

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

June 23, 2020

10:00 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Board of Higher Education ("BHE" or "the Board") was held virtually on Tuesday, June 23, 2020 on the web-conference platform Zoom.

The following Board Members were present:

Chris Gabrieli, Chair

Sheila Harrity, Vice Chair

Ann Christensen

Veronica Conforme

Alex Cortez

Patty Eppinger

Paul Mattera

JD La Rock

Jim Peyser, Secretary of Education

Judy Pagliucaⁱ

Mike O'Brien

Paul Toner

Abby Velozo, Student Member, Community College segment

Anna Grady, non-voting Student Advisor, State University segment

Kush Patel, non-voting Student Advisor, University of Massachusetts segment

Carlos E. Santiago, Commissioner and Secretary to the Board

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Chris Gabrieli called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and announced that this meeting is being held remotely and in accordance with Governor Baker's recent Executive Order which suspended certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law for the purpose of authorizing public bodies to allow remote participation by all members while the state of emergency is in effect. Chair Gabrieli announced that Board members and select Department of Higher Education (DHE) staff would be participating remotely via Zoom. DHE Chief of Staff, Elena Quiroz-Livanis, then took roll call attendance (see above for attendance roster).

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chair Gabrieli reported that there was one request to address the BHE during the public participation period asked that remarks be kept to three minutes.

Rosemarie Freeland, Vice President of the Massachusetts Community College Council (MCCC) and coordinator of the Greenfield Community College Women’s Resource Center, addressed the BHE about reallocating funding to Community Colleges to better support needed resources to assist students. She stated that as a 1993 graduate of Greenfield Community College, and a 26 year-old single mother with three small children at that time, she was in a situation similar to that of current students navigating the opportunities of public higher education as it intersected with the regulations, policies and practices of the Commonwealth’s welfare system. She shared the perspective of a Community College student of color working on the front lines of health care during the pandemic. After being unable to complete her course assignments due to testing positive with COVID-19, the student needed an extension of her assignment deadline beyond the end of the semester. However, in a system that is dependent on part-time, contingent and un-benefited faculty, the student met head on with the lack of attention to what an adjunct faculty member might need to be able to work beyond her contract, in order to meet the needs of and enable student success. Ms. Freeland stated that disinvestment in Massachusetts Community Colleges and the perpetuation of decades old practices of hiring part-time contingent faculty and staff needs to be reversed. We can no longer depend on the goodwill of our faculty and staff to fill the gaps where the state has failed to support and fund us adequately.

III. WELCOME

List of Documents Used

[Resolution for President Patricia Gentile](#)

[Resolution for President David Nelson](#)

[Resolution for President Ramon Torrecilha](#)

Chair Gabrieli proceeded to present Resolutions from the Department for three presidents who are either retiring or have resigned to accept other positions.

First, Chair Gabrieli read the Resolution in recognition of President Patricia Gentile’s upcoming retirement as president of North Shore Community College (NSCC). Dr. Patricia A Gentile stated that she was honored by the recognition, and that it was a pleasure to be engaged with terrific people at NSCC who truly wanted to see student success not only at the college, but across the Commonwealth. She commended the BHE for their hard work and for keeping students front and center in terms of decision-making. She wished everyone great success, but mostly our students because as the labor force for today and tomorrow, they are worthy of the investment. Dr. Gentile concluded that the work must go on and she really appreciates the personal support provided over the last seven years. Board Member JD LaRock acknowledged President Gentile on her departure, thanked her for her service, and remarked that in his career he had never worked with a more hardworking, dedicated, trustworthy, personable, and caring leader.

Chair Gabrieli next read the Resolution in recognition of Dr. Ramon Torrecilha, the President of Westfield State University. President Torrecilha thanked the Board and the Commissioner. He also recognized his colleagues at the State University Council of Presidents and how it had been a

partnership with the entire team, along with the Westfield State community. Dr. Torrecilha remarked that it had been an honor to serve the Commonwealth and to serve our students.

Finally, Chair Gabrieli acknowledged President David Nelson's work at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MassArt) and proceeded to read his Resolution. President Nelson thanked Chair Gabrieli, the Commissioner and the Board. He also thanked his Council of Presidents colleagues and Community College colleagues. President Nelson reflected on how serving as President of MassArt had been one of the greatest privileges in his lifetime. He further highlighted the importance of the DHE's work and said it was a joy to have been part of it. In closing, President Nelson commended the Commissioner, Elena and others for being on the vanguards of the Equity Agenda and a made promise of his continued support moving forward. He thanked the DHE for allowing him to serve with them for the last 4.5 years.

Commissioner Carlos Santiago welcomed incoming interim presidents, Nate Bryant at North Shore Community College, Kim Pynder at the Massachusetts School of Art and Design, and Roy Saigo at Westfield State University.

IV. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Chair Gabrieli asked for a motion to accept minutes of the last BHE meeting, which was held on May 5, 2020. The motion was duly moved and seconded, with no discussion, and then proceeded to a roll call vote:

- Ann Christensen – Yes
- Veronica Conforme – Yes
- Alex Cortez – Yes
- Patty Eppinger – Yes
- Chair Chris Gabrieli – Yes
- Vice Chair Sheila Harrity – Yes
- JD LaRock – Yes
- Paul Mattera – Yes
- Michael O'Brien – Yes
- Judy Pagliuca – Yes
- Secretary James Peyser – Yes
- Paul Toner – Yes
- Abby Velozo – Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

V. REMARKS & REPORTS

A. Chairman's Remarks

Chair Gabrieli commended Commissioner Santiago and Deputy Commissioner Tom Simard on the work done on the EY-Parthenon Report. He remarked that while this particular effort had

taken a lot of time and effort, it was a group effort. Chair Gabrieli stated the Board's powers are much greater when they are pursued in partnership.

B. Commissioner's Remarks

Commissioner Santiago began by stating that he typically provides the BHE with a year-end report at this time each year, but given the length of the agenda he would not do so this year. He added that given the current challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, today's remarks would be suited to address this topic. In that regard, the Commissioner noted four key issues:

- we are confronting the single most devastating pandemic in our nation's history to date;
- this pandemic has led to the consequential shift from face to face to strictly remote modality resulting in the most fundamental impact on teaching and learning in at least 15 years;
- the pandemic has led to a collapse of the national and state economies; and
- for over a month, the young people in this nation have been protesting systemic racism in this country.

He continued that in each of these circumstances the lack of equity has been apparent. The Equity Agenda is timely and the decision the BHE made in December of 2018 was forward in its scope. He remarked that the focus on racial equity emerged from empirical analysis and has also been validated by the major events of the day. He then shared news of signing the Lumina Foundation grant agreements that will bring in \$1.2M to support the Equity Agenda, and noted that a formal public announcements would be forthcoming.

