

CAMDEN BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
May 6, 2024

A meeting of the Camden Board of Directors of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, was held virtually at 10 a.m. Monday, May 6, 2024. Dr. James Dougherty presided as Chair.

Present and constituting a quorum were Mr. Anthony Covington, Ms. Mary DiMartino, Dr. Dougherty, Mr. Walter MacDonald, and Mr. William Tambussi.

Attending for the university administration were Dr. Antonio D. Tillis, Mr. Michael Sepanic, and Mr. George Loeser.

Also present were Dr. Samuel Rabinowitz, faculty representative to the Board of Directors; Ms. Gaylene Gordon, graduate student representative to the Board of Directors; and Mr. Matthew Brodsky, undergraduate student representative to the Board of Directors.

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Dougherty called the meeting to order.

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 April 30, 2024 with the Office of the Secretary of the 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 Camden Board of Directors website, under Governing Boards.

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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 25, 2024 MEETING

Dr. Dougherty called attention to the minutes of the January 25, 2024 meeting that were distributed to the Board and asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes.

Receiving no objections, Dr. Dougherty called for a motion, which was seconded, and asked if there was any discussion. Hearing none, the minutes were approved.

CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Chancellor Tillis provided his report to the Board regarding the status of the campus, including updates on enrollment; the budget; the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan; the Chancellor's "15-in-5" initiatives; centennial celebration planning; internationalization initiatives; faculty, student, and alumni achievements; *U.S. News & World Report* rankings; and the Cooper Street Gateway Project.

Chancellor Tillis began his report with an update on new student enrollment for spring 2024. There was a year-to-date increase of 9.6% in new students, with increases in both graduate and transfer students and a slight decrease in FTIC (first time in college) students. Despite a continued downward trend in undergraduate enrollment, as has been the case at the university and across the broader higher-education landscape since the pandemic, a surge of interest and activity in graduate and business programs has led to an increase in the overall enrollment for these programs.

An important change to note with fall 2024 applications is that Rutgers–Camden – in step with Rutgers University as a whole – is now a member of the Common Application. This explains, in part, the increase of more than 180% in undergraduate applications. Since the Common App has made it easier for prospective students to apply to Rutgers–Camden, the enrollment management team is keeping track of the trends and how they will affect bottom-line numbers. Chancellor Tillis expressed confidence that the Common App will have a positive effect on overall enrollment, making Rutgers–Camden more accessible to those who would not have taken part in the application process without this option.

Chancellor Tillis discussed the broader financial picture at Rutgers–Camden, noting that revenue remains steady thanks to the increasing enrollment, specifically in graduate students. Reductions in state appropriations to Rutgers underscore the need to focus on student enrollment, international recruitment, and alternative sources of revenue.

Chancellor Tillis highlighted the university's revenue sources, reporting that 71% stemmed from student population and sponsored awards, while federal and state aid constituted the remaining combined 29%. This breakdown illustrates the strength of Rutgers–Camden's academic and research enterprises, and their pivotal role in sustaining the university's financial health.

Chancellor Tillis shared examples of how the five strategic pillars that frame the Rutgers–Camden 2023-2028 Strategic Plan are being put into practice. The Memphis Pipeline Project continues to flourish and expand as new undergraduates prepare to make their way to Rutgers–Camden. Part of nurturing the beloved Camden community means maintaining a vibrant and accessible campus, so Phase I of a ten-year master plan for the maintenance and improvement of the university's facilities and grounds has begun. Additionally, the newly acquired GivePulse

software will enable Rutgers–Camden to better work with its community partners while opening more access to student internships.

Chancellor Tillis presented an update on the continued rollout and success of his “15-in-5” initiatives. The rollout of all 15 initiatives, and the latest round of grant and award applications, saw robust participation from faculty, staff, and students. Ph.D. candidate Joseph Abbas is the latest recipient of the Chancellor’s Grant for Independent Student Research, which he is using to develop an app that contributes to student wellness at Rutgers–Camden. Through a combination of two strategic Chancellor’s initiatives, students participating in Learning Abroad experiences and in need of financial assistance had the entirety of their expenses covered by Rutgers–Camden.

Rutgers University–Camden will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2026. Centennial Committee Chairs Margaret Marsh and Jim Rhodes have put out a call for members of the steering committee and plans for centennial events will continue to solidify throughout this year and next.

