DRAFT MINUTES

UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

UConn at Waterbury
Multi-Purpose Room (113/119)
99 East Main Street
Waterbury, Connecticut

Wednesday, October 28, 2026

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Board Chair Toscano.

The following Trustees participated in person: George A. Barrios, Andy F. Bessette, Charles F. Bunnell, Shari G. Cantor, Andrea Dennis-LaVigne, Nina Lemash, Daniel H. O'Keefe, Bryan K. Pollard, Philip E. Rubin, Fabio R. Saccomanno, Daniel D. Toscano, Richard I. Vogel, and Diane W. Whitney.

The following Trustees participated virtually: Trisha M. Bailey, Mark L. Boxer, and Denis J. Nayden.

Natalie Wagner, Governor Lamont's designee, participated virtually.

Trustees John P. Driscoll, Bryan P. Hurlburt, Thomas D. Ritter, and Charlene Russell-Tucker were not in attendance.

University Senate Representatives Karen Bresciano and Carrie Fernandes attended the meeting in person.

University Senate Representatives Lindsay Cummings, Sandy Grande, Horea Illies, Karen Skudlarek, and Jennifer Tibbetts attended the meeting virtually.

The following University senior staff attended the meeting in person: President Radenka Maric, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs Pamir Alpay, Executive Vice President for Health Affairs and Chief Executive Officer for UConn Health Andrew Agwunobi, General Counsel and Executive Secretary to the Board Nicole Gelston, Chief of Staff Philip Hunt, Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer Anthony Rini, Vice President for Student Life and Enrollment Nathan Fuerst, UConn Health Chief Financial Officer Jeffrey Geoghegan, and Associate Vice President for Budget and Planning Reka Wrynn. Other members of the President's Senior Leadership Team were present for some or all of the meeting.

Vice President for Communications Michael Kirk, Senior Governmental Relations Director Joann Lombardo, and Governmental Relations Director Gail Garber participated virtually.

1. Public Participation

   Mr. Peter Tribuzio, Assistant Campus Director and Director of Student Services, UConn Waterbury raised student concerns about the non-UConn Brown Building housing facility. He also asked the Board to consider an alternative housing arrangement partnership with the University.

   Undergraduate student Brenda Ramos raised concerns about the lack of diversity messaging and increased community engagement.

2. Chairman's Report

(a) Matters Outstanding

Board Chair Toscano welcomed Waterbury Mayor Paul K. Pernerewski, Jr. to the Board., who gave a brief welcome.

Board Chair Toscano thanked Campus Dean and Chief Administrative Officer Fumiko Hoeft for welcoming the Board to the Waterbury Campus and asked her to make a few remarks.

Dr. Hoeft gave a presentation on current and ongoing initiatives at the Waterbury Campus, including value for students and families, workforce needs of the State, and emerging trends in health science and technology.

President Maric acknowledged the leadership and support from former Waterbury Mayor Neil M. O'Leary and asked him to make a few remarks. Mr. O'Leary welcomed the Board to the Campus and acknowledged the partnership between the City and UConn that has fostered community engagement and enterprise. Mr. O'Leary also asked the Board to consider a housing residence similar to downtown Hartford to attract more students. Mr. O'Leary also recognized Dr. Hoeft's tireless efforts and tenacity in support of her campus initiatives.

Board Chair Toscano reminded the Board that the UConn Marching Band was selected last year to participate in this year's Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade in New York City.

Board Chair Toscano recognized 6 members of the UConn community who are finalists for the Connecticut Women of Innovation Awards in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and Math (STEM): Linda Barry, M.D., School of Medicine; Jennifer Mathieu, Executive Director, Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Breanna Robbins, Co-director of the Industrial Affiliates Program in the College of Engineering; Kelly Burke, faculty member, in the College of Engineering; and Madisyn Brooks, a Ph.D. candidate in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The Awards are hosted by the Connecticut Innovation Council.

