

Financial Affairs & Board of Trustees Meeting-20260225_081732-Meeting Recording

February 25, 2026, 1:18PM

3h 4m 54s

BT **Board of Trustees** 0:01

So our committee members are George Barrios, Mark Boxer, Sean Dunn, Dan O'Keefe, Phil Rubin and Richard Vogel. And we need 5 for a quorum. Sherry Cantor will not be here today. Deb, will you take a roll call of the committee members participating to establish?

Forum.

Will do. Andy Bessette here, George Berrios.

Mark Boxer.

GB **George Barrios** 0:30

here

BT **Board of Trustees** 0:32

Sherry Cantor, Sean Dunn here, Daniel O'Keefe.

MB **Mark B** 0:33

Here.

GB **George Barrios** 0:38

Yeah.

BT **Board of Trustees** 0:41

Philip Rubin, Richard Vogel.

PR **Philip Rubin** 0:42

Here.

BT **Board of Trustees** 0:49

Sorry, I did hear her earlier.

Mr. Chairman, you do have a quorum. Thank you, Deb. Also, we take a roll call of

other trustees in attendance as well as University Senate members who are present, Trisha Bailey.
Chuck Bunnell, Andrea Dennis Levine.

DB **Dr. Trisha Bailey** 1:05
here

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:10
Yes, here.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:11
John Driscoll.
Ryan Herbert.
Dennis Nayden.

DN **Denis Nayden** 1:21
Here.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:22
Brian Pollard, Thomas Ritter.

PB **Pollard, Bryan** 1:24
Here.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:27
Charlene Russell Tucker.
Fabio Sacamana.
Diane Whitney, Natalie Wagner.
University Senate.
I'm sorry, did I miss someone?

WN **Wagner, Natalie** 1:46
Yeah, Natalie Wagner here.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:48

Thank you.

Lisa Park Bush here.

Carrie Fernandez.



Fernandes, Carrie 1:59

Here.



Board of Trustees 1:59

Ross bags of glue.

Karen Bresciana.

Lindsay Cummings.

Robert Day, Timothy Folter.

Like a human.

I I'm gonna. I don't know how to pronounce this one, so I apologize in advance.

Horea Ilies.

And Tina McCarthy.

Mr. Chairman, you have a quorum. Thank you, Deb. Also, Deb, were there any requests for public comment?

No.

No.

Sorry, I've missed that. Were there any any requests for public comment? No, there were not. Thank you. Thank you.

Just two reminders since since we've moved this to the hour before the Board of Trustees meeting, I just want to remind the committee members to state their name when making a motion or a second, especially today because we're there are a couple of us here in person, but that's it. And then also.

So the Trustees, just as a reminder that only committee members can vote on the motions before the committee in the FAC meeting. So just a couple of quick reminders, there being no public participation, the first motion, first order of businesses, I'd like to have a motion and a second by the committee.

To change the agenda just a little bit as we go through the UConn and UConn Health budget updates, Jeff Gagan's delayed by about 1/2 an hour. And so I'd like to move him to the end of our FAC meeting if we have time and we'll go ahead with the with the structure that's on the paper and Reka will give us an update on UConn.

On the UConn budget and then we'll get the Budget Transformation Initiative update

and then we'll go through the rest of the agenda. So can I have a motion and a second to approve the change in the agenda?

PR Philip Rubin 4:05
So move Philip Rubin.

OD O'Keefe, Daniel 4:07
2nd OK.

BT Board of Trustees 4:07
Thank you, Philip.

DN Denis Nayden 4:08
Second Boxer.

BT Board of Trustees 4:10
Thank you, Mark. Any other comments? Any changes? All in favor? Aye. Aye. Any nays? Any nays? No. Thank you. Motion passes. OK, the next one. I need a motion and a second to approve the minutes of the Financial Affairs Committee meeting from December 2nd, 2025.

PR Philip Rubin 4:16
Hi.

MB Mark B 4:16
Hi.

OD O'Keefe, Daniel 4:17
I.

BT Board of Trustees 4:30
We have a motion in a second. So move done. Thank you.

OD O'Keefe, Daniel 4:35
Second Boxer.

BT **Board of Trustees** 4:37

Thank you, Mark. Any other comments, questions, changes, adjustments on favor?
Aye, aye. Any nays? Thank you. Thanks, Dan. Great motion passes.

PR **Philip Rubin** 4:45

Hi.

MB **Mark B** 4:46

Bye.

OD **O'Keefe, Daniel** 4:48

I.

BT **Board of Trustees** 4:52

Good. So Reka, with the given change, will you, you can take us to the UConn budget and then Jeff will talk later about the health budget.

Good morning. I can just ask to have the presentation brought up the.

First slide deck.

Good morning, everyone. This morning want to just share with you an update on the UConn Stores and Regionals budget. As of the end of the second quarter, we're doing well. The take away here is that we have identified about \$5.1 million in additional.

Savings and or additional revenues between the end of the first quarter and the second quarter. And so at this point in time, we are forecasting a net loss for the end of fiscal year 26 of \$6.9 million.

The big story here is that we are seeing activity in our grants and contracts, our research grants and contracts that are consistent activity level that's consistent with last year. We had originally forecasted a significant drop in this activity level.

When we began the the the budget, you can see there in about halfway down in the top of the revenue section that grants and contracts other line, we originally had budgeted \$225.9 million. We revised that at the end of the first quarter up to 250 based on activity at that point in time. We've since revised that up a little.

Bit more. So we are hopeful that that level of research spend will continue. Along with that level of research spend comes the expenditures, the grad assistance, the,

you know, special payroll, the faculty cost that go along with that research as well as the.

Outsourced contracts that go along with that research. So yes, we have picked up some additional revenue on the grants and contracts, but there are some additional costs on the research side as well that go along with that additional revenue. The other thing that I would point out that has changed.

Significant swing from the first quarter to the second quarter is that we just had a GASB re categorization of some lease cost from our other expense line to our capital projects lease debt line. It was about a.

A \$15 million swing that we needed to move from one line to the other. So it's it makes it look like that line is up in its expenditures, but it's really not up that significantly. It's just that we had to recategorize some expenditures to be in compliance with our Gatsby rules. We are seeing some of our as I.

As I mentioned, that other expense line did not go down as drastically because we have some additional expenditures that go along with that increased grant revenue that we're bringing in. So All in all, it's a positive story in that we were able to pick up an additional \$5.1 million for the year that 37.

\$9 million deficit has gone down by nearly \$31 million if we're looking at the full year, which is, you know, a lot of work that has been done by a lot of individuals across the university to be able to identify that magnitude of savings. We're continuing to scrutinize all of our positions.

As far as refills or new positions, any temporary hires, every single one gets that additional scrutiny to really determine is it necessary and do we need to move forward with it at this point in time. And so that will continue as we move forward. That is part of our every day now.

So that will continue. In addition, we're continuing to scrutinize all of our contracts to be to be able to identify any savings that we can in that space as well as we move forward. So we are optimistic that prior to year end, I'm, I'm hopeful that when we come back to you at the April board meeting, I'll be able to positively.

Report to you that our year end budget is forecasted to be balanced. I'm basically what we're seeing at this point is that we're trending in that direction, not quite ready to to show you that in the numbers yet, but we are trending in that direction and I'm optimistic that I'll be able to show you in April that that that is a balance.

Budget. As you know, some of these things that we're doing are one time and some of them are permanent and will carry forward to next year's budget. We're trying to

find as many permanent changes as we can to be able to carry forward, but some of those are one time things and will not, we will not be.

Be able to find those savings in 27. So while this is getting us through the current fiscal year, there's still work to be done to be able to balance future year budgets. So if you want to, oops, I have the controls. I'm not gonna. Let's see. Here we go. This is just the the.

MB **Mark B** 9:54

So do you? I'm using the Mr. Chairman. I'm using the raise hand feature just because with virtual it's sometimes hard to break it. I don't want to be disrespectful. Can I ask a question?

BT **Board of Trustees** 10:03

Sure, go ahead.

MB **Mark B** 10:04

Could you go back one side?

Where we were talking about the yeah, one thing that might be helpful in future meetings is to take this one clip down and break it out by the regional campuses. So recently, you know we we've had discussions about the regional campuses and and we've gotten some good analysis done, but.

BT **Board of Trustees** 10:09

So.

Yep.

MB **Mark B** 10:26

It would be interesting to have this page as an addendum in the materials by regional campus for the committee to see. It provides great insight and the information that was shared with me recently one-on-one around the regional campuses from financial perspective was very helpful. So just a consideration to to break this down by the regional campuses as an addendum for future meetings.

BT **Board of Trustees** 10:46

OK. And and just to share, you know and you're going to hear a little bit shortly

about the status of the new budget model. As we implement that new budget model moving forward, it's going to be a little bit easier for us to be able to show you on a unit level basis.

What our financials look like at a given point in time, but the the the analysis we've done for you on the regional campuses is currently a very manual process that we have to put together and it's it's a very difficult thing to do through the year. It's it's almost something that we look at at the.

End of the year and we we go through and we scrutinize all the expenses and try to identify OK, what belongs where because it's it's not a clean accounting of exactly what belongs at at those regional campuses throughout the year. So it's we'll work on that for you. I don't want to say it's not possible. We'll work on that for you, but it might take us a little bit.

Time to get there to get to that picture that that I think that you're looking for.

MB Mark B 11:47

Yeah, I think, I think they, I think they actually have produced the data. So you you may want to just check with Nathan and team. I think they've got it.

BT Board of Trustees 11:57

OK.

Maybe I'll circle back with you offline on that.

MB Mark B 12:04

Perfect. Thank you.

BT Board of Trustees 12:04

So, OK. So just moving forward, this is the overarching picture of where we're at on our thermometer of, you know, filling that, you know, reaching that goal of \$37.9 million. As I said, we have \$6.9 million to go and we're optimistic that.

Will be able to fill that gap prior to year end.

I also wanted to take a quick minute and review the status on the state budget proposal. We had shared with the board an update on what the governor had proposed versus what was enacted and as well as what we've requested, but just to provide you that high level overview.

The governor has proposed a level of funding for fiscal year 27 that's just slightly

below what was enacted. It's like point \$2,224,000 below what was enacted, but we've actually requested a higher amount. You can see there in the blue bars what we've requested the block grant of the.

\$241.3 million matches what was enacted, but we've requested the state to fund the differential on the salary increases. So if the full cost of the salary increases at a 3% level is 37.6, the state has only included 12.2.

We were asking for that differential to fully fund the collective bargaining increases at whatever level they are finalized at, whether they're 3% or 4 1/2%. What you're seeing here on the slide is at the 3% level because that's what the state had included in their enacted budget. In addition, we've requested \$22.1 million.

For some strategic initiatives, that strategic initiatives funding is to fund various things and I just want to share with you a few of those items at this point. Almost half of that \$10.6 million is to help us with our student success initiatives.

Financial aid for students, as well as some software to be able to help us to retain and graduate students at a higher rate. The financial aid will be able to help us to be able to retain some of those students who are, you know, very close to being able to afford to stay here and and finish.

Their, their degrees and we feel that, you know, finding some, we call them completion grants, finding just a little bit more funding for them will be able to entice them to be able to stay and be able to to retain them and be able to stay and graduate through.

In addition, there's some money in there for about \$6 million in there for research to help us with the decline in research funding that we have experienced and that that will help us to be able to support additional graduate assistance.

That have been impacted by the decline in research funding over the last year. And then the third piece of that is about \$4 million is the first year of our proposal to hire 10 faculty over a five year period.

It's our top tier faculty hiring fund to be able to increase our our profile and achieve an invitation to a prestigious ranking entity. So in in total that's \$22 million, just over \$22 million for.

Strategic initiatives and and you add that with the differential of collective bargaining increases and we're talking about a request of about forty-seven and a half million dollars that we've requested from the state. We're meeting with the legislators.

I'm sure Radenka will share that with you as part of her update, but we're meeting with legislators and we're walking them through all of these numbers and hopeful

that we will be able to secure some of this additional funding during the legislative session.

So I will end there and ask if there's any questions.

Bye.

OK. Thanks, Reka. Great to hear that we might be on a balanced budget path by April. So what do you think this means because people will ask for the future because you know units are being asked to model cuts, so.

Can you speculate on what that might mean for any future cuts? Are they going to be the same or? Yeah, absolutely. So we have a multi-year financial sustainability plan that includes all of those rescissions that we've already communicated out to various units. We're asking them to.

Still to plan for those rescissions that is part of our long term strategy. So in addition to working to generate additional revenue through retaining additional students, we also need to work on the expense side and that we can't solve this.

Budget deficit over the long term. Just with revenue growth, we need to identify expenditure cuts as well, so units need to continue to plan for those cuts.

Any other questions?

I think the one comment I'd make because that you were talking a little bit about is that we we have a 2627282930 plan it's but it's you know the like any plan the further out you get it's it's a little bit uncertain but I think that next year there's certainly we continue to face headwinds.

Right. And right now we're showing about an unfavorable \$38 million that that we'll start working on next year in July 1st, right after the fiscal year changes. But there are challenges out there and you know they're all there are pieces of it being there are pieces.

With the the reduced state support, there's pieces of it where the the salary and wages may go up because of some of the union contracts. So there's all kinds of stuff in there that may or may not happen. There's also a big a big increase in tuition which is a positive. So I think that as we.

Look, as we get further here into a year, we'll share that with you because I think it's important for us for us all to at least to see what's ahead of us in 27 fiscal year 27.

And and Mark, I was looking for, we've looked at that. We that I'm sorting a dream somewhere, but there was a regional campus.

Profit and loss type of thing that showed which campuses were making, which ones weren't. But the data was a little bit like you said, it's it's manual and I don't think it's

ready for prime time, but we'll go back. We heard your comment loud and clear and I think that would be good to look at when we can show everybody.
Something that's that we know that comfortable with that's meaningful financially.

MB **Mark B** 19:15

Yeah, I think it's helpful.

BT **Board of Trustees** 19:19

Anything else? OK, Reka, you want to jump in? We'll skip Jeff for now. We'll take him later and do the BTI one. Absolutely. As we've promised you in prior Financial Affairs Committee meetings, we are going to be bringing you updates on the budget transformation initiative at each of these meetings just to give you a high.

