

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: August 9, 2021

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vicki Bingham, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Mr. Rick Munroe, Dr. Andy Novobilski, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Mr. Jamie Rutledge, Ms. Nakikke Wallace, Dr. Andrew Wegmann, Mr. William Young (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: None

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on August 9, 2021. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Novobilski and seconded by Dr. Lovin, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on August 2, 2021.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from last week. President LaForge participated in the weekly conference call with Commissioner Al Rankins and the Institutional Executive Officers to discuss COVID-19 related issues. President LaForge met with Mr. Young for a recap on the SGA Retreat and a discussion on SGA's priorities for the year. The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce held their monthly Board of Director's meeting. The Chamber Board is working diligently to bring economic development to the area. President LaForge resumed filming his Statesmen Insider for the Fall semester with a segment with Mr. Young regarding the new academic year. The BPAC held their Annual Membership Reception and the 2021-22 season was revealed last week. The Panhellenic Council's Formal New Member Recruitment began on Saturday, and 48 women are attending parties on the second night. The university's summer work schedule ends on August 6.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. He completed several walk throughs last week. Cain-Tatum Hall and Fugler-Hammett Hall are 95% complete, and it will be final upon the completion of the roofing project. Mr. Rutledge will participate in one final walk through for Lawler-Harkins Hall tomorrow. Foundation Hall will be cleaned and ready for students this week. Mr. Young has worked with Mr. Rutledge on securing a space for a beach volleyball court. With the approval of Mr. Rutledge, Dr. Lovin, and Mr. Finley, the volleyball court will be located at the back of Foundation Hall. Mr. Rutledge is helping Mr. Young secure quotes for the project.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The football team reported to campus last week, and they have practiced four times as of this morning. The team will participate in a scrimmage on Saturday morning. The men's and women's soccer teams, cross country team, and cheerleading squad reported today. The renovation of the soccer field will be finished by the end of the week.

- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. President LaForge will participate in the weekly conference call with Commissioner Rankins and the Institutional Executive Officers on Tuesday to discuss COVID-19 related issues. The GSC Board of Directors meet on Tuesday. Dr. Lovin shared with Cabinet members the schedule of New Student Week beginning on Thursday. New students will move into the residence halls on Thursday followed by a New Student BBQ and Pinning. Student Life will host a showing of Friday the 13th on the Quadrangle. A Glo Party will be held at GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi on Saturday, and students will have a walk-through of campus on Sunday. GRAMMY Museum Board of Directors meet on Thursday morning. Academic Affairs hosts Convocation on Thursday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. in the BPAC where President LaForge will provide his State of the University address. Returning students will move in on Sunday.

CABINET TOPIC

Purchasing Laws Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge distributed to Cabinet members a document titled “Quick Review of State Purchasing Laws”, and he provided Cabinet members with a brief overview of Mississippi’s purchasing laws. Delta State’s Office of Procurement promotes the objectives of Delta State University by providing administrators, faculty, and staff members necessary supplies, equipment, and services. The primary responsibility of the Office of Procurement is to obtain supplies, equipment, and services with the objective that they will be available in the right quantity and quality, at the right price, from the right source, and in a timely and organized manner that will provide for essential accountability of Delta State University expenditures. The Office of Procurement is a Certified Purchasing Office — more than 50% of the office has completed and passed the State Procurement Exam. The Office of Procurement can assist with all purchases and how best to obtain purchases through competitive bid contracts, negotiated contracts, statewide agency contracts, cooperative contracts, sole source procurement, etc. Mr. Rutledge reminded Cabinet members that a gift from a vendor (including food/meals) must be valued at less than \$50. Any purchase under \$5,000 can be made without the procurement of quotes; however, the purchase must go through the appropriate approval queues. Purchases over \$50,000 have to be put out for bid and advertised twice. All purchases made with university funds have to follow Mississippi purchasing laws unless the purchase is made with federal funds entailing additional requirements. All purchases requiring a contract or memorandum of understanding must be approved and signed by the Chief Financial Officer.

BUSINESS

Action

COVID-19 Protocols (revised) President LaForge

During the August 2nd Cabinet meeting, Cabinet members voted to delay public access to Young Mauldin Cafeteria until a later date due to the possible surge of COVID-19 cases upon the opening of school. After further discussions about our COVID-19 protocols, the Executive Committee believes that the delayed public access to Young Mauldin Cafeteria for the public should be reconsidered. It is the recommendation of the Executive Committee to open Young Mauldin Cafeteria to the public when school opens, which is in line with when the public will have access to Delta State’s other campus services. All patrons — public and campus constituencies — will be required to wear masks unless eating. Also, patrons will be asked to socially distance as much as possible.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the revised COVID-19 protocols and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Alcohol Sales for Athletics Mr. Kinnison

