

**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**March 4, 2022**  
**9:00 a.m.**

## **MINUTES**

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A meeting of the Board of Directors of San Diego State University Research Foundation was held virtually on Friday, March 4, 2022 pursuant to the notice duly posted for public information.

**The following Officers were present:**

Adela de la Torre, President  
Hala Madanat, Vice President  
Karen Emmorey, Secretary  
Agnes Wong Nickerson, Treasurer  
Michèle Goetz, Associate Secretary-Treasurer

**The following Directors were present:**

Vickie Capps	Ashley Tejada
David Page	Ming-Hsiang Tsou
Randolph Philipp	Alex Waters

**The following Directors were absent:**

Guadalupe X. Ayala	Natalie Mladenov	Robert Zeller
Bill Brack	Salvador Ochoa	
Joan Copenrath	Jennifer Thomas	

**The following University administrators and Research Foundation staff members and guests were present:**

Reza Akhavian	Leslie Levinson	Rachel Raynoha
Debbie Brighton	Lizette Nájera	

**I. Call to Order**

President de la Torre called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

**II. Consent Agenda**

President de la Torre requested a motion to accept the Consent Agenda.

**Motion:** A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously carried to accept the Consent Agenda for the SDSU Research Foundation Board of Directors meeting thereby approving:

- a) SDSU Research Foundation Board Meeting Minutes of September 24, 2021
- b) Resolution 22-01: Industrial Security Clearance

### **III. Signature Authorizations (Action Items)**

Ms. Goetz provided background for the updates to the signature authorization which included a delegation of authority to the sponsored research development staff to submit proposals as signing officials subject to routing approvals required under the CSU policy. With this permission, specialists would be able to comply with new multi-factor authentication safeguards to submit applications without the need to share passwords and log in and out of the system as the authorized official.

President de la Torre called for a motion to adopt Resolution 22-02:

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF SDSU RESEARCH FOUNDATION  
APPROVING DELEGATED SIGNATURE AUTHORIZATION**

**Motion:**        **A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously carried to approve Resolution 22-02 to approve the Delegated Signature Authorization.**

Ms. Goetz then provided background information on the second item, a delegation of power of attorney to sign the proposals and any resulting contracts associated with three new proposed activities under RFPs from the Government of Georgia’s Ministry of Education and Science with funding from the World Bank. Although the signature delegation already addresses the authority of the CEO to sign for the organization, World Bank protocols require a specific written power of attorney authorizing the approval.

President de la Torre called for a motion to adopt Resolution 22-03:

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF SDSU RESEARCH FOUNDATION  
CONFERRING AUTHORITY TO RESPOND TO GEORGIA RFPs**

**Motion:**        **A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously carried to approve Resolution 22-03 Conferring Authority to SDSU Research Foundation’s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to Respond to Georgia RFPs**

### **IV. PI Presentation**

Dr. Reza Akhavian is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Civil, Construction, and Environmental Engineering, and the director of the Data-informed Construction Engineering

(DICE) Research Lab. Dr. Akhavian presented his research “*Boosting Construction Safety and Productivity through AI and Robotics.*”

## V. CEO Report

Ms. Goetz gave an update on the Proposal and Award numbers to date. As of 02/28/2022 faculty have submitted 28 more proposals than this same time last year valued at \$34 million more than prior year proposals. 453 awards valued at almost \$103 million have already been recorded. There are 566 proposals valued at \$113 million that are pending review. Ms. Goetz stated that this is significantly ahead of indicators for the same time the previous year and could result in the highest year ever for awards.

Ms. Goetz then shared staffing updates. SDSURF hired 23 diverse and experienced individuals to fill vacancies across all areas of the organization. Management is working on a five-year staffing plan to assess what is needed to support the anticipated continued growth in proposal and award volume, identify any specialized expertise needed to support campus initiatives as well as plan for succession in key positions.

Next, Ms. Goetz shared that the research foundation is looking for opportunities to increase revenue streams and preparing for the F&A rate negotiation. The base year for the F&A rate renewal is FY 2023. If the F&A recovery can be increased the research foundation could provide more investments back into research to further the strategic goal of becoming an R1 university.

