

MINUTES
Board of Trustees of Illinois State University
December 14, 2019

Jones: I will now call this meeting of the Board of Trustees of Illinois State University to order. I note for the record that notice of today's meeting was posted in accordance with the Illinois Open Meetings Act and that the public has been notified of the date, time, and location of this meeting.

Over the past few days, changes have been made to the agenda for this meeting. The resolution regarding an agreement with Connect Transit was added after the university and Connect Transit agreed to terms for an extension earlier this week.

Due to illness and schedule conflicts, three of the Trustees cannot be physically present for the meeting. The Trustees felt strongly that the entire Board should be present to participate in discussions about the president's bonus. Thus, the resolution on the president's bonus has been delayed to a future meeting.

For the record, I will note that Trustees Dobski, Donahue, and Louderback wish to participate by means of audio conference. In accordance with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act, a member not physically present at the meeting and participating through other means needs to state the reason they are prevented from physically attending, such as (1) personal illness or disability, (2) employment purposes, or (3) family or other emergency. If you are participating by audio conference, please state the reason following answering "here" when your name is read.

Board Secretary Louderback is not physically present today. Therefore, I have asked Trustee Rossmark to call the roll. Before Trustee Rossmark proceeds with the roll call, I want to remind everyone that in accordance with the Illinois Statute 5ILCS 120/7, if a quorum is physically present at the location of an open meeting, the majority of the Board may allow a member to attend the meeting by audio or video conference if the member is prevented from physically attending the meeting either because of physical illness, employment purposes, or a family or other emergency. If you are joining the meeting by audio conference, when your name is called, please indicate the reason for joining the meeting by this method. Trustee Rossmark, would you please call the roll.

The following members were present:

Trustee Bohn
Trustee Dobski
Trustee Donahue (participating via electronic media due to employment purposes)
Trustee Jones
Trustee Louderback (participating via electronic media due to personal illness)
Trustee Navarro
Trustee Rossmark
Trustee Aguilar

Rossmark: Chairperson Jones, we have a quorum.

Jones: Now, could I have a motion and a second to permit Trustees Donahue and Louderback to join us by audio conference to officially attend and participate in today's meeting? Trustee Aguilar so moved and was seconded by Trustee Rossmark.

Motion made, seconded, and votes recorded as all members voting aye.

Jones: Trustees Donahue and Louderback, you can now officially join and participate in this meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Jones: You have before you the revised agenda for today's meeting. Can I have a motion and a second to approve the agenda? The motion was made by Trustee Bohn and second by Trustee Navarro.

Motion made, seconded, and vote recorded as all members voting aye.

Jones: The agenda is approved.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jones: Next on the Agenda is Public Comment. We have several who have indicated an interest in making public comments to the Board today. In accordance with the policy, the Board of Trustees will allow up to 30 minutes in total for public comment and questions during a public meeting. An individual speaker is permitted five minutes for his or her presentation. If more than two persons wish to speak on a single item, it is recommended they choose one person to speak for them. The Board of Trustees will accept copies of speakers' presentations, questions, and other relevant written materials. When appropriate, the Board of Trustees will provide a response to the speaker's questions within a reasonable amount of time.

At this time, I invite Trevor Rickerd to come forward to address the Board. We do not have a podium today, so you may speak from where you are standing or sitting.

Rickerd: Thank you. So, I have a statement that I would like to deliver myself; and near the end of my statement, I also have a written statement that a graduate worker, who would like to remain anonymous, wanted to deliver here today but could not be in attendance.

Jones: I would just ask that you please also be mindful of the five-minute time limit since we have commencement going this week.

Rickerd: Yes, ma'am.

Jones: Thank you.

Rickerd: My name is Trevor Ricard. I'm a fourth-year PhD candidate in the School of Biological Sciences and an active member of the Illinois State University Graduate Workers Union. We are here today to express our discontent with our economic status as workers, to point out that we are aware that the university has the sustainable means to help alleviate our issues, and to stand in solidarity with the AFSCME union on campus, pushing for fair contracts as we are. In regard to the Graduate Workers Union, we are aware that the Board of Trustees is not a negotiating body with the campus unions, but you do have control over economic issues regarding our work.

