voice. She said that we had heard at Board meetings and from institutional leaders the importance of making sure that we are elevating student voice in our context. We have also added a new bullet point regarding racial injustice in our society. It was noted that we need to emphasize and recognize the racial injustices in our society, so this additional point has been added. Chair Atkinson and Dr. Jennifer Delaney discussed upward mobility as this goes beyond racial injustice. Ms. Ostro shared that this is also addressed in other parts of the Strategic Direction. Mr. Pranav Kothari and Ms. Veronica Herrero feel it is important to address this as well as the student voice. Chair Atkinson noted that having a variety of student voices, not all from students already predisposed to pursue a college education, is important. Ms. Ostro indicated that the students for the focus groups would have a variety of backgrounds and experiences with higher education.

Executive Director Ostro next discussed the Vision Statement. She noted that the Board had a long discussion on the “that means” topics and the consensus was to remove these statements since they are captured in the core principles. She reported the word “accessible” has been added to the vision statement as the Board feels it is important to make sure higher education is accessible to everyone who wants it. Ms. Ostro reported a slight wording change of adding “ensure” to the Vision Statement so that individuals, families, and communities across the state thrive. This was a clarification offered by a Board member in comments.

Ms. Ostro then moved to discussing the Core Principles, which is where most changes were made. Under the first bullet point, she emphasized an addition of “well-rounded” education. Leadership potential was also added as this was recommended by institutional leaders in the higher

education system. The Board feels strongly that the Strategic Plan addresses affordability and justice issues as well as adult learners, so those points have been added.

Executive Director Ostro stated they have added language to the Core Principles for a varied, aligned, and articulated system because it is important to emphasize that the Strategic Plan is trying to bring the whole system together. She reported this came from the early focus groups wanting to make sure we address transfer students and certificate programs as an addition to credentials. She stated we want to emphasize that it is not just one path, but it is a seamless opportunity across the entire system for both educational and workforce needs of our life-long learners. Dr. Delaney, Ms. Herrero, and Mr. Kothari believe we really need to think about multiple entry points for students moving to and among institutions and to recognize that traditional college students are not the typical student anymore. They stated we need to think about efficient ways to make sure things are aligned and seamless. Dr. Brian Durham added that articulation and seamless pathways are a big concern for community colleges as they want to make sure credits are transferring and students are not losing credits when they move from a community college to a university setting. Chair Atkinson, Mr. Kothari and Dr. Jennifer Garrison discussed the importance of accountability around the students and the universities. They are not positive that adding the terminology, “embrace and foster,” gets us where we want to be; however, we do not want to lose the value of what we have now as feedback shows the importance of what the current principles state. Ms. Ostro stated she may need to change the order of the wording to better recap the last bullet point.

Executive Director Ostro reported that higher education as a public good received a lot of written and verbal feedback. Changes have been made around research as well as the importance of liberal arts and the humanities to ensure we support the whole student and understand the human condition. She stated we added some language around talent being developed by the higher education system which drives our economy. The notion of a nimble and innovative system is also important. She reported she is trying to tie together the notion of high-quality jobs and careers that will help the State to thrive.

Executive Director Ostro moved on to the Priorities for the Strategic Plan. The timeline of ten years was discussed. It was decided we need to be specific about our goals and add milestones and accountability metrics. The Plan should articulate the priorities that go with this so we can measure progress.

Ms. Ostro discussed the last bullet point for Priorities as Improving Affordability, Increasing Access, and Managing Costs. She stated affordability is seen as the biggest barrier to access and attainment. Mr. Kothari and Ms. Herrero discussed different options for ways to address the issue of affordability and the cost structure of higher education.

Ms. Ostro will work on revising the language as discussed in today’s meeting, and it will be posted on the IBHE website.

Executive Director Ostro reminded Board members that Phase 2 of stakeholder engagement is underway. She stated the survey is still open and we have continued to share it with others to make sure we are expanding the voices that we hear. The Strategic Plan will be on the December Board Meeting agenda where the Board will be able to review a Phase 1 and Phase 2 engagement report presented by UPD Consulting.

C. Public Comment

No one registered for public comment.

D. Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Atkinson adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Tracy Rembusch, Interim Secretary to the Board.