

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM  
Board of Trustees Meeting

hosted by the University of Southern Maine  
January 12-13, 2025  
Board of Trustees Meeting

Present: Trustees: Trish Riley, Chair; Lisa Eames, Vice Chair; Roger Katz, Barbara Alexander, Patrick Flood, Donna Loring, Emily Cain, David MacMahon, Kelly Martin, Owen McCarthy, Elise Baldacci, William Kemler, John Moore (Zoom), Pender Makin, and Michael Michaud. Chancellor: Dannel Malloy. University Presidents: Leigh Saufley, Joan Ferrini-Mundy, Ray Rice, Jenifer Cushman, Joseph McDonnell, Deborah Hedeem and Jacqueline Edmondson. Faculty Representatives: Ivan Manev, Clyde Mitchell, William Otto, Libin Thaikkattil Louis, and Joe Staples. Student Representatives: Alec Brooks, Griffin Goins, Grace Hills, Tristan Mitchell, Anna McLaughlin System Staff: Ryan Low, Jeff St. John, Tracy Elliott, Paul Chan, Carolyn Dorsey, Samantha Warren, Seth Goodall, Elizabeth Stickler, Kayla Flewelling and Charles Stuller Jr.

Sunday, January 12, 2025

Trustee Riley, Chair, welcomed everyone and called the Executive Session to order.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Trustee Michaud, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present and by roll call vote, the Board of Trustees meeting went into Executive Session under the following provisions:

- 1 MRSA Section 405 6-A to discuss the evaluation of personnel and the consideration and discussion of appointments, evaluations, employment and duties.
- 1 MRSA Section 405 6-C to discuss the condition, acquisition or disposition of real property or economic development if premature disclosure of the information would prejudice the competitive or bargaining position of the UMS.
- 1 MRSA Section 405 6-D to discuss planning for negotiations and communications with AFUM, UMPSA, ACSUM, Police, PATFA, and Service and Maintenance Units.
- 1 MRSA Section 405 6-E to consult with its attorney concerning legal rights and duties of the university.

On a motion by Trustee Michaud, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present and by roll call vote, the Board of Trustees concluded the Executive Session.

Monday, January 13, 2025

Trustee Riley, Chair, called the public meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Citizen Comment is a time regularly set aside for comments from the public. Twenty-five individuals spoke during the Citizen Comment period regarding various topics including investment policies and academic freedom.

Stephen Cope - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 12-13, 2025

Elaine Kahaner - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Bill Linnell - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Allan Levois - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Rabbi Steven Luft - Thanked the board for not taking positions on foreign policy matters.

Patty Friedlander - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Roger Clement - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Margery Goldberg - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Mark Aramson - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Lisa Siciliano - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Nancy Melcher - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Eli Small - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Bobbi Cope - Discussed recent experiences with antisemitism in Portland.

Ryan McMann - Read comments from Brian Dench supporting board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Jeff Hotchins – Did not support board’s decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Karl Rawstron - Did not support board’s decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Robert Aronson - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Levi Wilansky - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Josh Rosenberg - Supported board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Asher Reisman - Did not support board’s decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Knia De Vries - Did not support board’s decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

Willow Cunningham - Argued in favor of divestment as UM graduate student.

Brendan McQuade - Called for divestment as USM criminology department chair.

Jamie Isaacson - Expressed gratitude for board resisting pressure to divest.

Lucas Bent - Criticized executive committee's decision on divestment demands.

Julia Harper - Called for divestment citing humanitarian concerns.

Peter Spearsmith - Did not support board's decision to stay out of divestment discussions.

The Chair noted that she made an exception to the one-hour time limit to assure the Board heard all perspectives on these issues.

### **University Of Southern Maine Presentation**

President Edmondson presented a comprehensive overview of the Career and Employment Hub. Vice President Natalie Jones detailed the Hub's operations, highlighting successful initiatives in student employment, career guidance, and employer partnerships. The presentation showcased the significant impact of peer career guides and demonstrated strong outcomes in student placement and career development.