For example, this Board has control over fee rates, tuition rates, and the ability to approve or deny expenses and line items that the university will invest in. We are aware that this Board has consistently voted to raise mandatory fees and tuition costs over the past couple of years. For graduate workers at the university, these fee raises are effectively pay cuts. We are aware that a 2% raise was given a few years back to some departments on campus, but that this raise was also coupled with a fee hike that outpaced that raise—again, effectively, a pay cut. We are aware when the university raises fees, raises tuition rates, garners the highest population of incoming undergraduates to pay these higher rates, when our work yield gets multi-million-dollar grants—which the university has a portion of it appropriated—and when the university gains over \$160 million in a donation campaign. We are aware that the university's general reserves are doing well, and sustainably so. And that's a good thing. We agree. This is a good thing. It means that you should have the means to pay your workers a fair wage and not need to bleed dry the lowest paid workers in the institution.

I want to believe that this administration cares about its workers. I want to believe that this administration recognizes that the only reason this whole system works is because we do. Our labor begets the capital that runs this institution. But I know that conditions are difficult for workers currently.

In my department, mandatory fees for masters workers amount to over 20% of their monthly wages—and we're the highest paid department on campus, mind you. For other departments, for every other department on campus, things are much more stringent. And I don't want to speak, myself, on their conditions. I would rather they have the

ability to speak themselves and have their own voice, but I did bring with me, like I said, a statement from another graduate worker, who wants to remain anonymous, about their feelings they wanted to share here at this meeting.

So, this is a letter from a graduate worker titled, “Dear ISU: A Love Letter.” ISU, I love you. I really do. But lately I have been making a lot of excuses for what you are doing to me, and it’s not good that these excuses are eerily, frighteningly similar to what an abused victim used to make for the sake of their abusers. This relationship that we have, however, is not abused, and it will never have the same traumatic implications that abuse has on its victims. So, please do not misconstrue my words as downplaying or equalizing our relationship to abuse. It is also probably not healthy that I already anticipated your potential twisting of my words—like I said, eerily similar to abuse. And that’s the truth. Our relationship is not healthy.

Our relationship is not healthy when I have to constantly reason why I don’t deserve a livable wage working for you. I shouldn’t have to justify being paid \$400 a month while trying to pay \$500 in mandatory fees per month that you charge me. Only recently have I realized that I, too, deserve to eat and buy groceries and not constantly worry about whether I can still go to my classes next semester. Funny enough, I thought it was me. I thought I wasn’t good enough while working on both my graduate classes and my job you expect me to complete. But that’s not true, and we both know it.

I am worthy for more. My labor is worthy for a basic-need wage, as do other graduate workers. I love you so much that only recently I have remembered that other institutions wanted me, and I chose you just as much as you have chosen me. And you might say, “Well, you chose this, so you have to live with it.” That’s valid. But do you really prefer the alternative of me leaving this relationship? If the answer is yes, I will leave. I’m worth more. I deserve more, so I’ll find something better. I love you, but love shouldn’t hurt. I hope our relationship becomes healthy once again. I shouldn’t struggle this much to love you. Thank you.

Jones: Thank you, Mr. Rickerd. If you have any written materials, you may leave them with Brent Paterson who is there. He will provide copies to the Trustees. At this time, I invite Renee Nestler to come forward to address the Board. Again, you may speak from where you are standing or sitting.

Nestler: I’m right here. I am Renee Nestler, the staff representative for AFSCME Council 31. I’m here today on behalf of AFSCME members in locals 1110, 3236, and in support of the Grad Workers Union. Earlier this week, we noticed that the president’s bonus was on today’s agenda. We already knew that it was unusual that it was not on the October regular meeting agendas as in past years. Then to have it show up in a special meeting on graduation Saturday when most students are gone, and not a regular work day, seemed odd. Regardless, we made plans to be here. We now know why it was recently removed from the agenda, but also we understand the bonus is supposed to be approved by 12/31 of this year.

We want to remind you that all of our members are still in bargaining, and negotiations are being drawn out because the university is unwilling to give our members fair wages, respect for the work that they do, and give them credit for their longevity at the university. Local 3236 clerical have been without a contract for 18 months now. The university has been unwilling to make fixes to a wage structure that allows new employees to be hired in at a higher wage than employees that have been here for years. Some proposals that would make fixes to the wage structure would cost the university nothing, but those proposals have been rejected. Saying that this has been frustrating is an understatement.

