

KEAN UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**MINUTES – PUBLIC MEETING****MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2026****4 p.m. DAVE GIBBONS CONFERENCE CENTER, KEAN HALL**

PRESENT: Steve Fastook, Chair; Linda Lewis, Vice Chair, Bertha Little-Mathews, Rajeev Malhotra, Alan Markman, Ada Morell, A. Todd Mayo, Matthew McDermott, Ed Oatman, Dr. Lamont Repollet, President; Cylia Blackmon, student trustee; Jane Howlett, alternate student trustee; Board Secretary Audrey Kelly

VIA CONFERENCE CALL: Dr. Thomas Bistocchi, John Kean, Jr., David Spevack, Barbara Sobel, Rick Torres

OTHERS PRESENT: President Andres Acebo, Dr. Itunu Balogun, Dr. David Birdsell, Michelle Freestone, Kate Gallagher, Kristin Ganley, Dr. Sancha Gray, Jerome Hatfield, Kellie LeDet, Dr. Michael Salvatore, Dr. Joseph Youngblood

Chair Fastook called the meeting to order at approximately 4:05 p.m.

1. **ROLL CALL**

Ms. Kelly called the roll and reported a quorum present.

2. **STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE – OPEN PUBLIC MEETINGS ACT**

Ms. Kelly read the statement of compliance and reported the meeting was properly advertised and in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

3. **CHAIR'S COMMENTS**

Chair Fastook welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for joining today's session. He remarked that he continues to be amazed at all the University is accomplishing in record time and asked everyone to give President Repollet a round of applause.

4. **PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

President Repollet welcomed everyone to the public meeting, noting it reflects the shared commitment the Kean community has to continued growth and success.

He said the academic year is moving quickly and progress on R2 initiatives remains focused and impressive. Construction and redevelopment is now underway at 1085 Morris Avenue, a facility that will be far more than a signature facility. It represents a transformational step forward in reshaping and expanding our research mission, he said, and will support innovation in critical areas ranging from artificial intelligence and cybersecurity, to cell and genetic therapies.

He gave a brief update on the progress of the merge with NJCU. The university is moving both strategically and cooperatively forward with plans to establish Kean Jersey City as a unique hub of academics and innovation, he said. He also thanked NJCU President Andy Acebo for being an excellent partner in this effort and recognized him in the public audience.

President Repollet noted that Kean recently filed a comprehensive response with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education regarding the merger, and is optimistic about securing their approval later this month. He asked Vice President Neva Lozada, head of the SADI office and Kean's MSCHE liaison, to stand and be recognized for leading this work.

Financially, the President reported that the University remains strong. Interest from prospective students is at an all-time high, however, he cautioned that the university must continue to operate prudently and efficiently. New Jersey Governor Mikie Sherrill last week shared that the state faces a \$3 billion deficit for FY27, and suggested there would be major cuts across the board. The Governor's budget address is March 10th and the President said he will provide an update after the budget is introduced.

The President then introduced three separate presentations, all focused on student success and retention. First, Provost David Birdsell and Dr. Bridie Chapman and their colleagues shared a presentation on the new General Education curriculum and its progress. The new approach is demonstrating success, and a student who participated in the pilot program shared her experiences.

The President then introduced Senior Vice President Kate Gallagher to introduce a new initiative with Braven, which was focused on extending learning beyond the classroom and connect our students directly to career pathways of opportunity. By aligning academic preparation with career readiness, the project focuses on ensuring that Kean graduates are not only well educated but well positioned for success. The President and CEO of Braven, Aimee Eubanks Davis and her colleague Samantha Crockett, for the presentation.

Before the final presentation, the President briefly addressed Kean's global engagement. He noted that as a world-class university — and as a global university committed to expanding access and opportunity to communities around the world — recent events in the Middle East remind us that we must remain cognizant and conscious of what it means to operate in a rapidly changing global environment.

He said the university's responsibility is to balance vision with prudence — to continue building global pathways for our students while ensuring their safety and well-being above all else.

He then introduced Vice President Dr. Itunu Balogun to share the highlights of a January 2026 student TraveLearn to the UAE and Dubai. The presentation included an overview by Dr. Muhammed Hassan, a video and highlights from several students who participated.

The President thanked everyone for their participation today and wished everyone a restful and fun Spring Break next week.

5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The Board received public comments from the following speaker: Denise Anderson, who serves as the University Senate representative to the Board of Trustees.

6. **ITEM OF THE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

Trustee Morell noted the committee met to review various items including the resolution now before the board. She then moved the following item:

- 6.1 Resolution Amending Resolution #25-06-23-2962 Designating The Star Ledger/NJ.Com and The Home News Tribune/ MyCentralJersey.Com as the Official News Media to Receive Advance Notice of the Meetings of the Kean University Board Of Trustees for Academic Year 2025-2026

Chair Fastook asked for questions on the resolution. The item was seconded and approved by the Board.

7. **ITEMS OF THE FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE COMMITTEE**

Trustee Oatman noted the committee met to review various items including the resolutions now before the board. He then moved the following item:

- 7.1 Resolution Authorizing the Waiver of Public Bidding and Advertising For Transportation Services in FY27

<u>Transportation Services</u>	<u>Not to Exceed</u>
Lyft, Inc.	\$840,000

- 7.2 Resolution Amending Resolution #25-09-15-3007 Extending the Contract Awarded to DLS Contracting Inc. for Snow Removal Services (Bid No. K20-1-6-1)

Chair Fastook asked for questions on the resolutions. Each item was seconded and approved by the Board.