### **Tourism, Hospitality and Outdoor Recreation (THOR) Presentation**

A panel of faculty members presented the THOR Institute as an example of successful multi-campus collaboration:

Tracy Michaud, PhD (USM) introduced the THOR Institute as a system-wide collaboration incorporating every university's strengths in tourism, hospitality, and outdoor recreation. The institute represents a fundamental shift in cross-campus cooperation, supported by system leadership and the Chancellor's office.

Lauren Jacobs, PhD (UM) detailed the institute's efforts to attract students through initiatives including:

- The Vacation Land Conference, which attracted over 100 attendees reaching 11,000+ potential students
- Scholarship funding supporting over 105 students
- Strategic marketing campaigns increasing online presence

Clyde Mitchell, PhD (UMF) discussed the development of the THOR minor, the first true multi-campus program in the system. The 18-credit minor includes concentrations in three core areas with foundational courses in outdoor recreation, hospitality, and tourism.

Michael Curran, PhD (UMFK) presented the Vacation Land course series, highlighting successful winter programming that attracted students from multiple campuses to participate in activities including downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, and biathlon training.

Emily Zider detailed student fellowship opportunities and outlined future plans for expanding THOR programming across the system.

### **Board Policy Review**

Trustee Alexander presented proposed changes to Board Policies 212 (Free Speech, Academic Freedom and Civility) and 214 (Institutional Authority on Political Matters). After extensive consultation with faculty representatives, student representatives, and general counsel, several amendments were proposed.

Following discussion of Policy 212 regarding issues of safety in classrooms and academic settings, concerns were raised by President McDonnell, President Saufley and other trustees about potential

Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 12-13, 2025

misinterpretation of the term "safe environment" versus physical safety. The Board agreed to refer Policy 212 back to committee for further review and refinement of language.

For Policy 214, Trustee Alexander noted that faculty concerns about disclosure requirements had been addressed by adding language about professional discretion and clarifying expectations around delegation of authority. The policy aims to balance academic freedom with appropriate disclosure of institutional representation.

#### TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:

That the Board of Trustees approves the final version of the edited Board Policy 214 as initially presented in redlined form at the November 2024 Board Meeting and provided at the January 2025 Board Meeting materials in final form.

On a motion by Trustee Michaud, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present, the Board of Trustees approved Policy 214.

#### **Presidents' Round Table**

President Hedeem (UMFK) highlighted winter activities including Winter Carnival and the Can-Am dog sled race.

President Cushman (UMA) reported on Aviation program expansion and the new Capital Center development.

President Ferrini-Mundy (UM) discussed growth in sports management programs and research achievements.

President Saufley (Maine Law) provided updates on access to justice initiatives and enrollment increases.

President McDonnell (UMF) outlined strategic planning efforts and academic restructuring.

President Rice (UMPI) shared updates on enrollment growth and student achievements.

President Edmondson (USM) detailed student engagement initiatives and upcoming arts events.

#### **Vote to Approve University of Maine System 2025 Honorary Degree**

President McDonnell presented the nomination for the University of Maine at Farmington 2025 Honorary Degree.

#### TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:

That the Board of Trustees approves the 2025 nominations for Honorary Degrees as presented.

On a motion by Trustee Martin, seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present, the Board of Trustees approved the honorary degree nomination.

**Confirmation of Boards of Visitors Appointments**

President Ferrini-Mundy presented the Board of Visitors appointments for 2025-2028 for the University of Maine.

**TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:**

That the Board of Trustees confirms the Boards of Visitors appointments for 2025-2028, as presented.

On a motion by Trustee Michaud, seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present, the Board of Trustees approved the Board of Visitors appointments.