High level overview of where we're at in the process. This is a two year process to implement a new budget model and so we are doing a lot of work behind the scenes and involving a lot of individuals across campus to be able to work through in developing this model. And so here with us today is Devon.

McGee on online and he's going to walk you through several slides to let you know where we're at. Devon, are you there?

DM **Devon McGee** 20:04

Thanks, Reka. I am, yeah. Thank you and and good morning everybody. Sorry I couldn't be there with you all in person. But what I what I want to do is just provide a quick update as Reka said to the BTI and and honestly a couple of these things have tie ins to one of the previous trustees questions and conversations about regional campuses and things like that. So I'll.

I'll touch on that very briefly as well. If we could cycle to the to the thank you very much. So we are as Reka mentioned, this is a two year long process that started in late summer, early fall and it's it's going to be a long and and kind of high engagement process by which there's a ton of touch points, a ton of engagement and a ton of change management.

Because this is about as big a change management kind of initiative or or project as the institution can take on in terms of engaging almost everybody from every unit and every every regional campus and every every area at Storrs. We have just recently within the last three weeks or so finished the working.

Group phase, which started in early November and went until February 5th or so, and

we had five working groups with about 15 members each. We met 10 to 12 times each. In total it was about 1500 hours of folks time when combined with the summit, which I'll talk about in just a moment.

Where we dove really deep on some of the values based conversations around how tuition and fees and state appropriations should be allocated, how central services should be dispersed fairly equitably and transparently across the enterprise to the to the academic units and to the auxiliary units, how we pay for and fund, pay for and fund things like strategic initiatives that are outside of the.

Do you have any single academic or or auxiliary or central service unit? Those are all those big weighty questions that we spent 1500 hours in total talking about with with members of the working groups. And we've we've done this, we've done this process similarly at other institutions when they've done budget transformation initiatives and what it does is it.

Provides a very strong base level of support. It it effectively ensures a a kind of wide and flat layer of folks who are engaged in the process, who are involved in the process, who are bought in and and who can be allies and change agents for the for this process as as it kind of moves through the institution.

So we are now at this point in the timeline, we are up to our elbows in kind of data modeling and financial modeling. We have a ton of data that our team is working on with the expectation that there's a big kind of deadline.

The week of March 30th, during which we during which time we will be back on campus to have meetings with the leaders of each unit, academic units, central service units, auxiliary units, everybody to say this is what the the decentralized budget model says your kind of unit level economics are right, what revenues.

These are attributable to you, what costs are attributable to you and what is the bottom line surplus or deficit. As I mentioned in previous updates, it says you know it is it. There is a there's a mechanism by which subsidies will take place from from units generating A surplus to those generating a deficit. That's already happening, right? That's already happening behind the scenes in the kind of base budget.

Model, but there's there's going to be a much more transparent approach to that and it'll be much more clear. And that gets back to one of the trustees questions about understanding kind of how regional campuses are are kind of similar to or different from academic units, auxiliary units and central service units and things like that.

So after those meetings on March 30th, we'll we'll have you know each of the leaders

of the academic, auxiliary and central service units kind of in individual meetings and then we'll be back three weeks later in April for town halls where we will share.

The outcomes of the model in a very transparent way with with everybody who wants to who wants to come right to two in-person town halls and one virtual that that are meant to kind of show the full transparency of the model as it is as is meant and meant to be. So that is the next couple of steps.

The big milestone that we just passed was the working groups phase and the summit. And if we could cycle to the next slide, please. Three weeks ago we were right there in that same room. It probably looks relatively familiar to you all gathered there we had.

Eighty-ish people during during the day for about 6 hours, and it was a really, really productive conversation at the summit where each working group was kind of in the hot seat for an hour, providing an overview of the discussions that they had, the preliminary recommendations that they are making from their group deliberations. And that the preliminary recommendations that they'll be making to the steering committee and then the kind of outstanding questions and the things still to discuss during the the next year, which is that the shadow year during which that the budget model will be kind of stood up in a parallel in a parallel fashion.

As you recall, there were five working groups and I just want to talk real quickly about the kind of high-level recommendations that each of the working groups is making. The Tuition, Fees and State Appropriations group is responsible for allocating almost a billion dollars of of of revenue in in a given year.

And they have identified A mechanism by which undergraduate and tuition revenue will be allocated on the basis of the kind of instructional instructional activity taking place within the course as well as a some some amount held for.

The unit that is the major unit and the the the the unit that confers the degree, right? So there is activity and then there is the kind of reward for the high level student service and advising and engagement and career services and so on that academic units will receive even when students are taking courses outside of their home unit. That group also recommended a portion of state appropriations, 10 to 20 million or excuse me, 10 to 20% of the 300 or so \$1,000,000 of state appropriations to be used on some research productivity measure to to fund or pay for some portion of research which which we know is kind of already happening.

Happening, but it's going to be very clear in the future how some portion of state appropriations rewards research productivity going down to the academic units

themselves. We also had a costs working group, so that's the academic and central services cost we effectively spent.

Six or 8 hours with that group of 15 folks going through a list of every central service unit on campus and saying what is the right, appropriate and equitable mechanism to charge this group's budget down to the academic or auxiliary units, right?

For example, facilities will be charged on the basis of square footage and some kind of designation for indoor versus outdoor and that will be spread on the basis of how much square footage each individual academic unit sits in. That will be their share of facilities total budget.

We went, we went all the way down to, you know, there were, there were 20 or 30 central service units that we did that activity for the strategic initiatives working group. That's the group that was tasked with thinking about how UConn will fund things that are outside of the purview of any single academic unit or to pay for big investments that single academic units or central service.

Service units can't pay for on their own. And the biggest recommendation here I think is that that group identified a 1 to 2% range of state appropriations and tuition revenues that would be withheld, kind of taken off the top and withheld to fund strategic initiatives via.

The president via the Provost and via some type of governance committee and governance mechanism that could kind of adjudicate grant requests and things like that from throughout the institution.

The Research and Scholarly Activity Working Group was the group that was tasked with thinking about how we fund research, prioritize research and and just as importantly, pay for the central services that research provides primarily out of OBPR. There is an ongoing conversation of what that's going to look like.

That's the one area where we're still kind of working towards a final decision point because what exactly that productivity measure is, is kind of in conversation still and there's some good conversations about how individual academic units can kind of design their own level of.

Success or their own kind of scorecard, if you want to call it that for how research dollars will be allocated to them. OVPR will be paid what will be paid for effectively by a similar mechanism to ensure that the central services provided out of OVPR are clearly and effectively kind of communicated and and transparently passed on to academic units.

And then lastly, in the auxiliary unit space, each of the auxiliary units, the surplus is

generated within housing and dining and things like that will pay for deficits that are generated within the auxiliary units first. Sometimes that's athletics, sometimes it's other auxiliary units, whatever it may be. This is a really.

Really important recommendation that this group has made because it helps to draw a relatively clean line, and it's never it's never perfect, but it draws a relatively clean line of the auxiliary unit supporting the auxiliary functions without the academic units necessarily paying for deficits generated within the auxiliary function.

Sometimes that might happen and that's OK, but I think that's one of the that's one of the key mechanisms there. One of the biggest things that came up that everybody was talking about during that meeting and everybody continues to talk about in the working groups, in the steering committee and and so on is governance. These models do not work without good, strong, clear, transparent governance structures. I want to be very clear about that.

This is just a sample of 1 governance model that could work and and there's it. We have a year effectively to design this and to to enhance it for UConn specifically, but sitting at the top is the executive leadership team to ensure that there is a clear. Kind of executive sponsorship and executive leadership of the project and all recommendations are made to them. The governance committee, which should be made-up of Deans, leader, VPS of central service units, auxiliary units and Faculty Senate representatives, is effectively the main group that will make recommendations to the executive leadership team.

To be cross-disciplinary and kind of university citizens to think about big kind of strategic initiatives and central service costs and things like that that are for the highest and best use of the institution and not necessarily just kind of what what what is kind of optimized for the unit that they represent.

And then there's subcommittees specifically. These can be things around how we fund strategic initiatives or what strategic initiatives would that we do fund, how we think about enhancing data and the analytics used to drive the model, how we think about funding central strategic and central.

Central service units like IT and HR and finance and things like that and how those dollars get kind of moved around amongst in between central service units and academic units as well. So this is the biggest piece that I think is the kind of that that the governance process that will be built during the the next.

Calendar year or so starting in late March and I think that's that's one of the key mechanisms to ensure that the budget model works well and stays on the road.

So I'll pause there and see if there's any questions from either the the virtual line or from the folks gathered in person.

BT **Board of Trustees** 31:33

Thank you very much. I guess I have one question Reka and and I I don't know how quite to ask it, but when will we see the the a straw man of all this work with the allocation of central expenses back out to the each of the businesses or schools, whatever, when when do we see that?

And that's and that's timeline is that like in the 26 fiscal year or 27 fiscal year. So you're you're going to see a very rough draft of that model at the end of March as as Devin referenced and then we will begin sharing some preliminary.

Of what that model is producing. But keeping in mind that fiscal year 27 is our shadow year. So we will spend a year refining that model and you know, looking at pieces of the university, you know, hey, we didn't think about this. We need to create, you know, this rule or.

Or account for this particular activity of the university because it can't be accounted for by this broad brush model that we've created. So we will spend the year refining that, but the first pass at those numbers will be available by the end of March and the only other one is.

In in all of the the model, whatever you call that model, Kruger model, whatever, yes, you have each of the schools lined up across the whole place. The Kruger report, yes. Do you have each of the regional campuses in there as well? So we'll get a complete view of the regional campuses as well. Yeah. So in the model moving forward.

Regional campuses are actually will be treated as the cost centers, those central cost areas, they will not be revenue centers. So as we think about the model and where the revenues are allocated, the revenues are allocated to the the schools and colleges and the auxiliary units that you know housing, dining and athletic.

Bikes for example. And then all the cost of the university, the the central cost including the regional campuses get allocated back to those revenue centers. And so in the new model per SE, we won't necessarily see a hey, the regional campus has this amount of revenue and this amount of expense.

We'll know that the base expense of the regional campus, but we won't know or we won't look at it as a revenue center that's generating revenue because those credit hours that generate revenue from those students, those belong to a school and

college. I think once we get to the end of of March and you see those numbers, it'll be very clear to you how that will show.

DM **Devon McGee** 34:09
OK.

BT **Board of Trustees** 34:10

Shake out. OK, OK, good. Are there any any questions, Tom? Sure. Questions. We get discretionary bond funds from the state. How does this fit into this whole scenario? It doesn't. The bond funds are not part of this budget model.

The the capital program, the bond funds are outside of the operating so the bond funds will still be like we have the 464,000,000 and we've internally allocated it to certain people to determine where it goes. So that will stay the same that that'll stay the same that process is outside of this this budget model.

It could skew things, but OK, I got you the.

OK. Cause one one example like I did just something I learned this morning when you know we talk about the regionals and cause I was concerned about the profit and loss and when we add bond funds to a regional campus that that just makes it profitable because we get zero, it's like a gift.

So like Stanford is profitable because they've gotten \$40 million in the last 10 years and Waterbury's gotten 3 million. And so I just think and we'll get into, we get into the regionals, it is.

Well, anyway, that is something that needs to be dealt with.

I have to turn myself on. That's a great point. And I think it feels like we've got to do some work around the regional campuses because between the bond funds and the not the revenue that goes to the college and and I'm not sure what I'm going to, we're going to see. Yeah, well, I think we FFE is gets done differently in every campus, OK, but we take it out of.

Bond funds, it doesn't count toward their account. If we buy an apartment in Stanford and they are making money off the rents, that's profitable. If we borrow money to build something somewhere else, it goes to their loss and it's just not the same. Finally, just.

What is the role of the trustees in all this other than just to vote on it?

Yes. So the trustees approve the total budget and I understand, but during the process, I mean anybody can vote on a budget at the end in terms of insights,

concerns where we would like.

People to look at in a certain are we just not relevant till the end. So the the trustees help to set the strategic plan in the operational priorities of the university that are there to guide the decision making by the President and the Provost for where to invest those those revenues of the university.

But also you know the the revenues that are allocated out to those schools and colleges are driven by student demand. Those students that you know Nathan is recruiting and you know the areas of you know the majors that they want to go into are driving those revenues into the various schools and colleges and then the operational.

Priorities will help to guide us as well as to where to invest to support those students and where that demand is. And then just final question, just cause will we get something like a like the state gets a budget pack, you know like a budget book for once.

Yeah, we we will. We do plan to provide you a further level of detail in the future for you know that each of those revenues centers, all those schools and colleges and auxiliary units, what those pictures look like that was that was what.

I guess if we we we should be out of all this data, it's it's gonna go more than one one one page here, right? It will be a booklet. If I can just chime in, you know we are doing, we are doing the annual review and everything the budget planning, the budget approval goes through the process.

So we have the process and and we are looking now how to make that process more transparent from the planning perspective and posting everything online that the department heads have a huge saying, the unit leaders have a huge say and we go based on our objective.

Practice that are stated in the strategic plan and operating plan. So it means that we can we can have a conversation what is the best path forward and is this the right path. But I will wait for one more month after they finish the study and then we have a conversation. Thank you.

Good. Thank you for the comments. We have 20 minutes to get through this or else the Chairman's going to yell at me. So any questions, Lisa, go ahead.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 38:58

The chair is gonna ask a question if you'll let him and and I'm currently sitting. I'm

currently sitting behind 6 plow trucks on 384. So if we end up being a little late there, so no problem, no problem. So I had a I have a question for for Devon McGee.

BT **Board of Trustees** 39:02

Where is it?

Sorry, Dan.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 39:18

And then which is you guys have done this at other institutions. So what what have you seen about what we're how we're currently doing things and how we are transforming?

DM **Devon McGee** 39:24

Yeah.

BT **Board of Trustees** 39:29

Mm.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 39:34

That was surprising or unusual to you relative to how you've experienced this at other like institutions to us.

