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Faculty Trustee's Report

CSU Board of Trustees Meeting – Jan. 26-27, 2021 (virtual)

Hereby I respectfully submit a summary of the Board of Trustees meeting. My report is largely based on the agenda materials provided to the trustees and to the public, my personal notes, my memory, and a partial review of the archived livestream of the meeting accessible at

<https://www2.calstate.edu/csu-system/board-of-trustees/past-meetings/2021/Pages/January-26-27-2021.aspx>

I tried my best to accurately reflect the deliberations, and I hope to have quoted correctly and paraphrased in the spirit of the speakers' and presenters' intentions. If you notice any inaccuracy or misrepresentation, please let me know (Romey.Sabalius@sjsu.edu).

This first meeting of the Board of Trustees in 2021 still had to be conducted virtually, like all Board meetings since March 2020. The public was invited to comment live for one and a half hours at the beginning of the meeting or to submit their comments in writing.

Since the agenda items of the Committee on Educational Policy were merely informational (*10 years of ADI*) and ceremonial (*Wang Family Excellence Awards*), I presume that the topic of the greatest interest to the faculty would be the *2021-2022 Operating Budget Update* (section 10.e) – **with a major announcement by Chancellor Castro.**

I hope that you were able to stay healthy, productive, and optimistic throughout these difficult times, and I wish that we all can return to some semblance of normalcy this year.

Romey Sabalius

San José, CA – February 2, 2021

Faculty Trustee's Report

CSU Board of Trustees Meeting: Jan. 26-27, 2021 (virtual)

On January 26 and 27, the CSU Board of Trustees meeting was held virtually via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On January 26, at 8:30 am

1. The **Committee on Educational Policy** and the **Board of Trustees** met in **Closed Session**
 - a. The Board approved without discussion as an action item the *Honorary Degree Nominations and Subcommittee Recommendation*.
2. The **Board of Trustees** met in **Closed Session** to discuss *Executive Personnel Matters* and to receive a report on *Pending Litigation*.
[Trustee Sabalius excused himself from the briefing on a legal matter at San José State]
3. The **Committee on Collective Bargaining** convened in **Closed Session**.
[Note: According to California Education Code § 66602 (c2) the faculty trustee “shall not participate on any subcommittee of the board responsible for collective bargaining negotiations.”]

The **Public Meeting** started at 9:45 am.

4. Due to the meeting modality, all **Public Comments** were made at the beginning of the open session. There were 47 speakers, and each was allowed one minute for input. Additionally, several comments were submitted in writing.

Six students demanded divestment from fossil fuel investments, expressed their solidarity with the lowest paid workers in the CSU, and protested lay-offs and other austerity measures.

Twenty representatives from Students for Quality Education (SQE) criticized the salary raise for in-coming Chancellor Castro, and they called on him to reject it. They also demanded more mental health counselors on campuses to reach the recommended rate of 1 counselor for 1,500 students. There were also repetitive requests to defund “absurdly militarized” university police departments, especially since campuses are practically empty right now.

Seven union leaders (CSUEU and Teamsters Local 2010) bemoaned the limited speaking time for the public at Board meetings (later echoed by CFA representatives); expressed their desire to achieve equity, fairness, and labor justice through collective bargaining; complained about increased staff workload after lay-offs and that “faculty push their work onto staff;” and they criticized lay-offs despite the availability of significant financial reserves at the campus and system level.

Eight leaders of the California Faculty Association (CFA) lamented the lack of progress in bargaining, demanded a stronger focus on health and safety in campus re-population plans, and requested more COVID leave for over-extended and exhausted faculty and staff.

Several CFA speakers stated the need to address structural racism with a collaborative implementation of the Ethnic Studies requirement, and they called for “anti-racism and -bias training” for Board members. Lastly, Steven Filling, CFA Political Action Chair, urged to engage in joint advocacy efforts to secure additional state allocations to meet the needs of the CSU.

Ken Monteiro, Chair of the Council on Ethnic Studies, asked the Board to “successfully implement AB1460” (Ethnic Studies requirement) and rescind “the unnecessary and obstructionist Title 5 changes.”