In support of the same goal, management is working with the Division of Research & Innovation (DRI) to conduct internal and external assessments of the research infrastructure needed. Ms. Goetz stated she was working with Dr. Madanat on a draft scope of work and that an RFP would be issued by SDSU Procurement for a firm to help with the assessments. Other activities include joint site visits to comparable institutions that have made the jump for R2 to R1 in the last few years to learn about best practices and recommendations based on their experiences.

Finally, Ms. Goetz shared that two important investments will be brought to the board at the May meeting as part of the FY 2022/23 budget. The first of those is funds to help support the recent hiring of a National Academy of Sciences faculty member. As part of the startup package, the research foundation has been asked to provide \$150,000 in funds to help support 50% of a center director for two years to establish a Center for GeoSpatial Sciences. Second, SDSU was the recipient of an NIH FIRST grant which will provide salaries and startup packages for 11 new faculty. The research foundation was asked to provide \$1.0 million for start-up costs as part of an almost \$7 million institutional package of support.

Discussion ensued.

Dr. Madanat took over chairing the meeting as Dr. de la Torre left the meeting to attend a previous commitment.

## **VI. Finance and Investment Committee Report**

Chair Wong Nickerson updated the board on the Finance & Investment Committee meeting held on February 24, 2022. Ms. Wong Nickerson reported that the committee discussed various items: a) F&A rate negotiation preparations as mentioned in the CEO's report b) SAG-AFTRA Union/KPBS negotiations. No updates at this point. c) Staffing plans that were covered in the CEO's report. d) Investment results as of December 31. Total investment portfolio was at \$183M and increased by \$3M since September.

The committee also reviewed the 990-tax return and there were no changes to the return as presented.

Ms. Levinson gave a thorough overview of the mid-year general fund budget including revenue areas, proposals and awards, as well as expense areas including administration and operations, facilities, investments, personnel costs and allocations to support research. Ms. Levinson informed the board that the mid-year budget assumes a need to use \$232,000 from reserves to balance the budget.

Discussion ensued.

Interim Vice President Madanat called for a motion to adopt Resolution 22-04:

### **RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SDSU RESEARCH FOUNDATION APPROVAL OF SDSU RESEARCH FOUNDATION'S FY 2021-22 MID-YEAR GENERAL FUND BUDGET**

**Motion:** A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously carried to approve Resolution 22-04 to approve the FY 2021-22 budget at a level of \$34,560,000.

Ms. Levinson next summarized the revisions to the Investment Policy Statement. The proposed changes were presented in a red line version included in the board packet.

Dr. Madanat called for a motion to adopt Resolution 22-05:

### **RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SDSU RESEARCH FOUNDATION APPROVING REVISED INVESTMENT POLICY STATEMENT**

**Motion:** A motion was made, seconded, and unanimously carried to approve Resolution 22-05 to approve the revised Investment Policy Statement

## **VII. Audit Committee Report**

Audit Committee Chair David Page reported on the meeting held on February 24, 2022. He stated that the research foundation had 14 sponsor audits, and all were fully completed with no findings. The Chancellor's Office audit and advisory team is performing a review, not an audit, of executive travel and hosting at several campuses including SDSU. Ms. Raynoha reported on cyber security risks. Lastly, Grant Thornton and Holthouse, Carlin, Van Trigt (HCVT) reviewed their audit plans for the upcoming audits for the fiscal year.

## **VIII. Interim Vice President for Research and Innovation Report**

Dr. Madanat provided a presentation that discussed the various factors that would influence our ability to achieve R1 status, including an assessment of the impacts of growth in research expenditures, growth in the number of doctoral degrees conferred, and the number of postdocs and research scientists engaged in research. Discussion ensued.

Following the presentation, Dr. Madanat provided an update on the various programming and research investments implemented by DRI and shared some of the successes of these programs. She also shared profiles of a number of new staff who have joined DRI to help support the division. Finally, Dr. Madanat shared examples of proposal submissions that if funded, will help support the research infrastructure. Discussion ensued.

## **VIII. Associated Students Report**

Associated Students (A.S.) president Ashley Tejada provided a brief report on current activities for A.S. which include the upcoming Student Research Symposium, elections for A.S., and a visit to the Mission Valley construction site.

Discussion ensued.

## **IX. New Business**

Interim Vice President Madanat called for any items of new business. Hearing none, she adjourned the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Michèle G. Goetz  
Associate Secretary-Treasurer