

Minutes of the General and Senate Meeting – APPROVED

Feb. 24, 2022 (virtual, held using Zoom, business conducted)

Convener: Tim Tryjankowski

Officers Present: Tim Tryjankowski (Chair), Don Erb (Vice Chair), Catherine Donnelly (Secretary)

Senators Present: Kim Behun, Rachel Blane, Ed Brodka, Jennifer Chazen, Rita Ferri, Fran Fiscus, Janiece Jankowski, Meredith Forrest Kulwicki, Hugh Jarvis, Chris (CJ) Keough, Jenna Lenz, Doug Levere, Sherene Milizia, RJ Multari, Marlo Roetzer, Pam Rose, Melinda Saran, Janet Schrum, Daniel Schweitzer, Eileen Sirianni, Virginia Stever, Tony Waleszczak, Christopher Wilson

Senators Absent: Charlie Baxter, Brianna Bennett, Jessica Byerly Coram (sent Fran Fiscus as alternate), Ray Danneffer, Lynn Emminger, Andrew Fogelsonger, Bradley Hendricks, Kimberly Krzemien, Carl Lam, Dom Licata, Tim Matthews, Lisa Patterson, Thomas Slomka, Ryan Spearer, Fred Stoss, Krystal Testa, Michael Yates

Guests: Ron Raccuia, EVP Pegula Sports Entertainment

Parliamentarian: Rachel Poole

Staff: Jessica Naish

Recorder: Catherine Donnelly

Meeting called to order by Tim Tryjankowski at 3:02 p.m.

Quorum reached: 22 senators and 3 officers present. One senator arrived after the meeting started.

Supporting documents in Box.com folder in

[Professional Staff Senate/ Meetings/ Senate and General Meetings / 2022-02-24](#)

PRESENTATION OF AGENDA – Tim Tryjankowski

- **Motion to adopt [Agenda](#):** Tony Waleszczak (Virginia Stever) Passed.

REVIEW OF PAST MINUTE(S) – Tim Tryjankowski

- **Motion to approve [Minutes from Jan. 27, 2022](#):** Daniel Schweitzer (Ed Brodka) Passed.

CHAIR'S REPORT – Tim Tryjankowski

- SUNY Chancellor's awards under review. SUNY Shared Governance award cannot come to UB since we are a recent winner, but we did a great job in the past several months.
- UB is starting the reaccreditation process with a Middle States Review. This is put the campus through a test-run before the official process in 2023. If you are asked to participate please let the PSS know.
- The PACOR, President's Advisory Council on Race will be sharing the results of their recommendations next week. You should have received an email from the UB Provost.

Office of University Shared Governance
Professional Staff Senate

543 Capen Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260-1601

Ph: (716) 645-2003; Fax: (716) 645-2717

pssenate@buffalo.edu

www.buffalo.edu/pss

- [Shared the Faculty Senate resolution on FX grading \(no longer allowed\) \(PDF\)](#)
- **Motion to receive the chair's report. Chris Keough (Daniel Schweitzer) Passed.**

VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT – Don Erb

- Happy recent birthday to PSS Senator, Dr. Hugh Jarvis!
- Awards Committee asking for nominations for the PSS Awards due March 9. Also are adding a diversity statement "The PSS Awards Committee encourages the identification nomination and recognition of candidates that represent the full breadth of diversity at UB. "Special consideration will be given to individuals have made contributions to the betterment of the university, including those related to the university's commitment of increasing inclusive excellence. Nominated candidates should have a record of collaboration with faculty staff and our students from diverse backgrounds.
- The Budget Advisory Committee reports a positive fund balance of \$22,000. Please help us brainstorm uses for these funds.
- The Constitution and Bylaws Committee is working on the redistricting proposal.
- The Inclusion and Diversity Committee is collecting socks for Niagara Pride.
- Marketing and Communications sent no report.
- Recreation and Wellness working on spring activities.
- Retirees Committee had a spirited email exchange this week. Planning a meeting.
- Staff Development and Engagement Committee confirmed President Tripathi for June 9 event.
- Sustainable Living Committee planning a clean up of Lake LaSalle.
- **Motion to receive: Hugh Jarvis (Janiece Jankowski). Passed.**

SECRETARY'S REPORT – Catherine Donnelly

- (none)

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- COVID has changed a lot, the PSS participated in a shared resolution seeking N95 masks, may have read in The Spectrum.
- Also concerned that the Comprehensive Fee letter to students was blaming increased fees on wages.
- Telecommuting reviews of reapplications are underway.