Several other speakers representing various community organizations spoke in support of under-served students, low-income students, and students of color, and they support the implementation of equity focused policies, while cautioning against the requirement of a 4th year of quantitative reasoning for admission to the CSU, which is seen as an additional barrier to college access.

After the public comment concluded, Trustee Sabalius addressed the public, especially the students, saying that “it is not helpful if multiple speakers repeat the same message over and over again. It does not make the argument stronger, and it shuts out other speakers and topics due to the limited time allotted for public comment.” Even worse, it might undermine efforts on part of the Board to explore ways to make communications with the trustees more comprehensive and effective, as has been requested during this public comment period by various union leaders as well as in a resolution passed by the statewide Academic Senate (ASCSU) in the previous week.

5. The Committee on Audit

- a. received by consent as an information item the *Status Report on Audit and Advisory Services Activities*.

“For the 2020 audit plan year, assignments were made to execute individual campus audit plans and conduct financial, operational, compliance, and information technology audits; use continuous auditing techniques and data analytics tools; and provide advisory services and investigation reviews.”

“Audit and Advisory Services continues to make progress on the 2020-2021 audit plan. Twenty audits have been completed as part of the 2020-2021 audit plan and 22 audits are currently in-process.”

6. The Committee on University and Faculty Personnel

- a. approved by consent as an action item the *CSU Salary Schedule*.

“The CSU Salary Schedule will be updated in February 2021 due to the California minimum wage increase effective January 1, 2021.

The salary schedule also includes updates implemented as a result of agreements previously ratified by the board for the State University Police Association (SUPA – Unit 8) and the United Auto Workers Local 4123 (UAW – Unit 11) in November 2020 and September 2020, respectively.

The CSU Salary Schedule reflects current payrates for all CSU classifications.”

- b. approved as an action item the Executive Compensation for Interim Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs.

Dr. Fred E. Wood will receive an annual salary of \$361,242 plus a monthly housing allowance of \$5,000 and a \$1,000 monthly auto allowance (the same salary and allowances as current EVC Loren Blanchard).

7. The Committee on Institutional Advancement

- a. approved as an action item the Naming of the George and Judy Marcus Hall for Liberal and Creative Arts at San Francisco State University.

The proposed naming of the facility recognizes the transformational gift of \$25 million.

- b. approved as an action item the Annual Report on Donor Support for 2019-2020.

“In 2019-2020, the California State University secured over \$641 million in new gift commitments and more than \$408 million in gift receipts, with both figures once again surpassing previous all-time highs.

Thirteen campuses had increases in giving. The CSU also had a 47% increase in gifts from individual donors.”

“Endowments grew by over \$94 million in new contributions, which will provide support in perpetuity. More than half of endowment gifts are designated to scholarships.

For long-term capital projects, campuses received over \$43 million for major facility construction and renovation.

Donors designated \$222 million for current use which included:

- \$72.2 million for faculty support and academic enrichment
- \$41.6 million for public service programs
- \$34.1 million for student scholarships
- \$15.4 million for athletics
- \$6.9 million for equipment and facility improvements
- \$52.2 million for additional university priorities.

Donors committed an additional \$40.1 million in irrevocable deferred gifts.”

“Among public master’s institutions across the nation, CSU campuses in the top twenty for fundraising include: San Luis Obispo (first), Monterey Bay (second), Long Beach (fourth), Fullerton (fifth), Sacramento (eighth), Northridge (12th), San Francisco (16th) and San José (18th). San Diego State ranked first among high research activity (R2) public doctoral institutions. Fresno State ranked second among public doctoral institutions with moderate research activity (R3). Cal Maritime ranked first among maritime academies.”

Trustee Sabalius pointed out that only \$15.4 million were donated for athletics systemwide. This amount would merely cover the annual deficit of the Athletics Division on one of our campuses with a Division 1 football program. “This clearly dispels the myth that high-profile, but also high-cost athletics programs bring in sufficient money to pay for themselves, much less benefit the campus as a whole.” He further stated that benchmarking data shows that CSU campuses that abandoned their expensive football programs –such as Long Beach, Fullerton, and Northridge– are doing quite well in fundraising, and in some cases even better than CSU campuses with such expensive sports. Trustee Sabalius urged

the CSU leadership to “rethink the appropriateness of such high-cost Division 1 athletic teams for the CSU.”

