MEMORANDUM

June 29, 2020

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Dr. Merryl H. Tisch, Chairman

SUBJECT: Appointment of SUNY Leadership Positions

Action Requested

The proposed resolution approves the appointment of leadership positions of the State University of New York.

Resolution

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Whereas on June 3, 2020, Chancellor Kristina M. Johnson was appointed President of Ohio State University, and will be stepping down, making it necessary to designate an individual to fulfill the responsibilities of the Office of the Chancellor; and

Whereas it is anticipated that a new Chancellor will be considered and appointed in the future by the Board of Trustees; and

Whereas in similar past transition periods such as this the Board of Trustees has designated a senior officer of the University as Officer-in-Charge to perform the duties of the Office of the Chancellor in addition to continuing duties otherwise assigned; and
Whereas it is imperative that, in addition to an Officer-in-Charge to direct the operations of the University, there is also clear leadership in our academic programs through appointment of a Chief Academic Officer; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer Robert Megna be appointed Officer-in-Charge effective immediately to serve until such time that a new Chancellor is appointed and takes office or that the Board takes other action with respect to the Office of the Chancellor; and be it further

Resolved that Dr. Tod A. Laursen, in addition to his prior-appointed role as Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor, be appointed Chief Academic Officer of the University effective immediately to serve until such time that a new Chancellor is appointed and takes office or that the Board takes other action with respect to the Office of the Chancellor; and be it further

Resolved that the following Senior Officers of the University be appointed to hold the following titles:

Eileen G. McLoughlin  Senior Vice Chancellor for Finance and Chief Financial Officer

Johanna Duncan-Portier  Senior Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges and the Education Pipeline

Robert Haelen  Senior Vice Chancellor for Capital Facilities & General Manager of the Construction Fund

Teresa Miller  Senior Vice Chancellor for Strategic Initiatives and Chief Diversity Officer

Sandra Casey  General Counsel-in-Charge
Paul N. Patton  Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Human Resources Officer

Dr. Jinliu Grace Wang  Senior Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development

Leo Rosales  Vice Chancellor for Press and Communications

Travis Proulx  Vice Chancellor of Government Affairs and Marketing

Stephanie Fargnoli  Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Health & Hospital Affairs

Jennifer M. Mero  Secretary to the Board of Trustees

**Background**

The State University of New York finds itself at a leadership transition. The current Chancellor, Kristina M. Johnson, has been appointed the incoming President of Ohio State University, and will be departing. However, the strong leadership team she leaves in place has proven adept, talented and full equipped to continue the great work of this University. As we face an uncertain future and tumultuous waters ahead, the Board is relieved to know that this highly-qualified and experienced group of leaders is firmly in place to guide us through difficult terrain.

At previous points in SUNY’s history, upon departure of the Chancellor, a senior officer of the University has been designated by the Board as Officer-in-Charge to fill the role and perform the duties of the Chancellor until a new Chancellor may be appointed and take office.

Robert Megna has served as Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer of SUNY for the past 3 years, skillfully directing the operations of the University. Prior to this role, he served as Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration of SUNY Stony Brook University.

He previously served as Executive Director of the New York State Thruway Authority and Canal Corporation, overseeing operations and finances, including the construction of the New NY Bridge to replace the Tappan Zee. Prior to joining the Thruway Authority, Bob served as Budget Director for the New York State Division of the Budget.
Under his leadership, New York State achieved its highest financial ratings in 40 years and the Division of Budget passed four on-time budgets for the first time since the 1970’s.

Mr. Megna earned a Master of Science in Economics from the London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London, and he received his B.A. in Economics and a Master of Public Affairs, both from Fordham University.

Dr. Tod Laursen has served as SUNY’s Provost for the past two years, leading the University through several expansive initiatives, including the creation of SUNY Online, developing general education program standards, and implementation of SUNY’s Seamless Transfer policy. Before joining SUNY, he served for eight years as the founding President of Khalifa University in Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Prior to becoming President of Khalifa University, Dr. Laursen was a member of the faculty of Duke University (USA), between the years of 1992 and 2010, during which time he had appointments in civil engineering, biomedical engineering, and mechanical engineering. He served as Chair of the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science from 2008-2010, and served as Senior Associate Dean for Education in the Pratt School of Engineering from 2003-2008. In the latter capacity, he had oversight responsibility for all undergraduate and graduate engineering programs at Duke.

Dr. Laursen earned his Ph.D. and M.Sc. postgraduate degrees in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University and a B.Sc. in the same subject from Oregon State University.