

CAMDEN BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
September 14, 2023

A meeting of the Camden Board of Directors of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey was held on Thursday, September 14, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. in the Rutgers–Camden Campus Center, Camden, New Jersey. Dr. James Dougherty presided as Chair.

Present and constituting a quorum were Covington, DiMartino, Dougherty, MacDonald, and Tambussi.

No Board members were absent.

Attending for the university administration were Tillis, Sepanic, and Roesener.

Also present were Rabinowitz, faculty representative to the Board of Directors, Gordon, graduate student representative to the Board of Directors, and Brodsky, undergraduate student representative to the Board of Directors.

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Dougherty called the meeting to order and welcomed Dr. Walter MacDonald, a new member of the Board to be sworn in, Ms. Gaylene Gordon, graduate student representative to the Board, and Mr. Matthew Brodsky, undergraduate student representative to the Board.

ANNOUNCEMENT PURSUANT TO CHAPTER 231, PUBLIC LAW 1975
(OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT)

Mr. Sepanic, Secretary of the Rutgers–Camden Board of Directors, announced that pursuant to Public Law 1975, Chapter 231 (Open Public Meetings Act), public notice of this meeting was filed on September 11, 2023 with the Office of the Secretary of State of New Jersey and three newspapers, the *Cherry Hill Courier-Post*, the *New Brunswick Home News Tribune & Courier News*, and the *Newark Star-Ledger*. Public notice of the meeting was posted in the following University libraries: the Alexander Library, New Brunswick; the Dana Library, Newark; and the Robeson Library, Camden. In addition, notice of this meeting was posted on the Rutgers–Camden Board of Directors website.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Mr. Sepanic asked the board members if they had reviewed the meeting agenda and supporting documents and if anyone had a possible conflict of interest to disclose. No conflicts were reported.

INDUCTION OF NEW BOARD MEMBER

Dr. Dougherty introduced Mr. Robert Roesener, deputy general counsel and member of the Bar of the State of New Jersey, to administer the Oath of Allegiance and Office to induct new members. Mr. Roesener called on Dr. Walter MacDonald, who was inducted and joined the Rutgers University–Camden Board of Directors as a member representative of the Rutgers University Board of Trustees.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE RUTGERS UNIVERSITY–CAMDEN BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Annual elections for the positions of chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer were held. Dr. Dougherty turned the chair over to Mr. Covington for the election of chair and left the room. Mr. Covington presented Dr. Dougherty for the position of chair for the term September 2023 to September 2024 and called for a motion, which was made and seconded. Mr. Covington asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, Mr. Covington called for a vote, and Dr. Dougherty was unanimously elected as chair. Dr. Dougherty rejoined the meeting and assumed the chair.

Dr. Dougherty asked Mr. Covington to leave the room. Dr. Dougherty presented Mr. Covington for the position of vice chair for the term September 2023 to September 2024 and called for a motion, which was made and seconded. Dr. Dougherty asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, Dr. Dougherty called for a vote, and Mr. Covington was unanimously elected as vice chair. Mr. Covington returned to the room.

Dr. Dougherty asked Mr. Sepanic to leave the room. Dr. Dougherty presented Mr. Sepanic for the position of secretary and Mr. Michael Gower *in absentia* for the position of treasurer for the term September 2023 to September 2024 and called for a motion, which was made and seconded. Dr. Dougherty asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, Dr. Dougherty called for a vote, and Mr. Sepanic and Mr. Gower were unanimously elected as secretary and treasurer, respectively. Mr. Sepanic returned to the room.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JUNE 5, 2023 MEETING

Dr. Dougherty called attention to the minutes of the June 5, 2023 meeting that were distributed to the Board and asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes. Dr. MacDonald and Mr. Tambussi abstained from the vote; Dr. MacDonald was not a member of the board at that time, and Mr. Tambussi was absent from the meeting. Receiving no other objections, Dr. Dougherty called for a motion which was seconded and asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICIES

Dr. Dougherty called on Mr. Sepanic who reminded Board members and representatives about the need to review, sign, and return to the Office of the Secretary the policy statement on confidentiality of proceedings of the Rutgers–Camden Board of Directors’ meetings.

CHANCELLOR’S REPORT

Chancellor Antonio D. Tillis provided his report to the board regarding the status of the campus, including welcoming new students and faculty and updates on enrollment, the chancellor’s 15 in 5 initiatives, leadership and strategic initiatives, the campus strategic planning process, new and ongoing traditions, internationalization plans, student and alumni achievements, and highlights of upcoming events.

In addition to the almost 1800 new students on campus, Chancellor Tillis was pleased to welcome 21 educators and scholars joining the faculty at the start of the academic year. Chancellor Tillis lauded their exceptional standards of research and professional experience.

Enrollment at Rutgers University–Camden continues to gain momentum after pandemic-related declines. Although somewhat down, overall enrollment is performing above expectations, with significant gains in new FTIC, transfers, and graduate student enrollment this fall. The graduate student population continues to grow at the fastest rate, in part due to innovative new programs and international recruitment efforts.