Mr. Kinnison shared with Cabinet members the proposal of the Department of Athletics to sell alcohol at sporting events. The purpose of alcohol sales is to boost revenue for the department and to increase fan attendance. The initial discussions began two years ago with the intent to begin sales in Fall 2020; however, it was tabled due to COVID-19. The sale of alcohol does not need approval from the IHL Board of Trustees as their policies allow for beer and light wine sales. For the first year of sales, Sodexo will handle the operations and will use a local distributor as their vendor. Upon entrance to an athletic facility, patrons will have their I.D. checked for an alcohol sale wristband. Alcohol can be purchased for \$7 or \$8 at baseball, basketball, football, and softball games. All beer/wine will be served in cups (no cans or bottles). Athletics will receive 25% of each purchase. Athletics will also begin receiving 50% of Delta State’s 25% portion of all athletics concessions. All alcohol sales will cease at the end of the third quarter or at the 75% mark of the game. The process will be well-supervised and handled responsibly. The people selling the alcohol will be well-trained and will follow protocols regarding refusing service, as appropriate. Other Mississippi universities who sell alcohol at athletic events have not had higher rates of incidences as a result of selling alcohol. The public will not be allowed to bring outside alcohol into the athletic venues.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Kinnison to allow the sale of alcohol during athletic events and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Radio Station License for stronger signal..... Mr. Munroe

Mr. Munroe shared with Cabinet members that Delta State’s WDSW radio station has an opportunity to expand its license to 3,500 watts. The new license will allow the radio station to be protected and make a larger impact. The new license costs approximately \$1,000; however, the radio station has raised \$7,000 this year.

Repurposing Nowell Union – Room 302A..... Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin informed Cabinet members Room 302A in the H. L. Nowell Student Union is going to be repurposed to provide meeting spaces for the National Pan-Hellenic Council and other affinity groups. The repurposing will require some construction to remove a wall, but the new purpose of the room will commence prior to construction.

Convocation Plans Dr. Novobilski

Dr. Novobilski shared with Cabinet members the plans for Convocation on Thursday. Dr. Novobilski will provide the welcome to the Delta State family followed by a welcome from the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce’s Board of Director’s Chair-Elect Jeffrey Farris. Dr. Wegmann and Ms. Wallace will introduce new faculty and staff, and Dr. Lovin will introduce the 2021-22 Student Government Association Cabinet members. President LaForge will then provide his State of the University address. Dr. Novobilski will email the Convocation schedule to all faculty and staff.

Back to School Plans Dr. Lovin and Dr. Novobilski

Dr. Lovin shared with Cabinet members the schedule for Welcome Week beginning on Monday, August 16. The welcome week events are: Statesmen Spirit Fireworks Show and Ice Cream Social; DIY Street Signs; Organizations Fair; Statesmen Scavenger Hunt; and, Mocktails and Monet. Dr. Lovin will send an email to Cabinet members with the schedule. Dr. Novobilski shared with Cabinet members the schedule for the Faculty and Staff Opening Sessions beginning on Wednesday. New faculty and staff have orientation on Wednesday with Human Resources, and the new faculty have an additional orientation

with Dr. Gray Kane on Thursday. All faculty and staff are invited to attend in person or view via livestream the General Convocation and State of the University Address on Thursday afternoon. On Friday, colleges/school and departments/divisions will hold their individual meetings. The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce's Welcome Back Reception and the Convocation Luncheon hosted by President and Mrs. LaForge are postponed until a later date. Dr. Novobilski is working with the Courtesy Committee to implement more structure for their operations.

Additional information

- Dr. Lovin announced that Alpha Phi Alpha will host a Charter Day event on August 21 on Leflore Circle on campus.
- Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet members the Office of Information and Technology has hired five supervisor positions, and six positions remain open.
- President LaForge and Dr. Novobilski received a note from Ms. Margaret Ann Robbins, sister of Ms. Dorothy Shawhan, thanking the university for their assistance with the Writer's Trail Marker installation on Delta State's campus.
- Mr. Young informed Cabinet members SGA is hosting an orientation session for new international students on Thursday at 10:00 a.m. If any Cabinet members would like to attend, they are welcome.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- New Student Weekend, August 12-15
- ~~Pre Convocation Gathering for Cabinet members, August 12, 2:30 p.m., BPAC Green Room~~
- Convocation and State of the University Address, August 12, 3:00 p.m., BPAC
- ~~Chamber Welcome Back Reception for Faculty, Staff, and Retirees, August 12, 5:30 p.m., The Warehouse~~ **POSTPONED**
- ~~Convocation Luncheon, August 13, 11:30 a.m., President's Home~~ **POSTPONED**
- Move-In Day (returning students), August 15, 1:00 p.m.
- Classes begin, August 16 (night) and August 17 (day)
- ~~Popsicles with the President, August 17, 3:00 p.m., President's Home~~ **POSTPONED**

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, August 16, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:26 p.m.