DM **Devon McGee** 39:42

Yeah, I mean, Dan, I I I think what what I have seen thus far is that you all have a great engagement structure by which you have almost 100 folks that have been really engaged in this process and have gotten a chance to be, like I said, kind of supporters of of this.

Of of the the budget transformation initiative. Overall, I think the institution, you all as as an institution are dealing with a lot of the same headwinds and challenges that many other institutions within your region are. There's demographics challenges, there's there's research challenges that might or might not be kind of manifesting themselves.

A lot of those problems are anticipated and potentially on the right track for being solved for with some of the updates that Reka provided earlier with the financial sustainability plan, right. So that gets folded into the model, right that will be folded

into this forward-looking.

Decentralized budget model to say we know we have to plan for rescissions and we know we have to plan for these things because UConn is experiencing those the same way that other institutions in in your region are. And I think you all have planned for that and kind of operationalized a financial sustainability plan that will work very well with a.

Centralized budget as well.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 40:58

Great. And so, and and you could help us as you go through this. Um, I I I hear a lot. Enough transparency, there's not enough engagement and not not about this project per SE, but almost every time we talk about matters of of finance. So if you could just keep your eyes and ears open and if you feel like this process is not providing.

BT **Board of Trustees** 41:15

Yeah.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 41:30

An appropriate level of engagement and transparency for all of the constituencies who, you know, who work at UConn, you know, please just alert us to that. I I don't want to get to the end of this and have people say we weren't involved, we didn't know, nobody talked to.

DM **Devon McGee** 41:40

Yeah.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 41:50

To us this thing went too fast and have it have merit. If if people say that and it has no merit, you know we move on. But you could just be a a little bit of an auditor for us on that because we we do frequently hear that and I know.

DM **Devon McGee** 41:54

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 42:07

That the board and that leadership of this university are very committed to transparency, whether people believe that or not. Um and and then if I go ahead.

DM **Devon McGee** 42:14

Yeah. And and then I I I I agree that that is that is one of the founding principles I think of this project and the town halls, the working groups, the steering committee, the board updates, everything that that I think we we are trying to do aims to fully kind of pull back the veil of this and share.

Very, very directly share financials with rank and file members of the institution right at at at all these levels. If done right, this can and should live in some public form, but behind you know behind a login of course. But it should be available for folks to to understand on a transparent level what the unit level economics look like. So yes, we we are.

Very committed to the idea of transparency.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 42:55

Yeah, well and you make an important point right at the end there. So, so thank you for that. And then you know maybe to just sort of pick up a little bit where where, where tom-tom Ritter was commenting about you know role of trustees, one of the things that I think is important.

At a minimum for the Financial Affairs Committee and then maybe anyone else like me on the board who would be interested, this transformation in this process and the systems that will be will come out of it are.

Are tools to make decisions, not, at least as I understand it, tools that make decisions, right? They don't tell you what to do. They don't tell you how to allocate resources. They give you tools so you can evaluate it and then ultimately people make those decisions. So, you know, I think if anyone.

DM **Devon McGee** 43:40

Yeah.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 43:48

You know, is worried that this, this new budget model is going to change anything.

All it is is going to turn a much brighter light on decision making for us, not right. So do you agree with that?

DM **Devon McGee** 44:04

If if the question was directed at me, I absolutely agree with that. There's going, there's going to be surpluses generated in some academic units and deficits generated in others. We know that we see that at every, every single time we do this. There's some units where they're generated deficit and that's OK because it's expensive to educate.

Blank, right. That is not to say, great, that unit just got a budget cut correlating to whatever their deficit is. This is not kind of, this is not, it's not a for-profit university, right? We're not saying we're only picking the winners or we're only investing in the winners. We know that there are subsidies and subventions and things like that that that have to take place amongst and between units.

But you're you're right, Dan, it's a decision tool. It can help us say, do we want to be investing as much as we are in this versus something else that's growing or or needs additional kind of investment to fulfill our mission. Those are those are the kind of decision tools that are enabled by this budget model.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 44:58

Yeah, thank you. And I'm sorry to, you know, it may be obvious to everybody, but the the point I was going to make about the role of trustees here is, you know, there are going to be a a number of assumptions that get built into how that model allocates. Revenue and how it allocates cost and I think that would I I would suggest Andy if you if you agree that you host a session where we go through those because some of those might may be open to debate and at a minimum as a trustee.

If we're going to do this and it's a fresh start, I want to make sure we know how we are allocating revenues and how we are allocating cost because there will be some subjectivity and some decision making involved in that.

DN **Denis Nayden** 46:01

Uh.

Uh.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 46:01

So that we can collectively make good decisions.

MB **Mark B** 46:06

Yeah, because that that will skew data. I think you're spot on. We need to understand the detail.

BT **Board of Trustees** 46:12

If we could, I know Dennis has his hand up. Dan, I don't know if you have anything else. Lisa, we've got 13 minutes. We've got 13 minutes to get through 1/2 an hour of work. So if you have a question that can wait, that'd be great. If you can't, go ahead and ask it now, Lisa.

TD **Toscano, Daniel (IBD)** 46:13

Skype.

I'm done. Thank you.

Andy, Andy, it's Dan. Take the time you need. We don't. We don't need to wrap at 9:30. If you have, you guys have important stuff, so you're good.

BT **Board of Trustees** 46:35

Oh.

Oh, OK, good. We'll go for another hour. Lisa, you want to go and then Dennis, mine was really quick. You had just a clarification. So you had said that the regionals will be cost.

Not cost centers, but.

Um.

They will not be revenue centers. So we will not, we will not allocate tuition revenues to them. They will be cost centers. So just to clarify then all the decision makings for those regionals will be at the unit level. So for example CLAS will make.

The decisions for Avery Point and Stanford.

For that's an evolving situation that we're working through. OK, that's what I was a little concerned. Thank you.

Bond funds are outside this budget model.

DN Denis Nayden 47:37

So Dennis here. Just a suggestion, Devon McGee. What I would find useful is you you you're using the phrase a transformational model.

BT Board of Trustees 47:39

Yes.

DN Denis Nayden 47:50

So you come up with whatever characteristics you want as to, well, here's where, here's how we did things before.

DM Devon McGee 48:03

Mhm.

DN Denis Nayden 48:04

Here's how we're going to do things now, and here are the biggest changes in how we operate as an institution. So just as a, you know, generic matter, I would find it very useful.

DM Devon McGee 48:13

Mhm.

Yep.

DN Denis Nayden 48:19

To know the four or five, I'm just making this up to illustrate the point, four or five things that are going to be fundamentally different going forward that that then bring some credibility to this is really important change.

DM Devon McGee 48:20

Yeah.

Yeah.

Mm-hmm.

BT Board of Trustees 48:30

Sure.

DM Devon McGee 48:35

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. I I think that is, I think that is reasonable and viable, Dennis. I think there's also a very clear mechanism. And the North Star of all this is to say, what is the strategic plan? What is the institution's mission, mission and priority? I have kept this next to my desk for six months because it's important that.

BT Board of Trustees 48:36

Yeah, yeah.

DM Devon McGee 48:55

Is to be.

The guide. The strategic plan is the guide for how you allocate dollars and how you apportion credit to fulfilling the components of the strategic plan down to the individual units, right? To your point, what changes? That's a big change. There is a very clear carrot. There's a very clear relationship between fulfilling the the goals. Around rankings and things like that to the budget model such that when a unit does the right things that the institution says are important to it in the strategic plan and in its mission, it gets, it gets dollars for the fulfillment of those initiatives.

BT Board of Trustees 49:30

Good point, Dennis. Thank you. Good point. So Devon McGee, I have a question. You mentioned that 100 people engaged in this process. Out of 100 people, how many of them are faculties?

DM Devon McGee 49:40

Mhm.

15 ish.

BT Board of Trustees 49:50

Thank you.

DM Devon McGee 49:51

Mm-hmm.

BT Board of Trustees 49:53

I would just add to that that in addition to the working group members, we have in total engaged with over 700 individuals across the university through our various town halls and listening sessions. So it's not just the individuals on these working committees that we've been engaging with.

We have been, you know, having many, many meetings to be able to educate the university community about this new model that we're working on. Thank you, Reka. I guess the last question, just listening to all these questions between Dan's, Dennis's, Tom's.

Should we have a a, it doesn't have to be a whole day, but should we have a working group for FAC around this if you want to participate and all trustees would be invited just to go through this because just listening to the questions, there's a lot of different perspectives and expectations of the product that comes out and it might be helpful for us to.

Spend a couple of hours one day virtually, not in a snowstorm, and try to just make it clearer to everybody as to what's really happening, what's evolving so that we don't get Dan to get to your point. So we don't get to the end and say, oh ****, we we didn't. We missed this, this and this. Yeah, Andy, can I, since we're prolonging this. Sort of thought too. I think if we've been talking to OPM, OFA, maybe the four budget caucuses, you know, I mean, I think they're our funders. I think it'd be critical to bring them in to make sure that they are comfortable with this and.

Because they're always questioning our numbers. So this gives an opportunity to to be involved, hopefully. I'm not sure I want them in the same meeting as we are, but we may do too then. But we'll see OFA and OPM always have to agree before they can do a budget.

So we've engaged OPM and I've had a conversation with them already about the budget model and and been sharing information with them as we move along. So they've certainly been part of the conversation about what we're going, what we're working on and and what the goals are of this initiative. I'll talk to Dan and we'll figure out.

Structure to do that. I think it'd be helpful. Yeah. And I think the four, I think 4

caucuses, you know, they all have budget people. Yep. Would be helpful. Yep. Yeah. And off a.

OK, good. Thanks, Tom. OK, we're gonna move on, Dan. I have 7 minutes, but I'm gonna go. We're going over, so.

Thank you very much for all that. And we'll go through, we have two more things to do basically the contracts and agreements and the capital project budgets. Then we'll slip Jeff in because I see him here now and then quick University Senate update and then we'll be done. So Rick, do you want to take us through the contracts and agreements for approval and this is tab number.

Or in your books, I'm sorry, Item 5, Tab 4, sorry, contracts and agreements for approval. Thank you. I'm going to quickly go through some highlights. We have 3 new contracts that we're proposing today. The first one is for GHP Media for \$3,000,000 / a six year term to.

Provide our printing services for our student recruitment publications. This is a new contract as the result of a public bid just happens to be awarded to the incumbent and that they had the best bid for this option. The next two new contracts #2 and three on that list are for the International Studies Institute for \$15 million over a five-year.

Period and University of Granada for \$5,000,000 over a four year period. These contracts are for select study abroad programs in a few different countries and they cover the cost of tuition, accommodations, visa, emergency phone lines and other services for about. These particular contracts cover about.

210 students a year. So all of these contract expenses are paid by those fees that the students pay to participate in these programs. So those are the three new contracts.

There are 15 contract changes. I'm just going to quickly highlight seven of those.

Number four and five are very similar. NBI New England for a \$2 million.

Increase and Sauter Manufacturing for a \$4 million increase, no change in terms.

These are the first one. MBI New England is to fund some wall structures for the new SIM lab and the new school and nursing building and the second one Sauter Manufacturing is for.

Furniture refresh that we do annually in the dormitory buildings and so that's pretty standard. The next one is #7 CNG as Connecticut Natural Gas is an increase of \$5,000,000 / 5 years and this is to provide for continued operation and maintenance of our Cogen facility.

The gas pipeline, the next one is #12. The CNC janitorial services contract is a

\$3,000,000 increase with no change in term. And this was a scope change in that we added basically we added supplies to this contract. We were previously purchasing them through a different contract and we.

I've got gotten a good bid to add them to this CNC janitorial services contract for this increase in contract amount. The next one I will highlight is #14, the solar turbines for \$17 million over a five year contract extension. This is for full service and maintenance of our three turbine generators and the Cogen.

Facility. This is a sole source contract as this is vendor for the original equipment manufacturer. The next one is #15 Field Turf USA. This is to support a project budget you're going to hear about shortly. It's about a \$5 million increase to the contract is for the turf.

Installation and two existing natural grass football practice fields. And so this is the contract to support that project work. The last change I would highlight is #16 Texas Ores Fuel for two and a half million dollars. No change in term. This is to cover the cost of our increased heating fuel consumption needs.

Every year CNG does what they call a curtailment of our usage of CNG and we then have to run our operations on heating fuel. CNG has had additional curtailment periods during this heating season because of the cold winter and so we've had to use more heating oil than planned for so.

This increase in contract is to cover that increased need. There are three revenue grant contracts. I'm just going to quickly highlight two. Number 19 is with the Connecticut Department of Education. It's a 3.6, I'm sorry, \$3.7 million increase to continue implementation of the K through three literacy.

Initiative through June of 2028. And then the second one to highlight is #20 with the Connecticut Department of Transportation. It's up to \$12 million to continue support for the Connecticut Transportation Safety Research Center through June of 2031.

And then finally there are five leases and there are three to highlight.

Number 3-4 and five in that lease list are all for Waterbury Health Operations Corp. These are for three properties from the new Waterbury Hospital. They're 10 year leases with two 10 year renewal options at an annual cost of \$12,000 each.

And I'm not sure if Jeff, do you want to say anything in addition in addition on those 3 contracts? No, I would be happy to answer any questions related to those, but we'll open it up for anybody.

OK. Are there any questions on the contracts and agreements as presented?

We can note, Mr. Chair, all of the all of the leases were previously approved by the

Board of Directors on on Monday for UConn Health. Great. Thank you, Jeff. Great. There be no questions. Could I have a motion and a second to approve the contracts and agreements as presented?

Moved Vogel.

MB **Mark B** 58:05

Check second boxer.

BT **Board of Trustees** 58:07

Thank you. Thank you. Any questions, comments, all in favor. Aye, aye, aye. Any nays? Any abstentions? Great motion passes.

PR **Philip Rubin** 58:15

I.

MB **Mark B** 58:15

Bye.

BT **Board of Trustees** 58:22

Reka, if you can take us through the capital project budgets, stores based and UConn Health. Actually Eric Kruger is going to take us through the stores based budgets and Tom from UConn Health will take us through UConn Health budgets.

Good morning. I have 6 project budgets for review and approval today. The first one is a budget for parking lot L That's a \$1.255 million budget and we share the slides on this one by any chance?

