

The Ohio State University at Newark – Board Meeting Minutes

Date: October 17, 2024

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Location: Reese Center Executive Conference Room 255

1. Call to Order

- **Chair:** Jeff Cox called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

- **Action:** The board approved the minutes from the May 16, 2024 meeting.

3. Approval of Agenda

- **Action:** The agenda for the meeting was approved as presented.

4. Public Comments

- No public comments were made.

5. Introduction of New Board Members

- **New Members Introduced:** Jeff Cox formally welcomed Marc Lyons and Ashton Hisle (student representative) to the board. He highlighted each member's role and contributions anticipated for the upcoming term.

6. COTC Board Report

- **Presenter:** Rob Montagnese
- **Key Points:**
 - Rob reported that the COTC Board of Trustees acknowledged Cheryl Snyder's 20 years of service to the board and announced that Brady Burt, Chief Financial Officer and Senior Vice President at Park National Corporation, will fill her seat.
 - COTC reported a 10% increase in enrollment over the previous year and the implementation of two new academic programs: Respiratory Therapy and RN to BSN.
 - Lastly, COTC is collaborating with Ohio State Newark to redesign Lefevre Hall, aiming to expand engineering courses and programs.

7. Unit Reports

- **Business and Finance:** David Brillhart
 - **Financial Overview:** David reviewed the Annual Report for the period ending June 30, 2024. He noted that Ohio State Newark experienced a strong financial performance for the year with total revenues reaching 104.5% of the budget and expenditures managed at 94.9% of the budget. Revenue sources included state subsidies at 100% of projections, student fees exceeding the budget by 6.8% due to higher-than-expected enrollment, and other revenues, such as bookstore commissions, outperforming at 126.7%. While investment income fell short at 77.3% of projections, the overall financial position remained positive, bolstered by effective cost controls and enrollment growth.
 - **Budget Adjustments:** Efficient expenditure management across categories such as instructional support (99.0% of budget), academic support (84.0%), and student services (86.4%) contributed to a surplus. Surplus funds totaling \$2.27 million were transferred to the future building and deferred maintenance fund. Additionally, the campus maintained a \$6 million unrestricted current operations fund, ensuring stability and capacity to address unforeseen needs.
 - **Ongoing Projects:** Significant ongoing projects included capital investments which are supported by a dedicated fund of \$1.95 million. Initiatives encompass equipment upgrades, building renovations, and infrastructure improvements, many of which are cost-shared with COTC. Designated funds, including \$2.57 million for capital projects and \$9.36 million for future building expansions, reflect a commitment to campus growth and modernization.
 - **Future Projections:** Looking ahead, Ohio State Newark projects continued enrollment growth, translating into sustained revenue strength from student fees. David did caution the board about potential budget impacts related to state funding adjustments. The return to operation of Hodges Hall after renovations is expected to increase facility-related expenditures in FY25. The campus is well-positioned to support its strategic initiatives, with robust fund balances in unrestricted and designated categories ensuring resources for long-term expansion, scholarship programs, and academic excellence.
- **Enrollment:** Wes Grunden
 - **Current Enrollment Data:** Wes referred to the Autumn 2024 Ohio State University Enrollment Report which was distributed to board members prior to the meeting. He noted that Newark's enrollment surpassed projections with 2,543 students. New first-year student enrollment increased by 8% compared to Autumn 2023, reflecting successful recruitment efforts focused on local high schools and regional partnerships. First-generation students make up 46% of the new cohort, while 39% of all students identify as racially or ethnically diverse, highlighting Newark's continued commitment to access and inclusion.

- **Challenges:** Wes noted a decline in retention rates among second-year students, attributing this partially to financial strain and commuting challenges. Wes proposed targeted support programs tailored to Newark's student population, including financial aid counseling, peer mentorship, and enhanced academic advising. These initiatives aim to address specific barriers faced by Newark students and improve retention outcomes.
- **Recruitment and Diversity Initiatives:** Wes reported that the Newark campus has implemented a range of recruitment initiatives to sustain and grow enrollment. Efforts include extensive outreach to local high schools, participation in college fairs, and strategies such as an application fee waiver period and Buckeye Visit Days. Additionally, Newark continues its ongoing commitment to diversity through outreach in underrepresented communities and partnerships with local organizations, further encouraging applications from a broad range of prospective students. The campus is also leveraging new technologies, such as text-based communication through Modern Campus, to engage with students and simplify the application process.
- **Future Goals:** Looking ahead, Newark plans to expand its digital outreach by developing an online portal tailored to commuter student needs, enhancing access for those balancing academics with other responsibilities. Recruitment strategies will continue to focus on community connections and streamlined processes, ensuring the Newark campus remains an accessible and welcoming option for prospective students.

8. Dean's/Director's Report

- **Presenter:** Dean/Director Matt Smith
- **Topics Covered:**
 - **Licking County Transit:** Matt discussed ongoing discussions with Licking County Transit to improve transportation options for commuter students. He highlighted the need for expanded routes and schedules to better serve students living off-campus.
 - **Campus Housing:** An update on campus housing projects revealed current occupancy rates and plans to increase capacity in response to growing demand. Matt underscored the need for affordable housing options to attract students from a wider geographic area.
 - **Ella Baker Statue:** The board was informed of the upcoming installation of a statue honoring Ella Baker, which is anticipated to be a meaningful addition to the campus. Matt outlined plans for an unveiling event, with invited guests including community leaders, students, and alumni.

- **Governance Documents and Strategic Plan:** Matt reviewed recent updates to governance documents, aligning them with the university's strategic priorities. He provided an overview of ongoing strategic planning efforts, emphasizing goals around student success, campus growth, and community engagement.
- **Academic Collaborations with COTC:** Matt fully supports and plans to continue building upon the cost-shared relationship with COTC.
- **Comments on Minutes Format:** Matt raised the idea of updating the format of the meeting minutes to make them more concise and action oriented. He proposed shifting from a narrative to a bulleted format that emphasizes key decisions, action items, and follow-up responsibilities. This change aims to make the minutes easier to review and more accessible for board members who may miss meetings or need a quick summary. The board responded positively to the suggestion, agreeing that a streamlined format could improve clarity and efficiency

9. New Business

- **Chair:** Jeff Cox opened the floor for any new business items. No additional items were introduced.

10. Next Meeting

- **Date:** January 16, 2025
- **Time:** 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

11. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. by Jeff Cox.

Attendees:

- Jeff Cox
- Medha Deoras-Sutliff
- Tara Houdeshell
- Marc Lyons
- Ashton Hisle (Student Representative)
- Rob Montagnese (COTC Representative to the OSU Board)
- Ginny Grady (Newark Representative to the OSU Alumni Advisory Council)

Noted Absences:

- Talya Greathouse
- Matt Miller
- Alexa Robinson-O'Neill
- Todd Ware
- Lee Heckman