**Chancellor's Report**

Chancellor Malloy provided updates on several key initiatives:

- Acknowledged the Governor's groundbreaking budget recommendations for the University System
- Highlighted growing collaboration across the system
- Reported positive enrollment trends compared to national numbers
- Recognized success in labor negotiations and settlements

**Enrollment Update**

Vice Chancellor Jeffrey St. John reported significant increases in spring 2025 enrollment:

- Overall system headcount up 6.6% compared to last spring
- Credit hours up 5.3% compared to last spring
- Undergraduate headcount up 5.9% year-over-year, representing an increase of just under 1,000 students
- Entering undergraduate transfers total 843, a 67.6% increase year-over-year
- Transfers from Maine Community College System up 163 students (77.2% increase)
- Graduate headcount up 9.2% over last spring
- Law School headcount up 5.2%
- Graduate credit hours up 88.7%
- Law credit hours up 7.5%

**Regarding Summer and Fall 2025 applications:**

- Applications up 1.5% over same time last year, building on significant increases from previous year
- Admits for summer/fall up 4.1% from last year
- Active matriculated students down slightly at 4.4% compared to previous year
- Direct admitted students up 19% for summer/fall 2025
- A full report on the impact of the direct admit program will be prepared for ASA after completion of two full years of operation

Vice Chancellor St. John presented the proposal for 90-credit applied bachelor's degree programs. He indicated that following several months of discussions with faculty, presidents, provosts, vice chancellors, the chancellor, trustees, and students, the system is prepared to begin work on developing and delivering a small targeted set of programs - just five academic programs total across the entire system.

- Focused on adult degree completers
- Following established curricular processes
- Designed to increase access and affordability while maintaining academic quality
- Programs will be developed with interested faculty through regular established curricular process
- Implementation will require approval from Maine Department of Education and NECHE
- Primary focus on supporting adult degree completers and workforce development

Key points of discussion included:

- The process will follow regular established procedures for developing new undergraduate programs
- Board of Trustees support is required to proceed
- Final approval required from NECHE (New England Commission of Higher Education)

Trustee Alexander emphasized the importance of the proposed guardrails, noting "it's very important not to create any expectation that the traditional 120-degree programs are somehow going to be turned into a quicky 90-degree degree and that they are somehow the same."

The Chancellor highlighted three key reasons for pursuing this initiative:

1. Access - particularly for adult learners
2. Affordability for students
3. Competition - noting other New England institutions are already offering similar programs

The Chancellor emphasized the importance of remaining competitive as peer institutions embrace 90 credit hour programs. He noted the particular focus on returning students, with "millions of them across the country and in excess of 100,000 potentially in our state." Chancellor Malloy added context about returning students, noting that previous grant-funded programs targeting this audience had produced significant increases in enrollment. He emphasized that having additional tools to reach students with prior credits could help turn those credits into degrees, noting "there's a great difference between a 17 and 18-year old and a 35 or 45-year old" in terms of their needs and challenges.

St. John clarified that faculty and students can expect frequent and transparent communication about the development process throughout spring and summer 2025 and beyond.

### **Vice Chancellor For Strategic Initiatives' Report**

Vice Chancellor Carolyn Dorsey, along with President Ferrini-Mundy, presented comprehensive updates on UMS TRANSFORMS, highlighting four main focus areas:

1. Student Success and Retention
2. Maine College of Engineering and Computing
3. Maine Center
4. UMaine Athletics

Maine Center

Seth Goodall, CEO of Maine Center Ventures and Executive Director of the Maine Center, provided a comprehensive update on the Maine Center's progress. The Center focuses on four key areas:

1. Interdisciplinary Graduate Education
  - Supporting integrated programs across law, business, policy, engineering and computing
  - Providing funding and innovative approaches to support graduate education
  - Developing cross-disciplinary solutions
2. Executive Education and Professional Development
  - Launching tailored programs for Maine's industry needs
  - Focusing on five key areas:

Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 12-13, 2025

- Leadership development
- AI business applications
- Finance for non-finance managers
- Sustainability and environment
- Compliance, risk and governance
- Building partnerships with corporate leaders

### 3. Entrepreneurship and Innovation

- Developing a new venture studio
- Secured \$2.4 million in Congressional Directed Spending for entrepreneurship space
- Creating hub for innovation in Portland's commercial center

### 4. Center of Convening

- Bringing together system-wide assets for interdisciplinary solutions
- Addressing state challenges in affordable housing, AI, and climate adaptation
- Building partnerships between university expertise and industry needs