Before turning the meeting over to Secretary Peyser, the Commissioner informed the Board of three decisions enacted since the last BHE meeting, using the delegation of authority they had vested in him under BHE 20-10 . The three actions were:

- BHE 20-24 Amendment of MA 403B Supplemental Retirement Plan - The retirement plan is a voluntary tax favored savings plan for employees of Community Colleges, State Universities and Executive of Education department. The new federal Corona Virus aide and Economic Relief Security act (or CARES), provides opportunities for individuals and families whose finances were adversely affected by COVID-19 to take distributions and loans from their retirement savings plan. The 403B Plan amendment enables eligible participants in the plan to benefit from these temporary financial relief provisions.
- BHE 20-25 Amendment of the MA Optional Retirement Program (ORP) - This amendment is related to the ORP, the defined contribution system that serves as a portable alternative to the MA State Employees Retirement System. The amendment enacted changes to the plan to enable ORP participants to use the benefits under the CARES act, including loans and in service withdrawals, for certain age eligible participants.

- BHE 20-26 Approval of MA State College Building Authority (MSCBA)- On April 8, 2020, the Board of Higher Education authorized the MSCBA to issue refunding bonds before the end of FY2020 to achieve net present value savings in excess of 4%, which would lower overall debt service costs for the State Universities. Since that time, revenue losses and costs incurred by the State Universities in connection with COVID-19 created a need to realize cash savings in the short term and provide relief to university budgets. This motion provides authority for the MSCBA to issue refunding bonds to provide fiscal relief for the State Universities over the next two years.

The Commissioner thanked President Gentile for being an active member while serving on the Council of Presidents for the last year and welcomed her successor, Middlesex Community College President James Mabry. The Commissioner also thanked Fitchburg State University President Richard Lapidus for representing the State Universities while serving on the Council of Presidents and introduced his successor, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts President James Birge.

C. Secretary of Education's Remarks

The Secretary began his remarks by thanking Presidents Gentile, Torrecilha, and Nelson for their work at their respective institutions. He noted that in terms of educational quality, equity, finance and operations, each of them had left their institutions stronger than when they found them. He thanked them for their service and bid them well in the new careers and retirements

Secretary Peyser updated the Board on Governor Baker's reopening process. He stated that the Governor's Reopening Advisory Board met consistently over a three-week period in May 2020. The Reopening Advisory Board produced a variety of recommendations and established a basic framework for reopening the economy in a phased process tied closely to the changing and hopefully improving statistics around COVID-19.

He continued, stating that we are currently in Phase II and shared information on what Phase I entailed as it related to higher education. At Phase I, higher education was authorized to reopen research laboratories and other clinical services, which were designed to enable the continued operation of programs and activities on our college campuses that have deep and long experience with viruses, disinfecting, social distancing and various protocols necessary to ensure safety in the current health crisis. Phase 2 expanded permissions in order to enable students who engaged in programs during the spring, but were unable to complete them as a result of moving to remote learning, including occupational and professional programs that required specific in-person contact hours or certification processes in order complete their degrees and credentials. He remarked that we are approaching Phase III, which would enable further opening of campuses to other programs, but also to more in-person instruction including the potential for residential life and programs on college campuses as the fall approaches.

He continued by referencing the Massachusetts Higher Education Working Group, which was being formed through the Reopening Advisory Board for developing guidelines and templates for safe repopulation of students and staff on our campuses. The Working Group is also considering testing protocols to ensure students and staff that are found to be positive for COVID-19 are treated in an appropriate manner and isolated appropriately from the rest of the community. Monitoring the health and status of staff and students throughout the school year is another key component of safely repopulating our campuses.

Secretary Peyser concluded that both the Higher Education Working Group and Reopening Advisory Board would have more information available over the coming week as preparations in moving into Phase III began for repopulation of campuses.

D. Reports from Presidents

Community College Segmental Report

List of Documents Used

<https://www.mass.edu/bhe/lib/documents/2020-06-23%20Report%20from%20CC%20Presidents.pdf>

President James Mabry thanked the BHE, the Commissioner and DHE staff, and indicated that he would be serving as the Chair of the Massachusetts Community College Council of Presidents this upcoming year. President Mabry stated that the value of the Community College system in Massachusetts during these challenging times is unprecedented. He shared how his colleagues at the Community Colleges have spent nearly every day of the last few months responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, giving everything to meeting the needs of our students and the needs of our college communities. He stated that as students and families face difficult financial decisions this fall, Massachusetts Community Colleges will continue offering the most affordable pathway to an associate degree or transfer to a four-year school. The Community Colleges believe they are uniquely positioned to be a primary catalyst for the Commonwealth's economic recovery *throughout* and *following* the COVID-19 pandemic. He referenced a record of rebuilding local economies, providing a pipeline of workers to high-demand industries, and serving as economic engines for *all* regions of the Commonwealth.

President Mabry highlighted the unique ability of Community Colleges to re-skill and educate the core of the workforce. On this topic, the Presidents and the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges have developed a new virtual conversation series: "On the Road with the Community Colleges: Driving the Economic Recovery." This series is initially focusing on the Community College partnerships with workforce and business leaders, and how their programs serve critical industries in Massachusetts. He stated that in the first two sessions, they had incredibly valuable discussions with Presidents Valerie Roberson of Roxbury Community College and Ellen Kennedy of Berkshire Community College; along with Jim Brett of the New England Council; Prabal Chakrabarti of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston; Steve Walsh of the MA Hospital Association; and Michael Curry of the Mass League of Community Health Centers. President Mabry shared highlights from the first two sessions, and stated that the segment was

going to submit some summaries from those dialogues at a later date.

President Mabry said he thought we were in a critical moment where we are facing two powerfully dangerous pandemics: the COVID-19 virus and systemic racism in our nation. It is up to us to come together and work to find solutions that help all students in public higher education reach their full potential. He said that he felt we were falling tragically short. These last weeks and months have been eye-opening for many who are reckoning with the reality that, at an alarming rate, people of color in America are not provided the same opportunities to match the outcomes of their white peers, whether those are health outcomes, education outcomes, professional and career outcomes, and so on. This structural racism has kept generations of families from achieving their dreams, the dreams that we in public higher education are supposed to help people fulfill.