No. OK. All right. I'll continue. This resolution is asking for this final budget based on actual bids received. And we're also asking for a waiver of the three-step process for approval. And that's just based on the fact that our planning and design has already been completed for under \$500,000.

This improves the existing gravel parking lot located on Discovery Drive across from the central warehouse. Right now, there's no lighting, there's no parking stripes or curbing. It'll make it safer for folks that park in that area.

The next resolution is motor pool fuel tank replacement. This is a final budget of \$3.1 million and this is a replacement of two existing 10,000 gallon tank underground storage tanks, diesel and gasoline and associated fueling infrastructure including the

pumps, controls and and piping.

And that's to be in accordance with underground storage tank regulations with deep. The next project budget is practice field upgrades. We're asking for a final budget of \$4.9455 million. We're also asking for a waiver of the three-step process. We plan to get these two new artificial turf fields installed this summer.

To be ready for the 202627 football season. This is a upgrading the two existing natural gas grass practice fields and we've been having a lot of challenges maintaining those for safety for the practice.

And this will also allow us to increase opportunities for year round use by recreational programs.

The next project budget is a \$10 million final budget request for facade and roof repairs program. This is another one that is asking for a waiver of the three-step process. This generates from the 2016 study that was done for resident hall.

Facade and roof status. We took a look at that report again and look closely now that it's 10 years old and we found about 11 projects that we really want to get on this summer to make it safe and also to keep the keep the water from intruding into the buildings.

Page 3 or correction, page two of that document lists the the buildings we are gonna address.

The next project budget is for Gamble Pavilion Generator Replacement Project. This is a revised final of \$643,000, which is an increase of \$48,000 and this is to an order for us to close out the project.

This is due to some unrealized generate temporary generator charges from the general contractor and that allows us to close out the project.

The last budget we're bringing to you is for the Avery Point parking lots A&B upgrades. This is a revised final of \$2.41 million. This is an increase of \$1.41 million over the original final budget and mostly that is due to the lighting and the camera cost and also.

Stormwater management so that we can have our conduits run for the electrical and camera and communication. And also we have a if you look at the picture associated with this project budget, we'll have some rain gardens installed between.

The parking area and a Long Island Sound to help filter any kind of salt or debris before it goes into the sound. I'm happy to answer any questions.

Thank you.

Thanks, Eric. Tom, you're going to do you can help.

I have seven items that I wanted to go through and if you don't mind, I'd like to take them a little bit out of the pre-printed order. It's not often that the facility side of the house can offer a financial ROI on our projects. So we have three of them that I wanted to start with. The first one is Torrington. We have a a new primary care specialty care.

Radiology and now blood draw the the two chair blood draw station that we're adding is \$120,000. That actually comes with the idea of within two months we'll actually have payback on that. Along the same lines are surgery centered on the ambulatory side in the South campus. We have 5 ors we want to add.



Orlikoff, Jennifer 1:03:47

3.



Board of Trustees 1:03:56

6th that will actually help us decant some of the lesser priority or complexity cases that are up in our main OR and we'll bring them down the hill. So with that one, we're looking at a proposed design budget of two and a half million dollars. The third one that we have is an energy improvement.

Project that we're looking at, this will insulate a lot of our pipes, valves and items throughout the campus. That total cost is \$925,000. We're asking for a waiver of the the three-phase process here, mainly because we want to make sure that we get to CNG for the.

\$700,000 that we'll be able to return in in rebates. With that, the balance is also cleared in about 2 1/2 years because we'll be looking at \$97,000 of cost avoidance per year with this work that we'd be doing.

Getting back to some of the the typical facility projects that we look at, our main lobby doors into the CT tower. Unfortunately the rotating door there has become a a service and safety nightmare for us. It has old sensors where somebody actually has to hit the sensor before it stops on a couple of occasions.

That hasn't worked well. We're looking to get a new set of doors where there'll be an airlock in between stopping the cold and wind coming in in the winter, but also providing a much more safe entry for our our patients and visitors that need assistive devices as they walk in.

For that one, we're also looking to to try and get that work done quickly and before next winter sets in. So we're looking for a waiver there as well. On the lab medicine

side, we have 6 core lab areas that we're looking to renovate over the years. A lot of equipment has been brought in.

Causing a lot of concern from a worker safety perspective on how they have to maneuver around. Business has also grown and we're trying to promote additional service growth there. So we are looking at a design budget for that location of \$4 million.

We have an update, an upgrade to our MRI area between the infrastructure that the HAC system that tempers the room as well as the equipment itself. There's been a lot of downtime on the diagnostic equipment, so we have an upgrade from Siemens for one of our MRI as well as the room itself.

And to do this work, we also have to bring in a temporary trailer. So we we now have a revised final budget at \$2.36 million for that one. And then the last one, our central sterile area, just before turnover, there was a water quality issue that was found for where we.

Sterilized all of our OR and dental instruments and we had to add a reverse osmosis system. So that one now has a revised final of \$8.425 million. That was an increase of \$460,000.

Any question on these?

Thanks Tom. Any questions?

And any of them.

OK. Could I have a motion and a second to approve the capital projects as presented for stores and UConn Health?

GB **George Barrios** 1:07:09

Motion barriers.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:07:11

Thank you. Thank you. Any other questions? OK, any abstentions? All in favor? Aye. Aye. Any nays? Motion passes. Thank you. OK, two more things. Jeff, if you can give us a really quick update on UConn Health, that'd be.

MB **Mark B** 1:07:11

Talk for a second.

Hi.

OD O'Keefe, Daniel 1:07:22

I.

BT Board of Trustees 1:07:31

Great.

Excellent. Good morning, everyone. So just to go over high levels of the financials for UConn Health, very similar to what Rico President did just previously in the meeting, but we'll go through some information if I can. Perfect. So just going to the.

2nd.

Here on UConn Health, the thermometer and where we stand, I thought it'd be easier just to start here. So the bottom section of the dark green is 31.1 million. So you can just think of that as that is the amount of realized savings that we've had so far to date. Right above that there's another \$12.1 million which are.

Items that have been identified that will actually come in in the second-half of the year. So currently we have, we have identified \$43.2 million of that top total 46.7 million. So we still have some work left to do. We have about \$3.5 million that the team.

Still working on to balance the budget, but again going through the first six months of the year, we actually are in very good shape to make sure that we end the budget June 30th in balance. So going back one page, Justin, I won't go through all of the details here, but high level.

First column is our is our forecast where we believe we will be at June. That second column again is our the original budget and then just showing the variance too. So what have we done to get to that \$43 million and that's basically the variance column. So if you look in the total revenues.

You'll see that variance is a positive \$13.5 million or 13.5 more revenues than we originally budgeted. And they're really the bottom 2 lines are the driver there, the net patient revenue and that's based on volume and actually revenue enhancements across the clinical enterprise.

And then the other revenue you'll see is 2.4 million and that is related to our specialty and retail pharmacy operations for UConn Health. In addition to that, down at the bottom on the expense line, you'll see total expenses.

Total expenses in the variance is a savings of \$29.7 million. So the first two lines in their salary and wages and fringe benefits, we continue to look at all positions. We

monitor and either slow down hiring when we can or eliminate positions.

And.

For just a normal turnover as we go through. So the position review committee is still meeting on a weekly basis for all staff and faculty positions are reviewed before they are posted and rehired. And then just to point out the other two are purchased services. Rico went through some of this before our.

Conferences and travels and negotiations with vendors and everything else we've been doing as part of our savings program. A lot of that runs through this line and you'll see that's an \$8.2 million savings. And then we have held off capital projects on the bottom for a \$10 million savings. And again, this is items that could be postponed.

Postponed to a future year, we have postponed those items and reduced the spending in the current year to help balance the budget. But overall just to point out and I think it was mentioned before doing a great job in 26 in fiscal year 27 though a lot of these items are one time, so they do come back and.

We still have work to do as we prepare for our next budget here in fiscal 27. So just to end with that, the governor's, you know, did present his proposed budget for next year for fiscal 27. So over on the right-hand side in the orange is just the governor's proposed budget.

So the main difference really you'll see the green is what was enacted last year and then right next to it in the orange we do have a reduction about 700,000 was proposed in the governor's that is related to a lot of we call them the allocated grants. So we had an endometrial.

Grant that was in there, neuromodulation in a study for migraines, a lot of these single eye eye line items got reduced. So going forward for UConn Health, we will ask for those funds to be reinstated working with you know the the the PIS on each of the individual grants.

And then as was mentioned before, also the other thing that's still up for discussion is there are no approved salary increases either for fiscal 26 or 27. If anything does go before the legislature and they approve an increase, we will ask for the associated funds along with that increase expense.

So as we're starting, we're starting to kick off those project. Those are the two items that UConn Health will be focused in on this session. So I'll stop there. Mr. Chair, I'd be happy to take any questions. Great, Jeff. Thank you very much. Any questions for Jeff on UConn Health?

OK, they're being done. Thank you, Jeff. The last piece is if Representatives Boucher or Fernandez have any report for the committee. Yeah. So in the interest of time, I'll try to keep this brief. So the Senate Budget Committee met on January 29th.

From 3:30 to 5:00 virtually, and Jeff gave a sort of a 30,000 foot view of how the university calculates net tuition, so I'll keep that in the notes.

But more importantly, there was a discussion about the BTI and how it might impact the university. Obviously, I want to raise the following sort of four concerns that the committee had. The most important thing that they were concerned about is that the governance structure is still.

Unclear and it's not particularly clear how the this particular committee, the Senate Budget Committee would be would be involved in it. So I I think I I know the process is ongoing and needs to be clarified, but I I think these are some initial concerns.

Sort of who gets to decide who's at the table for these sort of discussions and decision making processes. The second one that was of concern was that the model as currently presented has very little in it that that stresses the quality.

Of instruction and there was some concern about how that was was going to be measured. And then the third thing was that the Fine Arts and Canar are particularly concerned about the square footage usage and how those metrics might be incorporated in.

In in their different academic units, so a little bit more clarification and then I think that in in general there there is some concern that Radenka had asked how many faculty were involved in these.

Working groups, while we appreciate that there's been a lot of involvement, there's a little bit of concern that perhaps not enough faculty have been involved in in these sort of decision-making processes. Thank you.

Thank you, Lisa. Appreciate it. And then there are a number of items in here, informational items, contracts and agreements, construction project status reports, quarterly construction status reports of period ending 12/31/25 in the UConn 2000 book 61.

Uh.

There being no need for an executive session, any other issues that need to be brought in front of the of the Financial Affairs Committee?

There being none, do I have a motion and a second to adjourn?

PR Philip Rubin 1:15:48
The second Rubin.

BT Board of Trustees 1:15:48
So moved on. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. All in favor. Aye. Any
nays? Motion passes. That concludes the Financial Affairs Committee meeting.

MB Mark B 1:15:50
Second boxer.
Bye.

PR Philip Rubin 1:15:55
Hi.

LS Locke, Susan 1:16:01
Yes.

AD Andrea Dennis-LaVigne 1:16:03
Thank you, Vice Chair Bessette. This is Andrea Dennis Levine. And as you see, I'm
looking, I see that that Dan is not quite there yet. So never fear, we have someone
that's subbing in for for a portion of the meeting, so.
If I might, I'd like to call the to order and ask for a roll call. Sue, could you please take
the trustee roll call for the Board of Trustee meeting?

LS Locke, Susan 1:16:22
Sorry.
Yes, Board Chair Toscano.
We know he's there. Vice. Yeah, Vice Chair Dennis Levine.

MB Mark B 1:16:37
I see he's on.

AD Andrea Dennis-LaVigne 1:16:37

He's probably parking.
Present.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:16:45
Trisha Bailey.
George Berrios.

GB **George Barrios** 1:16:54
Here.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:16:55
In the percent.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:16:58
Here.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:16:58
Mark Boxer.
Charles Bunnell.
Cherry Cantor.
John Driscoll.
Sean Dunn.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:17:13
Yeah.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:17:13
Brian Hurlbert.
This is Naden.

DN **Denis Nayden** 1:17:18
Here.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:17:19

Daniel O'Keefe.
Pollard.

PB **Pollard, Bryan** 1:17:28
Here.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:17:29
Thomas Ritter.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:17:33
Um.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:17:35
Reuben.
Charlene Russell Tucker.

PR **Philip Rubin** 1:17:38
here

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:17:41
Fabio Sacamana.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:17:45
Here.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:17:45
Richard Vogel.
Natalie Wagner and Diane Whitney. Madam Vice Chair, you have a quorum.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:17:48
Here.
Yeah.
Here.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:17:56

Thank you very much, Sue.

OD **O'Keefe, Daniel** 1:17:56

And apologies, Dan O'Keefe stepped away. I'm here.

DB **Dr. Trisha Bailey** 1:17:59

This is Trisha Bailey. I'm I'm here as well.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:17:59

OK.

OK. Thank you.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:18:02

Thank you both. Excellent. So then maybe now take a roll call of the University Senate representatives that are in attendance today.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:18:13

Ross bags of glue.

Karen Bresciano.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:18:18

Here.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:18:18

Lindsay Cummings.

CL **Cummings, Lindsay** 1:18:21

Here.

LS **Locke, Susan** 1:18:21

Karen Fernandez.

Timothy Volta.



Fernandes, Carrie 1:18:26

Here.



Locke, Susan 1:18:29

Micah human.



Board of Trustees 1:18:33

Here.



Locke, Susan 1:18:33

Horia Elis.



Ilies, Horea 1:18:36

here



Locke, Susan 1:18:37

Tina McCarthy.

And Lisa Parkbouch.



McCarthy, Tina 1:18:39

Here.



Locke, Susan 1:18:42

Thank you.



Board of Trustees 1:18:43

Here.



Andrea Dennis-LaVigne 1:18:45

Thank you very much. The next will be public participation. And I know given the weather, I'm not sure how many are actually in the room, but we have 14 individuals that signed up to speak this morning and we have about 30 minutes allotted for public participation, therefore those that are speaking this morning.

Please remember to limit your comments to ensure that everyone has an opportunity

to speak and as well just to remind the board, we received a number of written comments as well which have already been shared with us and had a chance to look at those. So with the help of those of that are in the.