Goodall reported on progress toward the \$55 million Harold Alfond Foundation grant matching requirements:

- \$28.2 million raised to date toward \$50 million match requirement
- Funding allocations include:
  - \$40 million for facilities at 300 Forest Street and Custom House
  - \$5 million for faculty positions across business, law and policy
  - \$5 million for expanding programming
  - \$5 million for scholarships and leadership development

The Center's priorities for 2025 include:

- Accelerating program development
- Increasing brand recognition
- Leading building renovation project
- Continuing fundraising efforts to meet match requirements

Trustee Riley applauded the significance of the Harold Alfond Foundation funding and asked about the matching requirements and contingent liability to the System when that funding expires. Goodall provided these clarifying details:

- Of the \$55 million Alfond Foundation grant, there is a \$50 million match requirement
- \$30 million must be raised for facilities (300 Forest Street and Custom House)
  - \$20.5 million raised to date
  - \$9.5 million still needed
- \$20 million needed for programming
  - \$7.7 million raised so far
  - \$2 million must be specifically for scholarships for Maine Center programs

Regarding contingent liabilities, Goodall explained:

- Faculty positions are structured with three-year funding to give universities runway to address the "cliff effect"
- The Alfond Ambassadors program was restructured from 3-4 years to 10 years
- Additional fundraising will support scholarship and internship opportunities

- Programs will include efficient delivery methods to help generate revenue

There was also discussion about building costs:

- Trustee Katz raised concerns about future building operational costs
- Goodall noted revenue will come from commercial tenants and common area maintenance once buildings are purchased
- The Chancellor reminded the board that this solution avoided building a new law school estimated at \$85 million

### **Approval Of Collective Bargaining Agreement, Afum**

Vice Chancellor Dorsey presented an outline of the collective bargaining agreement with the Associated Faculties of the University of Maine (AFUM).

TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:

That the Board of Trustees authorizes the Chancellor to execute the collective bargaining agreement with the Associated Faculties of the University of Maine (AFUM), upon notice that the agreement has been ratified.

On a motion by Trustee Michaud, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present, the Board of Trustees approved the agreement.

### **Vice Chancellor For Finance, Administration, And Treasurer's Report**

Vice Chancellor Ryan Low presented investment results and the FY2026 budget timeline:

Investment Results:

- Managed Investment Pool showed 2.5% gain
- Pension Fund gained 2%
- Operating Fund gained 0.9%

Budget Timeline:

- Campus reviews in February
- FFT Committee presentations in March
- Final approval planned for May 2024

### **Art Building Pre-Development Agreement, USM**

TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Technology Committee, and authorizes The University of Maine System acting through the University of Southern Maine (USM) to expend up to two million dollars (\$2,000,000) for a Pre-Development agreement for design services with Great Falls Construction for the construction of a new Art Building on the Gorham campus.

On a motion by Trustee Eames, which was seconded by Trustee Michaud, and approved by all Trustees present and by roll call vote, the Board of Trustees approved the agreement.

### **Modernization of Witter Farm, UM**



**TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:**

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Technology Committee, and authorizes the University of Maine System, acting through the University of Maine, to increase spending from \$2.6 to \$3.5 million for the construction of a new modern robotic dairy facility, renovate two existing barns, and demolish four existing barns located on the J. Franklin Witter Teaching & Research Center in Old Town, Maine.

On a motion by Trustee Cain, which was seconded by Trustee Michaud, and approved by all Trustees present and by roll call vote, the Board of Trustees approved the increase.

**Land Donation to University of Maine, UM**

**TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:**

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Technology Committee, and approves the University of Maine System, acting through the University of Maine, to accept the donation of a parcel of land of 0.46 acres from Nancy Nolette adjacent to the Witter property and University's bike path identified on the Old Town, Maine tax map as Lot 27C Hilliard St.

On a motion by Trustee Michaud, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present and by roll call vote, the Board of Trustees approved the land donation.