8. **ITEMS OF THE LEGAL AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Trustee Mayo noted the committee met to review various items including the personnel actions now before the board. He then moved the following items:

- 8.1 Personnel Actions—Administrative
- 8.2 Resolution Authorizing the Waiver of Public Advertising and Bidding for Information Technology Services in FY26

<u>Information Tech</u>	<u>Not to Exceed</u>
Incline Alchemy Inc.	\$550,000

Chair Fastook asked for questions on the personnel actions and the resolution. Each item was seconded and approved by the Board. Chair Fastook noted the bid waivers on today’s agenda were all reviewed and approved by counsel as authorized uses of the bid waiver statute.

9. **ITEMS OF THE STUDENT AND UNIVERSITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

Trustee Lewis, Committee Chair, noted the committee met to discuss a number of items now on the Board’s agenda and to receive updates on various student affairs, athletics and enrollment matters. Trustee Lewis moved the following resolutions for Board consideration:

- 9.1 Resolution Authorizing the Waiver of Public Bidding and Advertising For Advertising and Recruitment Services in FY27

<u>Advertising, Recruitment</u>	<u>Not to Exceed</u>
Outfront Media	\$610,000
Clear Channel Outdoor	\$205,000

- 9.2 Resolution Authorizing the Expansion of the Professional Development Internship Fund (PDIF) for Relocation Support

The Chair opened the floor for questions on the resolutions. The resolutions were moved and seconded, and approved by the full Board.

10. **ITEMS OF THE EXTERNAL REALTIONS COMMITTEE**

Trustee Little- Mathews noted the committee met to review various items including the personnel actions now before the board. She then moved the following items:

- 10.1 Resolution Authorizing a Grant Application to the NJ Department of State’s Office of Faith-Based Initiatives
- 10.2. Resolution Authorizing the Waiver of Public Advertising and Bidding For the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance in FYs26-29

<u>Professional Services/Sole Source</u>	<u>Not to Exceed</u>
NJ Environmental Justice Alliance	\$1,000,000 (total fy26-29)

The Chair opened the floor for questions on the resolutions. The resolutions were moved and seconded, and approved by the full Board.

11. ITEM OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE

Trustee Fastook, Committee Chair, noted the committee met to discuss several items, including the annual audit. He noted that for the fourth year in a row the University received a clean audit with no major deficiencies. He applauded the President and the CFO, and their staff, for their hard work in this area. He moved the following resolution:

- 11.1 Resolution Accepting the Draft FY25 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for Kean University Prepared by PFK O’Connor Davies

Chair Fastook asked if the Board had any questions on the resolution. The resolution was seconded and approved by the full Board.

12. ITEMS OF THE ACADEMIC POLICY AND PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

Trustee Morell noted the committee met and discussed various items, including the action items now before the Board for consideration. She moved each of the following items:

- 12.1 Personnel Actions—Faculty Report
- 12.2 First Year Faculty Reappointments
- 12.3 Faculty Reappointments
- 12.4 Faculty Promotions
- 12.5 Resolution Authorizing the Adoption of New General Education (GE) Curriculum for Kean University Students
- 12.6 Resolution Authorizing the Waiver of Public Bidding and Advertising in FY26, FY27

Information Technology

Waters
Exxat Inc.

Not to Exceed

\$230,000 (fy26)
\$162,000 (fy26 & fy27)

Professional Consulting

McAllister & Quinn
McAllister & Quinn

Not to Exceed

\$150,000 (fy26)
\$125,000 (fy27)

The Chair asked if there were questions on each item. Each motion was seconded and approved by the Board.

13. ITEMS OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Trustee McDermott reported the committees met jointly to discuss various items related to university finances. He moved each of the following items to the full Board for consideration:

- 13.1 Resolution Recognizing and Confirming the January 24 – 30, 2026 Declaration of an Emergency at Kean University Due to Freezing Temperatures
- 13.2 Resolution Approving Kean University Institutionally Funded Scholarships for FY27
- 13.3 Resolution Approving Kean University FY27 Institutionally Directed Scholarships Held by the Kean University Foundation Inc.
- 13.4 Resolution Authorizing the Expansion of the Living Abroad Scholarship for Kean Students Seeking to Study for a Semester Abroad
- 13.5 Resolution Authorizing the Waiver of Public Advertising and Bidding for FY26

<u>Professional Services</u>	<u>Not to Exceed</u>
WithumSmith+Brown	\$250,000
Choose NJ	\$200,000 (confirming waiver)
Greater Talent Network/ dba UTA Speakers	\$150,000

- 13.6 Resolution Authorizing an Amendment to the Waiver of Public Advertising and Bidding for FY26

<u>Information Tech</u>	<u>Not to Exceed</u>
Ellucian Company LLC	\$1,700,000 for FY26
(Total FY24-28 contract increases to \$8,466,666)	

- 13.7 Resolution Amending Resolution 24-09-16-2890 Authorizing Kean University to Pursue Short-Term Leasing for Copiers

Chair Fastook asked if the Board had any questions on any of the resolutions or bid waivers recommended by the Finance Committee. Each resolution was seconded and approved by the Board.

14. **RESOLUTION ADVISING THE PUBLIC OF A CLOSED MEETING**
Ms. Kelly read the resolution advising of a closed session. A motion was made, seconded and the Board unanimously approved the resolution.
15. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**
The Board entered Executive Session at approximately 5:25 p.m.
16. **RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION**
The Board returned to Public Session at approximately 7:15 p.m.
17. **FINAL APPROVAL OF MINUTES –MARCH 2, 2026**
Chair Fastook requested a motion for approval of the minutes of the March 2, 2026 public meeting. A motion was made and seconded, and the board approved the minutes.
16. **ADJOURNMENT**
There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:20 p.m.