8. The **Committee on Governmental Relations**

- a. approved by consent as an action item the *Statement of State Legislative Principles for 2021 and 2022.*

“The legislative principles [...] are the same as those adopted by the board in 2019.”

- b. approved as an action item the *Sponsored State Legislation for 2021.*

Only one proposal was submitted, namely to “sponsor legislation to annually appropriate funding from the Proposition 63 administrative fund to bolster student mental health services being offered on public college campuses.

This legislation establishes the College Mental Health Services Program, which would direct ongoing funding to the California State University, California Community Colleges and the University of California to expand student mental health services. While the CSU has made substantial investments in student mental health services, expanding these services has been highlighted as a top priority for students, faculty and campus leaders. The COVID-19 pandemic has further amplified the need for ongoing investment in providing these services to students.”

Trustee Raynes asked how many mental health counselors and staff might be funded if this legislation would pass. Nichole Muñoz-Murillo, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Advocacy and State Relations, responded that it “will be determined on the final appropriation amount. [...] To hire about 23 or 24 mental health counselors would cost approximately \$3 million. [...] The intent is to hire new counselors as well as expand existing services.”

- c. approved as an action item the *Federal Agenda for 2021 and 2022.*

“Overall, the agenda hews closely to the system’s approach in recent years.”

“The system’s top federal priorities for 2021 and 2022 are:

- Support and protect Dreamers, including by immediately restoring Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) protections
- Secure necessary federal relief and flexibilities for institutions and students in response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- Invest in student success by significantly increasing the maximum Pell Grant and restoring annual cost-of-living increases to the program.”

A full list of CSU system priorities for 2021 and 2022 follows:

- # Improve College Access and Timely Completion through Aid to Students
- # Prepare Students for College Success
- # Foster Degree Completion for California’s Diverse Population
- # Educate Students for Tomorrow’s Workforce
- # Solve Societal Problems through Applied Research
- # Enhance Campus Health, Safety and Infrastructure.

Trustee Sabalius asked that in addition to requests for support of STEM fields and the National Science Foundation (NSF) [under priority #4], our advocacy agenda should also include demands for “robust investments in the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).” The humanities and arts impart “essential and lasting skills that not only make our

graduates more employable, but they also enrich their lives outside of their profession, and they benefit society overall.” Garrett Ashley, Vice Chancellor for University Relations and Advancement, deemed the request as “consistent with our framework for our approach to federal relations” and agreed to add the item to the Federal Agenda.

Trustee Raynes quoted from the agenda that the CSU aims to “maintain strong support for Hispanic- and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions” [priority #3], and she wondered how the CSU fosters degree completion for Black students. James Gelb, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Federal Relations, explained that many of the stated priorities and programs do support Black students, first and foremost the Pell Grant program. Yet, among the mentioned minority-serving institution programs are only those that CSU campuses qualify for, such as HSI and AANAPISI. Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) are not listed because none exist in California. [Note: actually, there is the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science in Los Angeles with an enrollment of 410 students].

Trustee Abrego praised the much recognized and prestigious D.C. Scholars Program and wondered what we can do to sustain and improve it. VC Ashley explained that this program is not managed by the Division of University Relations and Advancement.

9. **The Committee on Campus Planning, Buildings and Grounds**

- a. approved as an action item the *Sonoma State University Master Plan Revision for Student Housing Project.*

“The project will involve two phases, as described below:

- Phase 1: Demolition of the existing Childcare Center (this building is approximately 3,900 gross square feet (GSF)) and vacant Dining Commons building (~25,000 GSF) to construct up to 600 beds. The new first-year student housing village would consist of three 3-story buildings, up to 40 feet in height, for an approximate total of 160,000 GSF. This facility will also include the Residential Education and Campus Housing Office, as well as an office for the Area Coordinator Office, Area Coordinator Apartment, and Faculty in Residence Apartment which are being relocated from the existing Zinfandel Village. Phase 1 is expected to move forward in 2025 at the earliest, pending market conditions.