NEW BUSINESS

- Future planning. Do we want to remain with Zoom, switch to hybrid or follow another variation of this with a few in-person meetings followed by Zoom during the winter months? PSS are asked to send Cathy Donnelly (chdonnel@buffalo.edu) any location suggestions that can accommodate hybrid meetings.
- Ideas for how to use the budget this year since so much programming was curtailed with the pandemic: Darien Lake tickets, a boat ride, picnic, tees.

- Ideas for future speakers: Brian Higgins, Governor Kathy Hochul, someone to discuss climate changes, Kelly Hayes McAlonie for updates on campus.

SPEAKER

Ron Raccuia (ECMC Foundation, Ad Pro Sports and Pegula Sports Entertainment) spoke with the PSS for about 30 minutes. This is a summary Q&A. [You can watch his interview here.](#)

How did you help with recent UB logo changes? It was great to refresh after the New State logo issue. We've brought Nike to the table, and I think where you're at right now with branding, with color, and with logo design is as good as any anyone in the country. It looks fantastic. It really accentuates who the university is. Its ties to Buffalo, and it's a really cool, athletic mark.

Is it true that UB was considered for the Bills Stadium? It is true. Sometimes you can't believe everything you read, but in that particular case, it was. We analyzed three sites. Well, we analyzed a dozen sites, if not more. But there were only three viable sites to put a new NFL quality NFL sized stadium in in western New York. And one was on UB's campus. We liked it. Honestly, from a Buffalo Bills perspective, we thought it was very viable. The governor at the time did not for whatever reason, and it never it never progressed to the point that the Orchard Park site progressed or the downtown site, but it was viable.

What perks would have happened in UB was a selected site? There might have been a subway extension, possibly, you know, out from the South Campus or things like that. You know, I would say yes, although it's not contemplated, but clearly, you know, we're building a stadium for the next 30 to 40 years. I think what you would have seen there, though, is number one, as you would see in a new home for UAB football, for sure. You would have seen more food and beverage and hospitality and lodging around the campus. You would certainly have seen a another more grand entrance coming from the, I'll just call it, the Sweet Home side of campus in that area.

Is the Orchard Park site a done deal across from the stadium? Well, it is from our perspective. It's the best site for a number of reasons, and I'm always very respectful for people that want to see it downtown. And I will tell you, as a lifelong resident here It just couldn't work. It was too expensive. We have no interest in uprooting people. And we love Orchard Park. What we're going to build hopefully is going to be something that no one has really experienced in Western New York in our history. This will be the latest state of the art NFL facility, it will have those types of amenities. We believe there is an opportunity for economic growth around a new stadium project if done strategically and collaboratively. So I am excited for it. I hope we can get a deal done.

Why no roof on this new stadium? It's extremely expensive. You're talking about an initial construction cost of somewhere around \$300 million and then you're talking about ongoing maintenance and HVAC, etc. It's fully done building that will be in the tens of millions of dollars. Quite frankly, we can't afford that. But more importantly than that, what I would say is we can mitigate the wind, we can provide shelter for the vast majority of the fans. We can provide significant temperature-controlled areas throughout the building, not just on the sweet and the club street level, but in the one hundred level in the end zones, in the 300 level and the 400 level, the 500 level. All the new areas that are being contemplated. And if we do the the stadium correctly from an all from a orientation standpoint, with the covering in with the right type of bowl configuration, we believe we will mitigate the weather. Last thing that I will say is. Really, look around if you

[Office of University Shared Governance](#)
[Professional Staff Senate](#)

543 Capen Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260-1601
Ph: (716) 645-2003; Fax: (716) 645-2717
pssenate@buffalo.edu

www.buffalo.edu/pss

look at New England, New York, Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Cincinnati a little further south, obviously the Baltimore, Philadelphia, those are all open-air stadiums. The only stadiums that have a dome that are in climate like ours are Detroit and Minnesota and they have always had domes.

