

CSU Board of Trustees  
Full Board Meeting and Board Retreat  
Open Session Minutes  
December 17, 2025  
9:08 a.m.- 12:20 p.m.

**Board Members Present**

Trustee Andrea Zopp, Chair attended virtually via Zoom  
Trustee Angelique David, Vice-Chair  
Trustee Cheryl Watkins, Secretary  
Trustee Dixie Adams  
Trustee Michelle Gooze-Miller  
Trustee Jason Quiara  
Trustee John Robak

**Board Members Absent**

Trustee Zariah Franklin

**Others Present**

President Zalduwaynaka (Z) Scott, JD  
Teresa L. Bates, Executive Director of Board Relations  
Jason Carter, Vice President, Legal Affairs, General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer  
Dr. Sonja Feist-Price, Provost & Executive Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs  
Nicole Latimer-Williams, Vice President of Financial Operations and Chief Financial Officer  
Oscar Rodriguez, Vice President, Enrollment Management  
Melanie Sillas, President, Chicago State Foundation  
Dr. Monique Carroll, Vice President and Director, Intercollegiate Athletics

**1. Call to Order**

Vice Chair David called the meeting to order. Chair Zopp requested to attend the meeting virtually. Her request was approved through a unanimous roll call vote.

**2. Roll Call**

A quorum was verified, and a roll call was taken.

**3. Verification of Meeting Notice**

The meeting notice was posted as mandated by the Illinois Open Meetings Act in the following physical locations: the Student Union Building, Library, Cook Administration Building, and online.

**4. Approval of Agenda**

Chair Zopp moved to approve the agenda. Trustee Quiara seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous consent.

## 5. Public Comment

Ms. Bates called Pastor Doyle Landry to present his public comment.

## 6. Approval of Minutes

**Vice Chair David moved to approve the meeting minutes from September 15, 2025. Trustee Watkins seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*  
*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

## 7. President's Remarks

President Scott opened by welcoming Chair Zopp and the Trustees to the final meeting of 2025.

The President highlighted the continued expansion of Cougar Athletics, including CSU's entry into the Northeast Conference (Division I), the advancement of new athletics teams, and ongoing fundraising efforts to launch Division I football. She acknowledged Dr. Monique Carroll, Vice President and Athletics Director, and the appointment of Head Football Coach Bobby Rome. The President also discussed community engagement efforts and emphasized the anticipated enrollment growth, economic impact, and transformational potential of Division I athletics for the Far South Side. Fundraising momentum remains strong, and updates will continue to be provided to the Board.

President Scott announced that both Chair Zopp and herself were recognized in Crain's Chicago Business "Who's Who 2026" list, which honors nearly 500 influential leaders across Chicago's business, government, philanthropic, educational, and arts sectors. She congratulated Chair Zopp on this distinction.

The President reported on the Illinois Center for Educational Equity's annual conference, which attracted over 300 attendees, including elected officials, advocates, researchers, and higher education leaders. The 2025 theme, "Time for a New Roadmap," focused on advancing equity amid shifts in higher education. She noted that the conference strengthened CSU's national leadership presence in advancing educational equity.

An update on student housing was provided, including the creation of nearly 100 new housing opportunities through a new downtown off-campus program and expanded on-campus capacity. Student feedback has been positive regarding safety and productivity. Given historic enrollment

growth, the President emphasized the need for accelerated housing expansion, including long-term plans for an additional residence hall and exploration of innovative housing solutions.

Finally, the President shared early indicators for Fall 2026 enrollment. Completed applications are up 230 percent compared to the previous year, more than 3,000 students have been admitted, and approximately 50 percent of admitted students have indicated their intent to enroll. Ongoing efforts include financial aid packaging, recruitment, and continued communication with prospective students. The President noted that enrollment updates will continue through the spring semester.

## 8. **Board Reports**

### *Academic Affairs*

Chair Zopp called on Dr. Sonja Feist-Price, Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, to give the Academic Affairs report. Dr. Feist Price discussed the following:

- The Provost highlighted continued progress in academic innovation, including the launch and advancement of market-responsive academic programs and the scaling of artificial intelligence, research, and experiential learning opportunities, including IBM SkillsBuild. Through a Department of Energy grant, the University expanded undergraduate research, faculty-student scholarship, and conference presentations. Progress toward the Higher Learning Commission mid-cycle review and ongoing professional accreditations was also noted, reflecting CSU's continued commitment to academic quality and institutional excellence.
- In the area of retention, the Provost reported measurable gains in Fall 2025 to Spring 2026 persistence. Expanded, coordinated student-centered strategies and data-informed decision-making efforts were implemented to strengthen student engagement and support.
- An update was provided on the School of Pharmacy. For the 2024–2025 admissions cycle, 172 verified applications were received, representing a 67 percent increase from the previous year. Seven first-year students matriculated for Fall 2025. For the 2025–2026 admissions cycle, six seats have already been filled compared to none at the same time last year, with additional offers pending and interviews scheduled. Enhanced recruitment efforts include expanded out-of-state outreach to HBCUs and collaboration with STEM programs within the College of Arts and Sciences. The School's current NAPLEX first-time pass rate is 87.5 percent.
- Finally, the Board received an overview of the proposed Southside Quantum Institute and the CSU Center for Quantum Education, Science & Technology (CQuEST). A cross-disciplinary working group has been convened to advance research, workforce development, and community engagement in quantum information science and engineering. Updates were provided on external funding opportunities, including NSF and EDA grants, and the need for administrative support, faculty hires, laboratory space,

and equipment to advance the initiative.