**Dental Lab Construction and Furnishing, UMPI**

**TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:**

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Technology Committee, and authorizes the University of Maine System, acting through the University of Maine at Presque Isle to increase the Dental Lab project by \$1,050,000 using reserve funds.

On a motion by Trustee Michaud, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present and by roll call vote, the Board of Trustees approved the increase.

**Bangor Hall Disposal Recommendation, UMA**

**TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:**

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Technology Committee, and authorizes the University of Maine System acting through the University of Maine Augusta to sell Bangor Hall at fair market value with all final terms and conditions subject to review and approval of the University of Maine System Treasurer and General Counsel.

On a motion by Trustee Michaud, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present and by roll call vote, the Board of Trustees approved the disposal.

**Building Acquisition Request - 125 Community Drive, Augusta, ME**

**TEXT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION:**

That the Board of Trustees accepts the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Technology Committee, and authorizes the University of Maine System acting through the University of Maine Augusta to purchase the 14,350 sq. ft. commercial building at 125 Community Drive in Augusta, Maine

Board of Trustees Meeting

January 12-13, 2025

with all final terms and conditions subject to review and approval of the University of Maine System Treasurer and General Counsel.

On a motion by Trustee Michaud, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present and by roll call vote, the Board of Trustees approved the purchase.

### **Vice Chancellor For Research And Innovation Report**

Vice Chancellor Ferrini-Mundy presented the annual Maine Economic Improvement Fund (MEIF) report. The report highlighted:

- Strong return on investment at 6.45 to 1 for MEIF funds
- Current state investment in R&D at 1.1% of GDP, compared to national average of 3.6%
- Support across seven key sectors defined in state statute
- Successful partnerships with Maine companies including:
  - Orange Bike Brewing Company
  - Brodis Blueberries
  - Brant & Cochran axe manufacturing

Mark Ferguson, founder and president of Brant & Cochran, presented on his company's partnership with UMaine's Advanced Manufacturing Center, demonstrating how MEIF support helps Maine businesses grow and innovate.

The report emphasized three key areas of product innovation:

1. Product Development - helping Maine companies improve products and processes
2. Job Creation - expanding business opportunities
3. Market Expansion - supporting growth in client base

The report also highlighted small campus funding initiatives at Fort Kent, Augusta, UMPI, Machias, and Farmington, showing system-wide engagement in R&D activities.

Trustee Cain emphasized the importance of MEIF funding, calling it "one of the most important pieces of State spending" and noting how it has been maintained even through difficult economic times. She commended the program's continuation and recent improvements under the current Governor.

Other points of discussion included:

- The success of leveraging MEIF funds for greater investment, with a 6.45 to 1 return ratio
- Maine's current R&D spending at 1.1% of GDP compared to the national average of 3.6%
- Emphasis that the report focused on three areas: product innovation, job creation, and expanding markets
- Recognition that Maine has no federal labs, making university R&D particularly important
- The program's role in cultivating talent and supporting workforce development
- Connection to UMS TRANSFORMS initiatives

Mark Ferguson's presentation generated particular interest, demonstrating how AMC support helped a small Maine manufacturer increase production by 50% and reduce order backlogs from 22 weeks to 8 weeks.

### **Consent Agenda**

On a motion by Trustee Eames, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present and by roll call vote, the items on the Consent Agenda were approved by the Board of Trustees as follows:

- Acceptance of Minutes
- New Academic Program Proposal: M.S. in Business, UMPI
- New Academic Program Proposal: B.A. in Criminal Justice, UM
- Naming of Roadway - USM Gorham Campus
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- 1 MRSA Section 405 6-E to consult with its attorney concerning legal rights and duties of the university.

On a motion by Trustee Michaud, which was seconded by Trustee Cain, and approved by all Trustees present and by roll call vote, the Board of Trustees concluded the Executive Session.

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held at the University of Maine on March 9-10, 2025.

Additional information about the meeting can be found on the Board of Trustees website:  
<https://www.maine.edu/board-of-trustees/meeting-agendas-materials/board-of-trustees/>

Adjournment  
Elizabeth Stickler, Clerk