

Trustee Brian Mosallam Town Hall, February 1, 2018

Real-Time Transcript

[Please Read Introduction for Important Contextual Details & Disclaimers]

February 6, 2018

Dear MSU Community:

Following the distillation and synthesis from Trustee Brian Mosallam's Town Hall held on February 1, 2018—which detailed the community's identification of the problematic power structure at MSU and a call for disruption and change (<https://hdfs.msu.edu/node/380>)--we are providing the real-time summary of the community's voices. The real-time summary was displayed on the big screen during the town hall as participants shared their stories. It is not a word-for-word transcript, but rather an attempt to capture as best we could the ideas, thoughts and feelings that were expressed in real-time by the MSU community to Trustee Mosallam.

Given the need to shift from a semi-structured format for the town hall to one that was more free-flowing to be as inclusive as possible of the more than 700 attendees, the real-time summary will inevitably be imperfect, but we felt it was important to share what we were able to record as stories were shared. We also realize that the real-time transcript is imperfect in that not all those who wished to speak were able to so, either because we could not circulate the microphones fast enough or because individuals could not get into the town hall due to room capacity. We did not anticipate that 3,000 to 5,000 members of the MSU community would show for the event and we regret that the space could not hold the power of all those who attempted to attend. The strong showing for Trustee Mosallam's Town Hall is evidence that the community had many stories to share.

We deliberated mindfully on how and when to share the real-time summary, including the legalities of doing so. Upon conferring with legal counsel, as the town hall was a public forum, we are proceeding now with the release to student organizations, namely ASMSU and COGS. However, with our release comes some important considerations.

First, in order to protect the identity of survivors and people with vulnerable institutional positions at MSU, we redacted personally-identifying information, and in each instance there is a notation that such information was redacted. We did not make any additional revisions to alter the content or grammar. Even with our redacting personally-identifying information, we realize that our sharing of the real-time transcript could be interpreted as an exploitation of voices. In response to the community's call

for transparency, our intent, rather, was not to exploit, but rather to hold space for the voices that have been otherwise silenced. As well, in the interest of protecting the identity of survivors and people with vulnerable institutional positions within MSU, our redacting information was done to elevate and honor the privilege of survivors and those with other exploited status; to ensure any revelation of identity is their choice, not ours.

Second, the real-time summary includes the telling of trauma and pain. Please keep in mind before reading it that doing so may be disturbing or re-traumatizing. If you need support, we encourage you to reach out to the following resources:

MSU Sexual Assault Program: <http://endrape.msu.edu/>

MSU Safe Place: <http://safeplace.msu.edu/>

MSU Counseling and Psychiatric Services: <https://caps.msu.edu/>

MSU Couple and Family Therapy Clinic: <https://hdfs.msu.edu/clinic>

MSU Office of Institutional Equity: <https://oie.msu.edu/>

MSU Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence

Program: <http://studentlife.msu.edu/sarv>

National Sexual Assault Hotline: <https://www.rainn.org/about-national-sexual-assault-telephone-hotline>

National Domestic Violence Hotline: <http://www.thehotline.org/>

In addition to the verbal comments made during the Town Hall, many people submitted written comments or sent them to us prior to the event. We have not yet had time to add those to the summary, but in the interests of transparency we felt it was best to share the verbal comments made during the Town Hall as soon as possible. These additional written comments will be compiled and provided to the student organizations for circulation, including ASMSU and COGS. Personally-identifying information will be removed from the compilation.

We thank everyone who shared their experiences and emotions with Trustee Mosallam, and we thank him for listening. This is just the beginning of what we envision will be more open and transparent communication among all members of our community.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Nawyn

Town Hall Moderator

Center for Gender in a Global Context & Dept. of Sociology

Amy Bonomi

Town Hall Transcriber

Dept. of Human Development & Family Studies

****TRANSCRIPT****

I am from the sexual assault crisis team. I want you to listen to survivors and hear their stories. Extend an invitation to hear survivor stories. Survivors need a forum to share their stories.

Survivors' words are not just words on a paper. How are we to trust the board to provide students with accurate information? We deserve to have our trust earned back not the other way around.

MSU has a gangrene rotting on the inside. Unless hurt and wounds of all members of community and rot of administration is exposed to light and scrutiny that gangrene will remain. Get rid of the gangrene. Hide nothing. We need to rid the rot.