He observed that the Community Colleges - who provide the most affordable higher education in the state, who educate more than 50% of the students in Massachusetts public higher ed, who offer regional accessibility with our 15 colleges, and, ultimately, who serve the largest share of students of color - are deeply and inequitably underfunded. Of state funding allocated for public higher education, the 15 colleges receive just 25%. If the funding to Community Colleges is cut further, it would quickly hamper their ability to gear up training and programs need to rebuild our economy and put people back to work. He added that 85% of first responders in Massachusetts attended a community college and we know that more CNAs, Nurses, Medical Assistants, Respiratory Therapists, and EMTs are critically needed. Community Colleges are the first choice and starting point for so many of these students. This moment – in response to the pandemic and in response to long-standing institutionalized racism – is calling on us to do better for our students. Everyone has seen the data, we know the outcomes for our students of color, and we know that we are not doing enough to support them. And the reality is Community Colleges serve more low-income students and students of color than the other two public higher education segments combined.

President Mabry said he was there to advocate for a renewed partnership between the BHE and the segment – one that is bold and proactive. We must take the goals of the Equity Agenda, take the aspirations of a post-COVID economy, and enable the Community Colleges to do the work that they are best known for: being regional economic engines and serving our Commonwealth's most vulnerable students and communities. He thanked the Board and said he looked forward to working with members to realize this new partnership.

State University Segmental Report

List of Documents Used

<https://www.mass.edu/bhe/lib/documents/2020-06-23%20Report%20from%20SU%20Presidents.pdf>

President Richard Lapidus began by announcing that MCLA President, Jaimie Birge, will be the State University Council of Presidents new, incoming chair. President Lapidus said that he was pleased to report that all that all nine of the State Universities are working towards campus

specific plans for a return to some in-classroom instruction and on-campus life for the fall semester. He noted that while all State University campuses moved from a largely in-person classroom experiences to almost exclusively remote classes last March, they are currently developing plans, in concert with faculty and union leadership, to return to face-to-face coursework beginning in September. These plans seek to prioritize the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff, while providing us the opportunity to continue offering high-quality, affordable pathways to baccalaureate and masters level degrees.

President Lapidus said that although the COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges in every aspect of our lives, we are all working on ways to manage through the crisis. State Universities continue to make progress on key Equity Agenda metrics and, prior to COVID-19, our universities were on pace to exceed the progress of the 2019-2020 academic year. He added, that the State Universities continue to see success with the retention rates of our students, closing of achievement gaps, creating pathways for more first-time, full-time high school graduates, students of color, and first-generation college goers, which has resulted in the graduation rate of our system being on track to graduate nearly 12,000 students this year; a significant increase from just four years ago when we graduated around 10,000 students. The State Universities will continue to work hard on these fronts.

President Lapidus reinforced the State Universities' commitment to anti-racism. Each of the campuses declare that we are committed to maintaining safe and healthy learning, living, and working environments, free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. He added that state universities are committed to disrupting hate, bias, ignorance, intolerance and violence whenever and where ever we encounter it. The State Universities stand by their commitment to the state's Equity Agenda, which recognizes the racial disparities in student outcomes and calls for a greater need to support and ensure the success of students of color. Finally, he acknowledged last Friday as the 155th anniversary of Juneteenth and it served as a reminder to all of us that we still have a long way to go. He concluded by stating that on behalf of his colleagues, the State Universities applaud, admire, support and join with those who are protesting in demand for change now, and asked the BHE to join the campuses in this fight against systemic racism.

E. Report from Student Advisory Council

BHE Member Abby Velozo opened remarks by introducing the Student Advisory Council Chair, Jorgo Gushi. Chair Jorgo Gushi thanked Commissioner Santiago, Chair Gabrieli and the BHE and provided an overview of 2019-2020 Actions and Initiatives of the Student Advisory Council (SAC). He remarked how the past few months had been challenging but how they persevered through teamwork and the strong student leadership. His presentation included summaries of the following initiatives:

- Open Educational Resources (OER)- he noted that this was one of the most important initiatives that the SAC has been working on since 2018. He highlighted the initial OER Statement of Support campaign's online survey, which was launched in November 2019. The survey asked students of the Commonwealth to express their support of OER and as

of June 23, 2020, the SAC has collected 1932 statements from various campuses. On March 24, the OER Advisory Council met for the first time at Quinsigamond Community College. The council consists of members from each Community College, State University and UMass campus, along with three students

- Community College Advocacy Day- this legislative event was held on October 23, 2019. This effort included advocacy on OER, and expressed the importance of funding the Performance Incentive Fund to provide students at the Community College level with more accessible, high-quality education.
- SAC's advocacy of the Every Voice Coalition- over the past two years SAC has engaged in advocacy on the campus and state-wide level to enhance campus safety and security. In October thru December 2019, the SAC supported the red letter writing campaign addressing legislators with letters in support of sexually violent climate surveys.
- On December 5, 2019 the SAC took a floor vote in supporting amendments to the law which currently requires the BHE student member to be enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student. The vote sought to change the language to allow eligibility for part time students. The SAC intends to revisit this, once normality returns to allow more campus and legislative advocacy.
- On February 27, 2020, the SAC unanimously voted and approved of SAR Resolution #001 to create a Statewide Campus Community Building Day held the third Wednesday in October of each year. Its purpose is to bring the students of each campus of the Commonwealth closer to their campus police officers the administration of their institutions. Given the situation around the nation on systemic racism , Jorgo stressed how much more meaningful the resolution is to campuses in solidarity with the Black community in Massachusetts and across the country.

SAC Chair Gushi concluded his presentation with the anti-racism statement that the SAC released on June 9, 2020. He addressed the SAC's action against racism as it joined the nation in its sorrow over the unfair death of George Floyd. He further condemned racism, bigotry and racial inequality as having no place in educational institutions, or communities. Finally, SAC Chair Gushi reiterated the SAC's commitment to promoting the Equity Agenda. He thanked Commissioner Santiago for his exemplary leadership.

In May 2020, the SAC sent two legislative advocacy letters, addressed to the MA legislative leadership, and the MA Congressional delegation. Both letters asked for additional funding due to unanticipated expenses incurred as a result of COVID-19. He stated that the budget is a mirror of the administration's values; if the administration cares about implementing equity across the state, they need to invest in their students, public higher education.

SAC Chair Gushi concluded his presentation with a breakdown of SAC's goals checklist and how most had been achieved for the academic year. He thanked Commissioner Santiago, Chair

Gabrieli, the DHE Board members and Abby Velozo, Anna Grady and Kush Patel for their teamwork. Finally, his asked DHE staff or BHE Members is to discuss developments regarding the Police Career Incentive Pay Program (PCIPP).

