

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

September 01, 2021

President Stanley called the meeting of the Board of Trustees to order at 12:00 p.m. via livestream.

Trustees present: Dianne Byrum, Melanie Foster, Renee Knake Jefferson, Dan Kelly, Pat O'Keefe, Brianna Scott, Kelly Tebay, and Rema Vassar.

University officers present: President Stanley, Provost and Executive Vice President Woodruff; Executive Vice Presidents Beauchamp and Woo; Senior Vice President Frace and Acting Secretary of the Board and General Counsel Quinn; Vice Presidents Beekman, Guerrant, Heil, and Wilbur. Faculty liaisons present: Richard Fulton and Karen Kelly-Blake.

All actions taken were by unanimous vote of the Trustees present, unless otherwise noted.

1. On a motion by Trustee Scott, supported by Trustee Foster, the **BOARD VOTED to approve** the agenda.
2. Personnel Action

Trustee Byrum presented the following personnel action:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Michigan State University hereby approves the appointment of Alan Haller as Vice President and Director of The Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, effective September 1, 2021 through September 1, 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the president of the university is hereby authorized to execute both documents and agreements as may be necessary or appropriate in connection with the implementation of this action.

Trustee Byrum **moved to approve** the recommendation, with support from Trustee Kelly.

President Stanley gave the following remarks:

In early August, we announced Bill Beekman would be transitioning back to a leadership role and our central administration team to help with strategic planning

and implementation. I just want to take this opportunity to thank Bill for the work he did over the past three years, and the steadiness he provided to our athletic department during a very difficult time. We made the decision to go to a national search to find our 20<sup>th</sup> Athletic Director for MSU and engaged Collegiate Sports Associates to help us conduct this search. In addition to the search firm, we established an advisory committee consisting of current and former athletes, alumni, a former coach, faculty, and board members. The search firm met with coaches and staff in the athletics department, and further helped us to identify what qualities would be most important in an athletic director.

The Advisory Committee also helped refine the position description to guide our search for prospects from a list assembled from nominations and individuals identified by Collegiate Associates. They were responsible for identifying a shortlist of prospects we could pursue. We thought it was important for everyone that we look at all options nationwide and find the best fits for our needs at MSU. We were impressed with the caliber of athletic leaders and of those interested in coming to MSU. One prospect had all the qualities that we wanted, and also happened to already be a part of the Spartan family. He is an alum, former athlete, former MSU Police Officer, and a current senior member of the athletic team. I am very excited to present to the Board of Trustees my nomination for our next athletic director, the single finalist from our search, Alan Haller.

Alan has the integrity, leadership skills and empathy and public service mindset and dedication to student athlete success that we need in our next leader. He has been a leader in promoting diversity among our athletic administrators and helping them become more engaged with the student athletes they serve. He has led by example and has been laser focused on student athletes and what they need to succeed right now and in their future. He has identified best practices among administrators and is helping implement them throughout our sports working continuously to improve performance. He has worked to provide opportunities for administrators to grow in their roles and responsibilities and has been a very steady hand in the difficult time associated with COVID-19. In conversations with my RVSM advisors, I learned that they felt that, through the past four years, Alan has been the leader in supporting prevention, education, and helping survivors with supportive services. He is caring and empathic. And his background in criminal justice and trauma informed approach to sensitive situations has been a great value to a department dealing with these critical issues. Throughout his career and during the search process, Alan demonstrated his strong ability to really connect to student athletes. He has consistently and passionately focused on their wellbeing and success and remains committed to the fact that our athletes are students first, and that we cannot lose sight of that priority. I have witnessed it myself these last two years. Alan is a natural leader and I have complete confidence that he will continue advancing our Spartan athletic program and student success.

Alan Haller gave the following remarks:

Good afternoon. Before I make my brief comments about my vision for the department, I would like to take time to let you know that our Spartan family is hurting right now. We are mourning the loss of Executive Senior Associate Athletic Director Jim Pignatero, and rowing student athlete Olivia Long, who was also a team captain. Our hearts, thoughts, and prayers are with the Pignatero and Long families. I would like to take this time to thank the Board of Trustees and President Stanley for this incredible opportunity to be the next athletic director at Michigan State University. It is truly an honor to lead a department that has meant so much to my life. I grew up in Lansing, Michigan and attended Lansing public schools. As a kid, I attended art and football camps here at MSU. I am also a former student athlete, competing for football and track and field. I have been coming to the MSU campus for about 40 years. I love this community. I love MSU.

Being a student athlete was a transformational experience for me. I learned the values and traits of hard work, dedication, being a team player, being able to pick yourself up and working through difficulties, all traits I use today. That is why my passion every single day is to help our current and future student athletes have the same transformational experience that I did. This is not a job. My responsibility is to make sure that our student athletes succeed. Spartan athletics will be a valued member of the MSU community. We will be an extension of the University's values, mission, and purpose. We will create a culture of competitive excellence centered around trust, honesty, integrity, transparency, mutual respect, diversity, equity, and inclusion. We will strive for excellence across all sports, and we will be an "and" department meaning we will continue to support our revenue sports in their quest for excellence. And we will provide resources, support, and opportunities for our Olympic sports student athletes to excel in their chosen sport, both academically and athletically. Spartan Nation I am excited. Please join us because we are about to do something incredible here and MSU athletics and the MSU community, we need you to move forward with us. Again, this is my dream responsibility. I love this community. I love this university. I am excited to go to work for you. Thank you and go green.

