

**ROWAN UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES HYBRID RETREAT**

October 26, 2023

**BOARD MEMBERS IN
ATTENDANCE**

Chad Bruner, Chair
Tony Calabrese
Michael Carbone (virtual)
Jean Edelman, Secretary
Thomas Gallia
Frank Giordano
Michael Harrington, voting Student Trustee
Kris Kolluri (virtual)
Barbara Armand Kushner (virtual)
George Loesch
Sunitha Menon-Rudolph
Nick Petroni
Larry Salva, Vice Chair
Yuval Saar, non-voting Student Trustee
Virginia Smith
Ali Houshmand, ex officio

**BOARD MEMBERS NOT IN
ATTENDANCE**

Brenda Bacon

**UNIVERSITY REPRESENTATIVES
PRESENT**

Joseph Campbell, V.P. Facilities & Operations
Joe Cardona, V.P. University Relations
Terri Drye, V.P. Human Resources
Jeff Hand, Sr. V.P. Strategic Enrollment Management
Mira Lalovic-Hand, Sr. V.P. Information Resources & Chief
Information Officer
Tony Lowman, Provost & Sr. V.P. Academic Affairs
Penny McPherson-Myers, Sr. V.P. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Joseph Scully, Sr. V.P. Finance & CFO
Jesse Shafer, V.P. University Advancement/ Rowan University
Foundation Executive Director
RJ Tallarida, Chief of Staff
Dave Weinstein, V.P. Government Affairs & External Partnerships
Mei Wei, V.P. Research
Melissa Wheatcroft, General Counsel/Board Liaison
Lee Ann Barbin, Recording Secretary for the Board of Trustees

OTHERS

Members of the President's Office: Theresa DeVecchis
and Lori McFadden.

Members of the McKinsey team: Katie Owen, Michel Roark, Mike
Kerlin (virtual), and Wan-Lae Cochran (virtual).

Representative from the Association of Governing Boards of
Universities and Colleges (AGB): R. Barbara Gitenstein.

CALL TO ORDER

A hybrid retreat of the Rowan University Board of Trustees was held on October 26, 2023 in the Alumni Engagement Room of Shpeen Hall on the Glassboro Campus via WebEx. Chair Bruner welcomed everyone to the meeting, called the Public Session of the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT STATEMENT

Ms. Melissa Wheatcroft read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement.

IMMERSIVE LEARNING

Dr. Tony Lowman, provost and senior vice president for Academic Affairs, provided an update on the Dreamscape Learn initiative at Rowan. Dreamscape Learn was founded in 2019 by Walter Parkes, former President and Co-Founder of DreamWorks Motion Pictures, and Michael Crow, president of Arizona State University (ASU). The Dreamscape Learn mission is to partner with educators in order to deliver transformative educational experiences by utilizing “education through exploration” pedagogy, cinematic engagement techniques, and advanced virtual reality technology. This program is ideal for Rowan as the vision for VR based learning started at the University in 2019 and coincides with the investment in digital humanities.

In March 2023, there was a visit to ASU by senior leadership in order to demo the Dreamscape Learn platform, and this program was then endorsed at the summer Leadership Retreat in August 2023 where all deans and faculty senate leadership were present. Data supporting this effort shows that there will be twice as many STEM jobs available when compared to other industries within the next 10 years. Current estimates predict there will be more than 1.3M new STEM openings at the bachelor’s degree level with less than 600,000 qualified new graduates to fill these positions. Of the highest-paying jobs, 75% were STEM-based careers. When evaluating the data from ASU model, it shows that students are remaining engaged throughout the duration of the class and are earning nearly a full letter grade higher scores on average when compared to non-Dreamscape Learn labs. These results were consistent across 11 evaluated demographics.

The Dreamscape Learn Immersive Learning Center at ASU is centrally located on campus for high traffic and visibility. It is a recognized hub for transformative learning experiences and is a testament to the institutional commitment to innovation. It also provides a showcase tour stop for prospective students, dignitaries, and donors. The Dreamscape Learn program offers a free roam pod centered around entertainment experiences and development where up to six participants can be rendered as full-body avatars and motion capture cameras along with haptic gear create an extraordinary immersive experience. There is also a classroom pod focused on courseware and immersive classroom experiences. The classroom pod can accommodate up to 32 students who can be rendered as customizable interactive seated avatars, an instructor who can be rendered as a full-body interactive avatar, and haptic-enabled desks also useable for traditional teaching.