Commissioner Santiago thanked the SAC and their hard work on the initiatives reviewed, including OER. The Commissioner explained how the PCIPP (QUINN Bill) funded police training throughout the Commonwealth. In response to the uses of those programs, the legislature asked the DHE to oversee the criminal justice and programs that provide some police training. It has made a huge difference in the quality of that training. The Commissioner asked Deputy Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Student Success Pat Marshall to provide more insight on the PCIPP. Deputy Commissioner Marshall shared recommendations brought before the Board in 2017 regarding minimum educational requirements for police officers. The committee recommended a minimum of an Associate's degree. The DHE has also been working with stakeholders to reduce barriers for individuals wishing to pursue associates and bachelor's degrees. This includes acceptance of prior learning assessment and entering transferability to a four-year institution. There is currently an ad-hoc committee working to align the police academy curriculum with higher education and focusing on reporting requirements for that work. There are several stakeholders involved, including representatives from public and independent institutions, the municipal police training committee, the municipal police department and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security.

VI. PRESENTATION

List of Documents Used

The presentation for the meeting can be viewed here: [EY-Parthenon Report](#).

Chair Gabrieli thanked the Commissioner and the SAC, and proceeded with the next section of the agenda. He introduced the next item by recognizing the tremendous work done do date with Commissioner Santiago, Secretary Peyser, the campuses and other stakeholders in answering questions about the fiscal health of the public higher education system (the 9 State Universities and 15 Community Colleges). Chair Gabrieli discussed the contribution of EY-Parthenon to help the DHE collaborate with campuses. He continued, stating that the objective was to come up with a global view on how to best help the institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Chair Gabrieli then turned the meeting over to Haven Ladd, a partner at EY-Parthenon.

A. EY-Parthenon Report

Haven Ladd began by introducing his colleagues, Daniel Jerneycic and Kasia Lundy. He presented on the findings of the financial viability of State Universities and Community Colleges in light of COVID-19. Mr. Ladd reminded the group that the project is not a budgeting exercise, but an analysis to help the DHE understand the financial risks that could be faced by the Commonwealth's public institutions of higher education, excluding UMass.

Mr. Ladd stated that the key objective of the project is to provide a normalized view of the nature and timing of potential liquidity risk in the higher education system. Liquidity risk was defined as

having enough cash or cash-like resources to cover, at a minimum, one month of operating costs for each individual institution. Mr. Ladd described EY-Parthenon's approach, which was to provide a segment level view. The group was also asked to summarize a high-level perspective on potential mitigation strategies for the colleges and universities in light of a financially challenged environment. The approach was to collect very detailed data in conjunction with each of the CFO's at the 15 Community Colleges, and 9 State Universities. He said that they held a number of conversations with all 24 CFO's through this process, as well as presidents, using one group with Community Colleges and the second group with State Universities. Mr. Ladd thanked the institutions for their participation throughout the fast-moving project.

Mr. Ladd described how EY-Parthenon normalized the base case information as a starting point for all institutions, using the same set of assumptions. The group also normalized enrollment to be a three-year individual growth rate of tuition and fees for each individual institution less 5% of the base case. State appropriations were normalized for base case planning assumptions to be the same as the FY20 General Appropriations Act level. The cost structure of each institution was normalized to be their current cost structure, recognizing that there could be mitigation strategies going into FY21.

Mr. Ladd then elaborated on the group's development of two additional cases, which are more negative than the base case as follows:

- Downside Case – It assumes a further 5% decline in enrollment and 10% decline relative to FY20 levels and state appropriations; and
- Pessimistic Case – It assumes a further 10% decline in enrollment, and 15% total relative to the base and a 20% decline in appropriations. It also assumes, for the State Universities, that residential occupancy of dormitory rooms and corresponding revenues would be at or near zero for half the school year.

In both the Downside and Pessimistic cases the reduction in state appropriations have a larger impact on the financial health of the institutions than just the 10% and 20% models because the assumption is that with a decline in state appropriations, payroll that is funded by state appropriations would stay on the books for each individual campus and therefore that campus would have to pick up the incremental fringe benefit, which comes to approximately 40%.

Mr. Ladd continued with an executive summary of the context and observations from the project. He noted that the context has been a challenging one for State Universities and Community Colleges for years. Community College enrollment has decreased 3% since 2010, while State University enrollment has been relatively flat. Per FTE, expenses have increased 3-4% in both systems. State appropriations have remained flat during that time period.

Mr. Ladd observed that the history has been hard for all of the leaders of these institutions, and the question asked of EY-Parthenon was-- whether the immediate future driven by COVID-19 was going to be so challenging such that it would cause a number of these institutions to run out of liquid resources and not be able to pay their obligations. The project started in the beginning of

June 2020 and during this period COVID-19 has created an unprecedented uncertainty in the marketplace and created an environment in which planners, CFO's and Presidents have less visibility into the next academic year and therefore each one of these potential scenarios, the Base, Downside, and Pessimistic cases appear to be possible for FY20. It is important to plan for all three financial scenarios.

Mr. Ladd said that on the positive side, under the Base Case only one institution appears to have a slightly negative liquidity position by the end of FY21. Here, this means that only one institution would drop below having one month of available operating expenses covered by liquid reserves. In the Pessimistic scenario as many as eight institutions, split evenly between Community Colleges and State Universities, could face the same liquidity challenge. The assumptions here are no cost productions, and no significant mitigation efforts.

Mr. Ladd noted, as referenced in Commissioner Santiago's earlier remarks, that an MSCBA restructuring proposal is pending which would be substantially positive from a liquidity standpoint. Assuming that the proposal goes forward on as of July 1 that would create enough liquidity in FY21 to cover all available shortfalls for State Universities. In addition, most State Universities have already identified additional incremental cost savings which they could enact in order to strengthen their cash position in FY21. On the Community College side, the number of Community Colleges in the initial submission did identify incremental cost savings above and beyond what EY-Parthenon modeled. This would enable them to weather the financial challenges of FY21 in a better way.

Mr. Ladd continued by reviewing the outlook, noting that most of the colleges would have available resources at a minimum to run through to the end of the calendar year and more of them through late in the fiscal year in the spring 2021. Although the good news is that most institutions can manage cash flow in FY21, it is also apparent that FY21 will cause a substantial reduction in reserve in liquidity for these institutions which could put them at more risk in FY22 and beyond. State Universities are beginning FY21 this month, with cash and liquidity approximately equal to 6-months of projected operating expenses. Community Colleges which have a more flexible cost structure are beginning FY21 with approximately four months in available reserves.

