



# Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

**BOT approved 09.21.2022**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**September 8, 2021  
10:30 a.m. – 11:45 a.m.**

### **Florida Polytechnic University WEBEX TELE-CONFERENCE MEETING**

#### **I. Call to Order**

Committee Chair Gary Wendt called the Strategic Planning Committee meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

#### **II. Roll Call**

Michele Rush called the roll: Committee Chair Gary Wendt, Committee Vice Chair Earl Sasser, Trustee Ala' J. Alnaser, Trustee Beth Kigel, and Trustee Lyn Stanfield, were present (Quorum).

Other Trustees present: Chair Cliff Otto, Vice Chair Mark Bostick, Trustee Samantha Ashby, Trustee Laine Powell, and Trustee Bob Stork.

Staff present: President Randy Avent, Provost Terry Parker, Ms. Gina DeIulio, Mrs. Kathy Bowman, Mr. David Calhoun, Ms. Melaine Schmiz, Mr. Alex Landback, Mr. David Blanton, Mrs. Kris Wharton, and Mrs. Kim Abels.

#### **III. Public Comment**

There were no requests received for public comment.

#### **IV. Approval of the April 26, 2021 Minutes**

**Trustee Beth Kigel made a motion to approve the Strategic Planning Committee meeting minutes of the April 26, 2021. Trustee Earl Sasser seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **V. 2020-2022 Work Plan Review**

Committee Chair Gary Wendt asked if there were any changes to the 2020-2022 Strategic Planning Committee Work Plan and none were offered.

#### **VI. FIPR Institute Annual Report**

Dr. Terry Parker and Dr. James Mennie presented the Florida Institute of Phosphate Research (FIPR) Annual Report. The FIPR Mission is to support research and development that benefits the Phosphate Industry and the environmental concerns of the state. FIPR is now working in four focus areas, which include:

- Mineral processing/Rare Earth elements
- Phosphogypsum (PG) Stacks "Smart Road Project"
- Water
- Phosphatic Clay

The Smart Road project is a test of Stack Material as a replacement of limerock road base, which is currently used for roads in Florida. There is over 1 billion tons of phosphogypsum material in the "stacks" in Florida. The material is regulated, and use is prohibited in the US, therefore use of PG requires a regulatory waiver or reversal of EPA ruling. Currently, research use is allowed up to 7,000 pounds.

Using this material for roads is an economically viable alternative to limerock as well as a mechanism to use the waste stacks that are an environmental and economic liability.

Trustee Earl Sasser inquired as to what the phosphogypsum was mixed with to make the material stronger than the limerock. Dr. James Mennie explained that the phosphogypsum was mixed with a proprietary additive, for which Florida Poly is seeking a patent. Trustee Sasser further questioned if this would become a potential P3 opportunity, to which Dr. Mennie replied this is a licensing opportunity for Florida Polytechnic University.

Studies have shown that the mechanical properties of PG can be up to three times stronger. The FIPR parking lot is paved with the phosphogypsum material as a base next to "standard" construction parking lot and are instrumented to monitor performance. In the coming year, FIPR will work with the FDOT to determine the next steps.

The water focus area is new to FIPR. Phosphate industry effects on water are a critical environmental problem and to date, FIPR hasn't focused on water. To build capacity in this area, FIPR has hired three new faculty for environmental engineering.

In the coming year, FIPR will open one to three new projects with these new faculty on the Florida Poly campus with collaboration from the Department of Environmental Protection and Mosaic.

Dr. Parker reported FIPR Laboratory Services revenue has increased by 29% from last year and is going strong. FIPR anticipates doubling laboratory services for this fiscal year over the prior fiscal year.

The Committee learned of two new federal contracts FIPR recently won:

- The Department of Energy (DOE) Rare Earth Elements (REE) award for \$150,000 to utilize non-coal-based feedstocks to produce a high purity source of rare earth elements.
- And for the eighth year, the FIPR Institute has applied for and been granted continuing funding from the Critical Materials Institute. The 2021-2022 grant is for \$230,000 for continued research on Rare Earth Elements extraction from phosphate processing streams.

## VII. Florida Equity Report and Presentation on Diversity

The next presentation was given by President Randy Avent on diversity across Florida Polytechnic University, including students and employees and was given to help introduce the Equity Report the committee will be asked to recommend approval to the Board of Trustees.

The Affirmative Action Plan provides a mechanism for evaluating diversity by comparing percentages at the University to the percentages available for admitting students or hiring

individuals. The Availability Analysis is used to highlight deficiencies. For example, in student gender diversity, female representation is down compared to availability; this could be attributed to a remote campus with a high male population as a likely factor.

Highlights of the presentation included the Florida Poly student success rate for retention and 6-year graduation rate. It was noted that Blacks perform strongly on student success metrics and females outperform males in retention. Florida Poly is stronger than national public averages for both blacks (69%) and Hispanics (75%) in this area.

Overall, the Boards of Trustees is expected to ensure that diversity, equity, and inclusion are priorities at Florida Poly and are incorporated into the university's strategic plan. The Board of Governors will also work through system level councils to track progress and obtain input and feedback. The Board of Governors will serve as a strong advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion to ensure that each university continually improves preparedness, performance, and sustainability.

Each university in the State University System of Florida is required to submit an annual equity report pursuant to Florida Board of Governors Regulation 2.003 Equity and Access using a mandated BOG reporting format. The regulation states that discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, or any other basis protected by applicable state and federal law against a covered individual at any university is prohibited.

The report summarizes the diversity of Florida Poly's student body, faculty, and staff as well as trends. In addition, the equity report discusses efforts the University is taking to make education at the Florida Poly accessible to persons of all groups. Acceptable efforts include conducting targeted outreach and recruitment aimed at inclusion, creating training programs to increase capacity of diverse cohorts, and taking lawful action to remedy underutilization.

Trustee Beth Kigel asked if there was any way to leverage Florida Polytechnic University faculty to help bring student diversity numbers up. President Avent responded that he would discuss this with Vice Provost of Admissions Ben Matthew Corpus.

Trustee Kigel felt that embracing the faculty's significant other/spouse and their families into the Polk County community could be further enhanced with partnerships with local Economic Development Councils.

**Trustee Earl Sasser made a motion to recommend approval of the 2021 Florida Equity Report to the Board of Trustees. Trustee Beth Kigel seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.**

#### VIII. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 11:47am.