

SUNY UPSTATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

Wednesday, October 14, 2020

MINUTES

The October 14, 2020 meeting of the SUNY Upstate Medical University Council was held in-person in room 4507 Setnor Academic Building. The following members were present:

Council Members

James Sparkes, Interim, Chair

John B. Johnson, Jr.\*

Gwyn Mannion\*

Calvin Corriders

Linda Ervin

Eric Allyn

Samuel Rowser

Diane Dwire

Akshay Patel, Student Representative

Mantosh Dewan, MD, Interim President

Guest

Stephen Glatt M.D., PhD., Faculty Representative

Patricia Numann, M.D., Alumni Representative

Eric Smith, CPA, MBA

\*denotes excused

## **I. Council Report**

### **Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 1:10 PM by Interim Council Chair, James E. Sparkes, who welcomed the group and began the meeting.

With there being new additions to the Council, Chair Sparkes asked each member to introduce themselves to the group. He thanked the newly appointed and returning members for their commitment to serve.

Erin Peters was designated Recording Secretary of the meeting and conducted a roll call.

Mr. Sparkes confirmed a quorum for Council was present.

### **Approval of Minutes of the Last Council Meeting April 2020**

Waived approval of April 23, 2020 meeting minutes until next meeting.

### **SUNY Trustee's Commendation**

Mr. Sparkes read the recent commendation given to SUNY Upstate by the SUNY Board of Trustees for development of a pooled surveillance testing program to be implemented throughout the State University of New York. Mr. Sparkes commended Upstate and the inspirational leadership of Dr. Dewan, expressing "This is how things can get done when you inspire!" (*Copy commendation attached*)

### **ACT Membership / Virtual Meeting October 16, 2020**

Mr. Sparkes shared information regarding the Association of College Trustees (ACT). The ACT is the statewide organization for all members of campus college councils, ACT works to promote increased council effectiveness, collaboration among the campuses, and advocacy for quality public higher education in New York State. Mr. Sparkes stated that the annual meeting of the ACT will be held virtually on 10/16/2020 and is open to all SUNY Council members. He encouraged Council members to register and participate in the meeting if their schedule allows.

### **Bylaws Committee Formation**

Mr. Sparkes stated that a Bylaws Committee of the Council was being formed for the purpose of creating Council Bylaws and is looking for two or three members of the Council to participate on this committee. Council member Diane Dwire agreed to participate on the committee.

### **Council Vacancies / Recommendation**

Mr. Sparkes stated that our Council has one seat vacant and encouraged the current members to consider a recommendation of individuals whom they feel would complement our existing Council membership.

## **II. UMU President's Report**

Dr. Dewan began his report acknowledging 2020 has been a terrible year, but he is encouraged because the pandemic has brought out the very best of Upstate. Dr. Dewan gave an overview of the "first's" and several of the commendable achievements and events that have taken place at Upstate in 2020.

A. COVID -19 Response:

Upstate has received widespread community support. As a result, the community has changed how they view Upstate. Community members have showed an outpouring of support in many ways including food donations to front line workers and donations of PPE.

2. Governor Cuomo traveled to Upstate twice and gave two of his daily briefings from Upstate Medical University. The Governor commended the extraordinary work of Upstate Medical University and its employees.

3. SUNY Chancellor James Malatras visited Upstate on his second day on the job and commended the extraordinary work of Upstate Medical University and its employees.

4. Syracuse Mayor, Ben Walsh, gave his State of the City Address from Upstate Medical University.

5. County Executive, Ryan McMahon visited Upstate to thank first responders.  
COVID.

6. Upstate physicians spoke with medical professionals in Wuhan, China who provided very good advice with regard to COVID.

7. Upstate RNs, therapists and techs volunteered to assist to Stony Brook University Hospital with COVID relief.

8. Upstate provided the Chief Medical Officer and Chief Nursing Officer to the New York City Javits Convention Center which had been converted to an interim COVID-19 health care facility.

9. Upstate scientists developed a novel pooled saliva test for COVID-19 that received fast-track approval and was used by SUNY throughout all campuses and was credited with the ability to allow in person classes throughout the semester.

10. An Upstate scientist was chosen as lead investigator for world-wide trials of the Pfizer vaccine.

11. Currently Upstate scientists are conducting 3 antibody trials.

B. Research: Upstate is a little ahead of 2019 its usual numbers despite the COVID-19 shutdown.

C. Students: A hybrid model for rotations was developed. All students in each of the four colleges graduated on time in May 2020.

D. Child Psychiatry: Upstate opened an inpatient adolescent unit (IOP).

E. Diversity: New Chief Diversity Officer started in June 2019 and will support the University goal of increasing the number of students from underrepresented populations.

F. A new Chief Wellness officer and Associate Dean of Wellness were appointed.

All of these underscores the value of a public academic medical center such as Upstate which provides the breadth and depth of expertise in areas such as infectious disease, epidemiology, and public health.

G. Finances: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in prolonged shutdown of elective surgery and related factors, Upstate experienced significant but manageable losses. Dr. Dewan expressed his personal satisfaction that there were no pandemic related layoffs, furloughs or pay cuts.

H. Other matters of note. Despite the pandemic, Upstate has added beds, building regional networks and developing new capabilities through such means as the Neurological Institute and Heart Institute.

I. Dr. Dewan pointed out that we are celebrating the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman to graduate from medical school and become a physician in the United States. We want to validate, honor, and celebrate our alumna Elizabeth Blackwell.

Dr. Dewan shared that Upstate is more efficient, creative, and better than ever!

He stated that “Upstate Strong is not just a slogan – it is our hard-earned reality today. Our 10,000 people are fabulous and have proven themselves to be everyday heroes and leaders. I look forward to 2021 with distinct enthusiasm!”

### **Executive Session**

A motion was made by Council Chair Sparkes to adjourn under New York Open Meetings Law Section 107 A into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing matters that impact public health and safety due to COVID-19. The motion was seconded, a carried by unanimous voice vote; and the Council adjourned the public meeting and entered into executive session at 2:00 PM. A motion was made by Chair Sparkes to conclude Executive Session at 2:14 PM. The motion was seconded and there being no further discussion a voice vote was taken, and the action was unanimously approved.

### **Final Remarks**

Council returned to regular session at 2:14 P.M., whereupon Mr. Sparkes requested Dr. Patricia Numann to provide a briefing on progress being made with regard to the anniversary celebration of Elizabeth Blackwell. Dr. Numann explained that an Anniversary committee has been formed and Dr. Lynn Cleary is the Chair. The committee is planning to have lectures, a display in the library. Other proposals under consideration include, fund-raising campaign through the Medical Alumni Foundation, a bronze sculpture, scholarship for students in Dr. Blackwell’s name, and renaming the medical college library the “Elizabeth Blackwell Library”. More details will be shared as planning progresses. Mr. Sparkes thanked Dr. Numann for her work on this very important event in the history of Upstate Medical University and asked that the Council be kept abreast of developments.

### **Adjournment**

It being determined that there was no further old or new business before the Council, a motion was made by Eric Allyn to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Gwyn Mannion and, there being no discussion, a voice vote was taken. The action was unanimously approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 P.M.