- Phase 2: Demolition of the existing Zinfandel Village student housing buildings. The existing Zinfandel Village was constructed in 1970 and contains a cluster of six two- and three-story buildings totaling approximately 100,000 GSF. Phase 2 would construct up to 400 beds on the same site of approximately 155,000 GSF in similar configurations and style to those constructed in Phase 1. Phase 2 is anticipated to take place in the next five to ten years.”

“The proposed Master Plan Revision has an estimated total cost of \$230 million.”

“Based on the environmental analysis, no substantive revisions are needed to the 2000 Master Plan Revision EIR because no new significant impacts or substantially more severe impacts would result from the project. The environmental setting has not changed, and the Project would not affect the rate of increase in student enrollment or the total university student capacity of 10,000 full-time equivalents. Therefore, no further evaluation is required, and no Subsequent EIR is needed pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162.”

Trustee Taylor wanted reassurance that the demolition of the existing Child Care Center would not result in the loss of currently provided services. President Judy Sakaki explained that the center can only accommodate 60 children and that there is a waiting list. The demolition of the existing facility would only move forward when plans and fundraising for a new center will be in place.

10. The Committee on Finance

- a. approved by consent as an action item the *Final Public-Private Partnership Agreement for the Central Utility Plant Replacement Project for CSU Fresno.*

“The campus plant, built in 1954, has had limited improvements over the past 65 years and its equipment and ancillary infrastructure have exceeded their useful life. The central utility plant provides heating and cooling to over 3.1 million square feet in 80 campus buildings. The condition of the plant has resulted in significant increases in operating and deferred maintenance expenses over the past ten years, and the risk of catastrophic failure is always present.”

“This project will establish greater predictability and budget certainty, around cost and schedule, as a result of involving at-risk private capital. The project also includes academic apprenticeship and paid internship opportunities to advance the academic mission of the campus.”

- b. received by consent as an information item the *Reporting of Auxiliary Liquidity Loans Approved by the Chancellor under Delegated Authority.*

“The Board of Trustees, at its November 2020 meeting, revised the CSU Board of Trustees’ Standing Orders to delegate authority to the Chancellor to approve auxiliary liquidity borrowings outside of the CSU’s established debt programs.”

“Since the November 2020 meeting of the Board of Trustees, two auxiliary liquidity loans have been approved by the Chancellor” in the amount of \$3 million for The University Corporation (SFSU) and no greater than \$4.5 million for University Enterprises (Sacramento).

- c. received as an information item a report on *Strategic Partnerships.*

“On August 31, 2018, Chancellor Timothy P. White appointed a Revenue Opportunities Task Force co-chaired by Trustees Douglas Faigin and John Nilon, to study how the CSU could create revenue beyond state support and student tuition and fees to support its educational mission. The Task Force was also charged to make recommendations for implementing new areas for revenue generation as well as existing partnerships that could be applied more broadly.

Revenue generating opportunities considered by the Task Force included enhancement of student support and academic connections including private and corporate philanthropy, scholarships, internships, work-study, and career placement services; increased private and corporate support for research and sponsored program activity; direct sponsorship and advertising; business-to-business arrangements associated with campus procurement and other activities; volume pricing arrangements across the system and within campuses; and monetizing assets and/or expanding programs and services for revenue generation.”

“To date, revenue generating activities considered by the Task Force have contributed over \$1,000,000 annually to support campus operations and we anticipate that such relationships will generate tens of millions of dollars annually within the next few years. We continue to work collectively across the system to explore campus, regional, and systemwide opportunities that build on the strength of the CSU campuses, to successfully implement recommendations of the Revenue Opportunities Task Force.”

“The CSU is exploring partnership projects on bandwidth and cell towers, banking, janitorial supplies, and maintenance, repair and operations supplies. We will also be pursuing opportunities in Community Choice Energy and making further progress on the Mission Valley [SDSU] and Lanterman [CPP] development projects. We will be assessing the implementation of shared administrative services in areas such as payroll, travel management, Title IX investigations, and accessible technology assessments. We are also planning on developing relationships within the electronic sports industry which is a form of competition between individuals and teams involving video games.”