Believe Doctor Mark Buchanan, you were the first that is listed on on my sheet here.

Are you there?

No, Doctor Mark Buchanan. OK, next Professor Gay Tuckman.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:19:40

He's here. No, he's here. He's here.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:19:44

Oh, so sorry. Thank you. Appreciate that. Welcome, Doctor Buchanan.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:19:48

OK.

OK, I'm sorry if I'm looking in the wrong direction. I couldn't tell where that last voice came from. Here it goes. I'm Mark Buchanan, a clinical assistant professor of medicine. For 23 years, the School of Medicine has recognized me as an outstanding teacher. Since retiring from clinical care in 2018, I've continued.

to teach, donating hundreds of unpaid hours to the school. To my surprise, it is my willingness to teach without pay that has taken from me the academic freedom protections granted to other faculty. Two years ago, Mr. Toscano told students that meaningful education demands the free

Exchange of ideas and spaces where they can be openly discussed and debated, including on some of the most contentious issues. I share that view, but must report that the university has rejected it. I've been struggling for well over a year to assert academic freedom, my freedom to teach and the freedom of students to learn a balanced.

Fair and evidence backed approach to a contentious subject. Worse, when activist students threatened their classmates who might have enrolled in my elective course, senior educational leaders sided with them and retaliated against me.

My attempts to access the university's protection for free speech have been blocked by the Dean, the liaison who controls access to the Health Center Appeals Committee, the Compliance Office, an ad hoc group of senior administrators organized by that office, and finally by the Office of the Provost.

The final decision is that unpaid faculty are not entitled to the protections granted faculty in the bylaws of the university. Likewise, I've been denied redress through the Office of University Compliance for my claim of retaliation and defamation.

I filed my report last June. Eight months later I've had no decision and only two weeks ago did I see the first signs of an investigation. I do not expect the Board of Trustees to sort through all these issues. I merely want some mechanism whereby my claims can receive a thorough, fair and objective review.

You Critics claim that universities receive public benefits like tax exemption, research grants, tuition support, and in turn are obligated to impartially pursue and disseminate new knowledge and share it with students and society. The critics would further claim that many universities have failed in this, and they stand ready.

To fix the problem, I would not want our university to face that kind of heavy-handed intervention and from the beginning have limited myself to the structures that the trustees have put in place to protect academic inquiry and expression. I've been told that no such protection is available to me. My effort to keep this in.

House has reached the end of the road, so I bring the concern to the highest authority in the university and hope that the Board will act to protect the values that it professes.

I have provided the Board with a brief written summary of my concerns and I'm happy to answer questions now or in the near future.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:23:01

Thank you very much, Doctor Buchanan. I thought I saw Chairman Toscano enter the room, but I don't see him now. So I believe I'd I'd like to move on to our next participant, which is Professor Gay Tuckman.

OK.

OK, I see a new view. So no. So Doctor Tuckman, you're not there.

OK, then Scott Whetstone.

I see you are coming to the podium. Thank you very much.

But I can't tell where our chairman is from this view, but we'll be good.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:23:55

Good morning and thank you for the good morning and thank you for the opportunity to be heard. My name is Scott Whetstone. I am a UConn graduate and an Associate Associate Professor of Public Health Sciences. I am in my 47th year of

employment at UConn Health and among the many ways I have served the university was a 20.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:23:56

Like.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:24:15

20 year stint as the administrative liaison to the Health Center's Board of Directors. I feel I have considerable knowledge and experience of board level governance and you have because of that, you folks have my sincerest gratitude for the time and effort you donate to the university as as trustees.

I am here today to ask that you contemplate your role in governance as it relates to the setting and maintaining of the university values towards academic freedom and the policies and practices for adjudication of allegations of retaliation or misconduct. My remarks today concern the issues raised earlier by Doctor Mark Buchanan. He has alleged his academic freedom was unduly curtailed and that he's benied any meaningful access to a fair and competent review of his allegations. He alleges that he was and continues to be retaliated against and has described breaches of the. The university's code of conduct, including creating a hostile work environment and acts of intimidation against students considering enrolling in his elective. These later allegations were submitted to the Compliance Office in June of 2025, and yet no determinations have been communicated with him.

I believe this board has the ultimate authority and responsibility to address Doctor Buchanan's issues, even if that means reconsidering the precedent already set by academic, legal and compliance office leadership. The legislature of the State of Connecticut created the university.

It created and empowered the Board of Trustees to govern it. You do this primarily through the bylaws, board approved policies and through board approved budgets, purchases, academic appointments and similar decisions. The President is appointed by and works for the Board.

While it is usually wise to follow the recommendations provided by the professional staff, in some cases, such as the one pertaining to Doctor Buchanan, the Board might be in a better position to understand and ensure the long-term values and reputation of the university are maintained. I believe you have decisions to make on these two items.

Items either by acting or choosing silence. First, do you believe the university should have an objective and competent process for adjudicating allegations of infringement on voluntary faculty members right to academic freedom? Second, do you believe allegations of retaliation and reports in them regarding? Serious violations of the university's code of conduct should be resolved in a reasonable time frame and not take eight or more months. Thank you for your consideration.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:26:54

Thank you for your time. I appreciate that as well as the rest of the board members do. Next we have our student, Mia Giancola. Mia. Podium is yours.

 **Orlikoff, Jennifer** 1:27:17

Hello.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:27:18

Thank you.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:27:27

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Board of Trustees. My name is Mia Jankola. I use she/her pronouns, and I'm a student with a disability. I'm here before you to talk about a Disability Cultural Center at the University of Connecticut. This initiative was unanimously supported by university student government resolution at their.

February 11th meeting. I recently spoke at the Student Life Committee on February 19th. The Disability Pride movement has been rapidly growing since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. It's driving statement. There can be nothing about us without us.

I believe that UConn can help lead this. There are twenty other disability cultural centers across the nation, with twelve additional in progress. This includes our peer institution of University of Maryland College Park, which was approved by the President in 2021.

I distributed a needs assessment to members of all campuses, graduate and undergraduate. It has been active for thirty-five days. The survey was confidential and

voluntary. This received 904 responses. Twenty-seven percent were sophomores. 32% were freshmen. According to a stratified sample, 33% of students at the Storrs campus identified as having a disability or significant mental health diagnosis. 89% of students supported the proposal.

I would like to draw your attention to the 11% of students unsure or opposed. I had a student tell me that disability should not be celebrated since it has placed such a burden on their life. Is this the reflection of the student or the lessons taught about disability through society?

Further, I would like to emphasize that this would be entirely separate from the Center for Students with Disabilities, which manages accommodations. We will focus on disability, pride, authentic representation, community, mentorship and advocacy. All of which equates to holistic student success and sense of belonging. When asked for the benefits of this idea, the qualitative feedback was coded into having a like-minded community, having a safe, quiet, inclusive space, advocacy, awareness and expression.


And providing a resource for fellow Huskies. I've conducted 53 interviews, heard 53 stories, 53 individuals who volunteered their time to support future UConn. Even though this is just a proposal, students have emailed me every day to say how grateful they are.

That they feel seen. Students who can't study without a quiet place. Students who are skipping class because they're overstimulated. Students on academic notice, dismissed from the university, looking for a community who understands.

We at UConn hope to normalize this conversation. We hope to promote resilience. This proposal will attract more prospective students with disabilities to the university. Our graduate student community has lined up to donate time resources.

And mentorship. I'm honored to see what we can achieve when the student body, allies and historically marginalized, overlooked minority group steps forward with the support of their university administration. If this moves forward, it is not because of me, but every member of the student body who came together.

I will now pass it to Gabby, another student leader who will tell us her story in an attempt to normalize student vulnerability pertaining to disability.

 **Philip Rubin** 1:31:05
Thank you.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:31:07
Gabriella de Solvo.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:31:13
Hold on just a second, Vice Chair.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:31:17
Oh, I know that voice. OK, I'll mute.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:31:21
I don't have the list though, so I'm gonna ask you to continue, but there's a a last part of this at.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:31:29
No problem.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:31:31
Good morning, everyone. I'm Gabby, as Mia said. I'm an undergraduate senior at UConn studying disability studies in media and food culture through an individualized major. My goal is to someday have my own cooking show with some kind of disability advocacy component within it.
Some of you may have noticed that I have a boot or a soft cast on my leg right now. Believe it or not, this is technically not related to my disability. On Monday morning, with the snowstorm and all that, I was getting out of bed and I fell and unfortunately injured my foot.
Fortunately, I am OK though, and was able to get back to my wheelchair with some assistance and with no really major issues at the time. After a couple hours though, I noticed that my foot was in a lot of pain, swollen and not really able to move much. Because of the snowstorm, I wanted to wait it out until the following morning to see if it improved. But yesterday morning when I woke up, I was unable to bear any weight on it and the swelling and bruising was much worse. I instantly started to panic as I knew it would be almost impossible for me to get to urgent care since UConn AVS doesn't run on snow days and the.
Sidewalks were not shoveled enough yet for me to roll there myself. This would

mean I'd be left with no other choice but to abandon my wheelchair, call an ambulance and be picked up to go to the emergency room. While getting ready to leave and call the hospital, my mom called me saying that she found an accessible transportation service that might be able to take me to urgent.

Care. Fortunately, they were able to, and I was able to get X-rays of my foot. Found out I do have a broken foot and that I might need a boot for about four to six weeks. But you're probably wondering why I chose to share all of this with you today, but you see.

If there is a Disability Cultural Center with a Resource Center like the one we are proposing, all of this would all of the stress and panic would have been avoided. Of course, the injury probably would not have been able to be avoided, but the reaction definitely could.

This is just one of countless examples that I and so many other disabled students on campus have experienced. And I'd like to preface, I do know a Disability Cultural Center may not create a solution for every single challenge or for every single student, but if it can benefit or make life easier for even just a few future Huskies. Then isn't it worth fighting for?

Lastly, I'd like to remind you that disabled individuals are the largest minority group. We're one in every four people. We're 33% of UConn's population alone. And we stand before you this morning, proud to be disabled students today, proud to be disabled Huskies forever. Thank you for the opportunity.

Opportunity to address the Board of Trustees. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:34:18

Thank you, Gabby, and we really appreciate you sharing these life experiences. Thank you.

As our group of individuals leave the podium, I would call Carrie Ann Caldwell up next.

Thank you, Carrie Ann.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:34:57

My name is actually Karen Ann Caldwell. I am an assistant professor in residence in the chemistry department here in Storrs. For anyone who doesn't know, an in residence faculty is a non-tenure track teaching only faculty member. I am here

speaking on behalf of the Executive Committee of AAUP, the American Association of

University professors, the faculty union here at UConn. Before I begin, I wish to say that the UConn AAUP Executive Committee stands in solidarity with the students on ICE and CBP being kept off campus.

As a member of the UConn AAUP Executive Committee, I am here to highlight a statement that we released January 9th, 2026. This states that UConn AAUP is deeply concerned that the UConn administration is undermining the core educational mission of the university.

As a faculty member, I have grave concerns about the direction of the university. Without full transparency, we are told that there is a budget crisis and that administration is calling for the elimination of programs deemed to be under enrolled. One of the best things about education at a State University like UConn is. Access to the diversity of courses. While students may complain about Gen. ed requirements, a university such as ours graduates a more well-rounded member of society than other schools. As quoted from Advisor Lee, general education exposes undergraduate students to diverse disciplines.

and ways of thinking. The breadth of knowledge helps students develop a more comprehensive understanding of the world and their place in it. By attacking faculty and funding in every college and department while not reining in other costs, we are depriving our students of the best education and depriving our state and society of the best citizens.

At the same time the administration is cutting programs, they are putting more pressure on the programs that are not being cut. I am here representing chemistry to give you an example. In the eight nearly eight years that I have been here, I have seen enrollment in general chemistry 1127 Q increased by more than.

33% from 12187 students to 17116. Each section now has approximately 240 students and cuts to the graduate programs mean that while the administration may have increased the number of students, they are reducing the number of graduate assistants since 2018.

Our teaching assistant or TA line has increased only 13% from 38 to 43. This is only for 1127 and the funding for TLS, the Teaching Laboratory stockroom, the people that provide our supplies, our glassware and our chemicals has been told that.

They are being cut.

Student enrollment is up 33% in this class. Teaching support is only up 13% and our

supply budget is being cut. The numbers don't add up. Looking at other courses, I teach a 3000 level physical chemistry lab. In the last three to four years, we have lost two of our physical chemistry.

Research professors, which we are told are not being considered for replacement.

The result is that I have difficulty every year finding TA's for my class. Physical chemistry may be one of the smaller areas of chemistry, but it is one that provides A diverse background for graduating students.

With physical chemistry, they emerge better prepared for future jobs and research opportunities. As a result of fewer faculty within the chemistry department, including these two unfilled research positions that I mentioned, we have been unable to offer undergraduate environmental focus in chemistry.

Many students have asked about it. Chemistry jobs are expected to rise up approximately 6% over the next five years, with environmental chemistry being an area with high demand. By not providing courses in this focus area, we are doing a disservice to our students.

I have wrestled with the conflicting ideas that UConn is a Tier 1 research institution at the time when numbers of faculty and graduate students are declining and access to funding for faculty is becoming more difficult. It has been discussed that the standard clinical in residence and extension theory faculty.

Teaching requirement will be raised from 3/3 to 4/3, meaning 7 courses per academic year. This change will have negative impact on faculty and harm student education, and it in no way takes into account the actual courses taught.

For example, a proposal submitted to CLAS from the chemistry department explained that a straight calculation of the number of classes per CIRE faculty member fails to take into account the actual classes being taught.

The physical chemistry lab I teach meets 6 hours a week rather than three, as do many of the upper level labs. These are labs not dedicated solely to TAS, but require the faculty member to be present as well.

Clinical instructors may see similar extended hours not reflective of the actual time spent in the classroom. This is a CLAS undercounting of our actual workload, and it isn't just STEM areas that are being affected.

Hearing from other faculty, I understand that there are issues everywhere on campus. Departments are being told to slash budgets, cut TA lines, increase class sizes by combining smaller sections, reduce research opportunities and other debilitating actions.

