

Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
May 28, 2024

A meeting of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University was convened on Tuesday, May 28, 2024 in the Student Union Alumni Hall located at 5500 N. St. Louis Avenue, Chicago, IL 60625. J. Todd Phillips, Chair of the Board, called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Roll was called and the following Trustees were present: Ann Kalayil; Jorge Leon; Edwin Medina; Anna Meresidis; Michelle Morales; J. Todd Phillips; and Paula Wolff

Also present: Katrina Bell-Jordan, Interim President; Nicki Bazer, Interim General Counsel; Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board; vice presidents, staff; and University community members both in person and viewing online

Trustee Garcia joined the meeting at 1:19 p.m.

Motion to Allow Remote Participation

Trustee Wolff, seconded by Trustee Morales, moved to allow Trustee Betty Fleurimond to participate in the meeting remotely.

Discussion: Trustee Fleurimond notified the Assistant Secretary in advance of the meeting. The request to participate remotely meets one of the conditions pursuant to Section 7(a) of the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120) and the Board's Bylaws.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Fleurimond:	Kalayil: Yes	Medina: Yes	Morales: Yes	Wolff: Yes
Garcia:	Leon: Yes	Meresidis: Yes	Phillips: Yes	

The motion carried.

Administration of Past Meeting Minutes

Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Morales, moved to approve the following open and closed session written past meeting minutes and to keep the written closed session minutes confidential:

- Open minutes from the April 18, 2024 Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee meeting; and
- Open and closed minutes from the April 18, 2024 regular Board meeting

Discussion: there was no discussion. The motion carried by acclamation.

Pursuant to Section 2.06(d) of the IL Open Meetings Act Trustee Meresidis, seconded by Trustee Wolff, moved that the confidential written minutes from the following closed session portions of the:

- April 24, 2023 Executive Committee special meeting; and
- May 8, 2023 Executive Committee meeting

require confidential treatment and will remain confidential.

Discussion: there was no discussion. The motion carried by acclamation.

Opportunity for Public Comment in Accordance with P.A. 91-0715

Chair Phillips announced the opportunity for public comment. There were 12 registrations placed in advance. 1 registration was withdrawn and 11 presentations were made.

1. **Denise Cloonan Cortez**, representing self
Topic: to speak about the current state of affairs at the University
2. **Mary Kroeck**, representing Civil Service Council
Topic: concern about layoffs and the future of NEIU
3. **Rebekah Fitchett**, representing AFSCME
Topic: integrity
4. **Heather Carper**, representing self
Topic: Civil Service staffing, resources and wages
5. **Tim Libretti**, representing self
Topic: state of the university
6. **Rosetta Cash**, representing Key Control area
Topic: misinformation being disseminated as it related to layoffs and Key Control
7. **Mary Serio**, representing AFSCME Local 1989
Topic: bargaining, layoffs and lack of transparency and communication
8. **Sudha Srinivas**, representing NEIU
Topic: NEIU's future
9. **Cyndi Moran**, representing self
Topic: Presidential search-overall feedback from a long-term engaged faculty member and Chair
10. **Dee Kimpel**, representing AFSCME
Topic: Civil Service layoffs
11. **Nancy Matthews**, representing self
Topic: the state's budget and farewell to the Board

Chair's and President's Remarks

Interim President Bell-Jordan congratulated everyone on a successful academic year and thanked the Trustees and others who attended commencement. The state's budget is not finished. The House and Senate deadline is May 31. Dr. Bell-Jordan introduced Dr. Claudia Mercado as the University's Interim Vice President for Enrollment and thanked Dr. Shayne Cofer, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, for leading the enrollment division over the past year.

Chair Phillips thanked the public commenters and assured them the Board is listening. The Board appreciates hearing from the public to help the University improve.

Presidential Search Update

Trustee Fleurimond briefly reviewed the work that has brought the search committee to this point. The committee received 76 applications, identified 8 candidates, and presented 4 finalists. Trustee Fleurimond thanked and acknowledged her co-chair, Dr. Xiwei Wang; Drs. Sarah Fabian, Patricia Aguado, and Christopher Merchant, Co-Chairs of the Search Planning Sub-Committee; Jorge Leon and Edwin Medina, Trustee committee members; Drs. Mohammad Tavakolifar, April Naumann, and Jane Xu, Jesse Rutschmann, Rebekah Fitchett, Erin Long, Eryn Nelkin, Ebony Jimenez Lee, Jennifer Blair, Akua Cason, Rebeca Lamadrid-Quevedo, D. Maurice Waddell, Sandy Vue, Mary Thill and Ben Krause, committee members; and University staff members Yolanda Aguilera and Aaron McLeod for their invaluable participation and support.