I don't feel safe on campus. I am a white guy. Sometimes on game night I experience young reckless behavior, car broken into, etc. Massive culture and gangrene. Mixed messages in op eds in the press. We can't scapegoat one person, e.g., the president. I don't have confidence in the board. It's a football culture, big culture.

I'm a freshman at MSU. Only school I wanted to go to. I am considering transferring bc I don't want to give one more cent to the institution. It doesn't take into consideration all of what we've been saying. President decision blindsided us. I would like student representation on Board.

I've been at MSU for over a year. It's clear the institution has failed its students failed to put them first. It privileged a doctor over its students. We are living in a culture that makes it impossible to live as a student. Students are not seen as first. It chooses a President for political reasons. We are in a transition time to move it forward. I am ashamed that this has happened. I am here because of the students. This is the only institution I have been in that doesn't put students first. **YOU HAVE TO FIGHT THE FIGHT.** We can only fight so much.

I am a survivor of Larry Nassar. I feel more support from the students and faculty and nothing from the Board. What does it take for you to step down? This is the biggest case in US history. What does it take? We have been in the dark for too long. I want a change. I don't want apologies, I don't want your money. I want a change.

MSU is the only school I applied to in [YEAR], came all the way from [STATE]. Got UG, grad degrees, work for [DEPT]. I am a victim of child sexual abuse. It took me 30 years to be able to talk about my experience. This place is revictimizing me all over. No one is listening. I work with thousands of people on campus who are trying to make this better. They are giving me hope. Thousands of people are asking why we don't have mandatory diversity and inclusion trainings. Adults have forgotten how. Please allow us to behave authentically and honor each other's humanity.

I want to respond to Engler being involved in any way. I recall in general that there was a large company. After Engler retires, he is working for that company. The other thing is Engler's involvement with DeVos. This man is cold, arrogant. Once his feet are dug into soil, we have problems. We need real credibility.

I am a student on campus. With the Board's action, I feel you have assaulted me all over by electing Engler. I would not feel safe on campus as a woman. All of the survivors have to wake up. I hope you are haunted by survivor stories. I hope you act on your promises and you haven't come together to support us. I don't believe anything is going to change.

I'm a fourth year medical student. Wanted to be doc at age 8. It has been very hard over the last few weeks. It has been hard to see patients, I'm being asked when I'm ready to be real doctor. It is hard to make change when those at the top don't want to make change. It is hard to see survivors and not be able to give them the answer that we are trying to change things.

I have two questions. At what point as the Board will you take accountability and leave? Will the Board include the counsel of racial ethnic student groups?

I'm an engineer and process is important to me. How has administration earned its trust? Decisions without the consent of faculty, staff and students is tyranny.

I'm a grad of MSU. I have two sons here. I don't want to give another dime to MSU. My daughter said the only good thing in all of this is that you've stopped bugging me to go to MSU. I'm not a fan of Engler. I'm appalled at the process we've done to choose Engler. I am grateful you are here. So

thank you. I will give message for other 7 folks. I ask that you move quickly to get a new permanent president that involves deciding vote of faculty.

I am a PhD student in [DEPT]. I am black student, black woman, one of [REDACTED] ancestry. I am not honored to be woman here. I am not honored to be a black woman here. It is partially why we are here. We are here for transparency. We have never practiced it on this campus. Need captain to guide us. You never saw fit to have a national call for president, you decided to move without transparency and input. We are sinking. No one practices transparency on this campus. AAAS needs to be a funded department. Now is the time to do something about it. We have women on campus that you do nothing to protect. You leave them looming. What are we going to do? Not the time to play politics, remove Engler and do a national call for president. Women and people of color are hurting, an inclusive environment is needed on campus.

I am a student worker in [COLLEGE]. How can you expect me to do my job when I don't have answer for how to keep prospective student safe?

I am an MSU alum 1980. I can't speak to the abuse women suffer. Sexual abuse is about power. The cover up is also about power. I would say to gentleman here to resist temptation to cover up. Cover up was the true crime. The true cover up will hurt. We need to come clean. Make these women whole. Only the truth can do that.

You know why Engler is a bad choice. You need to stand up and say why Engler is not the right choice. We have so many faculty who can run this university. There will be protests, we will call for whole board to resign. We need a university that represents us.