After her report, Dr. Feist Price presented her resolution for tenure for Dr. Luther King. She presented Dr. King's credentials.

**Vice Chair David called for a motion to approve the resolution for tenure for Dr. Luther King. Trustee Michelle Gooze-Miller moved to approve the resolution. Trustee Jason Quiara seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*

*Trustee David -Yes*

*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*

*Trustee Quiara-Yes*

*Trustee Robak-Yes*

*Trustee Watkins-Yes*

*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

### ***Finance and Audit Committee***

The Finance and Audit Committee met, but there were no items requiring action or consideration by the Full Board.

### ***Did You Know***

Vice Chair David called Dr. John Peters to present on the CSU Quantum Science Research and Education Center.

The presentation outlined the vision for the Southside Quantum Institute and the CSU Center for Quantum Education, Science & Technology (CQuEST), which will focus on education, research, and workforce development in Quantum Information Science and Engineering (QISE), with particular emphasis on quantum biosciences, biopharmaceuticals, and related interdisciplinary fields. A cross-campus working group composed of faculty from pharmacy, biology, chemistry, physics, engineering, computer science, and community engagement has been convened to guide the initiative.

Dr. Peters highlighted the growing national and global investment in quantum technologies and noted Chicagoland's position as a Midwest leader in QISE. They provided updates on current and prospective grant funding, including the \$2.3 million NSF QuBBE grant, a \$3.6 million NSF QuBBE Round 2 finalist proposal, an EDA Tech Hub award, NSF Engines funding, and additional state and corporate proposals. The Illinois Board of Higher Education has accepted CSU's quantum certificate program, further strengthening workforce development efforts.

The Board was informed of immediate and near-term needs to advance the initiative, including administrative support, coordinated grant development, targeted external engagement, one to two new faculty hires in quantum-related research areas, laboratory renovations, equipment investments, and strategic partnerships with Argonne National Laboratory, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign.

The presentation concluded with a clear commitment to establishing Chicago State University as a national leader in quantum education, research, workforce development, and community engagement.

### ***Intercollegiate Athletics***

Dr. Carroll provided an overview of CSU's sports expansion initiative, outlining key milestones since 2021, including the completion of a feasibility study, formation of an exploratory committee, Board approval to begin fundraising, the addition of Women's Triathlon as the University's 16th sport, and the hiring of Head Football Coach Bobby Rome II in April 2025.

An update was provided on football fundraising efforts, including strategy development, donor cultivation events, corporate and individual meetings, and a Football Day of Giving campaign.

Projected operating costs were presented for the football program. Estimated costs for FY26 (January–June 2026) total approximately \$703,599, with major expenses including coaching salaries, protective and field equipment, and other operational needs. Certain expenses, such as apparel and some support staff salaries, are offset through adidas and NCAA grant support. Estimated operating costs for FY27 (July 2026–June 2027) total approximately \$1,778,896, with major expenses including personnel, team travel, communications equipment, and uniforms.

The timeline for implementation includes Board consideration in December 2025, hiring key football personnel, recruiting student-athletes for Spring 2026, spring practices, and a planned kickoff for Fall 2026 competition.

Dr. Carroll also outlined the rationale for moving forward at this time, citing projected revenue opportunities of approximately \$1 million for Fall 2026 competition, favorable NCAA roster limit conditions, and the opportunity to capture enrollment growth and economic development momentum.

Dr. Carroll then presented a resolution asking board approval to expand CSU sports to include Division 1 football.

**Vice Chair David called for a motion to approve the intercollegiate athletics expansion resolution which included Division 1 football. Trustee Dixie Adams moved to approve the resolution. Trustee John Robak seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*

*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*

*Trustee Quiara-Yes*

*Trustee Robak-Yes*

*Trustee Watkins-Yes*

*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

### ***External Affairs***

Chair Zopp called Erin Steva, Vice President of External Affairs, to present on External Affairs. Ms. Steva outlined the process leading to the developer recommendation, including the July release of the Request for Proposals, a pre-proposal conference and developer Q&A sessions, receipt of four proposals in October, public presentations in November, and a structured evaluation process facilitated by technical advisors. The Proposal Review Committee, co-chaired by Trustee Andrea Zopp and Ms. Steva, included Board members, senior administrators, faculty, and the Student Trustee, with support from external advisors and legal counsel.

Following financial workshops, proposal scoring, and multiple rounds of developer questions and analysis, the Committee reached a consensus recommendation to advance a proposal from Edgemoor & 548 Development. The proposed development aligns with the University's long-term strategic, academic, and community objectives and includes plans for mixed-use development, enhanced campus connectivity, and future student-centered spaces.