What do you see a cost to Western New York? It is a very complicated transaction. It will require a significant public private partnership. There are really four parties to this type of agreement. The State of New York, the County of Erie, the Buffalo Bills in the NFL. I will say this it's not going to cost taxpayers a single penny. This isn't a new tax on anyone. This isn't money that is new to the budget. This is money that's being redeployed for other economic development projects throughout New York State. If this isn't done and it's not spent in Buffalo, it's not coming off the budget. It's going to just get spent on another project, either downstate or central or or wherever. So we feel strongly about that. You know, we think it's time Western New York gets what they're supposed to get.

Why fewer seats? Well, every stadium and arena in the country right now is building smaller. The reason we're building smaller is our fans and all of you are requiring a different level of experience. You want bigger seats, you want wider concourses. The sightlines have to be better. All of that means that you're using space in a different way. So, capacity has to come down, otherwise the stadium becomes too big. I will give you an example right now at Highmark Stadium, it's about 850-900 thousand square feet. It seats 70000 people. The new stadium, we're going to contemplate somewhere around 62,000 thousand, but the stadium is going to be 1.35-1.4 million square feet. A lot bigger, a lot more things to enjoy, a lot more space to get warm, you know, get out of the elements if you need to. But then we also have to think about that experience in the way that fans are enjoying professional sports right now is a more intimate experience. The experience will be much different and much better.

Cost increases? Well, you know, there will be a cost increase because it'll be four years from now. There will be seats that are more expensive because they have more amenities, but there will be seats that also are similarly priced to today. I'm from here. We're here, we know what this community is like. You can't overprice this community, and we certainly won't. Right now, I think we have the second or second or third lowest average ticket price. Maybe it'll be the fifth or sixth lowest, but it's never going to be where all these other stadiums are in these larger markets because our community just can't afford that.

Increased role of analytics in sports management? Everything we're doing right now is data driven. Let's just talk about the science and the technology, and we'll get to the analytics, how do you pitch that so that the wind doesn't come through the stadium but bounces off the top of the roof, goes over the top of the stadium and doesn't then circle into the stadium? Also, will be surveying season ticket holders and fans of our service. How often do they want to come to the game? How much time do they want to spend? Is tailgating, you know, critical? If it's not tailgating, do they want to come into the stadium early? All of those data points will form how we ultimately designed the interior of the bowl and the common area throughout the stadium.

Any specific details to share? The initial plan is to have a grass field. It will have sub air control, which means that the moisture will be regulated, it's a combination of artificial turf and grass. That makes it, you know, very durable in our type of climate. We're going to have as many events as we possibly can at the stadium. You're starting to see that a little bit right now with Highmark with major concerts, Buffalo Wing Fest etc. We've hosted multiple high school football games. We would love to have the University of Buffalo play a game. The interior of the stadium will have a grand indoor space. It will be designed to host multiple community or private event. We're going to turn this stadium into something that's used a lot and we'll have the space to do that. Also working to integrate the Ad Pro Field House.

[Office of University Shared Governance](#)
[Professional Staff Senate](#)

543 Capen Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260-1601
Ph: (716) 645-2003; Fax: (716) 645-2717
pssenate@buffalo.edu

www.buffalo.edu/pss

Public transportation? The public transportation piece is something we started working on with the NAFTA, the Erie County Legislature. Some of the New York state senators, Senator Kennedy Kennedy, has been very instrumental in that. We're already working on not only a public transportation solution to the new stadium, but a public transportation solution to the existing stadium over the next three to four years. That is a priority of ours. I know it's a priority of the community.

Who is going to pay for the upkeep? Right now we operate in a shared environment of maintenance costs on the existing stadium. Our position is that that shared environment should continue. So we'll see where that ends up in terms of additional events. The sales tax that comes from an additional event goes to the county. There are fees that are designated already for the county and the state with events.

Tunnels or other connections between buildings? We are talking about trying to find a solution, tunnels are extremely expensive. But there does need to be a solution for Abbott Road.

Any KeyBank improvements? I do know the extension of the light rail system behind KeyBank Center will be an improvement. We have a great plan to improve the traffic patterns around KeyBank Center.

Unfortunately, we haven't had enough capacity for people to realize that we felt we have a really good plan.

When can we hope to hear something? The budget on March 30 is the first. I know you guys live on that state budget as well, so we all share that anxiety. We have a couple of deadlines before that. We have an NFL Stadium and Finance Committee meeting. We're working on it. We're working on it every day.

Can you change the overtime rule? No, we can do a better job with those 13 seconds.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn: 4:06 p.m.

Attendance and meeting audio recording available through the PSS office.