Professor in [DEPT] since 1999. Engler should be out by tomorrow. The biggest sexual harassment suit for women who were incarcerated was covered up. Trustees ignored wishes of faculty. This is not going to stop. I have never been engaged in politics, but this administration must go. They rigged the whole appointment of the new president. All upper administration should go.

I am a second year master's student. I love every black and brown body in this room. I want to send love to all survivors in room. As a man, I want to

watch the space I take up so women can have it. Former [STUDENT LEADER ROLE], we had members of student government who have a vote. Why is there only one Board member here? Every single Board member should have been here if you care. Give students a voice on the Board. We need a healer as president, we need a black woman president at this institution.

I am student and I am on diversity and inclusion board. Women have not felt safe on this campus. When is the last time you have heard anyone on campus support victims? Students don't feel listened to. I am paying way too much money to be another victim.

I have been here for 5 years. My friend got sexually assaulted and the university said there is nothing they can do about it. Abuser wasn't a student and could continue to roam campus.

I am a junior and work for [REDACT]. When we hear the phrase, I don't feel safe, we jump on board. In this room, we've heard the phrase multiple times in response. If we as students are taught this, why aren't our leaders doing it? When we send students to counseling, we have to wait a month. We can't wait that long for services. That tuition should be going towards what students need.

What I would most like from the Board is to stop seeing us as dollars signs. See us as dollars signs to be retained. Transparency sucks. Engler doesn't have a good track record for dealing with sexual assault.

I first came to MSU in 1961 from [REDACT]. This establishment is a political rather than an academic entity. It votes for money and for influence. It is clear this is not working. If you want to win your case, not lose track for what young women fought for, don't allow your energy to be directed elsewhere. Focus on these women and fix it. Engler is one who works with the insiders, you don't want that to continue.

What was thought process behind it? Transparency is problematic, inclusion is problematic. I voted for you, you will not be on the Board next time.

I am a third year here. I want you to look me in my eyes, look into my eyes. MSU wasn't my first choice, it was my last. My parents forced me to come to MSU. I am woman on this campus. I am black woman on campus. I

want you to understand that I do not feel safe on the campus ever, since my freshman year. I am an [REDACT]. I worked with [REDACT]. My sophomore year I heard of a sexual harassment claim against professor and nothing was done. Nothing has changed in last 30 years except tuition prices.

I am fourth year. I am immediate [STUDENT LEADER ROLE]. I am a survivor of childhood molestation. The last two weeks have been especially difficult. All those feelings returned, it's rough for me and my friends. I love you [survivors], fuck Nassar. I saw anguish on your face for voting for Engler, you expressed you were outnumbered but you still voted yes. I am disappointed. We all belong here. You are the pillar of strength, you voted yes. You shoved your chair into the table. Stormed off with conviction. I know you regret your decision to stand united with dysfunction. Engler is wrong for MSU, eroded funding for K-12, refused to allow investigators of sexual assault in MI women's prison, and defunded mental health funding. Lots of people are angry at you. What were you thinking [by voting for Engler]? I know you know how it feels. This is atrocious. I will never look at you the same again.

I am an alumni and staff at MSU. I am a fan of MSU. I am devastated Spartan because of what you have done to women and the community. We can't see our way out because of your love of power. You have power to discuss things with faculty, power to do what you want. If you love power so much, take the power you have and make change. Please allow us to move forward by stepping down.

I am advocate for survivors. Could Engler be worse choice? Fact that Engler failed to protect women. How can I as an advocate tell survivors that this institution can take care of them? MSU shouldn't be sorry, IT SHOULD BE BETTER. Being better is resigning.

I am a [STUDENT REP]. One of the trustees told us we would hear us about Nassar, but you still gave President a raise. How can we restrain us from saying fuck you when that is what you are saying to survivors? We have 8 SAP counselors for 50K students. There are as many Board members as there are counselors.

I am a junior. I had to wait a month to see a therapist, didn't know my rights, no advocates, felt like rote process for reporting. It is very much a

political atmosphere, but you should be consulting who know more than you do. You haven't fostered environment where people feel they are heard and cared about. CJ on MSU's campus has one of the top programs in US, several are researching violence against women. I contacted four professors for information for a forum I was participating in. Within 12 hours, the faculty I reached out had responded to me to provide information about what to talk about at the forum.