Local 3236 healthcare and local 1110 have also been in bargaining and not been able to agree on what we believe to be fair wages, and it is what keeps us at the table. All of our negotiations could have been wrapped up months ago if the university was willing to give our members increases that are greater than the cost of living that gobble up the increase and often exceeds their increase. Many of our members have second jobs to make ends meet, which is where some of our members are right now—at their second jobs.

On today’s agenda is a resolution for the Star Ginger food venue. Snack bar attendant, a classification represented by local 1110 will be working at this venue. They will be starting at \$12 an hour. This is an improvement on the \$11.03 they were making several months ago. We had to fight for higher wages because employees can’t live on these wages, especially when this is not 12-month work. This classification experiences academic layoffs as some

of our other members do, too. This is also a high-turnover classification. Turnover is not uncommon for positions in this wage range.

While we are bargaining for a living wage for our members, we have been told more than once that the work they do is not worth a living wage, and our bargaining committee has been told not to take it personally. How does one do that, especially when workers are trying to care for their families on these wages? It is perfectly clear to us the only reason progress is being made on the lowest paid classifications at the university is because of the \$15 minimum wage coming, otherwise the university wasn't going to give more than the standard 2% that has been given since 2014. This continues to be disappointing, given the great university our members work hard for everyday on the front line.

ISU has had the highest freshman class in 30 years, high levels of fundraising, and continued construction on renovations and remodeling. The president awaits a bonus equivalent to 13% of his salary, while our members' is still often only 2. Please do something to address this so we can all reach fair contracts. Thank you.

Jones: Thank you, Ms. Nestler. If you have any written materials, you may leave them with Brent Paterson, and he will provide us with copies. At this time, I invite Trish Gudeman to come forward to address the Board. Again, you may speak from wherever you are sitting or standing.

Gudeman: Yes, I am Trish Gudeman, and I appreciate the opportunity again to speak. I'm not going to reiterate what's been said already. I did create a survey for our unit members and, just to distinguish, they are not full members. They are just part of the union, so they are part of our clerical union. It's about 165 of us, and I had about a third participation in it. I will leave that with the Board today. It highlights who we are and what our struggle is each day. It highlights the fact that half of those who participated, which is 49 people anyway, are heads of households. They're single. And it's hard for those, especially, to rely on what we make here at ISU. So many of those have second jobs, strict budgeting, and it's all highlighted in here what they have to do to make ends meet.

Some people say, "I don't eat out or get presents for the holidays or birthdays," "strict budgeting," "second job," "my husband is on disability, so we rely on that." Some of them don't have a vehicle, and they go second-hand shopping. So it's kind of disheartening to hear how people are struggling. Do they go forth on home repairs and skip meals? Some people are really having a hard time. So, again, I did want to reiterate that we make little.

Also, our issues are longstanding regarding just respect for our positions here at ISU, that we've been here for years, and yet we are making less than people that come in new, and that's a real struggle. We've been fighting this at the table for over a year now. If you look at the table, we've come by leaps and bounds while ISU just kind of goes minimally. We have come past halfway. I'm kind of ashamed at how far we come at the table, and ISU just kind of does a little dance about 2%, and that's all their willing to do. We have so many more issues that need to be addressed. And I'm here today to beg of you again to please take an interest in our issues. I know we've been told that's not your position. You rely on HR and how we do bargaining at the table, but it's just not happening.

And so we ask that you would endorse our proposal that we last put forward. If you want to meet with us, we can discuss it. We've asked for that as well, to have a little more of a conversation. We ask just that you would listen and put a caring ear to our concerns and that we could get this last proposal accepted or tweaked just a little bit to finally have resolution after a year of fighting. I will leave these things for your review. Thank you again for your time.

Jones: Thank you, Ms. Gudeman. I'm sorry, if you're on via the conference bridge, can you please make sure you're muted, if you're not speaking? Thank you, because we're getting some feedback. At this time, I invite Allan Axelrod to come forward to address the Board.

