MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF
EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

September 10, 2026

A meeting of the Board of Trustees was convened on September 10, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. on the Dvorak Stage of the Doudna Fine Arts Center at Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, Illinois. Ms. Julie Everett, Chair, presided.

Roll Call

Roll was called:

Ms. Baurer	Present
Mr. Hicks	Present
Ms. Madigan	Present
Mr. Ngoboh	Absent
Dr. Ranchero	Present
Mr. Slater	Present
Ms. Everett	Present

Also present were:

Dr. Jay Gatrell, President
Dr. Holly Farley, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Anne Flaherty, Vice President for Student Affairs/Interim Vice President of Advancement
Mr. Matt Bierman, Vice President for Business Affairs
Mr. Mike Hutchinson, Director of Business Services/Treasurer & Interim FEO
Mr. Josh Norman, Vice President for Enrollment Management
Ms. Laura McLaughlin, General Counsel
Ms. Cindy Hutchison, Assistant Secretary, Board of Trustees

Executive Session

Mr. Slater moved that the Board of Trustees convene in Executive Session to consider employment of employees as permitted by Sections 2.c.1 of the Open Meetings Act. Ms. Madigan seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

Ms. Baurer moved to return to the Open Session. Dr. Ranchero seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, motion carried. Closed session ended at 12:01 p.m.

The Board of Trustees reconvened after lunch at 1:00 p.m. on the Dvorak stage in the Doudna Fine Arts Center for the remainder of the meeting.

Report from Board Chair

Chair Everett called the meeting to order. She commended EIU's response to the June tornado and for partnership with Charleston Middle School to provide classroom space while repairs are being made at the school.

Committee Reports

Executive/Planning Committee

Ms. Everett reported on the Executive/Planning Committee.

President Jay Gatrell provided updates from Springfield and Washington. EIU expects to know sometime in October whether it will secure funding to support a project to install four charging stations on campus.

Mark Wilson, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, was introduced. He indicated that his primary focus will be academics for student athletes.

A revision to the Board Regulation concerning payouts to probationary employees upon separate from the University will be presented during the afternoon meeting.

A proposal for a single online graduate tuition rate is also being presented, with the expectation that it will increase enrollment and revenue from our international markets.

Finance/Audit Committee

Ms. Everett reported on the Finance/Audit Committee.

Vice President Matt Bierman shared FY2026 ended with a deficit of $2.820 million on Ledger 1 (appropriated funds). The FY2027 budget and FY2028 budget projections will be presented for approval at today's meeting. The F2027 Ledger 1 (appropriated funds) budget projects a deficit of $3.115 million. None of these figures reflect the savings from the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (VSIP).

EIU will request a 10% increase in state appropriations. Tuition income is estimated to decline 2.1% over FY2027, while expenses are projected to increase 1.1%.

An update on summer projects was provided. The new floor in the Rec Center was damaged by flooding caused from backed-up drains during the June tornados and will be replaced a second time. Insurance will cover all but the $100,000 deductible for the repairs.
Gardella Family Court has been painted, with new premium seating and video boards installed. The cooling tower in Lawson Hall has been replaced, as has the elevator in Old Main. Parking lot work outside of Buzzard Hall and University Court is complete. Utility tunnel work will pause from November through April. Bids for the Integrated Science Building are due September 23.

Mike Hutchinson provided an update on the line-item status report.

Academic and Student Affairs Committee
Mr. Hicks reported on the Academic and Student Affairs Committee.

Vice President Holly Farley introduced Michael Gillespie, Dean of Student Success, who provided an overview of Student Success and the use of Navigate360. Navigate360 is designed to provide a variety of tools and support for students, faculty and staff.

Vice President Anne Flaherty provided project updates on the Thomas Hall renovation and Panther Commons. Thomas Hall is expected to be open to students in August 2027.

Panther Commons was created as a home for registered student organizations (RSO's) and the Office of Leadership and Engagement. Moves to the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union occurred during summer 2026.

University Advancement and Alumni Relations Committee
Dr. Ranchero reported on the University Advancement and Alumni Relations Committee.

Vice President Anne Flaherty provided updates regarding the campaign consultants Gonser Gerber.

- Erin Phillips and Krista Bofill of Gonser Gerber visited campus on June 21-22. Krista Bofill will serve as the primary consultant and meet with Vice President Flaherty every six weeks to provide guidance on campaign priorities.