Chair Phillips added that the Board has been actively reviewing the University’s feedback from the finalists’ campus visits earlier this month. Finalist interviews with the Board will be scheduled soon.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee

Trustee Kalayil reported that the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee met on May 16, 2024 on the main campus and has recommended two items presented for Board approval. Trustee Kalayil also acknowledged that the most recent committee meeting marks the final meeting with Student Trustee, Edwin Medina, and recognized his invaluable contributions to the committee’s work and thanked him for his commitment.

Action Item I. A. Board Action on Committee Recommendation Regarding the Tenure Awards for Gretchen LaCivita and Nathan Putnam

Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Garcia, moved to approve the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee’s tenure award recommendations at the rank of Associate Professor for Gretchen LaCivita, in the College of Education, and Nathan Putnam in the NEIU Libraries.

Discussion: Dr. LaCivita’s tenure recommendation comes with support from the College of Education and Dean Thomas Phillion. Mr. Putnam’s tenure recommendation comes with support from the NEIU Libraries and Dean Steven Harris. Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Shayne Cofer, read the professional biographies for both Dr. LaCivita and Mr. Putnam.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Fleurimond: Yes	Kalayil: Yes	Medina: *	Morales: Yes	Wolff: Yes
Garcia: Yes	Leon: Yes	Meresidis: Yes	Phillips: Yes	

The motion carried. *The Student Trustee may vote on tenure.

Action Item I. B. Board Action on Committee Recommendation Regarding the Master of Science in Nursing Program Budget

Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Meresidis, moved to approve the Academic/Student Affairs, Enrollment, and Technology Committee’s recommendation to approve the Master of Science in Nursing Program budget.

Discussion: Trustees asked general questions about the program budget.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Fleurimond: Yes	Kalayil: Yes	Medina: Yes	Morales:	Wolff: Yes
Garcia: Yes	Leon: Yes	Meresidis: Yes	Phillips: Yes	

The motion carried.

Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee

Chair Phillips reported that the Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee met on May 14, 2024 on the main campus and has recommended two items presented for Board approval.

Action Item I. C. Board Action on Committee Recommendation Regarding the FY2025 Preliminary Operating Budget

Trustee Wolff, seconded by Trustee Leon, moved to approve the Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee’s recommendation to approve the preliminary FY2025 operating budget.

Discussion: Trustees discussed alternate scenarios in the event enrollment and credit hour goals are not met. Trustee Wolff thanked the staff for preparing the budget documents and for answering questions.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Fleurimond: Yes	Kalayil: Yes	Medina: Yes	Morales: Yes	Wolff: Yes
Garcia: Yes	Leon: Yes	Meresidis: Yes	Phillips: Yes	

The motion carried.

Action Item I. D. Board Action on Committee Recommendation Regarding the Board’s Treasurer

Trustee Phillips, seconded by Trustee Kalayil, moved to approve the Finance, Buildings and Grounds Committee’s recommendation to approve Beni Ortiz as the Board’s *ex officio* treasurer pursuant to Section 25-30 of Northeastern Illinois Law (110 ILCS 680).

Discussion: there was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Fleurimond: Yes	Kalayil: Yes	Medina: Yes	Morales: Yes	Wolff: Yes
Garcia: Yes	Leon: Yes	Meresidis: Yes	Phillips: Yes	

The motion carried.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Information Item I. A. 3rd Quarter Budget to Actual

The operating budget for FY2024 totals \$133,063,200, with an additional authorization for spending up to \$2.5 million by the Board of Trustees. Of that total, \$85,300,000 is the University’s unrestricted general operating budget supported by State appropriation and student tuition. In addition, the University’s restricted funds budget amount of \$47,763,200 is supported by student fee programs, auxiliary services, grants, and contracts.

This report provides an update on third quarter spending in the unrestricted budget and is summarized in Table 1, which also includes a comparison with year-to-date spending for both FY2022 and FY2023.

