

Saint Mary's College of California

Moraga, California

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes for Meeting of

May 21, 2021

**Minutes of the Regular Annual Meeting of the
Saint Mary's College of California
Board of Trustees**

May 21, 2021

- 1.1 A Regular Annual Meeting of the Board of Trustees (the "Board") of Saint Mary's College of California, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation (the "College"), was called to order by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, Dr. Kevin Nagle, on May 21, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. The meeting was conducted via video conference due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Nagle noted that the meeting was being held pursuant to written notice and that no defects in notice were raised and, therefore, were waived. Dr. Kathy Littles offered an invocation. Secretary Elizabeth Phelan called roll and stated that a quorum was present for the transaction of business.
- 1.2 Trustees Present: Mr. John Arnaudon; Dr. Karl Beutner; Dr. James Donahue, President; Mr. Michael Brisbin; Brother David Caretti, FSC; Mr. Kevin "Casey" Eichler; Mr. Eric Flowers; Mr. Kevin Flynn; Ms. Margaret French Isaac; Brother James Gaffney, FSC; Ms. Shirley Gee; Brother Charles Hilken, FSC; Brother Donald Johanson, FSC; Brother Bernard LoCoco, FSC; Mr. Mark Madgett; Dr. Dennis Meiss; Mr. Charles Moore; Mr. Joseph Motta; Ms. Sharon Muir; Dr. Kevin Nagle, Chairperson; Brother Michael O'Hern, FSC; Ms. Elizabeth Phelan, Secretary; Ms. Kimberley Vogel; Mr. Song Woo, and Mr. Michael Zumbo.
- 1.3 Trustees Absent and Excused: Ms. Michelle Higgins, Mr. David Kenney, Mr. Timothy McCaffery, and Brother Gustavo Ramirez, FSC.
- 1.4 Guests present: Dr. Jane Camarillo, Ms. Carolyn Otis Catanzaro, Ms. Susan Collins, Dr. Corey Cook, Dr. David Ford, Dr. Julie Ford (10:40 – 10:55 a.m.), Dr. Jennifer Heung, Dr. Margaret Kasimatis, Dr. Kathy Littles, Dr. Dana Lawton, Mr. Mike Matoso, Dr. William Mullen, Dr. Megan Mustain, Mr. Larry Nuti, Dr. Aaron Sachowitz, and Dr. Frances Sweeney. See section 1.10 below for guests present for the student panel from 10:55 a.m. – 11:35 a.m.
- 1.5 Dr. Nagle asked if there were any comments, questions, or corrections to the minutes of the January 21, 2021, regular annual meeting of the Saint Mary's College of California Board of Trustees. None were noted.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the January 21, 2021, regular annual meeting of the Board of Trustees as submitted. Moved by Brother James Gaffney, FSC, and seconded by Ms. Elizabeth Phelan. Motion passed.

1.6 **PRESIDENT'S REMARKS**

President Donahue indicated that after eight years as President of the College, this would be his last Board meeting. He expressed his gratitude to the Board for all it accomplished for Saint Mary's during his tenure. He then spoke about two of his major foci over the past nine months. He described his philanthropic outreach, in collaboration with the Advancement Office, to more than 150 contacts including donors, alumni, foundations, and corporations. As a result of those engagements, they raised almost \$3.0 million in new gifts for the College. He then talked about his involvement with the Bishop John S. Cummins Institute for Catholic Thought, Culture and Action. He and the Chair of the Cummins Institute, Brother Charles Hilken, FSC, reached out to the bishop of Oakland, Bishop Michael Barber, S.J., and put together two virtual panels, including the bishop, outside speakers, and students. The first panel was on the Catholic Church and Black Lives Matter, and the second panel dealt with the Catholic Church and Women's Leadership in the Church. Board Chair Kevin Nagle thanked President Donahue for his engaged leadership over the past eight years and indicated there would be opportunities in the coming weeks for Board members to express their appreciation to him.

1.7 **ACADEMIC SENATE REPORT**

Academic Senate Chair Dana Lawton spoke about the many challenges of the past academic year for the faculty. She said the faculty, nevertheless, rose to the occasion for their students and found kindness, patience, grace, and strength they did not know they had. They created community through a screen and became a different kind of educator, with more flexibility, ingenuity, and courage to change, to try new things, and to foster a collaborative spirit. She acknowledged the accomplishments of the faculty who served on the Presidential Search Committee, the Strategic Planning Committee, the Academic Contingency Planning Working Group, and the Academic Senate this past year. She spoke about how shared governance between the faculty and administration was instrumental in moving the College forward.

Professor Lawton then reported on some of the highlights of the past academic year, including the developments of a Parental Leave Policy and an Intellectual Property Policy. She indicated that the Academic Senate and the faculty participated in listening sessions, forums, and surveys to address the anticipated budget challenges for AY 2021/22. They identified priorities in next year's budget and presented their proposal to the Budget Committee. She reported that the Rank and Tenure Task Force addressed phase two of the three-part charge given to them by the Academic Senate in 2018 and created six proposals for policies that instruct departments and programs on how to conduct rank and tenure reviews. The Omnibus Academic Alignment Task Force is examining current academic policies and structures that create barriers to student recruitment, retention, and degree completion; the quality and success of academic programs; the Core Curriculum as a shared liberal arts foundation; innovation in graduate programs; and Saint Mary's integration into the external landscape of higher education. And the Remote Work Policy

Task Force has been researching what it means to work remotely while still being employed as a faculty member of Saint Mary's.

