

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: January 22, 2018**

**Members in attendance:** President William LaForge, Dr. George Beals, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Dr. Dave Breaux, Ms. Ashley Griffin, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Christie Rocconi, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

**Members not in attendance:** Mr. Patrick Hundley

**Guests:** Ms. Deborah Cox, Chief Financial Officer, University Advancement

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on January 22, 2018. The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. with President LaForge presiding.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Dr. Breaux, seconded by Dr. Beals, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on January 8, 2018.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge welcomed Ms. Deborah Cox to Cabinet. Ms. Cox will represent University Advancement in Mr. Hundley's absence.
- President LaForge asked Cabinet Members if there were any issues as a result of the recent harsh winter weather, which caused the campus to close from Friday, January 12 to Wednesday, January 17 at noon. Cabinet Members did not report any issues.
- President LaForge has been updating the Campaign Strategy Study Committee on the progress of the campaign. He updated Ms. Nan Sanders last week and plans to update Dr. Rose Strahan on Tuesday.
- President LaForge participated in the recent GSC Executive Committee Conference call. They continue to work on internal issues.
- President LaForge hosted his fifth faculty and staff luncheon a couple of weeks ago, and will host another luncheon this week.
- The Cleveland Music Foundation held their quarterly Board meeting recently. They have experienced another good year, and will celebrate their second year anniversary in March.
- President LaForge welcomed three student groups to campus a couple of weeks ago. He welcomed two groups of football recruits as well as the Honor Band students. President LaForge reiterated his willingness to help recruit students for Delta State.
- President LaForge, Mr. Mayers, and Ms. Dana George represented Delta State at the NCAA Convention in Indianapolis last week. Student Success Center's Student Athlete Support Services program sent five representatives, as well. President LaForge stated it was a grand occasion and all three divisions of the NCAA were well represented. Delta State's athletes were represented by Mr. Juwan Burney, who spoke at a conference meeting and served as President LaForge's Fireside Chat guest. President

LaForge explained that each division handles its own legislation. Division II had five business items to be discussed, including permanent extension for three additional days of football practice during pre-season and the expansion of international opportunities to allow universities in Mexico to apply for membership to Division II. President LaForge stated Division II places a huge emphasis on student success and graduation rates. Mr. Mayers thanked President LaForge and his colleagues on the Presidents' Council for amending prior processes so that the NCAA will now pay the cost of providing ground transportation for teams who participate in championship games.

- Dr. McAdams represented Delta State at the IEO and IHL Board meetings last week. He stated the main topic of discussion during the IEO conference call was the legislative session. Dr. Boyce spoke about the legislative hearings occurring today and IHL's case for an increase in funding. Mississippi's funding for higher education has decreased by 13% in the last five years, while higher education funding has increased in all of our neighboring states, except one.
- President and Mrs. LaForge attended the Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi's 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Crystal Ball Gala on Saturday as guests of the President and CEO, Mr. Tom Pittman. During his remarks, Mr. Pittman recognized President LaForge and Delta State. During the program, a tribute to Dr. Lucy Janoush, who was a member of the foundation's board, was played.
- GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi's "Mississippi Night" took place on Sunday evening and kicks off GRAMMY Week at the Museum. The GRAMMY awards ceremony will take place in New York this year.
- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. The swimming and diving team held a meet on campus last week against Emory University and University of West Florida. The men's swimming and diving team won and is ranked third in the country. The women's team is ranked 12<sup>th</sup> in the country. On February 21, Delta State will host, for the 17<sup>th</sup> year, the swimming and diving conference championship. The women's basketball team won against Shorter University. Spring sports will start soon.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. He stated the baseball parking lot will be re-paved as soon as we receive several days of good weather. Mr. Rutledge received the approval for change orders from the Bureau of Buildings for Zeigel Hall and Young-Mauldin Cafeteria. The change order for Zeigel Hall allows the use of sheetrock instead of cinderblocks, and the change order for Young-Mauldin allows for the completion of the outside aesthetic plans.
- President LaForge and Dr. Roberts travel to Jackson this afternoon to attend the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee Hearing, House of Representatives Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee Hearings, and the Universities and Colleges Committee meeting. The IHL staff did an excellent job in refining the message to the legislature on the needs of the IHL system. Dr. McAdams reported that IHL is watching legislation that forces state entities to adhere to conceal and carry laws as well as legislation that requires state entities to fly the state flag.
- President LaForge gave an overview for the week ahead. He will welcome students from Germantown High School to campus on Wednesday. On Thursday, he will receive an update on the Winning the Race Conference from Dr. Temika Simmons and Dr. Charles Westmoreland, and he will attend the BPAC performance of the Sound of Music that evening. On Friday, he will visit the Student Success Center.
- Dr. McAdams informed Cabinet Members the second annual Statesmen Scholarship Day will take place on Friday. The number of students scheduled to attend increased by 50% from last year. Dr. McAdams stated the Office of Enrollment Management's main goal for the event this year is to streamline it. President LaForge and Dr. McAdams will speak at the scholarship presentation ceremony.
- President LaForge stated the latest enrollment report shows an increase of 6.79% over spring 2017. Dr. McAdams stated the final purge process will occur tonight; and, as a result, enrollment will decrease. However, he is confident of an overall enrollment increase as a result of additional students enrolling in dual credit classes as well as the success of our retention efforts.