This administration professes to be focused on the students, and their faculty are treated in this manner. Students cannot be expected to obtain an optimal experience here at UConn in this way. For our statement of January 9th, the UConn AAUP and its members stand to research.

Innovation, stimulating teaching and mentoring, and shared decision making in funding. We ask the administration to please do the same. Thank you.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:41:24

Thank you.

Luca Cabercana.

Thank you, Luca.

It's a long walk sometimes, right?

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:41:47

My name is Luca Kabir Khanna.

I'm a third year student studying political science and Spanish and along with over 2000 students and members of our community that have signed the petition we bring forward.

I'm upset.

I'm disappointed. The Board of Trustees is a leading governing institution of this university, as the basic expectation of upholding the university mission statement in supporting and safeguarding the education of all of its students.

That is, quite frankly, your jobs and all of you, whether you're in attendance of this meeting or not, and your billions of dollars that you're worth are failing in almost every capacity of your position.

Embarrassingly so.

But you can change that. In light of the danger that federal immigration enforcement agencies continue to pose on our communities, we, the UConn Students in Defense of Immigrant Communities, including Alcansando Amidmo Sueno, UConn Solidarity Fund.

Undocu Huskies, Unchained and Jewish Voice for Peace formally demands President Merrick, the Board of Trustees, the broader UConn administration to adopt our list of 10 demands to ensure the safety of our student.

Faculty and staff communities of these demands. Most critically, we call on the university to not release any information on any member of our community, staff,

student or faculty without lawful judicially imposed warrants and deny any and all ICE or DHS.

Federal officers access on campus private property without valid, lawful, judicially imposed warrants to utilize to UConn alert procedures in the event the federal immigration enforcement agents enter UConn managed property or violate any of the listed demands.

And to remove the UCPD as a required party in any current and future university ICE responses, given the demonstrated evidence articulating the intentional or unintentional assistance the local police provide ICE immigration enforcement despite protocols listing otherwise.

As of now, however, this board has chosen acquiescence. It has chosen to do nothing, nothing to protect its students, its staff, its faculty, nothing to protect our communities from the violence.

We see unfolding in front of us nothing to ensure the safety of our education. With the power you have, the international recognition, enough money to feed thousands of families, you choose to do nothing.

Like a turtle sitting inside its shell, I ask you not just read and accept and enforce our demands in earnest, but also take a look at yourselves. A good, long, hard look in the mirror.

And ask yourselves.

What do you want your legacy to be?

What do you want your children or your grandchildren to think about you? What are you going to think about your life and everything you've done in those final moments on your deathbed, when all the money you've pocketed in your life can't buy you another second?

You could start sowing those seeds of excellence right now. All you have to do to start is accept and legitimately implement our demands that over 2000 members of our community and 26.

Organizations have signed on to.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:45:57

Rodney Alexander Junior.

You're up next.

And Luca, thank you for your remarks.

BT

Board of Trustees 1:46:18

Good morning. My name is Rodney Alexander Junior. I'm a councilman in the city of Willimantic, Connecticut, also the first vice president of the Wyndham Willimantic branch of the NAACP. I'm here this morning.

To address the concern of Wyndham tacked.

Of Wyndham Tech.

Being built in another town.

Windham Tech School has been a part of our city for decades, not a couple of years, decades. It's a cornerstone of a distressed city that we need all the help that we can get.

We realized that a new school has to be built. We are looking at this and you'll be hearing from others. Some information was made available to me that the.

Excuse me for a minute. Phone locked up.

That the CTECS is considering Mansfield.

Letter was sent to the NAACP over the past week with some erroneous facts about the population of colored students in the schools and the school.

Said that, if I recall right, because I don't have the letter in front of me, maybe 5 to 10 students in the school are black. Well, the NAACP represents all people of color.

Everybody here is a person of color.

What this letter overlooked was that our Latino population in our community, in our city, our Latino population makes up about 51% of the population and presently in Willimantic.

Of the 500 students who are there.

A good majority of them come from Willimantic. They can actually walk to the school if it's approved to be built in Mansfield. Now we're looking at transportation.

And this is another headache where kids used to be able to walk to school.

Removing Wyndham Tech from Willamana, CT as another eyesore to our city.

We already have to live with the fact that Hartford Healthcare closed their maternity ward, closed their ICU, which makes it even more difficult on our city to convince young couples to move to our city.

If anybody here can explain to me how a young city can grow when crucial corporations are making devastating decisions.

I'm all ears. And at this point, I want to say thank you. I'm going to turn it over to

State Representative Susan Johnson. Thank you very much for your time. Any questions I can be reached anytime. Thank you.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:49:44

Thank you, Mr. Alexander. Susan Johnson.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:49:48

Thank you so much for all the good work that you do and I'm really pleased to be here to discuss the fact that we really must try and keep Windham Tech in Windham. We have a very low income population. In fact, we are the lowest income region in the state of Connecticut. We have.

We have more public housing on a per capita basis than anywhere else in the state of Connecticut except for Hartford. We have three homeless shelters. We take care of people in the region. We take care of people all over. Part of the thing about Windham, though, also is we're an educational community. We have two magnet schools. We have the tech schools.

We have Eastern Connecticut State University. We are a great educational community and to take Windham Tech away and put it in Mansfield in a way where an area where we don't have the connections with people that would ordinarily be part of the tech school is a real, real problem.

Problem taking it away from a very high minority population. This would be the only time it's done in the whole state of Connecticut. Everywhere else, all the tech schools have been renovated or rebuilt in the area in which they were located. And so this would be very, very, very hard on the low income population where parents work two and.

Three jobs where they have to not really necessarily be available to take the child back and forth to a game that they might want to play in, be part of the sports team for that university, for the, I'm sorry for the tech school. And so it's really something that we really want to make sure that we do everything and the town.

The council has voted yes for this. We are offering free property to the state of Connecticut that would really be available and they could do all kinds of good things with the technical school, new geothermal. We would be able to do hydroelectric in that particular area. It's where the old mill burn. It's 46.

Acres. The only problem at this point in time that the tech school people from the state have indicated is the bridge. And so we want to wait for the Army Corps of

Engineers to give us an answer. I'm working with Congressman Courtney's office on that. And so I'm really hoping to work with everybody if you have another group that I could meet with and discuss this in more detail.

I'd greatly appreciate it, but I don't want to hold up the conversation and I want to now introduce Mayor Tom De Vivo.

Thank you, Representative Johnson. My name's Tom DeVivo. I'm the mayor of Windham. Windham residents depend upon Windham Tech. For those of you who may miss some of the some of the concept of why we're here today, Yukon controls the property that they're considering putting our new technical school on. It's a prison site off Route 44.

I urge you to to take your time and can before you consider don't giving this property over the C tech system. Windham has property. It would definitely damage your neighbor to the South. We count on Windham Tech, our businesses and. Industry and our community really are really count on the students that come out of there, out of Windham Tech. This building today, I'm sure the heating and air conditioning system was repaired, it was installed and it's being maintained by a Windham Tech student. We need Windham Tech to stay in Windham, the Town Council unanimously.

Supports Windham, Texting and Windham. And on that comment, I'd like to turn it over to my associate, Dennis O'Brien.

Thank you. I'm Dennis O'Brien, Attorney Dennis O'Brien. I'm a 1969 graduate of this institution. I have not been in this building. I used to be here all the time. I have not been in this building since 1969. It's great to be back. I'm also a graduate of the law school in 1972.

My parents didn't even go to high school. They were Depression era and and this this university has changed my life, made it better. I'm almost 83 years old. I'm still practicing law and I'm glad to be here today. I love UConn. I also love Willimantic. I've lived. I came E because of UConn. I've lived in Willimantic.

Willimantic since 1974. It is a wonderful town. Everyone is welcome there. It's like my hometown of New Britain. It's like Harford, Bridgeport, New Haven. But it has its problems, and the problems are generational poverty and the way out for a lot of kids in Windham.

The way up, the way up, and if they don't go to Yukon, if they don't go to Central and New Britain is through the tech school. And a lot of these people don't have cars. These people are very poor. We're one of the poorest towns in the state. We're

here today because apparently, as as Mayor De Vivo said.

UConn owns the property on which the tech school, the state tech school organization, wants to build the new tech school. Now we have been trying to work with them. We got a letter from Alice Pritchard, who is the new executive director of the tech school program.

Offering us other alternative solutions, which might include an annex in Wyndham, additional spots for members of our community in the new Mansfield building. And we we wrote our town manager wrote a letter back offering.

To meet with them and to talk about all that, we have not heard back in a month, almost a month and we are concerned that if UConn transfers that property over to the state for that and they use it and they start working on that, we'll never.

Have a chance to discuss this further with the state of Connecticut, which we'd love to do. It's a we wouldn't be here if we didn't feel this is a really important matter. It's wonderful to be back here. It's wonderful to see you all. Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak today.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:55:52

I believe our next person that signed up to speak is Angelo Montes.

It looks like you have other people coming with you, so I assume Ryan will be following you as well.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:56:13

Ryan will not be in attendance today. He's. Thank you.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:56:18

That's fine. All right, Angelo, then you have the floor.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:56:21

Thank you.

Good morning everyone. My name is Angela Montez. Many of you may know me from my previous role in USGS Governing Board as the Director of Organizations, Support and Services and my current membership on the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice and Accessibility Committee at the for the University Standing Committee and the Undocumented Student Advisory Board.

I do not stand here on their behalf, but on the behalf of the Immigration Defense

Coalition, and I wanted to touch base on the on the petition. Several members of the Board of Trustees and are proud graduates of this institution who are elected members of the UConn student student body. Nonetheless, you all have stakes. Here and a duty to the students.

UConn community organizers such as African Students Association, Afro Latinx Alliance, Alcanzandor Mismosueno, Applied and Resource Economics Club, Beekeeping Club, Black Students Association, Conmen Ethics Bowl Debate. Film Appreciation Club, Free Press, First Gen. Society, Frost Robotics, Garfield Club, Graduate Student Union, Jewish Collective, Yukon, Jewish Voices for PC, Yukon, Lambda Theta Alpha Latin Sorority, Latinas for Change.

NAMI on campus, Nepali Student Organ. Sorry, Nepali Student Association, Nintendo Club, Outing Club, Partners in Health Engage, Pakistani Student Association, period at UConn, PLUSCE, UConn Solidarity Fund, UCTV, Unchained, The Undergraduate Student Government.

Ondaku Huskies and WHUS Radio all support this petition. Many of you may recall the activism that began in 2012 from many organizers listed in this petition. We will continue to evolve and expand on their work. Now we build together for a better future together.

And we'll continue to take action until our demands are met. Community is the foundation of this institution, and your community is demanding action in this time of silence. Your community is scared, your community is tired, and your community is in need of your protection.

Thank you.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 1:58:27

Thank you. And just to be clear, Ryan is not up since he did did sign up to speak. Want to make sure we give him that floor.

OK, then our final speaker is Quinn Harper. Quinn Lee, make your way towards the podium, please.

Thank you.

BT **Board of Trustees** 1:58:53

Right. Good morning. Thank you for allowing us to speak here today. I would like to voice the concerns of myself, my neighbors and my community regarding the proposed golf facility project. I grew up on East Road where this facility is proposed

to be built and I would like to be clear this site is completely unsuitable for the construction of a driving range.

For a wide range of moral, scientific and ethical reasons that have been voiced by my fellow community members already. But I am choosing today to use my limited time to articulate the direct threat that it represents to my neighborhood. My parents property on East Road has suffered from severe water issues which stem from a unique set of environmental conditions that are natural to Spring Hill.

That is the reason it got its name. It's not named for the season. There are an abundance of unpredictable natural springs and a related very high perched water table that encompasses all of the residencies on East Road immediately down gradient of the proposed golf facility. This combination of conditions leaves all the residents with near constant water problems.

There are French drains and ditches visible all over East Road from my home. This was barely manageable with ditches and drains until the neighboring property uphill from us was selectively logged, removing a portion of the root systems, keeping the groundwater and earth in place, and sending it cascading down the hill in sheets when it rained, destroying our driveway, our well, our septic tanks and our septic fields.

Then, more recently, the property uphill from us was purchased by a local developer who planned to build multiple houses. Realizing that this would magnify the already existing problems we faced, we requested and paid for a study by qualified soil scientists, engineers and environmental policy lawyers to determine whether this new development would again send water and silt into our home.

Specialists determined beyond the shadow of a doubt that the proposed removal of trees and earth would indeed send more water and silt into our home. The town of Mansfield then requested an independent study of the proposed development by engineers and hydrologists very familiar with unique conditions on East Rd.

This team reached the exact same conclusion. Moreover, we learned that Yukon's failure to control runoff from its turf farm at the Agronomy Rd. Fields directly across the street from your proposed golf facility was a major cause of the excessive runoff issues on East Road. After a lengthy and extremely stressful fight to save our property, the developer agreed to sell my parents parcel so that it could be.

Preserved. Please understand this. The Gull facility you plan to construct is located on the exact same hill on the other side of the road, in these same unequivocally unsolvable water problems and soil issues that threaten the homes and property of

my neighbors.

The public hiking trail that runs directly adjacent to the parcel already suffers from water issues that are so severe the trail was completely washed out and had to be realigned last year. You must understand there is exhaustive engineering and environmental data that indicates any removal of trees from the Waxman Collection and the adjacent State Forest will condemn these people to a nightmare.

Scenario in which their homes are eroded and destabilized by runoff water from your facility. There is no water containment method that will be robust enough to stop this from happening, and the pesticides invariably used in golf facilities will further poison our wells and run straight down the hill into the Fenton River.

I understand that some concerns you have received from locals about projects in the past might appear to be emotional or NIMBY in nature, but this is not one of those cases. We are a community looking directly at hard data and legal precedent that spells out the only possible outcome of this project. I implore you as both an alumnus of UConn and a lifelong.

Strong citizen of Mansfield to abandon your plans for building the facility at this location. There are other viable spots at the Depot campus, not to mention the fact that the 12 students a year who would benefit from this facility already have no fewer than 9 driving ranges within a short drive of campus.

