



(APPROVED)

**Salem State University Assistance Corporation
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Monday, March 20, 2023**

Present In-Person Meeting: Chairman Mike Wheeler, President John Keenan, Helen Corbett, Tom Daniel, Beth Debski, Beth Haran, Anthony Nickas, and Rinus Oosthoek. **Guests:** Laura Swanson, Noreen Hazelton and Terry Brancato.

The in-person SSUAC Board Meeting was called to order by Board Chairman Wheeler at 8:00 am.

A motion was made by Rinus Oosthoek and seconded by Beth Debski to approve the Board Meeting Minutes of January 23, 2023. All in favor, none opposed.

Swanson reported the year-to-date rental income remains stable and the financial are where they predicted. Swanson reported that the increased inquiries for office space are from businesses that offer counseling to their clients at night and weekends and are not a good fit for our building because of the evening and weekend public access limitations. Swanson reported that the Enterprise Center did not respond to the RFP from the City of Salem for student space utilizing the SSU Bookstore and Admissions Office because it could not meet the timeline and buildout requirements. The City of Salem cancelled the RFP. Swanson stated that staff have finalized the capital maintenance plan and it will be reviewed with the Finance Committee and shared at the next Board meeting.

President Keenan reported that Salem State University will be starting its new fund-raising campaign, "Meet the Moment," on May 6, 2023 with a goal of \$75 million for this effort. It will be the largest campaign goal in state history. The SSU five- year strategic plan will be rolled out in the coming weeks after approval. He stated that the residential occupancy is at approximately 84% up from a low of almost half that amount during COVID. It is anticipated that next year the student occupancy will be at 95%.

President Keenan reiterated that Salem State is on track to receive its Hispanic Serving Institution designation and will be the first Massachusetts public higher ed institution to receive that designation.

Swanson gave her Executive Director's report and provided an overview of the programming since the last Board Meeting. She stated that workshops have been a combination of in-person and webinar format with the flexibility to change the format to respond to registration trends. Swanson reviewed the progress, successes and lessons learned for the Salem EDA Tourism Grant Program which is being closed out in March pending a final report. Swanson reported on the Business Briefing held with Congressman Moulton on February 24, 2023. It was hosted by the Enterprise Center and Alliance and brought together 16 business organizations including 9 chambers of commerce to discuss what businesses in the region are facing. A follow-up survey was sent and the results will be included in the next Executive Director's Report. Board Members Debski and Oosthoek offered their feedback and both commented on the opportunity it presented to meet with the Congressman and the continued need to

meet and discuss the region as a whole. The Enterprise Center and Alliance will host the next meeting of this group which will take place on May 11, 2023.

Swanson informed the Board of some upcoming specialty programming including a partnership with the Commonwealth Corp for Women Owned Businesses #LeadTheChange with Equity. She also provided an update on partnership programming with the Alliance including the MOU's signed by the Enterprise Center and Alliance to partner in MassHire's North Shore Offshore Wind Workforce Development Project.

Swanson reported on Alliance programming and projects including the North Shore Small Business Diversity Directory which will be launched in March with a new logo. There are approximately 50 companies currently participating in the directory and that will serve as the baseline for enrollment as outreach and marketing plans continue. The Alliance Community Spotlights in the form of blogs, social media postings and newsletters will launch at the end of March. All 30 Alliance communities will be included. Swanson informed the Board about the Future of Work Symposium that will take place June 28, 2023 at the Hawthorne Hotel. It is in partnership with MassHire Workforce and the keynote speaker will be Dr. Patrick Tutwiler, Secretary of Education. More information will be provided at the May Board meeting. Swanson reported on a new North Shore Conversations Podcast & coordinated Op Ed Letters to target the North Shore and Merrimack Valley audience. This programming provides the opportunity for the Alliance to talk with regional and state leaders about topics facing and impacting the region including Affordable Housing, Transportation and Workforce. Swanson stated that the recently held Quarterly Planners Meeting had less attendees than usual and she believed it was because of the snow storm the day before.

Swanson reported that she is scheduling a meeting with the Foundation Directors, accountants and attorney in to discuss organizational requirements, tax filings and fundraising outreach strategies.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Rinus Oosthoek and seconded by Tom Daniel. All in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 8:48 am.