Mr. Ladd provided observations under the Pessimistic scenario, stating that both the Community College and State University segments in FY21 were approximately within 2 to 2.5 months of available liquid reserves. All 24 institutions are expected to be in a notably worse financial position by June 2021 compared with June 2020 under all the scenarios that were modeled. Mr. Ladd stated that in EY-Parthenon's opinion this would reduce resiliency to cope with continued adverse outlook for enrollment in date appropriations going into FY22.

Mr. Ladd provided a break down on how EY-Parthenon assessed risk for the project into three primary components: 1) financial viability in FY21; 2) financial sustainability beyond FY21; and 3) system-wide resiliency.

Mr. Ladd presented sensitivity and mitigation analyses of the Community Colleges. This included an overview of the individual cases EY-Parthenon modeled by reiterating the three cases used for the analysis (i.e., Base Case, Downside Case, Pessimistic Case). He then presented graphs as showing the aggregate of debt cash flow for Community Colleges as a system. Mr. Ladd next detailed the Community College institutions individually, using the same Base, Downside and Pessimistic Case scenarios, he identified seven (1 Base, 1 Downside, 4 Pessimistic Case) institutions that fell below the one-month reserve threshold at one point during the year.

Next, Mr. Ladd presented a sensitivity analysis of the State Universities in the aggregate, again using the three-case modeling used for the analysis. (i.e., Base Case, Downside Case, Pessimistic Case). The analysis for State Universities also includes residential life applicable for State Universities, which assumes outlines for dormitory reopening for the FY20-21 school year. He then presented graphs showing the aggregate of debt cash flow for State Universities as a system. Mr. Ladd turned to mitigation strategies and reiterated the significance of the MSCBA funding for State Universities and demonstrated impact on a graph. Mr. Ladd next detailed the state universities individually. Using the same Base, Downside and Pessimistic Case scenarios, he identified 4 (0 Base, 0 Downside, 4 Pessimistic Case) institutions that fell below the 1 one-month reserve threshold at one point during the year. The MSCBA restructuring would preserve enough liquidity in FY21 that all four institutions would now stay above that one-month threshold. In closing, Mr. Ladd stated that additional cost mitigation efforts had been identified by the universities which could reduce payroll through a variety of strategies to enable them to preserve cash and increase liquidity and flexibility going into FY22. He then turned the meeting back over to Chair Gabrieli for the next part of the presentation.

Chair Gabrieli opened the floor for questions.

BHE Member Pagliuca asked about the available reserves being used and where the funds are being taken from? Mr. Ladd responded that from a technical and financial standpoint, we are looking at cash reserves as well as short-term, unrestricted investments (i.e., investments without endowment-type restrictions against them for individual purposes). From a financial standpoint, all of those assets could hypothetically be liquidated and sold to cover operating costs. Daniel Jerneycic added that the funds also include other investments beyond the short-term ones. Further, more work needs to be done on an institution-by-institution basis to determine the exact liquidation ability of some of these investments.

BHE Member Toner asked whether some campuses are in more trouble than others, and if there is an ability for campuses to share resources. Mr. Ladd responded that the analysis was done at the aggregate level across the two different segments of campuses as if there is a shared bank account across these institutions- which there is not. The sole intent was to understand the system-wide risk as we go into FY21. It is also true that each individual campus manages its own risk and positions.

BHE Member Conforme asked if EY- Parthenon looks at each campus and thinks about dollars and impact, is there anything you can glean from better financial positions to more challenging

financial positions vis-a-vis both student enrollment and student outcomes? Mr. Ladd explained that they could not glean that from their work on this particular project.

BHE Member Mattera asked if there is any work that addresses the quality or quantity of other mitigation strategies, and if other work has been done in that area? Mr. Ladd responded that it is apparent in working with the 24 CFO's, that there is a wide range of mitigation strategies being contemplated at each of the individual institutions. At the State Universities in early June as we started this, they proposed a potential list of cost reduction tactics they felt were needed on their campuses in terms of what they were seeing FY21. EY-Parthenon did assess the viability of those strategies, but for the purpose of quantifying the impact. We purely aggregated what they originally submitted to us as conceivable and logical.

BHE Member Mike O'Brien asked if the Board has an obligation as a system to engage with students, their families, and others to give them some idea of what these campuses may face or will face as we go through this year such as potential instabilities in higher education institutions? Commissioner Santiago agreed that we do have an obligation, and today's conversation is part of that. However, the timing and content of any specific announcement on risks, whether it is a private, independent institution or a public institution, is the key. For our private, independent institutions, we use an 18-month standard in terms of their ability to teach out students. For those institutions our focus is predominately on the students and ensuring the students can transfer to other institutions without loss of academic time or resources. For public institutions it's different since, among other things, the physical assets are the property of the Commonwealth, and BHE oversight is different. Each has to be dealt with on a case by case basis.

Commissioner Santiago thanked EY-Parthenon, Chair Gabrieli and the institutions for their work on the project. He outlined the major actions needed to position institutions for resiliency in FY21.

Commissioner Santiago stipulated the importance of monitoring state appropriations and their impact higher education funding. He remarked on the importance of institutions getting through FY21 to buy time, and that most are very concerned about FY22. He observed that campuses will likely need to use some of their reserves for FY21. The problem arises if they use all of their reserves for FY21, as it would prove to be a clear disadvantage going into the following fiscal year. Open dialogue with the administration and legislature is needed to be able to provide timely, accurate information that can assist in this planning process.

Commissioner Santiago continued, noting that at the campus level, most of the campuses have already had their budgets approved for FY21. They have had conversation with their boards, and their boards have been engaged on those issues We know because we have been looking at some of those budget presentations to the local boards; however, those conversations were based on information that may be somewhat obsolete now given that they occurred before the impacts of the pandemic became clearer. There is a responsibility of each campus to monitor their finances, to engage their communities in these conversations, and to talk about mitigation strategies that they could enact in both the short and long term. He added that we have a

seasoned leadership team of campus presidents that have done this before, but this is the most challenging environment that we have been engaged in as a system of higher education. The Commissioner noted that EY-Parthenon will be asked about providing some expertise that the campuses may be able to rely upon as well.

The Commissioner remarked on how the DHE needs to engage stakeholders, and constituent groups to provide information as this process moves forward. There must be communication across the institutions so that all are learning from each other, and we need to model some of the potential system-wide impacts as well. Commissioner Santiago stated that while we are a much-decentralized system, at this particular time it is important to act in concert as a system; collaboration will get us through this, competition will across the institutions will not. He added that we are beginning to see some unfortunate aspects of competition among independent institutions, with some institutions deciding not to take credits from others. This is to a great disadvantage to the students. Commissioner Santiago stated that both public and private institutions need to be responsive to students' needs.