#### Roll Call Vote

Trustee Byrum—yes  
Trustee Foster—yes  
Trustee Knake Jefferson—yes  
Trustee Kelly—yes  
Trustee O'Keefe—yes  
Trustee Scott—yes  
Trustee Tebay—yes  
Trustee Vassar—yes

**THE BOARD VOTED to approve** the recommendation.

### 3. Trustee Comments

Chairperson Byrum thanked AD Haller for beginning his remarks by acknowledging the loss that the Spartan Athletic Department has been experiencing over the past week. She asked to acknowledge also, on behalf of the entire Board of Trustees, the extremely emotional time in MSU athletics as they deal with the loss of valued and loved team members of the Spartan family. Chairperson Byrum congratulated AD Haller and said that she believes him to be a leader who is steadfastly committed to the success of MSU, and student athletes. She said that she has full confidence that he will continue to move Michigan State athletics forward with a vision that focuses on student success, competitive excellence, and integrity. Chairperson Byrum said that she is truly excited about the future of MSU athletics.

Trustee Foster congratulated AD Haller and said that she is thrilled that he is assuming this position. She stated that she looks forward to a very promising and successful future with him at the helm of MSU athletics. Trustee Foster thanked Bill Beekman for his three plus years of service as athletic director.

Trustee Knake Jefferson joined her colleagues both in expressing condolences for the loss that the Athletic Department has experienced this week and in thanking Bill Beekman for his service. Trustee Knake Jefferson said that she wanted to take a moment to share some concerns she has about the process that was used for selecting the next athletic director at Michigan State but also to congratulate Alan Haller on becoming our new Athletic Director. Trustee Knake Jefferson said that she was appointed as a trustee when this board was in crisis, another trustee had resigned over disagreement about the board's accountability and transparency and handling the Nassar documents and the governor appointed her, in part to help lead this institution forward from that turmoil. She noted that because her professional background has been devoted to legal ethics and gender equity, she was honored to accept the mission. Trustee Knake Jefferson said that she cares deeply about Michigan State University and wants to help usher in a new era of equity in the treatment of women and minorities. She said that from her view, this search process regrettably lacked the openness and public transparency that she and others, including Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson, called for in her role as chair of the Governor's Task Force on women's sports. Trustee Knake Jefferson said that for trustees, there is an obligation to expose practices that risk discriminatory or biased treatment, even when unintentional. She noted that she is worried that the lack of transparency may only further perpetuate concerns and misperceptions about the institution's commitment to the improved treatment of women in the wake of the Nassar scandal and the harm that continues, for example, as documented in the 2019 Climate Survey on Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct. Trustee Knake Jefferson said that equitable treatment for women and minorities is at the core of who she is as a scholar and a member of this community. She noted that this is personal for her. Trustee Knake Jefferson said that MSU is where she launched her career as a

legal ethics professor is where her husband received his degree and would go on to serve as the first African American Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas. She said that it is where his son began his own journey on a legal career and where her teenage children learned to walk at Spartan Marching Band practices and began their own education as preschoolers in the MSU Child Development Lab. Trustee Knake Jefferson state that MSU is also a place where she experienced discrimination as a faculty member and was advised by a senior administrator in her department not to pursue tenure because as a mother of young children, it would be too stressful for her family. She said that when she complained that she and her female peers were paid less than their male counterparts, her Dean called her the Norma Ray of the faculty for raising this inequity and securing equal compensation. Trustee Knake Jefferson said that it is this juxtaposition, her love for a university that has played a pivotal role in her own life and the lives of so many of her family and friends, balanced against her knowledge of the harms that Nassar caused so many women and inequities that have been experienced by others, including herself, through this institution that propels her to raise these concerns now about the selection process. She said that one of her many goals as trustee is to help this university move forward with more inclusive, open, and transparent processes in the future. Trustee Knake Jefferson said that despite her concerns with the process, she enthusiastically endorses Alan Haller's appointment to the role of Athletic Director. She said that she is confident that like herself and her colleagues on this Board of Trustees, he is committed to remedying the structural inequities--whether it is finding the funds to make sure that all our student athletes and especially our female student athletes have appropriate restrooms and other facilities or working to reform policies and practices to provide equitable opportunities for advancement of women and minority leaders. Trustee Knake Jefferson said that Alan Haller has been doing this work behind the scenes throughout his career at MSU and that she believes he has the ability to transform the athletic department in his new role, working together with Dr. Ashley Baker, the newly hired Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion officer in the athletic department. She said that she looks forward to the next era of leadership under Alan Haller that will prioritize achieving diversity, inclusion, equity, and a culture of care as much as winning in the competitive arena. She offered a huge congratulations to AD Haller.