**CABINET TOPIC**

None

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**Pets in the Workplace and University Housing policy - new (first reading) ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the new Pets in the Workplace and University Housing policy for a first reading. Mr. Rutledge stated he will remove the words “and University Housing” from the title of the policy since the Office of Housing and Residence Life has their own manual. Facilities Management staff reported several incidents occurred over the winter holidays of finding pet waste inside buildings. The proposed policy states employees are not permitted to bring pets to work. Pets are allowed on campus if it is outdoors, on a leash, and accompanied by the pet’s owner. An employee and/or student who requires the help of a service animal will be permitted to bring a service animal to campus if the animal’s presence does not create a danger to others and does not impose an undue hardship upon the University. Dr. Roberts suggested adding students to the “Procedures and Responsibilities” section of the policy and expanding the verbiage as it relates to them. Under the definition of service animals, Dr. Roberts suggested deleting “emotional support animals” from the definition since they do not qualify as service animals under the ADA. President LaForge asked Cabinet Members to review the policy to see if it hinders their respective areas, and to send any suggested changes or recommendations to Mr. Rutledge.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the Pets in the Workplace policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. McAdams. **This motion was approved.**

**Termination/Dismissal policy – revised (first reading) ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Termination/Dismissal policy for a first reading. The policy contains three major changes including the definition of an at-will employee and grievance procedures for verbal and formal warnings. At-Will Employees do not receive an employment contract and may be dismissed from employment for any reason. The policy also revises the hearing procedure for Non-Tenure Track Faculty and Non Instructional Personnel. Dr. Roberts asked Mr. Rutledge to add to items one and two in this section that the information be provided in writing, and to restructure the wording in item six to clarify when the decision will be made.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the revised Termination/Dismissal policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. McAdams. **This motion was approved.**

**Work Performance and Code of Conduct policy – revised (first reading) ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Work Performance and Code of Conduct policy for a first reading. Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet Members identical changes were made to the Work Performance and Code of Conduct policy as in the Termination/Dismissal policy. President LaForge expressed he wants these policies to exhibit a fair process that is understandable to all employees.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the revised Work Performance and Code of Conduct policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Roberts. **This motion was approved.**

**Prospect Management System policy – new (first reading)..... Mr. Hundley**

In Mr. Hundley’s absence, Ms. Cox brought to Cabinet the new Prospect Management System policy for a

