

To: Members of the Board of Trustees

From: Christopher A. Ruhl, Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, and Treasurer

Date: December 1, 2025

Re: Contract >\$2m. Approval of Fort Wayne dining services agreement with Fresh Ideas

Background

Purdue Fort Wayne operates three on-campus dining locations open to all students, faculty, staff, and community members. A fourth location will open in Fall 2026 to offer service closer to on-campus housing options. Although originally focused on lunch services, the dining operation has expanded in recent years to support the needs of the campus. Additionally, the campus recently began including a meal plan with all on-campus housing contracts. The number of weekly meals included in this plan will increase to four in 2026-27. Management and operation of the dining and catering services is contracted to a third-party operator, with Fresh Ideas Management LLC (“Fresh Ideas”) being the currently contracted service provider.

With the increase in locations, operating hours and meals served, the campus issued a Request For Proposals (RFP) in June 2025 to five potential service providers with the intention of entering a multi-year contract for services. A thorough review process, including onsite meetings, identified Fresh Ideas as the preferred provider for a long-term contract.

Request

Your approval of a new Fort Wayne dining services contract with Fresh Ideas is respectfully requested. The contract will have a maximum term not to exceed 10.5 years and is structured to include reimbursement of the provider’s cost of business (labor and cost of goods sold) along with an annual management fee and commission on catering sales. Annual costs are projected to be \$3M in the first full year of the agreement.

Within the terms of the proposed contract, Fresh Ideas commits to providing an upfront capital investment to cover costs associated with equipping the new dining location and refreshing equipment in existing locations. Additional commitments include another capital investment in the fourth year of the contract and annual contributions to campus nutrition programs, including the Food Insecurity Fund.

The contract may be terminated at any time with 90 days notice, provided Purdue compensates the vendor for the undepreciated balance of the capital investment if Purdue initiates a termination.