The Commissioner concluded by stating that both he and Chair Gabrieli are committed to working with the Secretary in finding ways to help the public higher education system get through what will be a difficult FY21, and to help position ourselves in a stronger way to confront FY22. The Commissioner added that he will be working immediately after this presentation to start moving forward some additional conversations.

Chair Gabrieli added his observations, noting that we are in a position today that shows a degree of uncertainty across a wide range of planning circumstances, and broad viability in FY21 with some pockets of higher risk. He said that as a Board we should be committed to investing significant time and resources into working closely with campuses to make sure their budgeting plans evolve and continue to be informed by new data. Our goal is to help institutions remain at healthy viable levels for FY21. More broadly, we need to reiterate to our campus presidents that under this decentralized system they are not only responsible for ensuring their campuses are viable next year, but they are also responsible for their balance points during the course of this year. Too much dependence on reserves will lead to a weakened system as we saw in some of the EY-Parthenon analyses. The only potential offsets to that are pleasant surprises on federal action or state appropriations, increases to student enrollment that may materialize, or cost mitigations. None of those are easy solutions. Chair Gabrieli concluded by stating that he hoped that the BHE can get engaged into these discussion more and added that these discussions must also occur at each campus.

Commissioner Santiago introduced the next set of speakers, a panel presidents from the Community Colleges and State Universities who helped advise the work: Bridgewater State University President Fred Clark; Berkshire Community College President Ellen Kennedy; Bunker Hill Community College President Pam Eddinger; and Worcester State University President Barry Maloney.

President Fred Clark opened the panel discussion by thanking the DHE, the Executive Office of

Education, and EY-Parthenon for engaging institutions in this great work. President Clark discussed the EY-Parthenon scenarios, the variables that they utilized, and the contextual framework that they deployed—which all made sense to the segment. Key cost mitigation strategies remain as a tool to be deployed, along with the significant state and federal assistance, including the MSCBA capital refinancing restructuring. There is also an additional \$18 million noted in the foot note of debt reserve funding that can be deployed by the MSCBA in FY21. President Clark said that he wanted the BHE to know that “we’ve got this;” it’s not going to be easy and we will need your help, as FY21 will be the most challenging one in our history for our institutions, but we’ve got this.

President Clark stated that implications of the global pandemic on higher education is historic. Demographic shifts could result in a recession far worse than the 2008 great depression. Racial justice tension reminiscent of the late 1960’s, and a hiring freeze through which we will be asking much more hard work from faculty and staff for a long period of time, have created an unprecedented environment. We also see something else that is new-- and that is tremendous uncertainty in student decision-making regarding their higher education choices.

Generally students want to come back to campus. 90% of the students at Bridgewater wish to return to campus, but when you inject hybrid education, flex-ed and online, it begins to fuel an incredible amount of uncertainty and indecision by our students. Predictive analytics fail during this environment. However, we all agree that students need public higher education, and our state needs our students to succeed now more than ever. Now is the time for students to lean into their education, not stop out. For a state that prides itself on our true natural resource-- our intellect and highly educated work force-- we cannot afford to lose a generation of learners to COVID-19. We hope that the state can help deliver that message to students-- which is to continue on with their education. President Clark concluded by stating that the State Universities look forward to working with the BHE in supporting our students and navigating these historic challenges. We have ideas as to how the state, the DHE and the BHE can do more to help in mitigating these challenges and we look forward to having these conversations as we move forward.

Berkshire Community College President Ellen Kennedy thanked the Commissioner Santiago and Chair Gabrieli for their forward- thinking approach to determine the liquidity issues facing everyone and looking at things from a different lens. She also thanked EY-Parthenon for their work alongside the institutional CFO’s to look at our two systems separately to help identify how our institutions really appear in aggregate.

President Kennedy discussed the model employed during the EY Parthenon analysis. She shared how the model’s flexibility would prove helpful as the ever-evolving national crisis continues. Community Colleges are the workforce engine for the Commonwealth. She added that our primary concerns lie in any potential reductions in state appropriations, and how we would respond to those reductions. President Kennedy then addressed the question posed by BHE Member Pagliuca regarding cash reserves and their use. She stated that for most institutions, cash reserves have two purposes: 1) operating cash throughout the course of the year; and 2) to

help meet urgent needs of new programming to support growth in areas that would immediately be a Commonwealth issue.

President Kennedy concluded by discussing how the Community Colleges align with the Equity Agenda. She said the Community Colleges boast the most diverse population of students in the Commonwealth. President Kennedy shared that when she first started, state appropriations represented almost 70% of the operating funds for our institutions. Now, for a host of reasons it reflects 30-40%, thus shifting the costs onto students. It is cause for great concern and we remain committed to preserving as strong of an education as possible for our students, and supporting the incredible employment needs in the Commonwealth. We also look forward to connecting and working closely with the BHE and our own campus boards to help build a strong response to whatever lies ahead.

President Pam Eddinger began by affirming an encouraging outlook, stating that the Community Colleges would prove to be successful in balancing their budgets in FY21. The cost-cutting methodologies used will be helpful, and since we are 85% people, our focus should be on preserving the core and what is best for our students. President Eddinger, however, expressed concern for institutions getting through FY22 if they are stripped to the bone in FY21. She offered suggestions on how the BHE could assist institutions, focusing on advocacy. President Eddinger added that what they were up against included rising costs in healthcare and, in some instances, transportation. Given that most students and graduates would be entering the healthcare professions, it is an area we ought to pay attention to as the reality of COVID-19 has shaped our communities. President Eddinger added that state aid is imperative to get us through in FY22. As the 15 Community Colleges try to do our best to make a positive impact, we are looking for advocacy in this endeavor.

President Barry Maloney expressed his appreciation to the Commissioner, Chair Gabrieli, Secretary Peyser, and the EY-Parthenon team for the opportunity to be part of the conversation. The four advisory campuses were thanked, along their Presidents and CFO's for their assistance in the fast-paced work done over a one month period of time. President Maloney advised the BHE not to view any of the analytics and conversations as done in isolation. On the contrary, the campus boards of trustees, presidents and campus leadership have been meeting for several years and have all rallied together with DHE in acknowledging declining demographics. The new layer of COVID-19 is a challenging one, but the campus leaders are involved in and committed to engaging in the work needed to be done to move towards a fiscal resolution. While President Maloney addressed the mitigation measures presented to the institutions as appropriate, he also reminded the BHE of how helpful it is to give institutions as much flexibility as possible to utilize the appropriate measures.