I the Waxman Conifer Collection. It is not a wasted space. With just a little attention, it could serve as a wonderful resource for both the Mansfield community and the UConn community as a memorial to Doctor Waxman as a pillar of the university and a dedicated servant in the cause of environmental preservation.

Thank you.

AD

Andrea Dennis-LaVigne 2:03:00

Thank you very much. We have that you are the last person on our list and I thank you all for taking the time to speak during the public participation portion of our meeting. We really do appreciate it. And Please remember, and I've said this before on behalf of the board, that we encourage individuals also to.

Attend our committee meetings where we have robust discussions about the items that appear on our board agendas. So we would encourage you to do that as well.

But again, appreciate that time that you've you've given us. If I may, Mr. Chairman, I would like to pass the reins over to you, I think.

You were there. You've taken care of. Are you settled in, Mr. Chairman?

BT

Board of Trustees 2:03:44

Yeah, thanks. Thanks, Andrea, for for covering for me. I think before we start, there's one last speaker that we're going to allow to address the group due to a technical malfunction. So I'm sorry, I don't know your name, but.

D and.

I live on 3 E Road. Good morning, Chair Toscano, President Merrick and other members of the Board. As I said, my name is Laura Toradenti. I live on 3 E Road. I am a proud alum.

Of the Neag School that used to be called the School of Education. I graduated 1983. I have lived on East Road, my home, a circa 1837 farmhouse with my family for almost 26 years.

I am asking the Board to pause advancement of the proposed, excuse me, golf training facility on East Road until such time as key questions about environmental impact, donor influence.

Process transparency are fully and publicly addressed. The university often emphasizes its commitment to being a good neighbor and a leader in environmental stewardship. Yet from the perspective of those of us living on East Road and Windswept.

The level of transparency around site specific environmental impacts has not fully met that standard. Already we are experiencing changes to the ecosystem and disruptions.

To the quiet environment of our property. Thus we see clear, publicly accessible information about how these impacts will be addressed.

This project, as currently described, would introduce a roughly 6000 square foot facility.

100 feet from my property line in the historic Spring Hill District. This is not a trivial change. Spring Hill remains one of the few areas that still reflects the rural historic character that residents, perhaps even prospective students and families.

Value about this community. My concern is not opposition for its own sake.

University evolves and facilities improve. I've worked on college campuses my entire career, but good planning requires public trust and right now.

That trust is strained. First, the environmental review process appears incomplete or, at a minimum, insufficiently transparent to the public, to the people most directly affected. Neighbors deserve clear information about stormwater management.

Tree removal, destruction of wildlife, lighting, noise and long term land use implications before decisions move forward. Second, there are legitimate public questions about donor influence.

And whether this project is being prioritized ahead of broader institutional or community needs, even the perception that private funding is driving, citing decisions without full public vetting can undermine confidence in the governance of this university.

Third, the public engagement process has felt compressed and reactive rather than rather than genuinely collaborative. Meaningful community input works best early before designs harden and momentum builds, not after key decisions.

Appear largely set. Respectfully, I ask the Board to pause any final approvals for the golf training facility. Ensure a fully transparent environmental and planning review. And provide a structured, good faith opportunity for neighbors and community input. Please consider other more appropriate sites among the university's vast real estate holdings. The Depot campus off 32. You know them better than I.

UConn's reputation as a good neighbor is built not on what it says, but what it does when concerns are raised. A pause now to ensure transparency and Community Trust will strengthen, not weaken, the University of Connecticut for the long term.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Thank you. OK, so we're running a little behind schedule. I'll do what I can to try to make up a little bit of time. First of all, thank you for everyone for coming. You're crazy.

I thought I was. I thought I was the only crazy one. But and I'd like to apologize to our staff. I underestimated what the weather was going to be like this morning. So we decided to move ahead in person, which in hindsight was probably.

A bad choice, but my career as a weather forecaster is is is now over. But thank you for everyone who who who made it out, even if you're just coming from a mile away or from 95 miles away.

Um.

So I'm just going to make a couple of quick comments and then we'll have some business and then we'll get into the president's report. I just want to call attention to a couple of things that have gone on around here over the course since our last meeting. I don't think we've been in person since since late last year.

Thank you.

Oh, thank you.

One of them, and a really important element of what we do with our students, is if

you have not seen the undergraduate first destination survey results, I would encourage you to take a look. This talks about.

What happens to our students after they earn their degrees here and and and move on into the world? In the most recent survey, 91% of our last graduating class had positive post-graduation outcomes.

Which means they took a full-time job or continue in their education or engaged in another productive pursuit such as the military or or non-profit. So 91%, it's a it's an incredible result. Obviously our goal is 100, but 91 is.

Is worth calling out. And then among our graduates, for Connecticut students who graduated, 77% of them stayed in state, which is an important consideration in terms of our ongoing impact to the population of the state of Connecticut.

And for graduates who came from out of the state of Connecticut, about 1/4 of them actually stayed, remained in Connecticut after graduation, which is up sharply year over year. So when we talk about the work that Jim Lowe and his team do.

And everyone who participates in the process of of getting our students ready for life after study job, job well done. So I I wanted to call that out. I want to hit one element of research.

If you are familiar with the outage prediction modeling team, I was not until I read this report, but I thought this was worthy of attention at at our public meeting, the research that they're doing first of its kind.

Combines studying weather events and county level outage data across the United States, and this is the work of one of our PhD students, Sha Saki, one of our.

Distinguished faculty members Manuel Agnostu and Julia Sophia. I hope I didn't mispronounce anyone's names as well as Bandana Carr at the National Laboratory of the Rockies. So this got a lot of attention in that world and highlights just the broad range of.

Research and good that happens on our campuses. And I'd also like to call out and acknowledge Dr. Jeffrey Hines, who we all work very closely with, who delivered the keynote address at the Martin Luther King Holiday Commission Commemoration.

Last month at the Capitol in Hartford, among luminaries from the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, US Senators and Reps, he reflected on what he called his four C's principles that are essential about keeping Martin Luther King's dream alive, compassion.

Courage, commitment and and coalition. So it was great to see one of our own from UConn. UConn Health play such a a prominent role in that. And then lastly, I don't

know what you were doing Sunday morning at 8:00 AM.

I'm usually asleep. I was glued to the TV, as many of us were watching the final event of the of the Olympics in Italy, and I was going to call attention to the I think the only Olympian in the room, but he stepped out.

But you know, we all take such pride in what what our Olympians do and and how they represent our country. And it's just so special when we have a a UConn, former UConn student among them. And so if you're not familiar with Tage Thompson. He's probably the biggest guy on that US men's hockey team as they captured gold Sunday morning. So I'd just like to acknowledge Tage. It it brought a lot of attention to the University of Connecticut. I saw countless interviews when they asked him about how he got to where he has gotten to.

Life and he talked about his time here while it was short, one that was super important to him. And I was also watching the Women's Championship game on Thursday afternoon when the US also defeated Canada in overtime. So both teams. Captured the gold. So congratulations to Tage. And if you're a hockey fan, you know it's a it's an interesting world. A lot of the professional hockey players don't go to attend college or university and our team, the USA team, was loaded with former student athletes.

Athletes across Hockey East and and the Big 10, but just a shout out to to those incredible student athletes led led by our own Tage Thompson. So with that I'd like to move into some of the business matters.

And as I mentioned, you know, we we're we're modifying these meetings as we go. So you know, please shoot me any and all feedback. You know, we've moved the committee reports to submit it in writing so we don't spend so much time reviewing them. They're very important.

DN Denis Nayden 2:15:34
Hmm.

BT Board of Trustees 2:15:44

As as you all know, and also just with the way the committee schedule works, they may not always be. The reports may not be ready in time for our meeting, so we will find a mechanism to organize them.

And and and get them out to people. And so a number of our committees have met over the course of the last week including financial affairs right before right before

this meeting. So please you know send me feedback if you.

If you will, I do need a motion and a second to approve our minutes from our December 3rd meeting.

PR Philip Rubin 2:16:24

So moved, Rubin.

BT Board of Trustees 2:16:25

There a second, second Whitney. OK, any abstentions?

Any modifications? Corrections. Hearing none. All in favor, please say aye. Any opposed?

PR Philip Rubin 2:16:37

Hi.

PB Pollard, Bryan 2:16:37

Hi.

AD Andrea Dennis-LaVigne 2:16:39

Hi.

BT Board of Trustees 2:16:41

OK, motion carries. I I have to ask an indulgence. There's a as we're revising all this, I missed something that is in the agenda which I I'd like to just pull out for this meeting and we'll we'll bring it back next time. But if if I just ask for a a motion and a second to.

Remove 2C1, which is a committee chair election. I'm doing some work on that. It's almost done and I'll have it back on the on the agenda for next month. But I just ask and apologies for I didn't catch it earlier, but if we could just get a motion and a second to to remove that for now, I'll bring it back.

PB Pollard, Bryan 2:17:21

So moved Pollard.

BT Board of Trustees 2:17:23

Second, Whitney. OK, all in favor say aye. Any opposed? OK, there are a number of consent agenda items which have been referred to the board from the appropriate committees. You heard several of them this morning coming from FA. I'd suggest.

PB **Pollard, Bryan** 2:17:27
I.

2:17:28
Hi.
Bye.

MB **Mark B** 2:17:29
No.

PR **Philip Rubin** 2:17:29
I.

BT **Board of Trustees** 2:17:43
We take those as a single vote and I'd ask for a motion and a second to approve items one through. I think it is 27 for for a single vote approval.
So move Whitney, second on any comment, any abstentions?
We're good. OK. All in favor, please say aye. Any opposed?

PB **Pollard, Bryan** 2:18:09
Bye.

AD **Andrea Dennis-LaVigne** 2:18:12
Hi.

BT **Board of Trustees** 2:18:14
And motion carries. Where are we from here?
I think it's time to turn the mic over to our President. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and for the weather forecast, please fire me. I consulted with Eversource Center that supplies information and they told me that roads are going to be clean and that we are not going to have more than two inches of snow.

So I spread this information to our Board of Trustees and strongly encourage them to come to this meeting in person. So, Rachel, and then you had been very brave and you trusted me. So thank you for that trust. So as a chair of Board of Trustees, Honors and the Board of Committee, I'm pleased to.

Present.

The committee's recommendation for the conferral of honorary degree at the May 2026 commencement ceremony. These individuals were selected following a comprehensive review process in accordance with board policy. The nominees reflect the distinguished achievement in public service.

Business leadership, science and innovation, the arts, philanthropy and social justice. Collectively, they embody the university mission and values, bring distinction to the institution, and serve as inspirational examples to our graduates.

At this time, I will ask Doctor Pamira Ope, Interim Provost, to present the recommended candidate. Pamir. Thank you. Thank you, Madam President. I'm delighted to provide the the recommendation for unanimous approval of the.

Following candidates Toni Boushey, Doctor of Letters, School of Business, Distinguished public servant and Wilton First Selectwoman. Toni Boushey is a UConn MBA alumna, former state senator and representative and Business Hall of Fame inductee. She's.

Recognized for our transformative civic leadership and enduring commitment to UConn and Connecticut.

Next is Kevin Burns, Doctor of Humane Letters, College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources, President and CEO of Chobani. Kevin Burns is a nationally respected executive and UConn alumnus.

He's honored for industrial leadership, operational excellence and status support of innovation and opportunity at UConn.

PB **Pollard, Bryan** 2:20:44

Yes.

BT **Board of Trustees** 2:20:51

Gerald Chan, Doctor of Science, UConn Health Doctor Gerald Chan is a scientist, entrepreneur and global philanthropist whose work bridges biomedical innovation and education. He is recognized for advancing biotechnology and investing in research and public health worldwide.

Elizabeth De Luca, Doctor of Humane Letters, School of Nursing, a UConn nursing alumni and philanthropist. Elizabeth De Luca made a historic gift supporting our new nursing building and expanded student access.

She's honored for her extraordinary impact on healthcare, education and opportunity. Scott Esdale, Doctor of Laws, School of Social Work, President of the Connecticut N AA CP. Scott Esdale is a nationally respected civil rights leader. He's recognized for advancing equity, criminal justice reform and sustained community impact.

Frank Filippetti, Doctor of Fine Arts, School of Fine Arts, Seven time Grammy Award winner. Frank Filippetti is a pioneering producer and audio engineer and a proud UConn graduate. He's honored for groundbreaking contributions to music, innovation and.

Mentorship.

Anita McBride, Doctor of Humane Letters, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Anita McBride served in the senior White House roles across 3 presidential administrations, including Chief of Staff to First Lady Laura Bush. A UConn alumna, she is recognized for exemplary public service and global leader.

A.

Indra Noe, Doctor of Humane Letters, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, former Chairman and CEO of PepsiCo. Indra Noe is a global business leader known for championing sustainable venues driven growth. She is honored for principled leadership and worldwide impact.

Matt Olander, Doctor of Science, School of Engineering, Senior Vice President at General Dynamics Electric Belt. Matt Olander is a double UConn Engineering alumnus. He is recognized for technical excellence, innovation and contributions to national security.

Barbara Smith, Doctor of Letters, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Barbara Smith is a pioneering feminist scholar and co-founder of the Combahee River Collective. She is honored for shaping black feminist thought and advancing social justice scholarship.

Bryan Stevenson, Doctor of Laws, UConn School of Law, founder of the Equal Justice Initiative and author of Just Mercy. Bryan Stevenson is a leading voice in criminal justice reform. He's recognized for advancing justice, dignity and human rights.

Lastly, Stanley Bittingham, Doctor of Science Doctoral Ceremony Nobel Prize winning chemist Sir Stanley Bittingham helped pioneer lithium ion battery technology. He's

honored for scientific discoveries that transformed energy storage and global sustainability.

Thank you, Madam President, returning back to you.

Mr. Chairman, can we get for approval? So it asks for a motion and a second to approve the slate. So move Whitney.

PR Philip Rubin 2:24:29

Second, Rubin.

MB Mark B 2:24:30

Second B.

BT Board of Trustees 2:24:31

Any further discussion? Any questions? It's a very, very impressive group. I would just note that Bryan Stevenson spoke here several years ago in maybe the most inspiring speech I've ever heard in my whole life. He's certainly a worthy recipient.

