

MINUTES
SPECIAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
THOMAS EDISON STATE UNIVERSITY
VIA ZOOM WEBINAR
October 8, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kemi Alli, Chair; Gualberto (Gil) Medina, Vice Chair; Merodie A. Hancock, President; J. Stanley Justice; Eric R. Lear; Brian Maloney; Lydia Stockman; Michael Toscani; Johnnie Whittington; Sanket Shah, (Student); Jennifer Hutchinson, (Student)

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Chris Stringer, Vice President and CFO; Jennifer Hoff, General Counsel; Michael Mancini, Chief of Staff/COO and Secretary to the Board; and Jamie Adams, Executive Assistant to the President

Dr. Alli officially called the public meeting to order at 4:06 p.m., followed by a statement of public notice pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 to 10:4-21.

PRESIDENT’S REMARKS

The President updated the Board on the virtual commencement and shared some photos of graduates that were posted on social media.

REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION, AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Dr. Alli introduced Mr. Lear to present the Administration, Audit and Finance Committee Report. Mr. Lear introduced Mr. Stringer to brief the Board on the committee meeting held earlier today.

CONSIDERATION OF FY 2021 PROPOSED BUDGET

Mr. Lear presented the following resolution:

WHEREAS: The “Higher Education Restructuring Act of 1994,” Chapter 48 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes requires the governing boards of public institutions to approve a university’s proposed budget; and

WHEREAS: The University’s Chief Financial Officer has prepared a proposed Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2021 totaling \$54,706,138 of which \$6,147,000 is the anticipated state appropriations; and

WHEREAS: The University’s Chief Financial Officer has prepared a proposed New Jersey State Library Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2021 totaling \$5,549,655, of which \$5,223,000 is the anticipated state appropriation; and

WHEREAS: The Administration, Audit and Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees has met to discuss the proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget and has recommended that the proposed budget be presented to the Board for its consideration; and

WHEREAS: The action taken herein is pursuant to the recommendation of the President; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Board of Trustees of Thomas Edison State University does hereby approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget as recommended and incorporated herein as referenced, effective October 1, 2020.

Mr. Medina made, and Ms. Stockman seconded, a motion to adopt the resolution. Motion carried unanimously.

CONSIDERATION OF BID WAIVERS

Mr. Stringer provided a summary of the proposed bid waivers. Mr. Lear presented the following resolution.

WHEREAS: The “State College Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 18A:64-52 et seq. requires that contracts be made and awarded by the University, after public advertising, for bids for contracts in excess of the established bid threshold; and

WHEREAS: The State College Contracts Law, N.J.S.A. 18A:64-56, permits, in certain specified instances, that contracts may be made, negotiated, or awarded by the University by resolution of its Board of Trustees without public advertising for bids; and

WHEREAS: The Board of Trustees approved the “Thomas Edison State University Purchasing and Contracting Policy,” which governs purchases and contracts for the University and Library, on June 10, 2016; and

WHEREAS: The Board of Trustees finds that the following purchases and contracts have met the criteria for award without public bidding, under the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:64-56; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Thomas Edison State University Board of Trustees hereby approves waivers of advertisement for the following purchases and contracts for the purposes designated:

BID WAIVER REQUESTS

The State College Contracts Law requires that contracts be made and awarded by the University only after they are publicly advertised for bids. N.J.S.A. 18A:64-56, a provision of that law, allows the Board of Trustees to waive advertising for bids in certain instances. The Board authorized the Thomas Edison State University Purchasing and Contracting Policy, by resolution dated June 10,

2016. The Policy requires that items exceeding \$3,000 be obtained through some price competition. The following proposed contracts will be processed in accordance with that Policy.

1. Education Management Solutions - \$100,000

The University seeks approval for a bid waiver for Education Management Solutions (EMS) to cover costs for the transition of an upgraded integrated software and digital audio recording system to a cloud based platform for remote access by student into the simulation laboratory in Pruitt Hall at a cost not to exceed \$100,000. N.J.S.A. 18A:64-56(a) (19) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract by Board resolution for information technology.

2. Nursing Simulators- \$120,000

The University is requesting a bid waiver to cover the costs for the purchase, installation, maintenance and repair of Pediatric Hal Simulator from Gaumard and a Nursing Anne Simulator from Laerdal, at a cost not to exceed \$120,000. N.J.S.A. 18A:64-56 (a) (25) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract, by Board resolution, for consulting services involving curriculum and N.J.S.A. 18A:64-56(a) (27) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract by Board resolution for the purchase of equipment of a technical nature when the procurement thereof is necessary in order to assure standardization of equipment in the public interest.