Professor Lawton concluded by expressing her gratitude to Board Chair Kevin Nagle for his support of more collaboration between the Board and the Academic Senate, to the Chair of the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Committee Sharon Muir for attending Senate meetings and making herself available outside of those meetings for further engagement, and to the senior administrative leadership for tirelessly collaborating with her and communicating with the faculty on important issues this past year.

1.8 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION: REVIEW OF AN UNPRECEDENTED YEAR

Interim Executive Vice President Margaret Kasimatis offered some reflections on the challenges and accomplishments of this unprecedented year. She indicated that the consistent theme across the year and in the broader landscape was change and uncertainty. As the pandemic ebbed and flowed across the year, the College had to pivot quickly. Layered on top of that was the economic impact not only on the College but also on our students, faculty, and staff. She described how the College creatively managed through the pandemic in a variety of ways. The faculty, spearheaded by the Academic Contingency Planning Working Group, employed flexible and innovative strategies to ensure that students would continue to receive Saint Mary's signature education.

Dr. Kasimatis indicated that the College did an exemplary job of putting together health and safety protocols and built a strong partnership with Contra Costa County Health. Saint Mary's built a rigorous screening and surveillance testing program and had an adaptive phased reopening plan that let us pivot back and forth as Contra Costa County moved between tiers. There were very few cases of student-to-student transmission on campus across the year. We were able to have more students living on campus than just about any college or university in California. In the spring, 650 students were living on campus that allowed us to have a number of in-person activities, such as barbecues, first-year Olympics, and liturgies. And we creatively served students who could not live on campus by opening the Rheem campus to provide student services.

She indicated that Saint Mary's had a successful year in athletics. All of our sports teams competed in the spring and our team rosters were at an all-time high. Because we could not do the traditional in-person fundraising events, we had to get creative in fundraising. We had more (three) Giving Days than usual, which helped drive donor count. We pivoted to virtual fundraising events, which turned out to yield higher net income because the costs of the events were lower. Athletics is projected to reach an all-time high in fundraising. Our scholarship initiative resonated with donors, and we raised \$662,000 toward the \$1.0 million goal for the James A. Donahue Endowed Scholarship.

Dr. Kasimatis indicated that the College did not just focus on adapting in the midst of a pandemic. It also spent considerable time this year building toward the future. In a year

when many colleges and universities delayed presidential searches, Saint Mary's went ahead with ours, and we were successful. With the leadership of the Board, we made a smart decision to invest in our facilities and infrastructure. We developed new academic programs, such as the on-line MBA and M.S. in Biotechnology, and are working on exciting academic initiatives, such as Executive Education programs, post-baccalaureate programs, and Associate Degree for Transfer programs. We have been working with SimpsonScarborough on a branding initiative, which will serve as the basis for launching a new marketing campaign. The College Committee on Inclusive Excellence has revamped our GUIDE training workshops, hosted community forums, responded to community concerns and needs around racial reckoning in our country, and is preparing to launch the campus climate survey. Facing financial constraints, we have thought strategically about better aligning our resources and reorganizing functions on campus to make them more efficient. The faculty have been actively engaged in those conversations and have been offering our outstanding academic programs more efficiently. And we have recognized the importance of expanding our outreach to community partners in multiple ways.

At the conclusion of her remarks, Dr. Kasimatis invited the Board to break into small groups and consider three questions: 1) What are the most important accomplishments or lessons that we have learned this year? 2) How can we leverage or build on those moving forward? 3) How can the Board help? Afterward, a representative from each small group reported out to the entire group what their small group discussed.

1.9 MUSICAL VIDEO: SMC GLEE CLUB

Dr. Nagle indicated that during this year's virtual Academic Convocation, the SMC Glee Club performed and he was impressed by our students' remarkable talent. He, therefore, invited Professor Julie Ford, Director of the Glee Club, to share with the Board a musical video performed by the Glee Club. Professor Ford provided an introduction and context for the musical video titled "I Sing Because I'm Happy." She indicated that the song was drawn from a text entitled "His Eye Is on The Sparrow," which was important for the civil rights movement. In the face of insurmountable odds during the civil rights movement, people were encouraged to stay positive and to remain resilient in order to accomplish hard things. She said the song resonated with the choir on so many levels in terms of what our nation was experiencing this past year with regard to the pandemic, racial injustice, and economic difficulties. She also described how the Glee Club creatively made the musical video under the constraints of the pandemic, and then she shared it with the Board.


1.10 GRADUATING STUDENT PANEL

Dr. Nagle welcomed the graduating seniors who comprised the student panel and invited Vice Provost Jane Camarillo to moderate the discussion. The student panelists and their majors were: Malia Allison, History / Justice, Community and Leadership (SOLA); Kiera Armintrout, Business and Economics (SEBA); Michael Montinola, Business Administration (SEBA); and Alyssa Plummer, Biochemistry / Dance (SOS). The students talked about how they first learned about Saint Mary's, described some highlights from

their years at SMC, spoke about their plans after graduation, and shared ideas for ways to improve Saint Mary's. Dr. Nagle thanked the students for sharing their experiences with the Board and congratulated them on graduating this weekend. He also took the opportunity to thank Vice Provost Camarillo and Acting Chief Academic Officer Megan Mustain, both of whom will be leaving Saint Mary's at the end of this academic year, for their dedicated service to the students and the impact they have had on the College.

Dr. Nagle called for a lunch break before convening the Board in Executive Session and adjourned the meeting at 11:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



David Ford, Recording Secretary
On behalf of Secretary Elizabeth Phelan