OK. Anyone else? All in favor, please say aye. Aye. Any opposed?

PR Philip Rubin 2:24:53

Right.

Hi. Hi.

PB Pollard, Bryan 2:24:54

M.

BT Board of Trustees 2:24:58

Motion carries. Congratulations.

So that next let's move to the president's update. So if I can move we have I first want to thank our facility people who are first one when we are thinking are we going to commute or not they are on the campus. So Eric please say hello and a big big deep thank you to your crews, your team.

And everybody who works so hard to keep this campus accessible, warm and safe.

Thank you.

It's a beautiful campus in winter, so it's truly amazing. So next slide please.

Before I started operational priority, I want also to acknowledge our students, faculty,

doctor, nurses, UConn leadership team that testified before Higher Education Appropriation Committee.

Your testimony makes everybody to aware what this university means for state, what is the impact to community, what is the impact to industry, and how UConn is economic engine of the state.

UConn operational priorities. Today I'm going to talk about what we define as a 5 priorities, improving our enrollment outlook and that's student success, that's a graduation rate and everything that you see in our strategic plan and key performance indicators.

Continuous improvement of enterprise effectiveness, increasing our academic and research profile, supporting a championship, culture and competitiveness in athletics and and you heard from German Toscano about Huskies bringing the gold to our country.

Advancing fundraising effort and engagement at the foundation.

The next slide please. So what we really want to do is to have to have the focus on enrollment and student success as a part of our strategic plan, operating plan. Our six years graduation rate is 80 percent, 84%.

And our target is 90%. Next slide please.

So I want to talk about some of the statistics fall to spring retention in past five years. So in fall 2021, the first year full-time students are 5136.

And the number of students that we retain was 95.3. In 2025, our freshmen were 6128 and our retention was 95.9. I want to thank Nathan 1st and his.

Team and Provost office that works so hard to provide the quality of advising, provide the support and at every corner. Now when you go to our campus you can see if you need help. Please scan the bar and we will be there to help.

Students ask is increasing the number of the students right way to go and I want to answer that question. We are the land-grant university and we are responsible for giving opportunity and access to the brightest and best of this state.

We are wealthy state with some poor towns in the in the state that you heard just from our representatives. So in 2021 we have 41,000 applications. In 2026 we have 66,000 applications.

We want to include the best and the brightest because they deserve to have education at UConn, all undergraduates, bachelor seeking, all campus store, regional, full-time and part-time.

We have 23,912 and in 2025 we retain 95.8%. Next slide please.

First generation students in 2022 we have 7321 first generation students. In 2026 we are expecting 8930.

That's 22% increase for all of those students that we accept to UConn. We provide additional financial support. University support had grown from FY22.

163.8 million to 232.4 million. That is increase of 42%. Federal Pell Grant on the other hand dropped.

From 74.5% to 57.9% decline of 22%. Others like fundraising, philanthropy, our amazing alumni and donors.

Helped us and since then we contributed in fundraising and scholarships from 20.9 million in FY22 to 35 million that are expecting in FY26.

State including Roberta Villi Scholarship.

Declined from 9.9 million to 8.2 million. So our total support financial support for our students moved from 269.1 million to 333.6.

So 24% increase. Next slide please.

We are very diverse body, 47 of our percent of our students are minority. So when we compare our total population in FY 2025, more than 1/3 of our students, undergraduate students were first generation.

students. First generation students at UConn means that neither of parents went to UConn. This is a different definition that many other schools who consider if one parent didn't go to college

You are a first generation student.

Next slide please. What that means for our state and state economy, the more of Connecticut students and first-generation students we accept at UConn.

More of them stay and work in Connecticut and that's why we are economic engine of this state. In 2021 Connecticut students, 62% stayed in Connecticut.

Of all of our students, including international and out-of-state, 63% stayed in Connecticut. In 2025, seventy-seven percent of our in-state students.

State in Connecticut and out of all our population out of state and international, it's 67. So it's important to provide a scholarship, the co-ops, the research, the connection in state for our student.

To thrive and stay in Connecticut.

Next slide please.

Continuous improvement and enterprise effectiveness focus on campus infrastructure and safety. Safety comes first.

Next slide please. Ken Science Complex renovation is 278.5 million total project

budget. It's the largest, most heavily used building on campus.

It is 310,000 gross square feet teaching a research work course since early 1970s. The first Institute for Materials Science in state of Connecticut was built in this building in 1969.

Nine and it still exists to help industry of Connecticut. Building renovation has three phases. The first phase in 2019 was physics, the phase two PMBMCBEEB.

And phase three is biology class labs, various department spaces and two floors of the shelf space that we will finish. The new bond money requires 10% of the matching from donors.

In order to release this bond money. So the GAN science. Next slide please. Complex renovation is 25% completed. It's on the tracking on time for December 2027.

And it current activities. I took legislators through and many of you went through to see where we are, but preparation for repairs, window replacers, replacement, exterior, etcetera. So next slide please.

When completed, then the part of the building that is under renovation will have 20 class labs and classrooms, 148 personal lecture hall, class tuition center and advancing space.

5 dedicated tutoring rooms, 27 shared and individual offices, 8 meeting rooms and two floors of the special space for the research base fit out. Next slide please.

So when this final phase is completed, as much as of 75% of a science space of Torrey Life Science building will be moved to this building. As you remember, the basement floor of the Torrey building has been flooded five times.

In last three years.

Next slide please.

Increase of our academic and research profile, focus of signature research initiatives and ranking is our priority. Next slide please.

We have comprehensive study of needs for AI on this campus done under different groups, IT assessment, working groups of the Senate faculty with leadership Deans. And Department of Energy Genesis mission that even before it was released, both brought to us by Trustee Rubin, is one of the major federal government initiatives, multi-billion dollars. It's the national mission to accelerate science through artificial intelligence.

And the focus is on grid, grid, sustainability, discovery, science, molecules, particles, quantum and national security, discovering mission ready materials and advanced manufacturing. I have conversation with our.

Our students, Board of Trustees and in February there was a symposium in Washington about opportunities and what is the strategy for the country and our senator, our Board of Trustee members, Sean was so kind to talk to students who participated, learned.

And I would like to invite him to share students perspective. So, Sean. Yeah, thank you, President Merrick. Again, I don't think it's a surprise to anyone in the world that we are at an inflection point with AI and quantum and these novel technologies. But here, institutionally, I think it's important that we think about, you know, on the board and in other conversations institutionally, how we can stay at the precipice of this transformational change that we're seeing. So just.

A couple stats here. I think the direction is clear. By 20-30, employers project roughly 170 million roles are going to be created, 92,000,000 displaced and 39% of core skills are changing. So I think.

From the educational perspective, we are going to see rapid churn on a four-year education cycle, at least from the perspective of undergraduates. And that's something that we need to keep at the forefront of our minds as we plan for the future. And it's not just combined or confined to computer science. So I think it's easy to think, oh, this is just.

Is going to affect the School of Computing. 40% of global employment is exposed to AI and around 60% in advanced economies. So nearly every major across the university, at least from, you know, the undergraduate perspective and also from the from the graduate perspective.

Needs a baseline pathway on the heels of of the Genesis mission that was launched and other initiatives coming federally and also from the state. I think it's important for us to really catalyze change here and have a forward-looking view with the state moving in parallel.

And other institutional partners, 120 million pledged to Quantum CT and then we're working with Yale CT framed over a billion dollars in coordinated commitments here and these are designed explicitly around workforce and commercialization. So I think the primary student implication.

Line here is that we're moving from AI awareness to AI enabled execution in every domain. So I think you know we're seeing other peer and aspirins. University of Florida has AI across the curriculum including an AI fundamental certificate.

AI taught across all 16 colleges through cross listed common ground computing subjects. MIT references computing bilingual graduates. So I think what we should

drive and think about in future meetings and discussions.

Is to build on what we have. So there's the AI literacy course. I took it last semester in the College of Engineering. School of Business has numerous new offerings, both courses and experiential learning pathways. But I think what we need to do is have cross-listed courses that blend computing here with other disciplines.

It's going to be very, I think bespoke on a discipline track basis, but it's important to stay up-to-date. So I think there's a lot of podcasts and resources that we can continue to listen to individually administrators and board members so that we are staying informed.

Thank you, Sean. It's always best to hear from students perspective. Husky Pride is the next slide please.

Our recognition and reputation. Faculty excellence across UConn schools and colleges drives improvements in ranking and elevates reputation of our universities. Just one example of many prestigious honors earned is by our faculty, Doctor Shana Feldstein, Evin.

Who was elected in January of 2026 to membership in American College Union Physiopharmacology. She's Professor of Psychology, Vice Chair of Research, Health Net Incorporation, Chair in Alcohol and Substance Abuse in the UConn School of Medicine.

Congratulations, you can help. The next slide please.

Our ranking matters because our students, our parents, our citizens are looking how well we rank and the most recent ranking that came out on January 28th is Times ranking. This is new ranking that place UConn in the top.

Of 23% of global university.

Economic capacity and performance, innovation and economic impact and global engagement. Next slide, please.

#4 pillar is supporting a championship culture and competitiveness in athletics. Focus on investing in athletics. Next slide please. Our student athletes are not the champions on the court. They are the future leaders.

Of the world and we could see our hockey player and what Trustee Toscano emphasize bringing UConn name on the global stage. Championship cultures, men's and women's basketball and men's and women's ice hockey have all been ranked in the top ten during the regular season.

For the first time, all these teams have the potential to qualify for the NCAA tournament in the same year. I am also aware that lacrosse and other sports are

doing well because I get the pictures from our students when they get the championship.

Athletics is on the track to meet or exceed the revenue goals set for the FY26.

Conversation and progress regarding the editing another name to Gampo Pavilion is happening.

The NCA has approved the future use of commercial patches that may be placed on uniforms for advertising purposes and we are exploring the offering and this opportunities and and seeing who is the best strategic partner for us.

The College Football Playoff recently met and discussed unique revenue distribution that are currently received as independent football program and the goal it would be to get a share equal to that of our current peers.

In the G6, next slide please. Because of UConn, I have a badge. I hope everybody has a badge. Because of UConn, we are where we are today. We want to advance fundraising effort and our mission as you can see the scholarships.

Help our students. The endowment money helps our faculty recruit the best. The donor's support of our facility helps us to improve and build our facility. So I want CEO and President of UConn Foundation Yancey.

Is on the picture and she done amazing job with her team. I appreciate and applaud in how short period of time that she has been with us. She turned foundation around before it was a dream. If we can ever achieve 1 billion, we launch campaign in April. 720 million and as of now we are over 800 million. So really, Amy, I know you are online. Congratulations to you and your team empowering our teams, empowering our units to be the best in fundraising.

The next one please slide is about Goldstein family and this is the 11 million gift from Goldstein family advancing the research and education actuarial science and the Janet Vadivella and and her husband are on the.

Picture and this is a very interesting, interesting gift. Janet's brother Jay is a faculty at UConn. He's he's faculty in residence for 25 years and he's actuarial sciences and he helps the student with.

Research projects to help communities. So one of the projects the students work with state of Connecticut, how to identify when people are going to be homeless and how to do early intervention. So those gifts are very meaningful, not only as a researcher.

Tools, but as a way to help our communities, to help our people and to help our state.

Next slide please.

The next gift is also very important. Everybody so far knows about our amazing donor, Liz De Lucas. I'm sure facility people know more about her because they are the best friends with her. She she purchased the lunches for them. She made the scarves for them for.

The holiday handmade scarves to show how much she appreciates the work that facility and constructions are doing on the new nursing building. Her new gift is 10 million for the Lucas Foundation to open the door for Waterbury students.

Andy, congratulations to you and your team on the new hospital and Husky footprint that will be in Waterbury community that badly needs your leadership, access and excellence. So thank you for that with leads, gift and.

And trust the reader is here. He has been instrumental in in helping us to think out the box and what are the opportunity for disadvantaged community like Waterbury and we built Li Health. We recruited Fumiko who has been amazing Dean and Direct.

And everybody in Waterbury knows who is Fumiko because she's everywhere. She invites the top leading researchers to meet our students. She organized so many events and and she really is doing amazing job. So the first part of the gift is to 5 million to expand nursing.

Program at Waterbury Pathway supporting nursing students at Waterbury in the early years and transitioned them to the Lucas Hall in Storrs and the junior and senior year 5.45 million STEM investment is Husky Prep Academy.

That supports Waterbody public high school students by creating a health STEM pathway to UConn Waterbody college credit and hands-on learning. And the second part is the Ideas to Action Lab introduces students to health and STEM career through hands-on.

On activities.

Next slide please 250,000 gift to School of Pharmacy that is now School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Science targets innovation in non animal testing. The gift is from Jane Hirsch.

Fellowship in Non Animal Testing Innovation. Jen graduated from School of Pharmacy in 1965. She's successful entrepreneur that built founded two pharmaceutical companies that are trading publicly and she's looking for the ethical. Clinical drug development and she supports us in in using the organs on the chip technology from the company from that our faculty already collaborate instead of

working on the on the animals experiments as a part of clinical study phase two. And three. And Mr. Chairman, that brings my presentation to the end. I thank you all and I'm open to questions and discussions. Thank you.

I brought it to the end and that concludes my report and I'm asking for questions. OK. Anyone have any questions? I have one comment, Dan, to Sean's comment. I think that's really important that.

In our environment, every student should have some exposure or learning about a I in quantum and have enough understanding of what it is and how it works, because when they go into the workforce, we expect that and.

So I think making sure that we have a curriculum that's all-inclusive, it doesn't matter what your major is that you should have a basic understand, no one that basic knowledge and proficiency with a I and quantum so that you know how to apply it to your to your basic knowledge.

Thank you, Trustee Bassett. And now that brings my report to the third part and that is strategic assessment. Sorry, before you jump into that, I was just going to ask and I don't know if anyone here knows the answer, but there's an element of fundraising with Gantt. I was just curious if we have an update.

And how that if anyone knows, I don't, I don't is Amy on maybe she might know you mentioned that in in the comments that there's a 10% requirement. Yes, in our last, in our last bond approval and John is here. John, can you please come to the microphone and.