

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

NO.: BHE 24-39

BOARD DATE: February 6, 2024

NAMING OF FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY'S 45 ADAMS ROAD PROPERTY IN HONOR OF JOAN E. MURTAUGH

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the request of the Framingham State University Board of Trustees to name the college's 45 Adams Road property the **Joan E. Murtaugh '61 Alumni Center**.

VOTED: Motion adopted by the BHE on 2/6/2024.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 9(m); BHE Policy Regarding Building Naming Rights at Massachusetts Public Higher Education Institution, FAAP 17-23 (January 24, 2017).

Contact: Matthew Cole, Deputy Commissioner for Administration, Finance, and Operations

Background

In 2014, the Board of Higher Education adopted a policy regarding the naming of buildings which was most recently amended on January 24, 2016 by FAAP 17-23. The policy sets forth the criteria for the naming of new and existing buildings. For living donors, there are specific monetary thresholds that apply for such naming rights. For unnamed, existing buildings, the threshold is \$1 million. However, the policy also recognizes:

...that campuses in both segments vary significantly in physical size, academic scope, geography, and regional economics, and therefore a donation below these thresholds would still be considered a significant contribution to the institution. The BHE will consider extending naming rights for donors making a contribution below these thresholds provided that a justification statement is submitted to the BHE along with the campus approved recommendation. Aggregate donations over time from individual donors shall also be deemed acceptable for meeting threshold levels.

FAAP 7-23, Section IV. The BHE policy further includes a section entitled "naming in recognition," and provides as follows:

A building may be named in honor of an individual, organization, or group having made a distinguished contribution of service, research, teaching or support to the campus; in honor of an individual, organization, or group having made a distinguished contribution of service or support to the community, the Commonwealth, or the nation. Naming in recognition rights shall be granted by the Board of Higher Education under the expectation that a fundraising campaign to support the institution be conducted in honor of the named recipient. Such fundraising campaigns can include any significant effort to support the institution, such as a campaign to raise funding for an endowed professorship or chair, a general scholarship or fellowship fund, or a building stewardship fund.

Framingham University proposes to name its property at 45 Adams Road in honor of Joah E. Murtaugh. The property is a small, two bedroom home, with two bathrooms, and it is approximately 2,400 square feet. The building is currently used as gathering and office space, and is the institution's alumni center.

Joan E. Murtaugh has served on the Board of Directors of the Framingham State University Foundation, Inc. since 2017 and has given nearly \$370,000 to the University and has made the University and Foundation a primary beneficiary of her estate, with an estimated current value of at least \$800,000. Her financial contributions, while currently below the \$1 million threshold, remain significant and only reflect a portion of her value to the University. Consistent with the BHE guidelines on "gifts in recognition of an individual" the Institution is committing to further leveraging this opportunity to engage

in a fundraising campaign to raise funds beyond the current contributions associated with this building naming.

In her letter to the Department of Higher Education, President Nancy S. Niemi justifies the naming by describing the extraordinary contributions of Joan E. Murtaugh, who graduated from Framingham State in 1961 with a Bachelor's Degree in Education. She devoted her career to public education, as both an elementary school teacher and as an elementary-level literacy specialist and embodies the values of Framingham State to educate leaders for lives of ethical citizenship, global stewardship, and public purpose and commitment. She has been a very active and devoted alumna of the University, with a regular presence on campus, at University and alumni events, and has never declined any request for her time and expertise.

For additional information regarding this request, please see the attached supporting materials from the institution, including the January 19, 2024 letter from the President of Framingham State University, Nancy S. Niemi.

Department staff recommendation is for approval of the request.