Axelrod: Thank you. So, my name is Allan Axelrod. I am an organizer for the Graduate Employees' Organization Solidarity Committee at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. I'm a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, I'm managing a congressional campaign, and I've got a track record that, I think, should be paid attention to, not in terms of my credentials but in terms of the experiences at other institutions and how they apply here.

Back in 2018, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, through a series of systemic reasons, demonstrated tone deafness when grad workers were saying education should be for all, not just the wealthy. Graduate workers often have student debt. They should not go further into debt when trying to further their education and work for the institution that could cause them to go into further debt. That is wrong. That is why the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Graduate Employees' Organization went on strike, and they won, protecting tuition waivers. That was demonstrated then and holds up now to be a strike-able issue.

The University of Illinois Chicago Graduate Employees' Organization this past spring went on strike after a series of systemic issues caused the tone deafness that made it so that the administration was arguing that it was not acceptable for them to negotiate on fees. In fact, it was not only acceptable it was a strike-able issue. They won an increase in their salary to offset the increased burden of fees. That is something that they won that we supported.

In Kankakee, the National Education Association's local there watched their administration give themselves raise after raise after raise, but not one raise for the teachers. In fact, it was so protracted that it wasn't until the state law that goes into effect January 1, 2020, that they will actually receive that raise, and it comes from systemic issues that result in skewed prioritization.

The Decatur Federation of Teaching Assistants went on strike barely two months ago. Not only were the systemic issues there ever present, they were worse, and I hope that they are the worst of the worst. There, their health insurance as well as their life insurance was stripped away from them to force them to come back to work. Is that what a supportive community does?

So, when we talk about what's going on at Illinois State University with their graduate employees and the AFSCME local, watching investment after investment go to things other than trying to make the people who make this university worth coming to stable economically, they feel hurt. Part of the systemic issues that cause this repeated interaction is earmarking of university donations. There are a ton of things that university donations are earmarked for, but how many of them are earmarked for the university workers so that there is a fund to support them when budgets fall short, so that there is a fund to show that the university is committed to providing cost-of-living adjustments so that there is not the chronic fear which also results in an increased overrepresentation of mental health issues? Graduate employees have a 30% overrepresentation of mental health issues relative to the rest of the country. These are related things.

So, please, rigorously analyze the systemic interactions and communications that have led to this point, to where we are spending a Saturday talking to you about this as opposed to celebrating graduation. Thank you.

Jones: Thank you, Mr. Axelrod. If you have any materials, please leave them with Brent Paterson. At this time, I invite Karla Bailey-Smith to come forward to address the Board.

Bailey-Smith: Good morning. My name is Karla Bailey-Smith. I am here primarily as a resident of Bloomington-Normal and a concerned citizen. I am also running for State Representative against Keith Summer, who does not have a good voting record for supporting positive educational issues.

I am here to let everybody know that I stand with unions. I definitely stand with the graduate unions. I went to the University of Illinois, and I was a graduate assistant; and from '90 to '93, my graduate assistantship paid my rent. I had enough money for food, and I had no additional fees. So, times have changed. We also know that wages have not kept up with cost of living.

And, as someone with a master's degree who earns less than \$50,000 a year, the idea that a university president would be entitled to a \$50,000 bonus boggles my mind, as a human being trying to earn a living right here in Bloomington-Normal. And the idea that a board of Bloomington-Normal residents would approve a \$50,000 bonus without also taking care of your graduate assistants and your students is also unconscionable.

I urge all of you to think about yourselves as a student. Think about yourselves trying to put yourselves through school. Think about what it was like those first few years after you graduated from wherever you've graduated, and

getting into the workforce and trying to earn a living and trying to pay for everything. Remember what that felt like as you make your decisions going forward. Thank you.

Jones: Thank you, Ms. Bailey-Smith. If you have any materials, you can leave them with Brent Paterson. At this time, I invite Cecelia Long to come forward to address the Board.

Long: Hi. My name is Cecelia. I graduated from ISU in 2018. I'm a two-time graduate of ISU and alumni of this university. I grew up three hours north of here in a small rural town and faced a lot of obstacles going along with being poor. I remember the first time stepping onto this campus, seeing the vibrant quad and beautiful buildings, this feeling of being in a place full of resources, a place I had never known. I thought I'd finally have an opportunity to overcome poverty. I was wrong.