This will be implemented at Rowan with the first pilot course being Introductory Biology. The pilot courses using immersive learning technologies will be open to all faculty. It will first be utilized for training students in the arts, graphic design, and computer science. The investment for this groundbreaking technology will be approximately \$3.8M for capital infrastructure and licensing for year one. This will include 3 “PODS”. Future licensing fees and maintenance contracts will depend on the number of students enrolled in the program but are expected to be between \$500k - \$700k annually and future pods will cost approximately \$1M per unit. The pods will initially be located at the South Jersey Technology Park (SJTP) and in the Campbell Library. The SJTP Hub will be for faculty development, training, and research. The 4th Floor of Campbell Library will become the home for Dreamscape and VR educational spaces. This investment further promotes the Rowan’s University of the Future initiatives, which centers around modern classrooms and a library of the future.

ROWAN GLOBAL AND ONLINE GROWTH

Mr. Michael Roark, senior advisor, and Ms. Katie Owen, associate partner, with McKinsey & Company provided an update regarding Rowan’s efforts to establish itself as a top online institution. This effort is being driven by Rowan’s desire to become more financially independent through the opportunities enabled by an expanded online presence. This will also allow Rowan to expand its offerings to a wider range of perspective students. However, in order for Rowan to capitalize on opportunities, there will need to be strategic investments and partnerships in order to establish the University as a top-25 national online education provider. Rowan’s current strengths are rare and critical for online growth. These areas of strengths include, approximately 11% in Global enrollment growth, Rowan’s culture of entrepreneurship, the University’s organizational flexibility, and geographic synergies through state support and regional growth.

There are currently three parallel pathways that could prepare Rowan Global to compete nationally. The first is to build a new business serving employers by educating their future workforce, which is considered business-to-business (B2B). The second is accelerate growth of current online enterprise within Rowan Global. The third option is to find “out of the box” partnerships with other universities.

With regard to the first option, B2B, the product concept is for workforce-oriented education to empower employers in shaping talent by upskilling and supporting time-strapped, hard workers who are looking to accelerate their career but need the flexibility and direction to do so. This option would allow employers to secure upskilled talent and enhance retention. Students get the support to drive career outcomes and credentialing in the true skills they need. Lastly, Rowan creates a symbiotic partnership to identify and educate workers.

Pursuing the second potential pathway, accelerating growth of the current online enterprise through addressing core processes, would require the following efforts from the University. First, there must be

investment in online brand strength and marketing. Additionally, increase online admissions efficiency and simplify the enrollment process. Rowan must build an online program portfolio that is aligned with the current market needs as well as create a market-leading online student experience. Lastly, the University must ensure the financial stamina required to match the increasing complexity of this marketplace.

The third pathway focusing on potential partnerships with other universities must be explored further and is dependent on opportunities. Regardless of which pathway is selected, the impact will ramp up over time as expectation in year one are expected to be less than 1,000 new enrollments, but well in excess of 5,000 in year five.

BREAK

Chair Bruner announced a short meeting break at 10:56 a.m.

The break concluded at 11:13 a.m.

**ACTION ITEMS FOR
INDIVIDUAL
CONSIDERATION**

Chair Bruner stated that one resolution #2023.10.01 is being considered individually.

VOTE TALLY

Resolution #2023.10.01: 14-0 in favor

RESOLUTION #2023.10.01

**APPROVAL OF CONTRACT WITHOUT COMPETITIVE BIDDING FOR CONSULTANT
SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED BY PROPULSION SQUARED**

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Medical and Health Sciences Education Restructuring Act, N.J.S.A.18A:64M-1, et seq., permits Rowan University, a public research university, to enter into agreements for the procurement of services without public advertising pursuant to applicable state law as outlined in N.J.S.A. 18A:64-56, and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Resolution 2014.02.02, approved by the Board of Trustees at its February 19, 2014 meeting, the Board approved exceptions including an exception for professional consulting services through 18A:64-56(a)(15), and

WHEREAS, the University received a grant in the amount of \$2,200,000 from the Department of Human Services – Division of Family Development (“DHS – DFD”) relating to education and training for the early childhood workforce, and

WHEREAS, the University requires certain professional consulting services, including technical assistance, evaluation, coordination and training supports relating to this grant to ensure the attainment of grant milestones, and