- EIU's three micro-campaigns will focus on Thomas Hall, the Integrated Science Building, and Pemberton Hall, all of which offer naming opportunities.

- FY2026 Annual Fund ended with 2,198 donors totaling $3,626,356 in gifts.

- Alumni Relations has numerous events planned, which can be found on the Alumni Relations website.

- The Academy of Lifelong Learning is offering a Virtual Viewpoint Series and opportunities to "Travel with EIU".

Enrollment Management Update
Ms. Everett shared the Enrollment Management update.

Vice President Josh Norman reported EIU's enrollment profile shows encouraging indicators of student quality and persistence despite broader demographic challenges. First-year retention increased 2%; 53% of incoming students are first-generation students; local enrollment within 60 miles grew 8%; and one in five first-year students earned a 4.0 GPA.

Academic programs experiencing strong growth include Business Administration (+31%), Construction Management (+33%), Special Education (+28%), and Nursing (+74% or +145 students).

Overall enrollment declines were concentrated in dual credit (-5%), largely due to state policy changes, and international students (-42%). EIU continues to serve students from 45 countries.

The University is also progressing well with academic restructuring. Student records updated, courses have been reassigned to new departments and colleges, and error-checking processes underway to ensure a smooth transition.

Strategic Enrollment Plan initiatives continue to advance. The new Majors/Minors database is on track for substantial completion by the end of October. A High School-to-College Transition Workshop was piloted at Shiloh High School during the week with plans for broader statewide engagement.

To strengthen recruitment and affordability, EIU is enhancing merit scholarships by lowering eligibility thresholds and increasing award amounts. Panther Promise eligibility is being expanded from families with adjusted gross incomes (AGIs) of $55,000-$100,000 to $60,000-$120,000. The Student Success and Engagement award is moving back to waiver funding to serve more students outside of Aim High Eligibility.

Together, these affordability and recruitment measures are designed to improve competitiveness and support enrollment growth for Fall 2027.

Action Items

A. Ms. Baurer moved to approve the minutes of June 11 Board Meeting and the June 12 Board Retreat. Dr. Ranchero seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

B. Ms. Madigan moved to approve the FY 2027 budget and the budget projection used in the Illinois Board of Higher Education submission for FY 2028. Mr. Slater seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

C. Dr. Ranchero moved to approve a single tuition rate for online graduate programs. Effective January 1, 2027, all online graduate programs will transition to a single tuition rate for both

domestic and international students, set equal to the current Illinois resident rate. Ms. Madigan seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

D. Ms. Madigan moved to approve Ratification of Charleston CUSD#1 Lease and Operating Agreement. Mr. Slater seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

E. Ms. Laura McLaughlin conducted the first reading of Board Regulation Sections II.B. and C. The proposed revision would bring EIU's vacation policy for terminated employees in line with the policies of other public universities in Illinois.

F. Ms. Baurer moved to approve the Non-Indentured and Indentured Reserves. Mr. Hicks seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

G. 1. Mr. Slater moved to approve the personnel contract for M. Wilson, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics, effective September 1, 2026, through August 31, 2031, with an initial annual salary of $190,000. Mr. Hicks seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

2. Mr. Slater moved to approve the personnel contract extension for K. Paulson, Head Coach, effective July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2031. Mr. Hicks seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

H. Mr. Hicks moved to approve depositories in accordance with Board Regulation V.G.1. Ms. Madigan seconded the motion. By unanimous vote, motion carried.

Information Items

President's Report
President Gatrell introduced Dr. Shawn Peoples, who presented the Annual Title IX overview to the Trustees. Title IX prohibits sex-based discrimination in education programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

Reports from Constituencies
Student Senate: Updates were provided by Student Body President Mason Tegeler.

Public Comment – None

Summary of Purchases $100,000 - $249,999 and Exempt Purchases
The Summar of Purchases $100,000-$249,999 and Exempt Purchases was provided.

FY2026 Deposit and Investment Reports
For the year ending June 30, 2026, the University had an average daily invested cash balance of $105,487,109.27 and a net average daily balance of $103,567,299.21. The annualized average yield was 3.95%.

University Highlights
University Highlights were provided, including spotlight events around campus, students, faculty, staff, alumni honors, achievements, and athletic events and honors.

Other Matters – None

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 1:53 p.m.