Trustee Sabalius cautioned against entering agreements that are disadvantageous for students, such as contracts with food service providers that preclude the distribution of free meals to students who are food insecure. Trustee Taylor surmised that these are archaic provisions that might have been part of older contracts, but he hopes that those are not present in our current agreements anymore.

Trustee Faigin –as in previous Board meetings– urged the Chancellor’s Office to explore more revenue generation from advertising. Steve Relyea, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer, responded that this is done on a campus-by-campus basis. Trustee McGrory supports these endeavors; however, “without over-commercializing the campuses.”

Trustee Adamson asked for a list or report of existing PPPs on each campus.

- d. received as an information item the 2020-2021 Student Fee Report.

There are a total of six fee categories. Most discussions focus on Category I (systemwide tuition) and Category II (campus-based mandatory fees). The CSU charges the lowest undergraduate tuition among its comparison institutions, being 37.8% below the average for that group (\$7,363 vs. \$11,839). The proportion is almost identical for graduate tuition (\$8,797 vs. \$14,235) and similar for undergraduate non-resident tuition (\$19,243 vs. \$28,645 or 1/3 below the average). In the last ten years, the CSU only implemented one tuition increase in 2017-18 in the amount of \$270.

A discussion ensued if the non-resident tuition is too low and whether the CSU is missing out on a potential revenue stream. Trustee McGrory opined that “we are leaving too much money on the table,” and Trustee Faigin supported that sentiment. On the other hand, Trustee Khames pointed out that while tuition is comparatively low at the CSU, the cost of living in California is very high. Currently, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo is in the process of pilot testing a staggered and gradual tuition increase for non-resident students.

Unlike tuition, Category II fees vary greatly among the CSU campuses, ranging from \$901 at Fresno to \$4,329 at SLO with a systemwide average of \$1,621, reflecting a \$26 (1.6%) increase over the previous year.

Trustee Sabalius called for increased oversight of Category II fees by the Board, especially when such fees are instituted or increased by “alternative consultation” and not by

a vote of the student body. He suggested that the Board should not only receive a report on such fees, but that they ought to require explicit Board approval. Trustee Faigin provided more history on the public controversy about some campus-based fees, and he wondered whether the creation of Category II fees without a student vote is in compliance with recent state legislation. He requested a list of Category II fees with an annotation if they were implemented by a student referendum or by “alternative consultation.” Trustee McGrory and Taylor deemed this to be micro-management, and they want to leave the decision solely with the campus presidents and the Chancellor. However, Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis strongly supported greater oversight and a decision on the trustee-level, thereby providing another layer of accountability.

e. received as an information item the *2021-2022 Operating Budget Update*.

Ryan Storm, Assistant Vice Chancellor for the Budget, presented the report. “Governor Newsom’s January proposal totals **\$144.5 million in new, recurring funding**. Of this amount, \$111.5 million [a 3% general fund increase or a 1.6% increase of the operating budget (general fund + tuition)] is *not categorized for specific uses* and is available to address some of the Board of Trustees’ budget priorities. In addition, \$15 million recurring is for the *Basic Needs Initiative* component of Graduation Initiative 2025 and another \$15 million recurring is for *student technology access and student mental health*.” Additionally, \$2 million are earmarked for a *common learning management system*, and \$1 for enrollment growth at the *Stockton Center* of CSU Stanislaus.

“Also, the proposal includes **\$225 million in one-time funding**, including \$175 million for *deferred maintenance* and \$30 million for *emergency assistance to students* who were previously working full-time,” as well as \$10 million for the *Computing Talent Initiative* at CSU Monterey Bay and \$10 million for *faculty development*.

Furthermore, the CSU will receive **\$853.9 million** (\$591.2m institutional + \$262.7m student aid) from the *Coronavirus Response & Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021*. [Note: in 2020, the CSU received \$563.7 million (\$301m institutional + \$262.7m student aid) from the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief & Economic Security (CARES) Act*].

