



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee Meeting Agenda

November 10, 2025
11:00 a – 11:45 a

Florida Polytechnic University
VIRTUAL VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Dial in: 1-863-225-2351 | Conference ID: 448 415 021#

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Beth Kigel, Chair
Eliot Peace

Sumanth Neelam, Vice Chair
Colby Manrodt

Jesse Panuccio

MEETING AGENDA

- | | | |
|-------|---|--|
| I. | Call to Order | Beth Kigel,
Chair |
| II. | Roll Call | Kristen Wharton,
Corporate Secretary |
| III. | Public Comment | Beth Kigel |
| IV. | Approval of the September 18, 2025, Minutes
<i>*Action Required*</i> | Beth Kigel |
| V. | 2025-2026 Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Work Plan | Beth Kigel |
| VI. | External Relations and Economic Development | Kelli Stargel
Vice President,
Strategic Initiatives,
Development, &
External Relations |
| VII. | Government Relations | Kelli Stargel |
| VIII. | Closing Remarks and Adjournment | Beth Kigel |



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Strategic Initiatives and External Relations **DRAFT** Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2025
2:45 p – 3:45 p

Florida Polytechnic University
Virtual via Microsoft Teams

I. Call to Order

Committee Chair Beth Kigel called the Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee meeting to order at 2:45 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Kristen Wharton called the roll: Committee Chair Beth Kigel, Committee Vice Chair Sumanth Neelam, Trustee Eliot Peace, Trustee Colby Manrodt, and Trustee Jesse Panuccio were present (Quorum).

Committee members not present: n/a

Other Trustees Present: Trustee Edwar Romero-Ramirez and Trustee Sid Theis

Staff Present: President Devin Stephenson, Provost Brad Thiessen, Dr. Tanner McKnight, David Fugett, David Blanton, Cole Allen, Kelli Stargel, Melaine Schmiz, and Kristen Wharton

III. Public Comment

There were no requests received for public comment.

IV. Charter

Committee Chair Beth Kigel reviewed the draft Committee Charter. Its purpose states:

The Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee is a standing committee of the Board of Trustees to support the University's mission and long-term success by providing strategic guidance and informed recommendations regarding the University's key strategic initiatives, external partnerships, and institutional reputation. The Committee will assist the Board in identifying emerging opportunities and challenges in higher education, evaluating long-range plans, and strengthening the University's engagement with government, industry, alumni, and the broader community.

There was no further discussion on this item.

Trustee Sumanth Neelam made a motion to recommend approval of the Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee Charter to the Board of Trustees. Trustee Jesse Panuccio seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

V. Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Report

Kelli Stargel, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, Development, and External Relations, provided Committee members with an overview of recent activities within her division. Her presentation focused on three key areas of external engagement:

1. Economic Development
2. Government and International Relations
3. Industry Partnerships

She provided representative examples within each category and introduced a four-stage engagement model to guide relationship development and strategic discussions:

1. Introduction – Initial contact initiated by the Florida Poly team.
2. Exploration – Follow-up meetings to identify potential areas of synergy.
3. Engagement – Concrete discussions leading to a preliminary plan for collaboration.
4. Partnership – Formal agreement executed between the University and the external entity.

Stargel illustrated how various companies currently align within these stages and described Florida Poly's efforts to advance each relationship strategically. She also introduced a proposed framework to guide involvement by University leadership and the Board of Trustees. Additionally, she emphasized the importance of discretion in public meetings, noting the need to withhold company names during early-stage discussions.

Chair Kigel added that the University's strategic plan serves as the guiding standard—or “litmus test”—for all external engagements. Even in the earliest stages of relationship-building, the administration ensures alignment with institutional goals and priorities.

VI. 2024-2026 Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Work Plan

Chair Kigel stated the new Committee needs to establish a Work Plan for the fiscal year. The Plan establishes the specific topics that will be discussed at each meeting throughout the year.

Trustee Colby Manrodt motioned to approve the 2025-2026 Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee Work Plan. Trustee Sumanth Neelam seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

IX. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kristen Wharton

Corporate Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Florida Polytechnic University
Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee
Board of Trustees
November 10, 2025

Subject: 2025-2026 Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee Work Plan

Proposed Committee Action

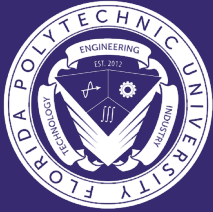
No action is required unless changes are requested.

Background Information

Committee Chair Beth Kigel will review the Committee's 2025-2026 Committee Work Plan.

Supporting Documentation: Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee Work Plan 2025-2026

Prepared by: Kristen Wharton, Corporate Secretary



Committee Work Plan

Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee Work Plan 2025-2026

SEPTEMBER

- Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee Charter *(review and approve every two years)*
- Strategic Initiatives
 - Receive updates on university strategic plan initiatives related to external relations
- External Relations and Economic Development
 - Review progress on key industry partnerships and identify opportunities for expansion
- Government Relations
 - Preview state and federal legislative and funding priorities for the upcoming sessions

NOVEMBER

- External Relations and Economic Development
 - Status report on corporate and industry partnerships, and economic development involvement
- Government Relations
 - Report status of legislative committee meetings
 - Review updates on federal funding requests and appropriations process

FEBRUARY

- Strategic Initiatives
 - Review University initiatives with significant external impact (e.g., research park collaborations, possible program funding)
- External Relations and Economic Development
 - Discuss advancement of new partnerships and external collaborations
- Government Relations
 - Assess progress in the legislative session (state and federal)
 - Review alignment of funding results with the university strategic priorities

JUNE

- Strategic Initiatives
 - Conduct an annual review of committee performance against the work plan
 - Recommend updates and goals for the next academic year
- Government Relations
 - Final report on state legislative session outcomes
 - Receive update on federal appropriations and grants status
 - Discuss future goals
- External Relations and Economic Development
 - Review fiscal year outcomes for partnerships and set priorities for the coming year

Florida Polytechnic University
Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee
Board of Trustees
November 10, 2025

Subject: External Relations and Economic Development

Proposed Committee Action

Information only – no action required.

Background Information

Vice President Kelli Stargel will present an update on the University's ongoing engagement with corporate and industry partners, highlighting key initiatives and progress to date. She will also share insights into the University's active role in advancing regional and statewide economic development.

Supporting Documentation: N/A

Prepared by: Kelli Stargel, Vice President, Strategic Initiatives, Development, and External Relations

Florida Polytechnic University
Strategic Initiatives and External Relations Committee
Board of Trustees
November 10, 2025

Subject: Government Relations

Proposed Committee Action

Information only – no action required.

Background Information

Vice President Kelli Stargel will deliver a comprehensive update on recent Legislative Committee meetings and related activities in Tallahassee. The status of Florida Poly's legislative funding initiatives will be reviewed, including their position within the state legislative process and any anticipated developments. Additionally, an overview of plans for Florida Poly Day at the Capitol will be presented.

An update will also be provided on the University's federal funding requests, outlining their progress within the appropriations process and identifying opportunities for continued advocacy and support.

Supporting Documentation: N/A

Prepared by: Kelli Stargel, Vice President, Strategic Initiatives, Development, and External Relations