There were times where I had to choose between paying for my rent and getting groceries and paying for my student fees. Through college, I worked two to three jobs at a time so I could continue to go to school. I didn't have any family support to turn to; and in 2016, I had excelled at this university and loved having a sense of purpose and having a safe space to learn. I worked my ass off to get a 4.0 to qualify for scholarships. Even with all this effort, I was close to dropping out.

I was only able to continue school because my boss in the financial aid department knew my situation and found another grant. I was lucky. But not other people have that opportunity. For the university to continue to prioritize its own financial investments and padding upper administrative salaries over insuring that students can have basic needs met is ridiculous.

I would like to ask you, what is the point of this university without students? The heart of this institution, the values that this institution proclaims is for students to have a place to learn and exceed and go beyond what they started at. So I ask you to consider what this place means without students. Thank you.

Jones: Thank you, Ms. Long. If you have any materials, please leave them with Brent Paterson. This addresses all of the people who signed up for Public Comment today. I would like to thank you all for showing up today, for saying what you had to say for us today, also those who came out to support.

RESOLUTIONS

Jones: Now, in the interest of time, because we do have a small window of time before the next commencement ceremony, we're going to move directly to the resolutions on the agenda. President Dietz, you may proceed with presenting the resolutions.

Dietz: Thank you, Chair Jones. There are two resolutions to present for consideration before the Board this morning.

Resolution 2019.10/34 Bone Student Center Food Venue Construction Authorization

Dietz: An Asian cuisine concept was identified as desirable by students, faculty, and staff in the plan for retail dining options to be included in the Bone Student Center revitalization. Event Management, Dining, and Hospitality has contracted with and obtained a franchise to operate Star Ginger, which is an Asian Grill and Noodle Bar, in the Bone Student Center. This resolution authorizes a capital project for construction of the Star Ginger Asian Grill and Noodle Bar to specifications to a cost not to exceed \$1.3 million. The cost is based upon the accepted bids from contractors to complete the work to university and Star Ginger specifications, and I ask for your approval of this resolution.

Jones: I will now ask for a motion and a second to approve Resolution 2019.10/34. Do we have a motion? Trustee Bohn so moved and was seconded by Trustee Navarro.

Rossmark: I just want to confirm that the source of funding is bond revenue?

Dietz: Yes.

Rossmark: Okay. Thank you.

Jones: Any other discussion?

Navarro: What's the length of lease for Star Ginger? I don't recall seeing that.

Dietz: I would turn to Vice President Stephens...

Stephens: I may have. As far as the lease, we have to refer to Vice President Johnson to see...

Johnson: I'm going to refer to...

(laughter)

Johnson: I'm going to refer—we just talked about this right before the meeting— Yes.

Danielle Miller-Schuster: Similar to all of our agreements, it's a five-year lease with five-year renewal.

Jones: Any other questions?

Donahue: Chairman Jones, this is Rocky on the phone. Can you hear me?

Jones: Yes, we can, Trustee Donahue.

Donahue: Thank you. My question is, is this a one-time—is \$1.2 million a one-time capital cost or is this an additional operating cost we're going to be incurring with this?

Dietz: It's a one-time capital, and it's 1.3.

Donahue: 1.3, okay. Thank you.

Jones: Do we have anything from anyone else who's on the line?

Dobski: This is Trustee Dobski. No. I'm okay.

Jones: Trustee Dobski, you were not here when we called roll, so could you please just, for the record, state that you are joining via the call and the reason for your absence today?

Dobski: Yeah. The reason for my absence is because of a family situation that I couldn't make the meeting and that. So I am on this call.

Jones: Okay. Thank you, Trustee Dobski.

Aguilar: I'm just curious about the location. Sorry. Is it second floor?

Johnson: It will be second floor, yes. Right next to where the other new venue...

Trustee Aguilar: Is it Qdoba?

Johnson: Qdoba. In that area where those new...

Jones: I'm sorry, Trustee Aguilar. I didn't hear you. Any other questions, concerns, discussions?

Motion made, seconded, and votes recorded as all members voting aye.

Dietz: Thank you very much.