President Maloney closed by expressing support and encouraging students to lean in to public higher education. President Maloney emphasized that a plan to meet the rising needs of our campuses may need to be presented where the Commonwealth sees an increase in enrollment rather than a decrease due to the rising costs of education. He welcomed a conversation about state appropriations so as to as to help campuses not deplete their reserves in the months and

years ahead.

Commissioner Santiago thanked the panel of Presidents, and turned the meeting over to Chair Gabrieli, who recognized Secretary Peyser for comments.

Secretary Peyser thanked Chair Gabrieli for his leadership, and thanked Commissioner Santiago, Deputy Commissioner Simard and the entire DHE team for their work. He also thanked the campus presidents, CFO's and EY-Parthenon. He recognized the importance of the work, stating that it is a necessary first step that would help guide the campuses into action steps going forward. While the state and the campuses are facing the most challenging fiscal climate, it is not a crisis but something that we can get through. Secretary Peyser observed that the risks had less to do with being able to survive FY21, but more with positioning for greater resiliency and sustainability in the years ahead, and addressing the demographic challenges before us.

Secretary Peyser noted that although the data produced provides direction at the aggregate, system and sector levels, each campus is actively working on their individual budgets for next year due to the uncertainty and changes on a daily basis. Secretary Peyser added that we are moving into a fiscal year where revenues have been shrinking dramatically as a result of the economic impact of the pandemic. Secretary Peyser addressed the need for open communication and transparency among all stakeholders, in addition to the need for analytical and planning support, and strong policy measures at the Department and state and administrative levels as we move forward during these uncertain times. He referenced the Governor's recent capital budget which will provide additional resources for small repair projects on our campuses as an example of incremental resource support. The Secretary closed by thanking everyone for their participation in the process to find solutions to move the ball forward and positioning our campuses and system for success.

BHE Member LaRock affirmed Secretary Peyser comment on the need for strong policy measures to help mitigate the impacts that we are seeing at the campus level. He stated, by way of example, that the recent MSCBA payment relief is the stitch in time that may help save four of the nine state institutions. However, Board Member LaRock advocated for additional state policy measures and appropriations to assist Community Colleges in the same manner.

Vice Chair Harranty let Board members know she had to leave the meeting at 1:15 p.m.

Chair Gabrieli introduced University of Massachusetts (UMass) President Marty Meehan. President Meehan thanked the BHE for the invitation and introduced his colleagues Lisa Calise, UMass Senior Vice President for Administration & Finance, and Katherine Newman, Chief Academic Officer. President Meehan provided an overview of UMass and history of the five-campus system.

President Meehan stated that UMass had been hit by COVID-19 noting that UMass suffered a loss of \$123 million in the last semester. This included \$65 million in room and board and reimbursement reversals, \$40 million in research grants (halted due to lab closures), and \$18 million in events and parking fees. However, he said that UMass has sought out ways to become

more efficient and effective. Those efforts are led by the UMass Board of Trustees and the Chancellors and have saved approximately \$27 million. To that end, the segment is presently engaged in things such as shared services, and looking for other ways to cut expenses. The segment also froze tuition for undergraduate students in the upcoming year due to the current pandemic.

President Meehan stated that he stands in agreement with the comments made by Presidents Clark, Kennedy, Eddinger and Maloney in that everyone is dealing with more than a one-year challenge, and perhaps one that extends well into a two or three-year period before recovery is achieved. He stated that UMass is going to work as hard as they can to try to increase state funding, but the outlook at this point was not as bright. He continued, stating that the 29 institutions should work together when lobbying the state for money so to speak with one voice. With regard to federal funding, President Meehan stated that the CARES Act provided \$46 million (\$23 million to revenue losses and \$23 million to students) to offset UMass losses. He also referenced pending federal legislation which may provide additional relief.

Next, UMass Senior Vice President for Administration & Finance, Lisa Calise offered a PowerPoint for presentation, which included brief highlights of the UMass finance structure. Ms. Calise also reviewed controls UMass has implemented to help manage the financial reality that COVID-19 has created. Such controls have included real time data collection and continuing to develop high-impact efficiencies across the five campuses, including expanding its shared services initiative.

Vice President Calise continued with an overview of the UMass “financial accountability framework.” She said that UMass has strengthened its long-term financial outlook by adopting a framework for financial accountability which is based on four key tenets:

- Oversight: Independent and objective assurance that analyzes data, processes, policies and controls;
- Internal Controls: Standard processes designed to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of objectives (now done quarterly instead of annually);
- Transparency: Reliable, timely information that is accessible and understandable; and
- Risk Management: Systematic approach to identifying, assessing and managing risks across the organization.

Vice President Calise remarked that the accountability framework has enabled UMass to create a centralized, efficient and effective delivery model for procurement, accounts payable, treasury, insurance, legal counsel, and IT services across UMass. In FY21, Vice President Calise stated that UMass will implement a structurally balanced budget that will ensure the long-term financial sustainability of UMass. She stated that some one-time revenue sources, such as federal CARES Act funding, may be used in FY21 to cover limited expenses based on funding source and

restrictions, but the use of one-time solutions must be limited as UMass continues to analyze which revenue impacts are likely to be long-term beyond FY21.

Assumptions made in the five-year financial forecast, published in December 2019, and the University's FY21 state budget request are being revised and Vice President Calise stated scenario planning was underway for a variety of different revenue and expense impact. President Meehan added that the scenario planning slide noted on page 17 of the presentation is a guideline that all five campuses are using to develop their fall plans. Vice President Calise concluded by providing an overview of next steps.

Commissioner Santiago stated that he would connect with President Meehan to discuss some of what might be help for the other campuses. The shared services approach, in particular, is one which the Department has strongly considered.

BHE Member Eppinger agreed on the importance of collaboration and asked for clarification of the shared services referenced by President Barry Maloney. President Maloney responded by confirming the partnership of Worcester State University and Quinsigamond Community College. Initiatives such as Early College represent one of the ways in which WSU and QCC share resources. The success rate of the program between the schools is unprecedented.

BHE Member LaRock remarked on the need for the Community College segment to join together to discuss the pressing workforce needs. As the economy reopens, adult learners, who have been displaced, will need greater assistance from Community Colleges. BHE Member LaRock also asked that as we continue to look at the financial viability of public higher education where does performance measurement and best practice fit in to the broader context? Chair Gabrieli confirmed that he will work with the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner Tom Simard to make this information more available.

BHE Member Mattera commented on different mitigation strategies and the need for moral support to assist institutions as tough decisions are implemented this year.