Table 1
 NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
 FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET TO ACTUAL COMPARISONS
 FOR THE PERIOD ENDED MARCH 31, 2024
 UNAUDITED FIGURES

	FY 2022 Q3			FY 2023 Q3			FY 2024 Q3				
	Adopted Budget	FY22 Actual YTD	% of Budget	Adopted Budget	FY23 Actual YTD	% of Budget	Adopted Budget	Current Budget	Actual Year to Date	% of Current Budget	FY24 vs FY23 ACTUALS
Revenue											
State Appropriations	\$ 35,566,900	\$ 35,263,283	99.1%	\$ 37,345,300	\$ 37,036,488	99.2%	\$ 39,960,000	\$ 39,960,000	\$ 39,923,855	99.9%	\$ 2,887,367 (A)
Net Tuition Revenue	50,780,200	44,054,649	86.8	42,172,200	40,673,732	96.4%	41,874,400	41,874,400	40,556,968	96.9%	(116,764) (B)
Net Differential Tuition Revenue	692,000	766,822	110.8	972,400	721,802	74.2%	689,000	689,000	760,465	110.4%	38,663 (B)
Investment Income	400,000	43,172	10.8	1,000,000	2,094,435	209.4%	2,276,600	2,276,600	3,310,622	145.4%	1,216,187 (C)
All Other Sources	2,788,700	375,018	13.4	2,450,100	417,969	17.1%	500,000	500,000	672,611	134.5%	254,642 (D)
Total Revenue	\$ 90,227,800	\$ 80,502,944	89.2%	\$ 83,940,000	\$ 80,944,426	96.4%	\$ 85,300,000	\$ 85,300,000	\$ 85,224,521	99.9%	\$ 4,280,095
Expenditures											
Personnel Services	\$ 71,683,348	\$ 47,565,706	66.4%	\$ 67,142,441	\$ 48,705,618	72.5%	\$ 67,901,380	\$ 68,176,508	\$ 50,412,341	73.9%	\$ 1,706,723 (E)
Contractual Services	12,805,062	6,919,987	54.0	11,208,876	8,070,312	72.0%	14,631,783	14,707,222	7,588,876	51.6	(481,436) (F)
Equipment	787,215	171,991	21.8	846,410	362,463	42.8%	431,986	831,218	355,565	42.8	(6,898) i
Commodities	877,788	289,113	32.9	775,075	339,923	43.9%	807,401	962,049	374,463	38.9	34,540 i
Telecommunications	222,872	93,828	42.1	176,422	87,630	49.7%	176,700	160,308	59,815	37.3	(27,815) i
Travel	209,469	21,247	10.1	168,841	134,939	79.9%	197,750	238,439	144,690	60.7	9,751 i
Permanent Improvements	47,845	-	-	25,000	-	0.0%	25,000	23,834	-	-	- i
Operation of Auto Equip	31,039	16,951	54.6	20,935	15,819	75.6%	21,000	42,580	20,661	48.5	4,842 i
Tuition Scholarships	1,330,162	902,628	67.9	1,299,000	1,140,031	87.8%	1,299,000	349,842	188,404	53.9	(951,627) (G)
Debt Service	2,233,000	1,674,750	75.0	2,277,000	1,703,703	74.8%	2,308,000	2,308,000	1,705,586	73.9	1,883 i
Total Expenditures	90,227,800	57,656,201	63.9%	83,940,000	60,560,438	72.1%	87,800,000	87,800,000	60,850,401	69.3%	289,963
<i>BOT Reserve Allocation</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	(2,500,000)	(2,500,000)	-	-	- i
Net Expenditures	\$ 90,227,800	\$ 57,656,201	63.9%	\$ 83,940,000	\$ 60,560,438	72.1%	\$ 85,300,000	\$ 85,300,000	\$ 60,850,401	71.3%	\$ 289,963

Notes:

1. Adopted Budget column reflects the FY2024 budget presented to the Finance, Building and Grounds Committee on September 21, 2023.
2. The Current Budget reflects budget transfers processed between organizations and accounts.
3. "Actual Year to Date" or "Actual YTD" is current year expenses recorded or booked through April 24, 2024 and does not include encumbrances.

Table 2 provides a financial forecast for the unrestricted operating budget. This financial forecast builds upon the existing quarterly reporting and presentation structure of the budget-to-actual reports and incorporates separate forecasts for revenues and expenses. The revenue forecast is forward-looking and based on existing models used to build the University's operating budget. The expense forecast is based on average historical spending by category and utilized data from the past five years. Additionally, the historical forecast is adjusted to account for new initiatives/funding sources, any anticipated new spending, and current commitments/ encumbrances.