Resolution 2019.12/39 Connect Transit Contract Extension

Since 1998, the university has partnered with Connect Transit, whereas it was previously known at the time as the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System, to provide transportation services for students, faculty, and staff. Originally, the Bloomington-Normal Public Transit System provided a safe, after-hours transportation alternative for students. Since then, the partnership has expanded to provide students, faculty, and staff with a campus bus route with stops around the Quad, residence hall, Cardinal Court, and parking areas as well as access to regularly published Connect Transit public bus routes throughout the Bloomington-Normal community. Negotiations with Connect Transit began in February 2019 and have continued through the fall of 2019. An agreement to extend services for the period of January 1, 2020, through June 30, 2020, was finalized by both parties on December 11, 2019. This new agreement provides for the university to pay a monthly payment to Connect Transit of \$48,178 for the period of January 1, 2020, to June 30, 2020. The total funding requested over this six-month agreement is \$289,068. I would ask for your approval of this resolution.

Jones: I will now ask for a motion and a second to approve Resolution 2019.12/39. Do I have a motion? Trustee Navarro so moved and was seconded by Trustee Bohn.

Dobski: Is there— Hello?

Jones: Yes?

Dobski: What is the percentage of increase?

Dietz: 4 percent.

Dobski: Oh, 4 percent. And when was the last increase that the university took on from the transit?

Dietz: 2 percent.

Dobski: How long ago was that, President Dietz?

Stephens: Trustee Dobski, actually a couple of years ago we actually entered into a two-year agreement with Connect Transit right after I got here, and it was a two-year agreement that was allowed for a 2% increase each of those years. We entered into negotiations this summertime. We brought a Board Resolution while we've been negotiating to approve the 2 percent. At the October meeting we also, because we had not made strides with them, we also asked for permission for an extension of 2 percent. Thankfully, this past week we were able to reach an agreement for the next six months, but we had to agree to a 4 percent increase, which is why we are bringing the Resolution back to you.

Dietz: I might also—

Dobski: Okay. Thanks. Go ahead. I'm sorry.

Dietz: I might also mention that in addition to this is the part of the discussion that their board at Connect Transit will also be meeting on the 17th of December, and they've already had a press conference relative to this, indicating that their plan is to approve this on their side. This allows the university to approve it on our side so we can come to terms so the service wouldn't be interrupted starting January 1st.

Dobski: Okay. Thank you. Thank you, President Dietz.

Jones: And so this—again, just to clarify—this is a six-month extension to allow us to negotiate for further contract. Correct?

Stephens: An annual agreement. Our goal is to have annual agreements, and the next agreement we would be shooting for would be the July 1, 2020, through June 30 of the following year.

Jones: And the term we're looking for is just one-year agreements? Are there some sorts of renewal policies or is that what we're seeking, just for a one-year agreement?

Stephens: Well, traditionally, we have one. A few years ago, we were able to seek two, and we chose two because those parties agreed to a 2 percent increase. And so we're always looking for multiple-term years, as long as those rates are fair to both parties.

Jones: Okay. And just to—

Louderback: Thank you.

Jones: I'm sorry, who— Please announce yourself.

Louderback: Trustee Louderback.

Jones: Okay. Please proceed, Trustee Louderback.

Louderback: Well, is this our decision for six months or theirs? We keep doing six months, so I'd kind of like to get a little longer.

Dietz: Our desire is to go longer as well. This will give us a six-month timeframe to try to move in that direction.

Louderback: Thank you.

Jones: Just to clarify, it says when we initially started this transit, it was for students. Now it says it's for students, faculty, and staff. Do they pay anything for this or does the university pay all the responsibility for this contract so it's free for faculty, staff, and students?

Dietz: Our understanding is that it is currently but they don't want— I think the ridership would reflect that only about 3% of the ridership is faculty and staff, and that's something we will be looking at this next six months as well.

Jones: Okay. Yes. I'm sorry. Trustee Bohn?

Bohn: So, I request that we see the ridership for the last, say, two to three years, broken down by students, faculty, and staff, if that's at all possible before we meet again to discuss the next extension or agreement.