WHEREAS, DHS-DFD and Rowan have used Propulsion Squared, of Port Saint Jo, Florida, to provide consultation, training, web support, and most recently, collect stakeholder feedback for the evaluation of early

childhood programs and in home supports for such programs, and DHS-DFD has used Propulsion Squared to help launch a pilot federal registered apprenticeship program for child care workforce in collaboration with the Department of Labor, and

WHEREAS, DHS-DFD and Rowan have consistently been satisfied with the consulting services provided by Propulsion Squared, of Port Saint Jo, Florida, and Propulsion Squared has consistently provided support to Early Childhood initiatives in the state of New Jersey and has met or exceeded all contractual obligations and expectations, and

WHEREAS, the University wishes to enter into a contract with Propulsion Squared for Fiscal Year 2024 for consulting services in an amount not to exceed \$860,000, and

WHEREAS, the Senior Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer has certified that there are sufficient funds available to pay the fees associated with these services

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Senior Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer is authorized to enter into a contract for services with Propulsion Squared of Port Saint Jo, Florida, for FY24 in an amount not to exceed \$860,000.

SUMMARY STATEMENT/RATIONALE

This resolution provides for the approval of a contract without competitive bidding for consulting services in connection with a grant received from DHS-DFD for services, education and training to support the development of the early childhood workforce in New Jersey with Propulsion Squared of Port Saint Jo, Florida for FY24.

Chair Bruner entertained a motion that was seconded to approve Resolution #2023.10.01. Chair Bruner opened the floor to questions and recusals from the Board. There being none, a vote was taken 14-0 in favor and Resolution #2023.10.01 was approved.

AGB PRINCIPLES OF TRUSTEESHIP Dr. R. Barbara Gitenstein, senior fellow and senior consultant for the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB), discussed the foundations of trusteeship at Rowan University. A university or college can never be better than its board. The board chair and the president have the greatest influence on board effectiveness. Effective boards understand that their work is essential, and that they are able to overcome resistance to change. Good board governance is an equal mix of the proper composition, relationships, and focus.

Regarding the principles of trusteeship, there are three critical areas of focus; lead by example, understand governance, and think strategically. To lead by example, one must champion justice, equity, and inclusion. Members must think independently and act collectively while conducting themselves with impeccable integrity. Understanding governance involves embracing the full scope of your responsibilities as a board member. Member must respect the difference between the board's role and the administration's role as well as serve as an ambassador for your institution and higher education. Thinking strategically requires focus on what matters most to the institution's

long-term sustainability. It requires asking insightful questions and listening with an open mind. Most importantly, you must learn about your institution's mission, constituents, culture, and context.

Fiduciary duties of board members include the duty of care, loyalty, and obedience. The duty of care requires governing board members to carry out their duties in good faith exercising diligence, care, and skills. The duty of loyalty requires governing board members to act in good faith and not in their own self-interest. Under this duty a board member must not use the position or authority for personal benefit. The duty of obedience requires governing board members to ensure that the college or university is operating in accordance with its stated purposes and in compliance with the law.

There are ten habits that have been identified for highly effective boards. The first is to create a culture of inclusion. The second is to uphold the basic fiduciary principles. The third is to cultivate a healthy relationship with the president. The fourth is to select an effective board chair. The fifth is to establish a strong governance committee. The sixth is to delegate appropriate decision-making authority to committees. The seventh is to consider strategic risk factors. The eighth is to provide appropriate oversight of academic quality. The ninth is to develop a renewed commitment to shared governance. The tenth is to focus on accountability.

In summary, governing boards act as a body; however, fiduciary duties fall on individual board members. Trustees must attend meetings, read, and evaluate materials. Trustees must ask questions and assess the answers. Trustees must become conversant in the major challenges facing the institution. Trustees must honor the difference between management and oversight/insight. Trustees must honor confidentiality, avoid conflicts of interest, demonstrate loyalty, and uphold mission. Lastly, trustees must ensure legal and ethical compliance.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Bruner entertained a motion that was seconded to adjourn the meeting. The vote was unanimous in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Lee Ann Barbin, Recording Secretary
for the Board of Trustees



Chair, Board of Trustees

Secretary, Board of Trustees

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Chair, Board of Trustees

 12:15:23

Secretary, Board of Trustees