BHE Member Pagliuca commented on the need to keep student performance and equity central to the conversation. Chief Academic Officer Newman responded, stating that UMass watches a number of metrics for student performance. UMass has also made a number of equity investments based on the Commissioner's recommendation and fiscal support from grants given by the Department. When COVID came up, the UMass institutions shifted to remote work and instruction, and initiated a system called "Respond." Respond is a proactive use of data analytics that enables staff to reach out to students based on levels of engagement. We then created a coaching system that scoops up the student and makes sure they have the appropriate coaching.

Chair Gabrieli thanked UMass representatives before moving on to the next items on the agenda.

List of Documents Used

[*PDF Presentation Found Here, FY21 Budget Planning*](#)

VII. MOTIONS

List of Documents Used

[PowerPoint Presentation – BHE Meeting June 23, 2020](#)

BHE Motions 20-27 through 20-34

Chair Gabrieli set the context for the three academic affairs motions before the Board, and recognized the work by the institutions and Department staff in preparing the letters of intent for the three programs up for consideration.

Chair Gabrieli asked for a motion of approval for BHE 20-27: Approval of Letter of Intent of Massachusetts Bay Community College to Award the Associate in Science in Surgical Technology and Authorization for Fast Track Review. Senior Associate Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Public Program Approval, Winnie Hagan presented the motion. Board member Cortez remarked that in prior motions for BHE approval, we noted that upon graduating each class of any given program, the college shall submit to the board a status report on the program's success. He noted that the language had not been listed in the action for BHE 20-27 and asked if it was intentional. Board Member Cortez further stated the importance of having such language given the current COVID-19 crisis, and as stewards of the system. He stressed the Board's need to track which degree programs are meeting the needs that they put out, and which ones are still working on towards that effort at the end of the four-year mark. Ms. Hagan responded by describing the BHE's change in the review process of public programs from a full program review to an approval of the letter of intent as phase one-- with the remainder of the review being done by staff internally as phase two. She noted that as a result of these changes, the language will be included in the final approvals conducted through the second phase of the review; not in phase one. At completion of phase two, the Commissioner then reviews the full program for approval and the language will appear in the Commissioner's approval.

There being no further discussion, Chair Gabrieli asked if the BHE could bundle all the motions related to letters of intent, in the interest of time, and hold one roll call vote. Chief Legal Counsel Papanikolaou agreed, but to facilitate that approach she suggested that Board receive the Department staff presentations on the other two motions, and take a bundled vote at that time, to assure that there are no issues with the other two programs which would warrant holding separate votes. Chair Gabrieli agreed with that approach and asked DHE staff to present the next two motions.

Ms. Hagan proceeded to the next motion and presented on BHE 20-28: Approval of Letter of Intent of the University of Massachusetts Amherst to Award the Master of Science in Data Analytics and Computational Social Science and Authorization for Fast Track Review. Board member Pagliuca remarked that the fees for the program at \$33-38k per students seem high. Board member Pagliuca also suggested that it might be helpful to tie in a specific and more marketable credential for someone graduating from the program and perhaps shifting to an online model to decrease the cost. UMass Amherst Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Farshid Hajir responded that the program is designed to be a one calendar year Master's Program

determination on review protocol.

degree granting authority pursuant to the Fast Track

BHE 20-28 APPROVAL OF LETTER OF INTENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST TO AWARD THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DATA ANALYTICS AND COMPUTATIONAL SOCIAL SCIENCE AND AUTHORIZATION FOR FAST TRACK REVIEW

VOTED: The Board of Higher Education (BHE) has evaluated the Letter of Intent of the University of Massachusetts Amherst to award the Master of Science in Data Analytics and Computational Social Science and has determined that the proposal aligns with BHE criteria. Accordingly, the BHE authorizes the Commissioner to review the program and to make a final determination on degree granting authority pursuant to the Fast Track review protocol.

BHE-28-29 APPROVAL OF LETTER OF INTENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS DARTMOUTH TO AWARD THE BACHELOR OF ARTS IN COMMUNICATION AND AUTHORIZATION FOR FAST TRACK REVIEW

VOTED: The Board of Higher Education (BHE) has evaluated the Letter of Intent of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth to award the Bachelor of Arts in Communication and has determined that the proposal aligns with BHE criteria. Accordingly, the BHE authorizes the Commissioner to review the program and to make a final determination on degree granting authority pursuant to the Fast Track review protocol.

In the interest of time, Chair Gabrieli asked BHE members if they had any objections to tabling motions BHE 20-30, BHE 20-31 and BHE 20-32, with the understanding that the Commissioner could take up these motions under his delegated summer authority, if warranted. With no objections and no further discussion, motions BHE 20-30, BHE 20-31 and BHE 20-32 were tabled, with the understanding that the Commissioner would be allowed to take up these motions under his delegated summer authority, if warranted.

Chair Gabrieli asked for a motion of approval for BHE 20-33: Board of Higher Education Fiscal Year 2021 Meeting Schedule. The motion was made and duly seconded. The votes were recorded by roll call as follows:

- Ann Christensen – Yes
- Veronica Conforme – Yes
- Alex Cortez – Yes
- Patty Eppinger – Yes
- Chair-Chris Gabrieli – Yes

- JD LaRock – Yes
- Paul Mattera – Yes
- Michael O'Brien – Yes
- Judy Pagliuca – Yes
- Secretary Peyser – Yes
- Paul Toner – Yes
- Abby Velozo – Yes

Motion BHE 20-33 passed unanimously by all BHE members present.

BHE-20-33 BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION FISCAL YEAR 2021 MEETING SCHEDULE

VOTED : That the Board of Higher Education approves the schedule of regular board meetings for Fiscal Year 2021, as presented by the Commissioner.

Board Member O'Brien left the meeting at 2:08 p.m.

Chair Gabrieli asked for a motion of approval for BHE 20-34: Delegation of Summer Authority to the Commissioner. The motion was made and duly seconded. The votes were recorded by roll call as follows:

- Anne Christensen – Yes
- Veronica Conforme – Yes
- Alex Cortez – Yes
- Patty Eppinger – Yes
- Chair-Chris Gabrieli – Yes
- JD LaRock – Yes
- Paul Mattera – Yes
- Judy Pagliuca – Yes
- Secretary Peyser – Yes
- Paul Toner – Yes
- Abby Velozo – Yes

The following motion passed unanimously, by all BHE members present.

BHE 20-34 DELEGATION OF SUMMER AUTHORITY TO THE COMMISSIONER

VOTED: The Board of Higher Education delegates to the Commissioner until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board its authority to take such action, in consultation with and upon the advice of the Chair or Vice Chair of the Board, as is deemed necessary or desirable.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carlos E. Santiago
Commissioner of the Department and
Secretary to the Board