Table 2
 NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
 FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET TO FORECAST COMPARISONS
 FOR THE PERIOD ENDED MARCH 31, 2024
 UNAUDITED FIGURES

	Adopted Budget	Budget Adjustment	Adjusted Budget	Actual Year to Date as of 03/31/24	Forecasted Revenue/Expenses Thru 06/30/24	Annual Forecast	Adjusted Budget Vs Annual Forecast
Revenue							
State Appropriations	\$ 39,960,000	\$ -	\$ 39,960,000	\$ 39,923,855	\$ 36,145	\$ 39,960,000	\$ -
Net Tuition Revenue	41,874,400	-	41,874,400	40,556,968	2,585,723	43,142,691	1,268,291
Net Differential Tuition Revenue	689,000	-	689,000	760,465	38,819	799,284	110,284
Investment Income	2,276,600	-	2,276,600	3,310,622	1,121,438	4,432,060	2,155,460
All Other Sources	500,000	-	500,000	672,611	27,000	699,611	199,611
Total Revenue	85,300,000	-	85,300,000	85,224,521	3,809,125	89,033,646	3,733,646
Expenditures							
Personnel Services	67,901,380	275,128	68,176,508	50,412,341	17,948,216	68,360,557	(184,049)
Contractual Services	14,631,783	75,439	14,707,222	7,588,876	6,791,290	14,380,166	327,056
Equipment	431,986	399,232	831,218	355,565	454,144	809,709	21,509
Commodities	807,401	154,648	962,049	374,463	325,079	699,542	262,507
Telecommunications	176,700	(16,392)	160,308	59,815	38,700	98,515	61,793
Travel	197,750	40,689	238,439	144,690	60,405	205,095	33,344
Permanent Improvements	25,000	(1,166)	23,834	-	-	-	23,834
Operation of Auto Equip	21,000	21,580	42,580	20,661	21,919	42,580	-
Tuition Scholarships	1,299,000	(949,158)	349,842	188,404	161,438	349,842	-
Debt Service	2,308,000	-	2,308,000	1,705,586	582,233	2,287,819	20,181
Total Expenditures	87,800,000	-	87,800,000	60,850,401	26,383,424	87,233,825	566,175
<i>BOT Reserve Allocation</i>	<i>(2,500,000)</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>(2,500,000)</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>
Net Expenditures	85,300,000	-	85,300,000	60,850,401	26,383,424	87,233,825	566,175
Excess Revenue Over Expenditures	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 24,374,120	\$ (22,574,299)	\$ 1,799,821	\$ 3,167,471

Notes:

- Adopted Budget column reflects the FY2024 budget presented to the Finance, Building and Grounds Committee on September 21, 2023.
- The Current Budget reflects budget transfers processed between organizations and accounts.
- "Actual Year to Date as of 03/31/24" is current year expenses recorded or booked through April 24, 2024 and does not include encumbrances.
- "Forecasted Revenue/Expenses Thru 06/30/24" is based on historical trends, adjusted for knowledge of new initiatives/projects or spendings.
- "Budget Adjustment" reflects net budget transfers processed between organizations and accounts.
- During FY2024, the University was awarded a State grant to provide academic, social emotional learning, basic needs, or other student supports. Portion of this funding, amounting to \$1.9 million, will be used towards related initiatives that were previously allocated funds from the University's FY24 unrestricted operating budget for contractual services and tuition scholarships.
- The total annual forecast for expenditures does not currently account for the BOT Reserves Allocation, thus, projecting the total expenditures to exceed the budget. The University, however, is anticipating to surpass its budgeted revenue, potentially eliminating the need to access the \$2.5 million BOT-approved reserves. This would allow the University to meet contractual obligations without tapping into the reserves.