first reading. Ms. Cox informed Cabinet Members that the goodwill of alumni and friends and the financial support from donors are resources of the university which the Division of University Advancement and External Relations is responsible for managing. To coordinate and foster mutually beneficial partnerships with colleges, departments, and programs, University Advancement and External Relations is granted oversight of the following activities: directing all private fund raising activities, including the assignment of prospects; the authorization to solicit or not to solicit as well as the approval for all fundraising plans; and, the ownership and maintenance of (a) all biographical, cultivation, and solicitation data on alumni, donors, parents, other constituents, and prospects, and (b) the records of private gift donations and pledge agreements. All fundraising efforts undertaken on behalf of the university and its programs may occur only through the prior approval of the Vice President of University Advancement and External Relations (or his/her designee within the Division). No other fundraising activities in support of the university are sanctioned by the institution. Ms. Cox shared with Cabinet Members the "Request for Prospect Assignment" form, which provides a person with the opportunity to request that they serve as a contact with a specific donor. All substantive contacts with prospects, by all members of the Delta State community, are to be recorded in a contact report filed into Banner. President LaForge stated this process will take coordination from all campus constituencies with the help of University Advancement and External Relations. Ms. Cox emphasized that the university does not want to take away anyone's ability to talk to donors; rather, the goal is coordinate the activity. Dr. Roberts asked Ms. Cox to make changes on pages 6-8 with regards to referencing who is responsible for specific tasks.

**Motion:** Moved by Ms. Cox to approve the Prospect Management System policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Roberts. **This motion was approved.**

**Discussion**

**Golf Course ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the Golf Course Task Force's recommendations on developing the golf course property. The committee's recommendations included various ideas, including upscale housing for students and family-friendly entertainment options. The next step is for Mr. Rutledge to meet with IHL's Real Estate Department and the Bureau of Buildings to make sure Delta State follows their policies and procedures. Once cleared by IHL and the Bureau of Buildings, Delta State will seek guidance from consultants to make sure each aspect of the development is placed in the right area, and to create a RFP. President LaForge reminded Cabinet Members that the development will be commercial, but Delta State will receive a revenue stream and will have input in the construction and design process. Once Mr. Rutledge meets with IHL and Bureau of Buildings staff, he will bring this discussion to Cabinet again.

**FY17 Financial Statements ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge gave an update on the FY17 Financial Statements. The three main statements are: 1) Statement of Net Position, 2) Statements of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Position, and 3) Statement of Cash Flows. Mr. Rutledge explained the fund statements show the university's standing better than the financial statements, and so he will bring them to an upcoming Cabinet meeting. The IHL ratios to measure success and sustainability — cash per day and debt ratios — show Delta State is in a good place financially. Delta State's overall cash balance went down, but expenses decreased, as well. Delta State currently has 68-70 days of cash, and our goal is to have 90 days of cash. The debt ratios are in an excellent range. The debt on Blansett Hall will be paid in full in the coming year, and this will make our debt ratio even better.

**FY19 Budget Timeline ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge presented the FY19 budget timeline to Cabinet Members. The timeline has four phases: Phase I – Facilities/Capital Improvements, Phase II – New/Expanded Activities, Phase III – Ongoing Operations, and Phase IV – Scholarships. Phase I and Phase II were sent to the President’s direct reports on January 18 in order for them to distribute them to their departments. Phase I includes requests for major and minor renovations to campus such as roofing, fire alarms, replacing light fixtures in large areas, etc. Phase II includes requests for new personnel, addition of vehicles, office furniture, and supplies. Phase I and Phase II requests need to be returned to Mr. Rutledge by February 26 and March 16 respectively, and will be brought to Cabinet for discussion. Phase III includes a continuation of regular items with current dollars budgeted. All Phase III requests will be sent out on April 14, and need to be returned to Mr. Rutledge by May 4. Phase IV will be a discussion for the Executive Committee to see what to do about scholarships as the budget has not kept pace with the tuition increases. A discussion in Cabinet will occur at a later date.

**Additional Information**

- Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet Members of a meeting of the Bolivar Medical Center Foundation at the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday. He stated Cabinet Members were welcome to attend.
- Ms. Cox offered her assistance to Cabinet Members in Mr. Hundley’s absence.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- The Sound of Music, January 25, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Second Annual Statesmen Scholarship Day, January 26
- Hamlet, February 6, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Colloquia Series with Mr. Fred Smith, CEO of FedEx, March 21, 6:00 p.m., Jobe Hall

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, January 29 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.