(b) Minutes of the Meetings of September 23, October 5, and October 21, 2026 (Attachment 1)

On motion by Trustee Whitney, seconded by Trustee O'Keefe, the Board voted to approve the minutes of the meetings of September 23, October 5, and October 21, 2026. Trustee Pollard abstained from voting on the September 23, 2026, minutes.

(c) Committee Reports and Updates

(1) Academic Affairs Committee

(a) Proposal to Establish the UConn Honors College (Attachment 2)

Trustee Cantor gave a brief update on yesterday's Academic Affairs meeting and introduced Dr. Jennifer Lease Butts, Associate Vice Provost for Enrichment Programs and Director of the Honors Program. Dr. Lease Butts introduced Honors students Anna Baltsevych (Allied Health Sciences, Waterbury) and Ryan Krishna (English and Individualized Major: Neuroscience of Language, Storrs), who spoke about their positive experiences and unique opportunities as students in the Program.

Dr. Lease Butts outlined several key points to establish an Honors College, including the ability to: 1) attract and develop exceptional students; 2) advance UConn's academic and excellent reputation; and 3) expand philanthropic opportunities and institutional visibility. She emphasized that each year UConn loses honors eligible students due to increased competition for talented students, especially in the Northeast, and UConn's ability to admit them. Dr. Lease Butts noted that last year there were 100 requests for entry into the Program, but only 7 students were admitted based on available resources to provide a strong educational experience.

Trustee Nayden asked for information about current enrollment and resources supporting the Program. Dr. Lease Butts confirmed that there are 2,649 students enrolled in the Program, which is about 10% of the total undergraduate population over all campuses. She also reported that the total operating budget is approximately $3.5 million, which includes staff and operational costs. In addition, there is also funding available through UConn Foundation funds. Dr. Lease Butts indicated that the proposal also includes an increase in university funding to create more staff positions and establish other programs that will complement the current program goals.

Trustee Whitney stated that she had served in the Honors Program for many years and expressed her support for the transition to a college as a means to strengthen the programmatic initiatives for Honors students.

Trustee Rubin noted that he was a former faculty member who had taught in the Honors Program. He said that teaching honors students was a very rewarding experience.

Trustee Cantor emphasized that the establishment of an Honors College would accentuate the Program's already strong retention and graduation outcomes.

On a motion by Trustee Whitney, seconded by Trustee Rubin, the Board voted to approve the recommendation to establish the UConn Honors College by transitioning the existing Honors Program to an Honors College.

(2) Other Committee Reports

Vice-Chair Dennis-LaVigne gave a report on the Institutional Advancement Committee Meeting held on September 21. She highlighted the new agreement between UConn and M&T Bank and the substantial investment in the University, especially in the Division of Athletics.

Trustee Bessette gave a report on the Financial Affairs Committee Meeting held prior to today's Board meeting.

(d) Consent Agenda Items:

On a motion by Trustee O'Keefe, seconded by Trustee Vogel, the Board voted to approve the Consent Agenda items.

(1)	Contracts and Agreements	(Attachment 4)
(2)	Project Budget (Design) for Northeast Campus Infrastructure Improvements	(Attachment 4)
(3)	Project Budget (Revised Design) for Golf Practice Facility	(Attachment 5)

(4)	Project Budget (Revised Final) for Avery Point – Community and Professional Building – Brandt Lab Renovation	(Attachment 6)
(5)	Project Budget (Revised Final) for Albert N. Jorgensen and Harriet S. Jorgensen Theatre and Performing Arts Center Building Envelope	(Attachment 7)
(6)	Tenure at Hire	(Attachment 8)
(7)	Designation of Emeritus Status	(Attachment 9)
(8)	Sabbatical Leave Recommendations	(Attachment 10)
(9)	Establishment of the Everett R. Emino Endowed Professorship in Floriculture in the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources	(Attachment 11)
(10)	Establishment of The Hartford Insurance Group Professor in Laborer Safety (College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources)	(Attachment 12)
(11)	Naming Recommendation for The Margaret and Robert Brady Executive Director, Center for Energy and Environmental Law (School of Law)	(Attachment 13)
(12)	Naming Recommendation for Adomat Nursing Simulation Center (Waterbury Campus)	(Attachment 14)
(13)	Naming recommendation of The Hartford Insurance Group Heat Safety Lab at the Korey Stringer Institute	(Attachment 15)
(14)	Naming Recommendation for The Cottage Classroom (Nursing)	(Attachment 16)
(15)	Naming Recommendation for the Crista Nolan BS RN Faculty Office (Nursing)	(Attachment 17)
(16)	Naming Recommendation for the Ashley M. Sullivan, BSN, RN, CCRN Faculty Office (Nursing)	(Attachment 18)