Stephens: If I may add, some statistics to you today I just brought for FY19, FY18. They're very similar. FY17, we actually, in the Connect Transit system, we did not have any, what they call "smart fare" boxes, to track; and so prior to FY17, I think, boy, it was just a manual clicker. As of the end of 2017, early 2018, we've now got a much more intelligent way of tracking, and so the ridership, let me give you a couple of key statistics, the total rides in FY19 for students and faculty and staff was 617,000 rides. If you break that down into unique riders, individuals themselves, 97 percent of those rides were done by students, 3 percent were done by faculty and staff. That's a little over 9,700 unique riders doing this, working with Connect Transit, not only doing what's called the Redbird Express, which essentially rides around campus, about 64 percent of the rides were on Redbird Express, and the remaining 36 percent are those that leave the community and go to other locations. So, we've got a lot of information, thankfully, over the last couple of years, with the smart technology we've added.

Dietz: And we'd be happy to provide that to you.

Jones: Trustee Aguilar.

Agular: With all their riders, do we have the percentage of, is the 617,000, that's just student—like, ISU, or?

Stephens: It is ISU. It is just— We only track or ask information about an ISU student or an ISU faculty where an ISU ID is swiped, not the entire ridership of the Connect Transit that serves the Town of Normal as well as the City of Bloomington.

Jones: Yes, Trustee Bohn.

Bohn: Would those numbers be available?

Stephens: We can certainly ask for that. I'm sure they are. Sure.

Bohn: Okay, thank you.

Rossmark: What's the status of Connect Transit with the other surrounding educational institutions? Are they doing the same timeline that we are in terms of settling contracts?

Stephens: In this particular agreement, just recently Heartland Community College does work with them. They just, within the last few weeks, agreed to an extension with them. I cannot certainly speak to the Town of Normal or the City of Bloomington. They're representing the community, Connect Transit, providing a quality service for them. The negotiations going on with the town is about the rate per ride. Our agreement is a fixed rate, which is a rate we would prefer to have. That way, we don't change behavior and we allow for students to basically get on the route no matter where they're going at any point in time. That's our preference. And so we're continuing to try to create a relationship with them that serves our student needs in the manner of which the students can take the bus anywhere, either around campus or around the city.

Jones: So you said they were in negotiations with the Town of Normal and the City of Bloomington as well. Do they have a current contract that they are existing under, or are they under some extension, too, to negotiate?

Stephens: From what I've learned, there is a part of both cities' budgets where they contribute into the revenue stream of Connect Transit. I do not know if it's under a contract or if it's simply in a contribution into that. Ours is a contract.

Jones: Thank you. Any other questions, Trustees?

Donahue: This is Trustee Donahue.

Jones: Please proceed, Trustee Donahue.

Donahue: Thank you. Do we currently charge a student fee specifically for this? I know the Chicagoland area, the universities have what they call a U-Pass where they pay a student fee, it's a master fee, that allows them to ride on the trains in the Chicagoland region. Do we have a similar, where the students are— Do they have a fee that's paying for this?

Stephens: No.

Dietz: Not currently. No.

Donahue: So, the university is absorbing all that cost on their own.

Stephens: This particular fee is paid for out of student fees, but there is no specific Connect Transit assigned fee.

Jones: Did you hear that, Trustee Donahue?

Donahue: Well, what I thought I heard was that it's paid for out of student fees but we don't, what I might term or not (unintelligible).

Dietz: We don't have a designated fee. It comes out of our overall student fee account, but we don't have a designated fee, and that's one of the things that (unintelligible).

Donahue: So, the students, in essence, though, are paying, because we are paying the cost from student fees.

Stephens: Correct.

Dietz: Connect Transit is a fee we've always paid from student fees.

Donahue: All right. Thanks.

Jones: Any other questions, concerns, discussion?

Motion made, seconded, and votes recorded as all members voting aye.

Dietz: Thank you very much. That concludes my recommendations on resolutions for today.

Jones: This concludes the resolutions for today.

ADJOURNMENT

Jones: I would now ask for a motion and a second to adjourn. Trustee Louderback so moved and was seconded by Trustee Bohn.

Motion made, seconded, and votes recorded as all members voting aye.

Jones: The meeting of the Board of Trustees is now adjourned. Trustees, you may continue visiting. We need to be back at the arena by 12:30 p.m. to don our gowns for the 1:00 commencement ceremony. I hope everyone has a happy holiday.