The impact of internationalism – the fifth and final pillar of the Strategic Plan – on the Rutgers–Camden campus culture and its efforts to forge partnerships was discussed. Recently, Chancellor Tillis and fellow Rutgers–Camden leaders traveled to Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, and Brazil. Collaborations with the university’s partners abroad allow international students to receive a world-class Rutgers education; they also made available international opportunities for Rutgers–Camden students and faculty. The recent 27th journey to South Africa over spring break again provided students with transformative experiences engaging South Africa’s rich culture and history. In February, 12 students from a partner university in Paraguay – Universidad Nacional de Asunción – traveled to Rutgers–Camden, where they experienced campus life, connected with fellow students and faculty on emerging research opportunities, and witnessed what for many was the first snowfall of their lives. In addition, the School of Business hosted International Professor of Practice Suzanne Ackerman, the former chairperson of Pick n Pay, one of South Africa’s leading retailers, and an instrumental force in the opposition to, and ultimate end of, South African apartheid. In her numerous speaking engagements and mentoring sessions during her time on campus, Ms. Ackerman imparted her motto to our students: “Doing good is good business.” Rutgers–Camden faculty are making their global mark through their work. Board of Governors Professor of Law Dennis Patterson recently visited with faculty at the University of Graz in Austria, continuing more than three decades of partnership between the institutions.

Chancellor Tillis emphasized the achievements of faculty and staff at Rutgers University–Camden by spotlighting the accomplishments of Prof. Lauren Grodstein, Prof. Kimberlee Moran, Prof. Gregory Pardlo, and Dr. Benedetto Piccoli. These four exceptional individuals provided a snapshot of the ways in which Rutgers–Camden faculty exemplify Rutgers excellence through their research and creative activity.

Chancellor Tillis called attention to a sampling of student achievements that demonstrates the positive impact of Rutgers–Camden. Mr. Paul Boyd was named Rutgers–Camden’s first-ever Truman Scholar. A junior philosophy major, Mr. Boyd was chosen from more than 700

applicants to join a select group of just 60 Truman Scholars nationwide. He has become an inspiration to many students on campus. Mr. Montrell Sanders, a doctoral student in public affairs, is a 2024 Fulbright finalist. Should he choose to accept this prestigious opportunity, he will travel to Fiji, conducting research that would form the basis for his dissertation. The Chancellor congratulated Mr. Sanders for the hard work and academic excellence that availed to him this exceptional opportunity. First-year chemistry student Sophia Mora is participating in a NASA internship made possible by the New Jersey Space Grant Consortium. In athletics, men's basketball guard Cameron Downs was named to the All-NJAC Second Team, and women's forward Razzirah Blocker tallied her 1,000th career point this past season.

Chancellor Tillis shared how some outstanding alumni are growing their Rutgers–Camden legacies beyond our campus. School of Business alumna Lisa Hou recently was promoted to the rank of Major General as she continues her distinguished service in the state's department of military and veteran affairs. Mr. Lawrence Luongo Jr. of Rutgers Law in Camden was recently named a municipal court judge for Winslow Township. School of Nursing graduate Monet McMichael, with more than 2.9 million TikTok followers, was named among *Forbes'* top creators for 2023.

Chancellor Tillis discussed Rutgers–Camden's standing in the *U.S. News and World Report* rankings. He reported that these are some of the highest rankings that Rutgers–Camden has ever earned, and shared his pride that the campus has achieved the top 50 in the Best Public Universities category. The university's standing as a premier destination for student veterans continued to rise, as did rankings for the doctor of nursing practice and public affairs programs. Chancellor Tillis expressed gratitude that Rutgers–Camden's faculty, staff, students, and alumni are receiving well-deserved recognition from its peer institutions.

Chancellor Tillis concluded his presentation by thanking the members of the Board of Directors and inviting them to join him on May 9 for the groundbreaking ceremony for the Cooper Street Gateway Project.

FOCUS ON FUNDRAISING

Chancellor Tillis introduced Mr. Chuck Wright, vice chancellor for advancement, to make a presentation focusing on recent fundraising initiatives.

Mr. Wright presented the five-year fundraising history of the university. He explained that the goal for FY24 was \$4.5 million and Rutgers–Camden had already taken in \$10.28 million as of April 26. This is a 31.5% increase from the prior fiscal year and represents the highest dollars raised in the past 10 years. Mr. Wright gave a breakdown of the sources and types of funding.