Since the inception of the program last year, 11 of the Chancellor’s 15 in 5 Initiatives have been launched. Geared to elevate the Rutgers brand by supporting students and faculty involved in research and academic innovation, Chancellor Tillis highlighted the new Camden Mayoral Internship program, the Chancellor’s Grant for Independent Student Research, and the Chancellor’s Research Grant for Part-Time Lecturers. The final four initiatives will launch during 2023-2024. Chancellor Tillis highlighted the Chancellor’s Grant for Faculty Development in Administrative Roles, which will prepare faculty to advance Rutgers as they enhance their administrative skills.

Rutgers University–Camden succeeds in recruiting strong leaders from the higher education and practice-based sectors. Dr. Sandra Richtermeyer has made great strides since joining Rutgers University–Camden in June as executive vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost. Mr. Robert McKee, senior vice chancellor for finance and administration, now also serves as chief of staff. Ms. Johanna Bond, the first dean of both locations of Rutgers Law School, will be welcomed at a reception on September 21 on the Camden campus. Finally, Mr. Michael Sepanic has been appointed to serve as vice chancellor for governmental and external affairs.

Beyond additions to campus leadership, there are a host of new, cross-cutting initiatives to advance Rutgers University–Camden. One such project is the revitalization of the Cooper Street corridor. Planning efforts are in progress to better utilize Rutgers’ space and to beautify the neighborhood.

With respect to strategic planning, the chancellor formed a steering committee last year comprised of faculty, staff, and students and charged them with creating a five-year strategic plan for the campus. Their SWOT analysis led to the development of questions intended to include the broadest audience across the campus and key stakeholders. The planning process, which will be completed and published this fall, identified 5 strategic pillars of focus and action: Academic Excellence, Transformative Student Success, Holistic Student Experience, Beloved Camden Community, and Internationalization. Rutgers University–Camden’s centennial in 2026 falls within the five-year period of the strategic plan, and Chancellor Tillis will form a committee to plan the celebration of this milestone.

Chancellor Tillis emphasized the importance of tradition. New traditions at Rutgers–Camden include fall convocation, a white coat ceremony for Doctor of Nursing Practice students, the Scarlet Raptors rally, celebration of Rites of Passage, the chancellor’s fall and spring addresses, and celebrating the service and sacrifice of veterans. As the first Purple Heart University in New Jersey and a Yellow Ribbon School, Rutgers–Camden has a strong tradition of serving veterans.

Preparing students for the global economy is part of Rutgers University–Camden’s mission. Rutgers–Camden’s intensive 10-day learning abroad programs, which take place over spring break or during semester breaks, are designed to accommodate students who have numerous competing responsibilities. Deans have supported the effort by developing resources to help defray costs. In addition to study abroad programs, Chancellor Tillis provided an overview of global recruitment initiatives.

Chancellor Tillis highlighted the accomplishments of two students who are among the many who excel in and out of the classroom at Rutgers University–Camden. While raising her younger brother,

Tiffany Chan, Class of 2027, completed the New York City Marathon and completed many volunteer hours at a local food pantry and as an EMT for her township's emergency squad. In addition, current Student Government Association president Matthew Brodsky, 2023 cohort and recipient of the Rutgers Eagleton Washington Internship Award, spoke at the fall convocation.

Chancellor Tillis also highlighted accomplishments achieved by Rutgers University–Camden's distinguished alumni. Lavett Ballard's artwork was featured on the cover of TIME magazine. John McGraw sculpted coins for the U.S. Mint's U.S. Women in Quarters series. Kaitlin McGee and Sydney Johnson were selected as Fulbright semifinalists for teaching assistantships in South Korea and Luxembourg, respectively. Dawn Daly-Mack is the first woman to lead a North Carolina county's NAACP chapter. Georgette Castner took the bench as the youngest confirmed female federal judge. And Ashley Estevez-Perez was appointed by President Biden to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

Chancellor Tillis concluded his report by sharing upcoming events, thanking the board for their support, and responding to questions.

OLD BUSINESS

Dr. Dougherty directed the Board's attention to old business. There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Dougherty directed the Board's attention to new business. Dr. Sara Joslin requested the year of Rutgers–Camden's centennial and asked if Rutgers also plans to celebrate the nation's 250th anniversary. She emphasized the importance of civic engagement in context of the nation's semiquincentennial. There was no further new business.

RESOLUTION TO CONDUCT CLOSED SESSION

Dr. Dougherty called on Mr. Sepanic to present the following resolution, which upon motion, was duly seconded and unanimously approved:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board meet in immediate closed session on this date, September 14, 2023, to discuss matters of attorney / client confidentiality in accordance with Chapter 231, Public Law 1975, Section 7, Item b(8).

ADJOURNMENT OF OPEN SESSION

Following approval of the Resolution to Conduct Closed Session, Dr. Dougherty called for a motion and second to adjourn the meeting's open session at 10:25 a.m. The Board adjourned immediately into closed session.

Minutes prepared and submitted by,

Michele L. Robinson
Rutgers University–Camden Chancellor's Office