3. New Backup System - \$400,000

The University received approval for a \$225,000 bid waiver on June 5, 2020 to procure and implement a replacement for the current antiquated enterprise backup system. The University is seeking approval to increase the bid waiver amount by \$175,000 to increase capacity for online remote storage. The cost will not exceed \$400,000 for the period from July 1, 2020 through December 31, 2021. N.J.S.A. 18A: 64-56 (a) (19) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract by Board resolution for information technology.

4. Security Enhancement - \$125,000

The University will use this requested waiver to implement new and provide improvements to security systems to protect University data resources. Components will be secured from several different vendors to provide the following services: completing penetration testing and remediation, enhancing DNS security, acquiring security log monitoring and alerting licensing, acquiring additional vulnerability scanner software, upgrading identity management and enhancing desktop and host-based security protection. The term will be through December 31, 2021. N.J.S.A. 18A: 64-56 (a) (19) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract by Board resolution for information technology.

5. Training and Conference Room Technology - \$100,000

The University will use this waiver to implement new technologies in conference and training rooms to enable staff and others best use of on campus resources during meetings and trainings either with a workforce that may be working remotely or on campus. The technology will include cameras that will focus on the speaker using traditional technology such as Teams, Skype and Zoom. The vendor has not been determined. N.J.S.A.

18A:64(a) (19) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract by Board resolution for information technology.

6. Update Identity Management - \$55,000

The requested waiver will be utilized to update, identify and access management at the institution to enhance stability, resiliency and security of authentication services. This funding will secure consulting hours to move services from on premise single-sign on authentication to cloud services with advanced monitoring and security features. Term will be through December 31, 2021. N.J.S.A. 18A: 64-56 (a) (19) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract by Board resolution for information technology.

7. Hardware Support Maintenance - \$60,000

The University will use this requested waiver for the annual support/maintenance of on premise servers. The request will enable the University to receive security patches, hardware updates and hardware component replacements, if needed. Vendors to be determined. Term will be through December 31, 2021. N.J.S.A. 18A 64-56(a) (19) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract by Board resolution for information technology.

8. Quickbase - \$70,000

The University seeks approval for a bid waiver for the QuickBase database platform that provides the framework for our CLT App, which serves as the technological backbone of CLT projects and services. The contract will cover the period through October 31, 2021, at a cost not to exceed \$70,000. N.J.S.A. 18A:64-56 (a) (19) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract by Board resolution for information technology.

9. Media Creation Studio - \$250,000

The University seeks approval for a bid waiver in the amount of \$250,000 for the expansion of the Media Creation Studio into a larger, more functional space. The cost will not include any construction, and will only include technology equipment. The new media studio will allow for group and panel video presentations, live streaming capabilities, enhanced custom content creation, podcasts, and post-production facilities. N.J.S.A. 18A:64-56 (a) (19) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract by Board resolution for information technology.

10. User Experience Center - \$100,000

The requested bid waiver will be used for professional consulting services to conduct user experience and accessibility reviews and to provide actionable recommendations for TESU's public facing website, student portal, and course exam platform. The cost of this project will not exceed \$100,000. N.J.S.A. 18A:64-56(a) (15) permits the University to make, negotiate, or award a contract by Board resolution for professional consulting services.

Mr. Maloney made, and Dr. Toscani seconded, a motion to adopt the resolution. Motion carried unanimously.

UPDATE ON FEDERAL GRANTS

Dr. Hancock provided an update on federal grants related to the CARES Act. She discussed the various projects that we are seeking to fund through these grants.

Dr. Alli provided an update on the AGB, who are consultants to help with the board assessment and senior management assessment as required for the middle states accreditation. Dr. Alli added that this assessment will be used as a foundation to understand board governance and the intersection of senior administration as well as laying groundwork for discussions on strategic planning.

She reported that an email will be sent to all members asking for members to do a board orientation from AGB to create a level playing field and a subsequent zoom meeting will be done to walk through of the survey that was completed.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Submitted by,



Merodie A. Hancock, PhD
Secretary of the Board

Approved by,



Dr. Kemi Alli
Chair