Next steps include negotiation of a Pre-Development Agreement and Terms Sheet, engagement of an Owner's Representative, development of design and financing plans, and execution of a Ground Lease, Development Agreement, sublease, and related financing agreements prior to construction.

### ***Chicago State Foundation Report***

Chair Zopp called on Melanie Sillas to present on the Chicago State Foundation.

The Foundation reported total projected FY26 revenue of \$3,297,300, exceeding the annual goal of \$3,050,000. Corporate and foundation giving has surpassed its FY26 goal of \$2,000,000, reaching approximately \$2,200,000 in Q2. The 1stGEN Scholarship Gala has raised \$900,000 toward its \$750,000 goal, with a \$1 million stretch goal identified. Alumni, staff, and individual giving has reached \$147,300 against a \$100,000 goal.

Significant corporate and foundation awards during the quarter totaled approximately \$1.1 million, supporting initiatives such as Rise Academy, the Center for Education Equity, AIM High Scholarships, Sophomore Academy, GenOps, and equitable funding advocacy. Additional proposals are pending or in process with several philanthropic partners, including foundations supporting basic needs, workforce equity, transfer pathways, and athletics initiatives.

The Foundation's FY26 Strategic Plan priorities include strengthening donor engagement, expanding corporate and foundation partnerships, increasing major gifts, raising CSU's public profile through signature events and consistent communications, and operating with excellence and transparency. The Foundation Board currently includes 15 directors, with a 73 percent giving rate and an approximate \$100,000 increase in gala support

Ms. Sillas then presented 4 resolutions.

Ms. Sillas presented a proposed Bylaws Resolution recommending several governance updates to the Foundation. The resolution includes changing the title of the Foundation's chief executive from Executive Director to President, renaming the Chair-Elect position to Vice Chair, and establishing a biannual review process for the Foundation's Bylaws to ensure continued relevance and alignment with best practices.

**Vice Chair David called for a motion to approve the by law governance resolution for the Chicago State Foundation. Trustee John Robak moved to approve the resolution. Trustee Cheryl Watkins seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*  
*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

**Vice Chair David then called for a motion to approve DeAndria Anderson, Manika Turnball and Jason Pughs as Directors for the Chicago State Foundation Board. Trustee John Robak moved to approve the resolution. Trustee Cheryl Watkins seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*  
*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

**Vice Chair David moved that the Board convene into Executive Session to discuss Employment and Real Estate Matters. Trustee Jason Quiara seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*  
*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

**Return to Open Session**

**Vice Chair David moved to reconvene into Open session. Trustee Dixie Adams seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*  
*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

The board took action in the executive session, which required action in the open session.

The board received a resolution regarding University Village 95.

**Vice Chair David asked for a motion to accept the resolution authorizing the President to initiate a public-private partnership pre-development process and enter into related agreements to construct the University Village 95<sup>th</sup> street housing and commercial project? Trustee John Robak moved to accept the resolution. Trustee Michelle Gooze-Miller seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*  
*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

**Vice Chair David asked for a motion to approve the Minutes Lawfully Closed Resolution. Trustee Cheryl Watkins moved to approve the resolution. Trustee Gooze-Miller seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*  
*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

**Vice Chair David asked for a motion to approve the 2026 Board of Trustee meeting dates (March 23, May 18, June 22, September 14, and December 7) listed on the agenda. The Board Retreat will be on Monday, September 14, 2026, immediately after the Board Meeting. All Full Board Meetings will begin at 9:00 a.m. Trustee Michelle Gooze-Miller moved to approve the 2026 meeting dates. Trustee Cheryl Watkins seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*  
*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

### **Election of Officers**

Vice Chair David called for Mr. Jason Carter to conduct the election of board officers. Mr. Carter called for a motion to open the nominations for Chair of the Board of Trustees, Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees, and Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

**Trustee John Robak moved to open the nominations for the election of officers. Trustee Michelle Gooze-Miller 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*

*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

Mr. Carter then asked for nominations for each of the open positions.

Trustee John Robak nominated Chair Andrea Zopp for Chair of the Board of Trustees, Trustee Angelique David for Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees and Trustee Cheryl Watkins for Secretary of the Board of Trustees. There were no other nominations.

Mr. Carter closed the nominations on the officers for the Board of Trustees and asked for a roll call vote for the election of Andrea Zopp as Chair of the Board of Trustees, Trustee Angelique David as Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees and Trustee Cheryl Watkins for Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*  
*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

The elections were closed and the elected officers were congratulated.

**Vice Chair David moved to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Dixie Adams seconded the motion.**

*Trustee Adams-Yes*  
*Trustee David -Yes*  
*Trustee Gooze-Miller-Yes*  
*Trustee Quiara-Yes*  
*Trustee Robak-Yes*  
*Trustee Watkins-Yes*  
*Trustee Zopp -Yes*

**The motion passed unanimously: Ayes, 7 Nays, 0**

*The December 17, 2025, Board of Trustees meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.*