

**Minutes**  
**SUNY Downstate Medical Center**  
**Council Meeting**  
**President's Board Room**  
**March 29, 2018**

**Council Members Present**

Rev. Kirkpatrick Cohall, Chair  
Michael Connors, Esq.  
Andrew Hasenzahl  
Marlene Dietrich Heath (*ex officio*)  
Dr. Constance Shames (*ex officio*)  
Dr. Mirian Zavala

**Downstate Administration Present**

President Wayne J. Riley  
Heidi Aronin  
Dr. Carla Boutin-Foster  
Dr. Keydron Guinn  
Thomas Gray  
James Minto  
Dawn Skeete-Walker  
Dr. Anika Daniels-Osaze  
Ellen Watson

Council Chairman Reverend Dr. Kirkpatrick Cohall called the meeting to order, and the minutes from the November 10, 2017, meeting were approved by consensus.

**Report from the President: Dr. Wayne J. Riley**

President Riley updated Council members on the New York State Budget, which annually allocates funding for the State University of New York. While negotiations are moving towards agreement, it is at this time uncertain if the hospital subsidy will be included in the final Executive Budget. The “hospital subsidy” is an allocation historically awarded to the three state-operated hospitals to offset legislature-imposed higher fringe-rates and administrative costs. When enacted some 20 years ago, the SUNY hospital subsidy had been \$154 million; by last fiscal year, it had been reduced to \$78.6 million, split between the three campuses. For the proposed 18-19 FY budget, the allocation was completely eliminated from the Executive Budget.

President Riley noted that he as well as leadership from SUNY, Stony Brook, and Upstate Medical University have campaigned vigorously for restoration of the subsidy. Without it, the other two hospitals will be thrown into a deficit situation; at Downstate, the existing deficit situation at University Hospital of Brooklyn will be exacerbated. Elimination of some services and/or jobs at Downstate might have to be considered, with “considered” being stressed. Until the final budget numbers are in, and the campuses have guidance from the Chancellor and the

SUNY Board of Trustees, no final decisions will be made on how to mitigate potential budget cuts. President Riley distributed a fact sheet that SUNY provided to legislators calculating the enormous value of the three state hospitals and their campuses to New York State (pdf attached).

President Riley briefed Council members on a new technology rolled out at Downstate earlier in the week. Called BioVigil, the technology tracks and facilitates handwashing as part of infection prevention. Downstate was the first hospital in New York City to roll out this technology. A *CBS News* video clip featuring Dr. Max Gomez discussing the technology was shown to Council.

President Riley advised Council members that the *Transition Committee Report* had been published (copies were distributed to Council) and that the *Report* will be used as part of the Strategic Planning process about to be initiated. Among the report's suggestions already in process is a search for a new Vice President for Research. Other recommendations will take time to implement, while some may never be implemented.

President Riley concluded his report to Council by introducing members of his new leadership team: James Minto, Vice President for Facilities Management and Development; Heidi Aronin, Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer; and Dawn Skeete-Walker, Associate Vice President for Communications and Marketing.

### **Report on Student Perspective: Andrew Hasenzahl**

A report on "The Student Perspective and Interdisciplinary Activities" was delivered by Andrew Hasenzahl, SUNY Council Voting Student Representative (M.D. Candidate, Class of 2020, and MPH Graduate, Class of 2016). Mr. Hasenzahl's report, developed in consultation with representatives from Downstate's five colleges and schools, reviewed Downstate's Student Governance structures, as well as students' interactions across colleges and disciplines and with alumni, SUNY, and the SUNY Board of Trustees. He stressed the need to develop stronger alumni associations for all Downstate colleges and schools, noting that these could play a role in providing career advice and mentoring, job and internship connections, and financial support for student activities. Mr. Hasenzahl also urged that Downstate promote interdisciplinary activities between all colleges and schools, citing the Brooklyn Free Clinic, with close to 200 volunteers from Medicine, Nursing, Health Related Professions and Public Health, as an example of a highly functioning student volunteer activity. A copy of his presentation is attached.

Dr. Constance Shames, faculty and Alumni Association liaison to Council, distributed copies of the latest Alumni Magazine, which included information on the Association's support last year for student programming and activities totaling \$647,450.

### **Report from the Chief Financial Officer**

Chief Financial Thomas Gray provided an update on Downstate's FY 17-18 budget through the first two quarters of the year, and previewed budget expectations for FY 18-19. He reviewed how Downstate's budget process has been improved to more closely monitor expenditures and

unspent funds in individual department budgets, allowing the Finance Office to better harness available money to address campus priorities. Mr. Gray anticipates significant challenges in the FY 18-19 budget as a result of contractual obligations to UUP, the union that represents Downstate's faculty. Union contracts are negotiated at the state level; SUNY anticipates an executed UUP contract that will require all 64 campuses to pay raises retroactively for the three years in which there has not been a signed contract. Mr. Gray anticipates that Downstate's obligation once the contract is signed could total as much as \$10 million, or almost 10 percent of Downstate's operating budget. He is working closely with President Riley to look at both cost saving and revenue enhancement opportunities. The UUP contract will affect both the academic and hospital budgets.

**Miscellaneous Business:**

Council members were invited to Downstate's Commencement Exercises and advised of an upcoming event to celebrate the Inauguration of Chancellor Johnson on September 20<sup>th</sup> at the Fashion Institute of Technology.

There being no further business, the Council meeting was adjourned.