Mr. Wright also presented an update on the university's alumni engagement. The number of total engaged alumni is 26,084, which represents 45% of the university's contactable alumni. He explained that they are working on increasing the number of email addresses collected. He discussed the variety of ways alumni can be engaged. They can “connect” (open email, respond to something), “give” (make philanthropic donations), “go” (participate in something experiential), or “help” (volunteer with associations, at events, etc.).

In conclusion, Mr. Wright explained that the university has done well this year and is in a great position in terms of development and engagement. His team is preparing for FY2025, with the aim of supporting the Strategic Plan of Rutgers University–Camden using tools to expand engagement and bring alumni into the mission of the university.

FOCUS ON RESEARCH

Chancellor Tillis called on Dr. Thomas Risch, vice chancellor for research, to make a presentation focusing on recent research accomplishments.

Dr. Risch discussed the growth in research and nature of that growth at Rutgers University–Camden. He pointed out that, although the number of awards is going down, the university’s faculty are focusing on bigger and more complex awards for which they are seeking help from the research office. The university is on track to exceed a 10% increase year over year as indicated in the Strategic Plan. He emphasized that this is part of an overall strong trend. Discussing the requests for total dollars, Dr. Risch emphasized that there has been a downward trend in the number of proposals, but this has not translated into a decrease in the value of proposals. He anticipates this growth in research to increase over the next several years. Although Rutgers–Camden is a relatively small campus, it is growing at a tremendous rate in terms of research expenditures.

Dr. Risch then framed this growth in terms of the university’s aspirations of moving from a Carnegie R2 status toward an R1 Research University. There are two aspects that are examined by Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education: research doctorates and research expenditures (Based on the National Science Foundation Survey of Higher Education Research and Development Expenditures [NSF HERD Data]). R2 Doctoral Universities with high research activity must have 20 or more research doctorates and \$5 million or more in research expenditures. R1 Doctoral Universities with very high research activity must have 70 or more research doctorates and \$50 million or more in research expenditures. For the 2025 classification, the higher of either of the following will be used: three-year average (2021, 2022, 2023) or the most recent single year (for Rutgers–Camden, this would be 2023). Dr. Risch used five-year projections based on growth rate to explain that if Rutgers–Camden continues at a 46% growth rate, it could achieve R1 status by 2028, and if the university continues a 31.3 % growth rate, it could achieve R1 status in this decade. This is very fast growth, especially without a medical school, expressed Dr. Risch.

Dr. Risch concluded his presentation by answering questions from Board members. Mr. MacDonald wanted to know if achieving R1 status was included in the Strategic Plan. Dr. Risch explained that, while the Strategic Plan called for a 10% growth in expenditures and total new awards, that projection was not as ambitious as what the university is actually experiencing. Mr. MacDonald also wanted to know if the ambitious goal of having 70 research doctorates by 2028 was possible. Dr. Risch explained that it is, especially considering Rutgers–Camden’s nursing program and new prevention science program which has not yet graduated students.

STUDENT SPEAKER

Chancellor Tillis introduced Mr. Boyd to speak about his 2024 Truman Scholarship.

Mr. Boyd extended his gratitude to the Board of Directors for extending the invitation to this meeting. He also thanked President Holloway, Chancellor Tillis, the administrative leadership, PTI staff at McGraw, the Hillel Club on campus, and the entire Rutgers community. Mr. Boyd said their support has been invaluable and that this achievement would not be possible without their support. With the official press release and the following flood of attention, his life has changed, and he knows he is up for the task.

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. Mr. Sepanic advised that any comments or questions from public attendees would be limited to items discussed during the meeting and to two minutes in length. No comments arose.

Dr. Dougherty thanked Mr. Matthew Brodsky for his service to the board and noted that he will graduate from Rutgers–Camden during commencement celebrations taking place May 14 through 16. Mr. Brodsky expressed his excitement for the incoming SGA president and his gratitude for the opportunity to serve with the Board of Directors this academic year.

Dr. Rabinowitz called the Board's attention to the next round of the Presidential Employee Excellence Recognition Program. Nominations are due by July 15, and Dr. Rabinowitz encouraged deans and members of the community to look at the website and make nominations so that Rutgers–Camden has an even better recognition in the next round.

ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Dougherty asked if there was any further business. Hearing none, he called for a motion and a second to adjourn the meeting.

Minutes prepared and submitted by,

Katharine Travaline
Rutgers University–Camden Chancellor's Office