I am a student leader and first generation student. I have question for Board – how fragile is your masculinity? I see so many brave women in this room who deserve to tell the Board and the Board should be here listening and then acting. I refuse to applaud you for doing your damn job. This is your responsibility, every woman. Do you know how many times we have had Town Halls and you did not include brown and black people? My question is when men will be held accountable for their action regardless of status. We are tired. My parents didn't fight this fight for us to sit here in this room. I haven't been brave enough but all of the women in the Nassar case taught me bravery – have had 2 assault experiences on this campus. Men refused to take courses about sexual assault, but constantly holding parties where they blame women for being too intoxicated. I didn't take the case to court because the police didn't believe my story when I brought it forward. I wasn't brave enough 3 years ago but I'm brave enough now. You become an accomplice when you do not speak up for your peers. We need to do better as a collective.

I study [REDACT] engineering. Every day I wake up and am asked to do my job as a student. When I don't do my job, there are consequences. When you have not done your job, you are not held accountable. You have failed to do your job. Why am I held to a higher standard than you are as an elected official? You have failed every human being in this room. You don't deserve to get paid. You have a hand in every individual who is hurting on this campus. You deserve to not set foot on this campus. You have failed us. I will not recommend any female engineer to come to MSU unless we get someone to do their job.

I am tired of not being heard as survivor. Change Title IX program. If you can't identify serial predator, how will you identify anyone on this campus?

Respect your victims. Only 2% of victims are making false allegations. I am shaking with anger. Fix Title IX office and OIE.

I am a senior at MSU. Standing up for the right thing can be hard when you are representing a wide range of students. You have a lot to reflect on and to change. Students are number one priority and we don't feel like it. It is time to resign because you are not very good at your job.

I am a professor in [DEPT]. I came in 2009. Problems we have are part of problem a culture of privilege. Culture that blames and shames victims, where victims question themselves. We are fooling ourselves if we said this is only a problem at MSU, it is a problem in all of society. There are many people who want to make change on campus. We would be remiss if we believed this couldn't happen elsewhere. I ask that we not give up on MSU. Let's not forget the positive. Thank you for bravely giving us the chance to reflect.

I am extending my personal thanks for opportunity to talk with you. I am not in a marginalized group, straight white man. I am fan of MSU, junior here. My heart here has been here a long time. This is my home and it hurts to see home hurting. Please take back to your board, I am here speaking for the women in my life. I have a friend who have been raped on this campus. Take back to board that we don't stand for assault and we hope that you take a stand. We need to have Spartan students first, need a voice. Students have been making voices heard but haven't been heard by Board. What can we students do to make a difference? I am going to do everything I can to make it better, most of this room committed.

I am a freshman here. Both parents went to MSU. 1 in 4 women get raped here. I come here my freshman here and I am not safe. I am more than 1800 miles from home, what do I do if I get sexually assaulted? You won't take my word for it if it happens to me? I should feel safe on this campus. I have to consider what I wear, what parties I go to. There are people who left because they didn't think they could get into this town hall.

I am in the middle of 3 generations of Spartans. As an attorney, I can tell you why Nassar got away with what he did. It is wrong for MSU to tell victim that her word is not enough. Promotions passed over, people with fewer peer-reviewed publications who got more money; that's how the administrator rules work. Rules don't apply to everybody. If they want to

protect their good friend Larry Nassar, they will. They have great lawyers here. This is a very political institution, rules don't apply to everybody. We can make the rules apply to everybody, really great institutions do so. As Americans, we are nation of laws. I heard rumors about students striking and faculty striking. If MSU doesn't want to change, maybe everybody should just strike. This is just as important as Vietnam protests if not more.

I am President of [REDACT]. We voted for resignation of Engler and Board. I volunteer as a crisis interventionist, including with those experiencing sexual assault. Empathy is about asking someone how they feel, not assuming what they feel. You don't ??? to survivors and Spartan community as a whole. Now we have President who raises his hand when student tries to speak. Empathize with us, take action to fix university to make sure this never happens again.

