



---

**University Auxiliary Services at Albany, Inc.  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**Friday, February 9, 2024 12:00 PM Indigenous Quad Danes Den**

President Christakis convened the meeting at 12:03 PM. The following Directors were present:

Michael N. Christakis  
James Cooper  
Todd Foreman  
Jermaine Harris  
Gabrielle Holness

Erin McGrath  
Mary Beth Murnan  
Stephen Pearse  
Carol Perrin  
Jalen Rose

Fardin Sanai  
Lee Serravillo  
Latonia Spencer  
Erica Strand  
Jeremy Zheng

**ABSENT:** Aissata Barry; Indu; and Cara White

**UAS STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:** Michelle Bowen; Randy Simmons; Michelle (MO) Schifley; Roxanne Welch; and Nancy Harrigan.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None at this time.

**BOARD BUSINESS**

**Approval of December 5, 2023 Board Minutes**

Jermaine Harris made a motion to approve the December 5, 2023 meeting minutes, seconded by Carol Perrin. The minutes were approved.

**UAS Board Member University Senate Elections**

President Christakis informed the Board that there are two UAS Board seats up for election this spring. Latonia Spencer has completed her time on the Board and will not be eligible to run for reelection. Jermaine Harris is completing his first term and may run again. Candidate recommendations should be sent to President Christakis.

**Executive Director Search**

President Christakis informed the Board that a search committee of Board members has been established and this group has had an initial meeting. President Christakis outlined the schedule the search committee will follow with the expectation of having a candidate to present to the Board at the May 1, 2024 meeting for approval.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Stephen Pearse thanked outgoing Board member Latonia Spencer for her 11 years of service on the Board.

**New Sodexo Managers** – Stephen Pearse introduced new Sodexo staff members to the Board. Eddie Rivera Campus Executive Chef shared that he had been born in Puerto Rico and has worked in many locations around the country but loves this area and considers New York his second home. John Batch, Indigenous Dining Manager, spent many years at Skidmore College and then traveled for work to several locations around the country and is happy now to be back home and at UAlbany.

**Old Business**

**Laundry RFP Process** -Roxanne Welch reported that the Laundry RFP has been issued and that three companies expressed interest in participating in a campus tour which was conducted on February 7, 2024.

**Intersession Projects** – Stephen Pearse reported on projects completed during Intersession:

- The Indigenous Kitchen Dishwasher & Accumulator was replaced along with several pieces of kitchen equipment that are now self-steam generating. Flooring and lighting were replaced creating a better working environment in the main kitchen area.
- The Indigenous Beverage Station flooring was coated with an epoxy to help with the safety issue of it becoming wet and then slippery.
- The State Quad dishwasher was replaced last summer and over intersession the accumulator was replaced to complete the full upgrade.

**Future Projects**

- Broadview Concessions– This renovation involves a major structural change so the project will have to go through the construction fund and will take place summer 2025.
- Indigenous Dome - A feasibility study is being put together with the Office of Facilities Management.
- Storage Facility – The construction of a self-standing storage facility for UAS near Liberty Terrace will start this summer.

## **New Business**

**2023-2024 Meal Plans**- Stephen Pearse provided data showing voluntary and mandatory meal plan participation for 2023-2024 compared to 2022-2023. The data shows that meal plan participation is almost exactly the same this year as last year. President Christakis noted that voluntary meal plan enrollment is a strong indicator of a dining programs appeal and success and Todd Foreman noted that when Sodexo bid on this dining contract there was emphasis on growing the program and increasing voluntary enrollment.

**Sustainability** -Stephen Pearse reported on efforts being made to comply with New York State Executive Order 22 on sustainability to reduce waste through composting, reduce waste through food donation and to reduce single service use items.

**NACUFS Customer Satisfaction Survey Results** – Stephen Pearse presented data from the 2023 NACUFS Survey. There was an 11% rate of response, 88% of those were students. In general, satisfaction ratings have risen slightly since the last survey conducted in 2021. The Board discussed the survey results, noting the Action Items that emerged (areas rated with the lowest satisfaction but of the highest importance by survey respondents) and that many of these are the same items that emerged in the 2021 survey as Action Items. The Board discussed dining hours of operation, which falls in the Action Item area. UAS Staff and the Services Committee will undertake a review of the issues and ways to improve customer satisfaction.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Program Committee** - Jermaine Harris reported that the Committee had completed their work for 2023-2024 with all funds allocated for this year. The Committee will meet in April to work through Round 1 applications for 2024-2025.

**Services Committee** -Carol Perrin noted that Stephen Pearse had covered all the Services Committee items in his report and informed the Board that Indigenous Quad dining hall will be used for summer 2024 dining.

Gabrielle Holness raised the issue that ethnic student groups find it difficult to get quality ethnic food for their events from UAlbany Catering. Suggestions for how to get information to students about the options that are available to them were discussed and UAS staff will undertake looking for solutions to improve this experience for students.

**Finance and Audit Committee-** Todd Foreman presented the 2024-2025 budget proposal that was approved by the Finance and Audit Committee that is based on a 3% increase to meal plan rates. The budget allows for new investments to help with various University initiatives, and increased staffing in UAS offices to provide some additional flexibility. Stephen Pearse noted that the dollar increase to the Flex meal plans will all be applied to discount dollars, so students will have more buying power on those plans. The meal plan retail discount will also be changed to 40% across the board instead of the current 30% for 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors and 50% for Sodexo and in-house brands. The 60% discount for residential dining will remain the same. Stephen Pearse reported that a peer institution comparison of meal plan rate increases for next year puts UAlbany near the lower end for the semester meal plan cost and the percentage amount of the anticipated increases.

Erica Strand inquired about donations to students who can't afford a meal plan. Todd Foreman noted that meal donations are built into the Sodexo contract and requested that a report be made on how many and how those donated meals are being used.

Todd Foreman put forward the motion on behalf of the Finance and Audit Committee to accept the proposed budget for 2024-2025 as presented. Latonia Spencer seconded the motion. The motion was approved with no abstentions.

Roxanne Welch informed the Board that Campus Specialties, who provide student micro-fridges, donated \$3,000 to the Purple Pantry and that will be an annual donation as part of their contract.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Carol Perrin made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Latonia Spencer. The meeting adjourned at 1:24 PM.