Trustee McGrory restated that campuses plan to spend approximately \$200 million in reserves during this fiscal year, which would be roughly half of all CSU reserves.

Trustee Sabalius appreciates the proposed \$175 million for deferred maintenance. Yet, this one-time allocation would only make a small dent in the CSU’s multi-billion dollar need. He wondered if this one-time allocation could be internally restructured into a long-term investment to service a bond in a much higher amount. He also expressed his hope and expectation that –in light of the current budget outlook– there will be no furloughs for faculty and staff.

Subsequently, Chancellor Castro made the announcement “that thanks to the Governor’s forward thinking and much appreciated budget proposal and to our own operational efficiencies and prudent management of our resources,” there will be “no increase in tuition for 2021-2022.” “And in addition, as far as assumptions for state and federal support hold, I will not support a systemwide furlough program, and we will all together do everything we can to avoid additional lay-offs of permanent CSU staff or faculty due to a lack of state funds.”

11. The Committee on Educational Policy

- a. received as an information item a report on the *Associate Degree for Transfer*.

“The Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) has provided an effective pathway for community college students to earn a baccalaureate degree from the California State University. The result of Senate Bill 1440, co-sponsored by the CSU and its higher-education and legislative partners –including United States Senator-designate Alex Padilla–the ADT program continues to grow in popularity a decade later. Moreover, ADT transfer students continue to graduate at higher rates than their peers who transfer without an ADT.

As this transformational program marks its 10-year anniversary, the CSU will seek additional ways to support transfer students. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many campuses already had reduced impactation to address a key challenge faced by transfer students. Other areas for potential enhancements include increased flexibility in how and where transfer students complete their studies, the development of additional ADT pathways to better address the needs of California’s workforce and additional investment in student resources – such as pre- and post-transfer advisement and tools like a CSU Transfer Planner currently in development to integrate with Cal State Apply. Building on the close collaboration with its CCC partners that began a decade ago, the CSU is committed to ensuring the ADT pathway leads to success for the next generation of California transfer students.”

Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis praised the ADT as an “incredibly successful program.” Nonetheless, she hopes that the complex program can be more “streamlined” and “consolidated” to provide clearer guidance and additional options for students. She also lauded another initiative (AB705–Assessment and Placement) that aims to reduce non-credit bearing classes (remedial courses) that community college students need to take. Lastly, she mentioned that a recent legislative change has placed her also on the Board of Governors for the California Community Colleges. So, henceforth, the Lieutenant Governor will serve on the Boards of all three higher education systems in California.

EVC Blanchard explained that the CSU constantly works to make the ADT process clearer, easier, and more effective, and the system expects “exponential growth” in ADT students. Additionally, the faculty of both systems continue to work on the expansion of ADT pathways. Alison Wrynn, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs, Innovation and Faculty Development, added that community college students –who have not yet decided into which system they would like to transfer– can also chose a pathway that qualifies for admission to both the CSU and the UC, which is the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC).

- b. received as an information item the announcement of the *Wang Family Excellence Award*.

“The Wang Family Excellence Award recognizes and celebrates CSU faculty members who have distinguished themselves through extraordinary dedication and exemplary achievements in their academic disciplines, while significantly contributing to the success of students. A staff administrator is also recognized for outstanding performance in her or his university assignment.

The selection process for the award begins with each campus president nominating one probationary or tenured faculty member for each of the award categories.”

The Wang Family Excellence Award recipients in 2021 are:

- Judith Canner (Monterey Bay) – Outstanding Faculty Teaching
- Cynthia Crawford (San Bernardino) – Outstanding Faculty Innovator in Student Success
- Hala Madanat (SDSU) – Outstanding Faculty Scholarship
- Aydin Nazmi (SLO) – Outstanding Faculty Service
- Gerald Jones (Sonoma) – Outstanding Staff Performance.

The Board of Trustees adjourned for the day at 4:40 pm.

The Board of Trustees reconvened its meeting on January 27 at 9:00 am.

12. The **Committee of the Whole**

- b. approved as an action item the *Conferral of Commendation for Loren J. Blanchard*.