I am junior in [COLLEGE], important to reflect intersectionality including experiences of minority women who have been speaking tonight. Minority women on campus do not feel safe. This is directed towards Jessica Norris: how is our training helping survivors on campus when it failed to protect victims such as for Nassar? What change needs to be implemented? You've taken steps with Title IX and administration as a whole.

I am a graduating senior. What MSU has taught me is that I don't matter. There is never a response when I raise a concern. Voting Engler in is an insult to students, to survivors. You endorse someone who doesn't care about assault. You don't care until you take responsibility, especially when only one board member is here. This is not bedside reading. I appreciate your presence. But at the end of the day, you voted for Engler. In most of my classes, I have to stand by myself. As much as you say you are here for us, is your loyalty with us? You showed us that you don't give a fuck about us. You didn't give us a chance in your choice of Engler. I am going to MSU for grad school and I regret it every single day.

I am fourth year [REDACT] engineer. I came here to listen of the beautiful voices that spoke their truth. I didn't think it was worth my time to talk with you. I could do anything and you wouldn't listen, it would fall on deaf ears. The importance of my voice is one I taught to myself. I am here bc I am frustrated, tired. Waiting to speak for an hour. I am exhausted. Victims

are truly exhausted. It kills me that you went with the majority. The majority is not correct, to vote in Engler. Sexual assault victims have not been listened to. You are taught that you do not deserve a place. The questions I have for you are those of basic humanity. You should have said so that you didn't agree with rest of Board. This system is corrupt. I am here to speak to those who showed up here. Speak your voice until the last day. Your resignation should definitely be in order. If you think it was the right thing to follow the status quo, problem when good men do nothing.

I am a senior and I will be attending law school. I am done with MSU and the culture. I want to focus on campus culture and student perpetrated assault. Only 7% of 700 plus reports, xxx? MSU has a serious problem. It is not that MSU has a bigger problem, it is that we are not doing anything. Proactively prevent these reports coming in. Who is creating this environment? Greek Life plays a huge role in environment. Greek [Fraternities] lure women in with alcohol and hot guys. We need to stop Greeks from hosting alcohol-infused parties. Other universities have done other things to change Greek Life. If we want to change campus culture, look at who's doing this. As a sexual assault survivor affected by Greek Life, I respectfully ask that something is done. It has to stop.

I am a senior studying [REDACT] engineering. Are you exhausted? It takes a lot of courage to stand up here. When we leave here, what are your really going to do? How can I trust you are going to use the information we shared and do something? You're leaning up against the wall. If you're tired, maybe you should have listened when they first came forward. We deserve something. We need more, we need action. Resignation, etc.

I am a [STUDENT]. I want to say something about OIE specifically. We need to shore up services, only 3 investigators investigating cases. Wait times are not okay. We need to change policies. I have been raped [REDACT NUMBER OF TIMES] and stalked. OIE said I didn't have enough information. I cannot get out of bed. All MSU wants from me is my money; I am an international student.

I am representative of [COLLEGE] and member of [STUDENT ORG]. This is a conversation that many students have been a part of for a long time. The closer I get to this the more it disturbs me. Thank you and I hope this

is the first of many conversations. Your appointment of Engler with minimal input from MSU community is in direct conflict with promises. I am also an undergraduate PLA. Mandatory reporting procedures need to be reformed. How am I supposed to answer questions about whether women are safe on campus? I want to thank all of the strong women in this room and who have come forward. This change started with you and it will not end any time soon. I look forward to you stepping up to the plate or stepping out.

I am a grad student in [COLLEGE]. I know how hard and exhausting this is going to be. I want to talk with you as someone in [COLLEGE]. I want you to go back to when you aspired to be in this career, your degree. Was it to go for who has the most power and the biggest voice? I have gone through OIE when someone confided in me. I don't have confidence that it will be handled effectively. I don't know how to handle it. I will stay and work to fight to make this better. You need to look in the mirror and asked if you earned that right. If not, you need to step down. Don't give us words, give us actions.

I wrote a poem. I am over it. I was sexually assaulted on my own campus. I don't even like boys. I have gone to MSU for three and a half black ass years. This is our school, we own this room, we don't have it only until 9:45. When does it end, when does it feel okay to be safe, I still have classes. You don't listen to shit. I didn't even know I was assaulted until a few weeks ago. I can't trust the Trustees. I don't want to have you all here only til 9:45, want you here til this is fixed. Happy Black History Month.