Information Item I. B. Purchases \$100,000 to \$249,999

VENDOR	DESCRIPTION	CONTRACT AMOUNT
Holabird & Root, LLC (Non-BEP)*	Architectural and engineering design services for the new Nursing Program simulation lab at El Centro	\$162,800.00

*Holabird & Root, LLC BEP Subcontractors:

- Nest Builders, Inc. d/b/a dBHMS (18% - Hispanic Male)
- CCS International, Inc. (2% - Asian Male)

Information Item I. C. Construction and Signage Updates

Main campus monument signs were installed late winter 2024. El Centro signage on Kimball Avenue will be completed in winter 2025. BBH administrative offices asbestos abatement and trip hazard repairs have been completed. Architectural and engineering investigations on the pool are ongoing. Capital Development Board (CDB) projects nearing completion: LWH roof replacement and HVAC upgrade both expected to be completed by fall 2024. Business Innovation and Growth (BIG) Center construction projects at CCICS and in the main campus parking facility are both expected to be completed in spring 2025. Main campus sidewalk repairs are expected to be complete by fall 2024. Fine Arts Center dust collector project

is expected to be completed by summer 2024. The nursing simulation lab design phase at El Centro is currently underway and the project is expected to be completed by winter 2025. The Green Lab at El Centro has been completed. The Data Lab in BBH has been completed. The Chemistry Lab 210 in BBH is expected to be completed in time for fall 2024 classes. The Veterans Lounge in the lower-level E Building is expected to be completed by late fall 2024. The CCICS façade tuckpointing project is in the planning phase with project expected to be completed in spring 2025.

Motion to Convene in Closed Session

At 3:28 p.m. Trustee Wolff, seconded by Trustee Kalayil, moved to convene in Closed Session pursuant to Sections 2(c)1 and 2(c)11 of the IL Open Meetings Act to discuss personnel and litigation matters.

Discussion: there was no discussion

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Fleurimond: Yes	Kalayil: Yes	Medina: Yes	Morales: Yes	Wolff: Yes
Garcia: Yes	Leon: Yes	Meresidis: Yes	Phillips: Yes	

The motion carried.

Motion to Reconvene in Open Session

At 5:03 p.m. Trustee Wolff, seconded by Trustee Medina, moved to reconvene in Open Session. The motion carried by acclamation.

Legal Report

Chair Phillips announced that Trustees received a copy of the legal report in advance and had an opportunity to ask questions in Closed Session.

Item for Board Action

Action Item: Board Officer Elections for New 2-Year Terms Pursuant to Section 25-25 of Northeastern Illinois University Law (110 ILCS 680)

Chair Phillips announced that Trustees have nominated the following slate of officers for new 2-year terms:

- J. Todd Phillips, Board Chair
- Michelle Morales, Vice Chair
- Anna Meresidis, Secretary

Trustee Kalayil, seconded by Trustee Garcia, moved to approve the slate of officers as presented.

Discussion: all nominees have accepted the nominations.

Roll was called and the vote was as follows:

Fleurimond: Yes	Kalayil: Yes	Medina: Yes	Morales: Yes	Wolff: Yes
Garcia: Yes	Leon: Yes	Meresidis:	Phillips: Yes	

The motion carried.

Old / New Business

Chair Phillips asked if there was any old or new business to address. No old business was raised.

New:

- the Board will hold a Special Meeting on June 13, 2024

Trustee Wolff, seconded by Trustee Morales, moved to adopt the following resolution honoring outgoing Student Trustee, Edwin Medina.

WHEREAS, Edwin Medina was elected to serve as the Student Trustee on the Northeastern Illinois University Board of Trustees from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024; and

WHEREAS, Edwin Medina is a graduate student at Northeastern Illinois University working toward a Master's in Business Administration degree in Entrepreneurship; and

WHEREAS, Edwin Medina, in addition to his impressive academic work, has tirelessly promoted Northeastern Illinois University and the success of its students through his diligent involvement in Student Government, serving as its President for two years; and

WHEREAS, Edwin Medina served as a member of the NEIU Student Advisory Committee for three years, and has maintained a student membership in the Association of Latino Professionals for America – Chicago Chapter for three years; and

WHEREAS, Edwin Medina has worked in the Division of Student Affairs for two years as a graduate assistant helping students navigate university life through creative programming, and has removed barriers to access for students to engage more meaningfully with the university; and

WHEREAS, Edwin Medina has earnestly pursued equity among the entire student body, and has admirably represented his fellow students as a member of the Board of Trustees, as well as being a respected ambassador of Northeastern Illinois University.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University honors Edwin Medina and expresses its sincere gratitude for his exemplary service.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University, May 28, 2024

Discussion: Trustees thanked Edwin for his devoted service and for this thoughtful participation as a member of the Board.

The motion carried by acclamation. There was no further business.

Motion to Adjourn

At 5:17 p.m. Trustee Medina, seconded by Trustee Morales, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Todd Phillips, Chair of the Board
Karl Voigt, Assistant Secretary to the Board
Approved September 19, 2024