Trustee Kelly noted that he does agree with some of the comments of Trustee Knake Jefferson, although he does believe that the process resulted in the best candidate. Trustee Kelly congratulated AD Haller and said that he is very excited for the future of athletics for his leadership at MSU. Trustee Kelly thanked Bill Beekman for holding the course for the last three years noting that he did it out of a love for MSU. Trustee Kelly thanked the President for guiding the process and the Advisory Committee, as well as the trustees of the board that sat on that Advisory Committee, Trustee Knake Jefferson and Tebay.

Trustee O'Keefe expressed his condolences to the families who suffered the recent loss that was mentioned by Trustee Byrum and AD Haller. He thanked Bill

Beekman for his work as AD and appreciates his yeoman's effort over the last three years. Trustee O'Keefe thanked President Stanley for running a rigorous process with a lot of stakeholders with varied interests, and a lot of input. He said that he understands that it was not easy, and he appreciate him trying to keep everything down the middle of the road relative to the process. Trustee O'Keefe said that if you give a person a job, they will work through your money and if you find a person who believes in your mission, vision, and values, they will work with their blood, sweat and tears. He said that Alan Haller is such a person. Trustee O'Keefe welcomed AD Haller noting that he survived a very rigorous national search with many qualified candidates. Trustee O'Keefe said that AD Haller's passion for MSU and his dedicated service to the university made his candidacy stand out. He said that he is pleased that Alan accepted this position of Athletic Director and the fact that he is bringing his many talents to MSU. He also noted that to whom much is given, much as expected and he has tremendous joy and support for AD Haller as he begins this new journey. Go Green.

Trustee Scott extended her condolences to the family, loved ones and friends of those who lost their lives over the course of the last weeks noting that her prayers and thoughts are with them. She thanked Bill Beekman for the leadership that he displayed during a really difficult time in the Athletic Department's history and that she looks forward to continuing to work with him in his new role. Trustee Scott also thanked President Stanley for incorporating the board in the process by taking the time to hear what the concerns were, what the suggestions were and the issues that needed to be a be utmost importance with the decision of who would come in to take over this role as athletic director. She said that even though this was his appointment, she feels like it was ours, because we all felt so strongly about Alan Haller. Trustee Scott said that she is excited and happy for him and believes that the passion that he has is going to take him extremely far. She said that she would be remiss not to talk about what his appointment means for those who come after him. Trustee Scott said that when she thinks about athletes, people who come from various backgrounds, some of them from disadvantaged homes or situations and all the things that they go through, typically to try to do for their families, by going into the professional or to the Olympic sports and things of that nature. She said that it is important for those who do not make those goals to see someone who has come up through the system, as AD Haller mentioned he did. Trustee Scott said that his is a phenomenal story and that she hopes that it is an inspiring story for those youth who come after him to see that anything is possible. She noted that this is the beginning of a new era for Michigan State University and that she is extremely excited to see what AD Haller is going to do to take us to that next level. Trustee Scott said that she believes that MSU will be a leader in this arena for years to come because of the visionary person at the helm. She said that she is excited, happy and is looking forward to working with AD Haller.

Trustee Tebay said that her heart goes out to those in the Athletics mourning the loss of two of our own and their families and friends that are going through this

difficult time. She thanked Bill Beekman for his continued service to Michigan State University in many different capacities and that she looks forward to working with him in his new position. She also thanked him for his kindness over the years and noted that she has really enjoyed getting to know him. Trustee Tebay congratulated AD Haller on his new position and said that she is very excited for him and for MSU to have him at the head of our Athletic Department and that she is looking forward to working with him and seeing all the great things that he will do.

Trustee Vassar stated that it was a dynamic time to serve on the board. She said that as a black woman faculty member she understands and empathizes with Trustee Knake Jefferson's experiences. Trustee Vassar acknowledged the pain in her voice as she recounted her experiences and thanked her for her bravery in speaking out regarding her convictions and principles. She stated that values are important, and that Trustee Knake Jefferson continues to persist in displaying them with openness and she appreciates her working to make change. Trustee Vassar said that it was not lost on her that the last five members, appointed and voted to the board, ran or were appointed for change and so this process is one wrought with the growing pains necessary to facilitate transformative change. She stated that she is grateful for the agility and flexibility of the president and the grace and professionalism of her colleagues during this process. Trustee Vassar said that she is hopeful to see the changes being sought. Trustee Vassar noted that it has been her pleasure to serve on this board and has already learned so much and met so many fantastic people. She thanked Bill Beekman for his continued dedicated service to MSU and she looks forward to working with him. Trustee Vassar said that while she has not known him for long, AD Haller immediately impressed her as an integral, passionate, and kind person, and she immediately respected him and his commitment to the students. She said that she is so pleased that he will serve MSU student athletes and that she looks forward to working with him to ensure his success both on and off the field. Trustee Vassar asked AD Haller to let the Board know how it can partner with him to ensure Spartan athletes contribute to the improvement of the world as they represent MSU.

4. Request to Adjourn

On a motion by Trustee Byrum, supported by Trustee Foster, **THE BOARD VOTED to adjourn** at 12:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Acting Secretary of the Board of Trustees