Current Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, Loren Blanchard, will become the new President of the University of Houston – Downtown in March. The trustees expressed their deep gratitude for his “steadfast dedication and leadership on behalf of the students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni and friends of the California State University” and for all his professional accomplishments as well as personal friendship.

At 9:20 am, Chair Kimbell called the full **Board of Trustees Meeting** to order.

13. The **Board of Trustees**

- a. received the following *Reports*:

Lillian Kimbell, *Chair of the Board of Trustees*, nominated the new members of the Committee on Committees: Steinhauser (Chair), Day (Vice Chair), Adamson, Firstenberg, and Khames.

In reference to the events in Washington D.C. on January 6, Chair Kimbell stated that “now more than ever it is our duty to ensure that our campuses remain beacons of truth, knowledge, and inclusive excellence.” “Our role as an institution of higher learning is not just to debunk fake news and alternative facts, but to train our students to ‘pre-bunk’ them.”

She spoke about the value proposition of the CSU, which has low tuition, yet high national rankings in several categories, especially in the area of social mobility. She cited statistics from the Campaign for College Opportunity that show higher earnings and lower unemployment for university graduates. “There is no doubt that a college degree provides strong protection against economic downturns.” “Our message to admitted students is clear: by moving forward with their education, students are making the best possible investment in themselves and taking a significant step toward a projected prosperous and rewarding future.”

Joseph Castro, *Chancellor*, presented his inaugural report in his new role. Despite all political, economic, and pandemic challenges, he remains optimistic “that we are at an inflection point, one that will mark a turn towards healing, reconciliation, and recovery.” “It

is our great privilege and responsibility that we do not have to hope for an inflection point – we can be the inflection point.”

He urged that “we must continue to come together to work as one. That is when the CSU is at its very best.” “I assure you that, as Chancellor, I will listen to and respect diverse perspectives before making significant decisions.”

Chancellor Castro announced that he will begin to visit campuses. “The visits will, by necessity, be virtual at first, but hopefully in person starting in the fall.” He expressed his appreciation for the Governor’s budget proposal and reiterated the CSU’s commitment to the Graduation Initiative 2025, which will remain its highest funding priority.

Robert Collins, *Chair of the Academic Senate CSU (ASCSU)* – like the previous speakers – contextualized the role and responsibility of the institution and its faculty in response to misinformation (“negation of reason and truth”), violence, and inequality in our society. He reported that the Executive Committee of the ASCSU met with the CSSA leadership, and that the entire senate received presentations from both Student Trustees Khames and Raynes.

He summarized the resolutions that the ASCSU passed during its plenary in January and briefly introduced three first reading resolutions. He closed by quoting Martin Luther King on how education and “legislation and court orders” meaningfully supplement each other.

Zahraa Khuraibet, *President of the California State Student Association (CSSA)*, thanked Chancellor Castro for joining the CSSA plenary and sharing his priorities, which align with those of the students.

She reported that the “students are both anxious and excited by the possibility of a return to on-campus instructions in the fall,” and that the health and safety of students is an essential part of CSSA’s COVID-19 policy agenda.

President Khuraibet further noted that financial aid reform is “an immense priority” of the CSSA. “We know that our students are impacted the most by non-tuition costs, particularly low-income students. Those costs have not been taken into consideration or account by the current financial aid model.” A reform of financial aid and Cal Grants is necessary to address the affordability crisis.

Aaron Moore, Executive Director of the Alumni Council, presented the Alumni Report of behalf of the *President of the Alumni Council*, Michelle Power, who was without power [electricity outage]. He shared four examples of “how our alumni are using their expertise to make a difference in their communities as well as the nation.”

Executive Director Moore further reported that a self-assessment survey revealed “a strong desire for our alumni to become more involved with the advocacy work of the CSU.” Lastly, in December, the Alumni Council hosted “the first ever virtual CSU London Alumni event,” and “we look forward to hosting similar events for our alumni in Hong Kong and Tokyo in the coming months.”

- b. approved as an action item the *Resolutions that were previously passed* in the various committees.

The Board of Trustees meeting was officially adjourned on Wednesday, January 27, at approximately 10:00 pm.