



Oregon State
University

The Board of Trustees of Oregon State University

Meeting of the Board of Trustees

April 16, 2021
Remote Meeting

MINUTES

Trustees Present: Mike Bailey, Patty Bedient, Rani Borkar (*chair*), Julia Brim-Edwards, Darry Callahan, Ed Feser (*ex officio*), Lamar Hurd, Khawater Hussein, Paul Kelly, Julie Manning, Preston Pulliams, Kirk Schueler (*vice chair*), Stephanie Smith, and Mike Thorne

University Staff Present: Charlene Alexander, Jennifer Almquist, Susan Capalbo, Debbie Colbert, Katie Fast, Becca Gose, Becky Johnson, Paul Odenthal, Lauren Skousen, Patti Snopkowski, and Irem Tumer

1. Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum

Board Chair Rani Borkar called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m., asked the board secretary to call the roll, and noted a quorum. Borkar then made a land acknowledgement statement.

2. Consent Agenda

a. Minutes of the April 2, 2021 Board Meeting

b. Minutes of the April 2, 2021 Executive Session

A motion was made and seconded to approve the items on the consent agenda. The motion carried.

3. Action Item

a. Interim President Appointment and Employment Agreement

Borkar began by acknowledging that appointing the president of the university is the most important job undertaken by the Board. She said that she was presenting Dr. Rebecca “Becky” Johnson to the Board as the recommended nominee to serve as Oregon State University’s interim president. Borkar thanked Trustee Patty Bedient for serving as her delegate in leading an inclusive community engagement and nomination process. She added that she was encouraged by the level of engagement during the process and pleased that it had progressed at a pace that was responsive to the community’s desire to have interim leadership in place as soon as possible. Borkar reviewed the process, noting that hundreds of responses had been received through the online survey seeking input on what is needed in an interim president and providing nominations. She added that Bedient had held more than 50 one-on-one conversations with OSU academic leaders, Faculty Senate leaders, staff, student leaders, administrators, university partners, and other stakeholders. Borkar shared that she was proud of the adjustments made along the way, including the addition of the Nominee Review Committee composed of trustees and stakeholders in response to feedback from trustees at the April 2 Board meeting and the addition of the open forum with the final recommended nominee in response to feedback from the community. Borkar thanked those who participated in the community forum and provided feedback on Johnson’s

nomination, and she thanked the trustees and student, faculty, and university leaders who served on the Nominee Review Committee.

Borkar said that she had reviewed the collective feedback from the webpage, one-on-one meetings, and the Nominee Review Committee and what the community wanted in an interim president, and in her role as Board chair, she selected Johnson as the recommended nominee. Borkar summarized Johnson's career in higher education, most of which has been at Oregon State University. She noted Johnson's significant academic experience in the College of Forestry and the time she spent as vice provost for academic affairs and international programs before assuming her current role leading OSU-Cascades. Borkar shared that her decision to put Johnson forward was informed by extensive community engagement. She expressed confidence in Johnson as the right leader to fill the interim role. Borkar then invited Johnson to make remarks.

Johnson spoke about her background, including starting as an assistant professor in OSU's College of Forestry, and reflected on the opportunity she had to serve as an academic and administrative leader before moving to the position of vice president for OSU-Cascades. She remarked on OSU's strengths and strategic initiatives, and she reflected on the challenges of the previous year, including navigating the pandemic and many important social and university issues. Johnson said she is confident that Oregon State can continue its excellence in teaching, research, and service, and she said she would be honored to lead the university.

Bedient thanked everyone who engaged in the nomination process and reflected on the broad support for Johnson in the role of interim president.

Public Comments

The following individuals provided public comment:

- Roberta Marinelli: spoke in support of Dr. Johnson's nomination and noted her qualifications for the role.
- Katy Brooks: spoke in support of Dr. Johnson's nomination and described her strengths as a leader.
- Liisa Bozinovic: spoke in support of Dr. Johnson's nomination and said she is a strong partner.
- Anita Azarenko: spoke in support of Dr. Johnson's nomination and noted her commitment to OSU's mission.
- Nadine McCrindle: spoke in support of Dr. Johnson's nomination and described her strengths as a leader.
- Deb Tebbs: spoke in support of Dr. Johnson's nomination.
- Charlene Alexander: spoke in support of Dr. Johnson's nomination and detailed her demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- Rod Ray: spoke in support of Dr. Johnson's nomination and described her attributes as a leader.
- Kyle Gee: spoke in support of Dr. Johnson's nomination and said she is a strong partner.
- Rita Hansen: spoke in support of Dr. Johnson's nomination and described her impact as a leader.

Following comments, Trustee Preston Pulliams remarked on Johnson's strengths as a leader and expressed his confidence in her ability to step into the interim president role. Trustee Kirk Schueler spoke about Johnson's leadership at OSU-Cascades and her extensive experience at OSU, and he remarked on her qualifications for the role. Trustee Darry Callahan expressed his support for Johnson and noted that her experience as vice president for OSU-Cascades has prepared her for the presidency. Trustee Lamar Hurd remarked on Johnson's personal commitment and demonstrated actions to advance equity, inclusion, and diversity. Acting President Edward Feser spoke about Johnson's commitment to OSU and said he looked forward to working with her. Trustee Julia Brim-Edwards asked about the due diligence that had been completed as part of the nomination process. Bedient noted that background and media checks had been conducted for Johnson, and she summarized the discussions with the current supervisor and colleagues in a variety of positions across the university. Board Secretary Debbie Colbert provided additional information about the third-party background check, noting that the process was led by University Human Resources in partnership with the Board Office and the Office of General Counsel. Colbert noted that there was also a review of internal records. Trustee Paul Kelly expressed his confidence in Johnson's ability to successfully serve in the role.

A motion was made and seconded that Dr. Rebecca Johnson be appointed as the interim president of Oregon State University effective May 1, 2021, and that her contract with the university in the form presented to the Board be approved. Borkar asked the board secretary to take a roll call vote. On a unanimous vote, the motion carried.

Following the vote, Borkar congratulated Johnson and thanked her for her willingness to serve the university at an important time and in a critical position. She invited Johnson to make remarks. Johnson thanked the Board for conducting a thorough nomination process. She said she would use the input provided to inform her work as she stepped into the role.

Borkar thanked Acting President Feser for his leadership and said he would remain in the position as acting president until Johnson begins her presidency on May 1.

4. Adjournment

With no further business proposed, Chair Rani Borkar adjourned the meeting at 2:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Almquist
Assistant Board Secretary