(e) Informational item:

Board Chair Toscano noted that the *By-Laws of the University of Connecticut* may be amended at any regular meeting with notice of proposed amendments, which are provided for review in Attachment 19. The Board will consider approval of the proposed amendments at one of its next three meetings.

(1)	Notification of Proposed Changes to the *By-Laws of the University of Connecticut*	(Attachment 19)

3. President's Report

President Maric reported that the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) recently provided a draft accreditation report, which was distributed to the Board. President Maric thanked the Board for its commitment and engagement in the process.

President Maric introduced recently retired Journalism Professor Stephen G. Smith who spoke about his new book, *Who is America?* Professor Smith taught visual journalism, which includes photojournalism and cinematography, for the past thirteen years. His work captures and represents a visual narrative of American society, civility, and humanity.

President Maric announced the permanent appointment of Dr. Lindsay DiStefano as the Vice President for Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship. She also noted the appointment of Andreas Bohman as UConn's first Chief Transformational Officer (CTO), who will lead university-wide initiatives to strengthen institutional effectiveness and will work closely with the Board and the senior leadership.

President Maric updated the Board about several topics, including the Governor's FY25 budget recommendations, UConn's Strategic Plan, enrollment outlook, Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Plan, commitment to financial aid, projected declining enrollment, metrics used in US News rankings, advancing UConn's national research standing, highlights regarding the Faculty Hiring Initiative, and continued progress aligning fiscal management strategies with operational priorities.

4. University Senate Report

On behalf of University Senate Executive Committee (SEC) Chair Morrell, University Senate Representative Grande gave his report on the University Senate's continuing discussions, including the NECHE visit; removal of the blue light phones around campus; the new blue budget model; support of the establishment of the Honors College and the appointment of Dr. Lease Butts as the new dean; advanced undergraduate student assistance in teaching large classes; and the draft of the institutional neutrality policy under consideration.

Vice-Chair Dennis-LaVigne temporarily chaired the meeting on behalf of Board Chair Toscano until the start of Executive Session.

5. Other Business

There was no Other Business.

6. Executive Session

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Trustee Vogel, seconded by Trustee Pollard, the Board voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 12:10 p.m. pursuant to:

1. CGS 1-200(6)(A): Discussion concerning the appointment, employment, performance, evaluation, health or dismissal of a public officer or employee, provided that such individual may require that discussion be held at an open meeting; and
2. CGS 1-200(6)(E): Discussion of any matter which would result in the disclosure of public records or the information contained therein described in subsection (b) of section 1-210.

The following Trustees were in attendance: Bailey, Barrios, Bessette, Boxer, Bunnell, Cantor, Dennis-LaVigne, Lemash, Nayden, O'Keefe, Pollard, Rubin, Saccomanno (departed at 12:45 p.m.), Toscano, Vogel, and Whitney.

Natalie Wagner, Governor Lamont's designee, also participated.

General Counsel and Executive Secretary to the Board Gelston was in attendance for the first 20 minutes of the Executive Session.

The Executive Session ended at 2:45 p.m., and the Board returned to Open Session at 2:46 p.m.

OPEN SESSION

7. Adjournment

On a motion by Trustee Barrios, seconded by Trustee Bunnell, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting. The Board meeting adjourned at 2:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan K. Pollard
Secretary