

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: July 17, 2017

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

Members not in attendance: Ms. Caitlyn Thompson

Guests: Ms. Jennifer Phillips, Director, Communications and Marketing

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on July 17, 2017. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Beals, seconded by Dr. McAdams, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on July 10, 2017.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge asked Dr. Bennett to give an overview of the two freshmen orientation sessions held last week. She stated they went well and students were excited to be on campus. One transfer orientation session takes place this week. At the next Cabinet meeting, Dr. Bennett will provide the attendance numbers for all orientation sessions.
- President LaForge hosted a luncheon last week for a summer camp group from China. The guests included nine students and one professor from the Henan University of Economics and Law in the Henan Province. This group was visiting Delta State to learn more about Southern culture and to experience life as a United States college student in order to determine if they would like to study in the United States in the future.
- Last week, President LaForge hosted the fourth annual Mayors' Summit. Fourteen mayors and three aldermen attended. During the summit, President LaForge rolled out the Local Government Training Institute. The audience was engaged and gave great feedback.
- President LaForge attended Mound Bayou's 130th Anniversary celebration last week. He stated it was an excellent event.
- The Cleveland Music Foundation Board met last week. President LaForge stated GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi continues to prosper in all areas — ticket sales, rentals, retail, and visits.
- President LaForge asked Mr. Hundley to give an overview of the Greater Jackson Alumni meeting from last week. Mr. Hundley stated his staff pushed audience development prior to the meeting by calling alumni, sending emails, and posting reminders to social media. He was pleased with the number of attendees as it was the largest crowd in several years. The Greater Jackson Alumni group gave out five scholarships to students attending Delta State in the fall. Mr. Hundley believes the Greater Jackson

Alumni group and their meeting could be a template for how other groups run and set up their annual meeting.

- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. He stated the NCAA started a media campaign for fans to vote for their favorite Elite 90 athlete. Ms. Melanie Tombers is in the top ten in the popularity vote. Voting continues until tomorrow.
- President LaForge and Mr. Keith Fulcher travel to Arkadelphia, AR on Wednesday to visit Mr. Percy Malone for a Capital Campaign briefing meeting.
- President LaForge and Mr. Rutledge have a meeting on Wednesday with IHL Commissioner Glenn Boyce and Dr. John Pearce to discuss Delta State’s financial sustainability report. This is part of IHL’s initiative to make sure universities stay abreast of their financial situation.
- The groundbreaking ceremony for Statesmen Boulevard is Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. The ceremony will take place on the football practice field by McCool Stadium, and a reception will be held in the Dorgan Center immediately following the ceremony. Central District Transportation Commissioner Dick Hall will be in attendance and will provide remarks during the ceremony.
- President LaForge announced Phi Theta Kappa is hosting their Regional Honors Institute at Delta State on Friday. Approximately 100 PTK members will be on campus to participate in activities. President LaForge cannot give the welcome as planned, and asked if a Cabinet Member would take his place. Dr. Breaux agreed to welcome the PTK students on the university’s behalf.

CABINET TOPIC

Marketing Report: FY17 Results and FY18 Plans Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts introduced Ms. Jennifer Phillips, Director of Communications and Marketing, and stated she would give an overview of the marketing results of FY17 and plans for FY18. Ms. Phillips distributed a report and referenced several items in the document. In the past six years, the marketing budget has increased significantly, from \$0 to \$170,000. The marketing budget is broken down to show the categories where funds are spent, including collaterals, social media ads, billboards, and digital advertising. Ms. Phillips informed Cabinet Members that print ads are not used much due to the high cost. In FY17, Delta State’s social media advertising reach had 3.5 million Facebook impressions; 318,848 people took action on the Facebook page including likes, shares, and watching videos; 331,016 clicks on the Admissions website and 42,791 clicks on the summer school website; 61,207 people visited the Delta State Twitter feed; and, thousands of people saw the 10 Delta State billboards. The top visited page on the Delta State website was the Admissions page and the top five cities where web traffic was initiated are Cleveland, Clarksdale, Hattiesburg, Atlanta, and Jackson. Ms. Phillips stated geo targeting allows Delta State to share ads within social media platforms to anyone within five miles of community colleges and major areas such as Jackson, Memphis, Desoto County, and the Delta. Ms. Phillips announced upcoming projects for FY18. The Mascots in Majors photo campaign showcases Delta State’s two mascots in its distinctive programs. New billboards are being created for Memphis, Jackson, and the Delta. In Memphis, the billboard will focus on no out-of-state tuition; Jackson will focus on key programs; and, the Delta billboards will focus on affordability. Communications and Marketing is working on two commercials and revamping the FearTheOkra.com website. They will be working on banners and “Wall of Fame” for individual colleges to showcase prominent alumni, and also working on static cling murals for around campus. Another exciting project will be the Delta State emojis, which will be released around football season. President LaForge asked Ms. Phillips her thoughts on the best way to break into the Jackson and Clarion Ledger culture. He noted that very few articles about Delta State are printed in the *Clarion Ledger*. She suggested scheduling an editorial board meeting to encourage them to print articles and also for Delta State alumni, who provide a lot of business to the *Clarion Ledger*, to request that more attention be given to Delta State. President LaForge asked Ms. Griffin the best way to reach students. Ms. Griffin stated the best way to reach students is through social media and more specifically through Snapchat and Instagram.

BUSINESS

Action

Boy Scouts Merit Badge College.....President LaForge

President LaForge stated the Boy Scouts’ Merit Badge College will be held on Delta State’s campus in early 2018. The local Boy Scout district is requesting the use of campus facilities at the discounted rate of \$850 that we provided to them last year. With regards to the revised fee schedule for rental/use of campus facilities, the cost for the facilities requested would be almost double the requested amount. President LaForge suggested we allow the Boy Scouts’ Merit Badge College to use our facilities for \$850 if certain criteria are met: 1) credit Delta State in all publications, printed materials, and publicity as a co-sponsor of the Merit Badge College; 2) allow Delta State to showcase the university for the Scouts through introductory/welcoming remarks by an appropriate official; and, 3) allow Delta State to set up a recruiting table to provide university information to Scouts. President LaForge believes these criteria, in exchange for a reduction in price, would be meritorious due to the recruitment opportunities available during the Boy Scouts’ Merit Badge College.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Roberts to waive half the cost of the facility fees for the Boy Scouts’ Merit Badge College if the contingencies are met and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. **The motion was approved.**

Class Attendance Policy (First Reading)Dr. McAdams

Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the Class Attendance policy for a first reading, based on the recommendation and approval of Academic Council. A revision was made to the Class Attendance policy to ensure that attendance for online courses is more precise. Students are expected to engage regularly in an online course. Student attendance for an online course is counted upon completion and submission of an instructor-prompted activity such as a discussion or quiz. The advising system in practice deeply encourages professors to take attendance in regular and online courses. Taking attendance helps with reporting “no shows” and withdrawals with regards to financial aid.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the Class Attendance Policy for a first reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. **The motion was approved.**

Discussion

DOE AuditDr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett informed Cabinet Members that the Department of Education performed an audit of the university last spring. This is the first audit performed at the university in at least 30 years. The audit team compiled 31 findings with the Office of Financial Assistance. The Office of Financial Assistance has been working on resolving these findings, but all of the findings cannot be completed by the original deadline of July 18. The Department of Education has granted Delta State an extension until September 12; however, Dr. Bennett hopes to complete the process in August. Some of the more problematic findings deal with Title IV and student appeals. Protocols are being updated within the Office of Financial Assistance and some processes will now be automated.

Cabinet Advance Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts shared with Cabinet Members the agenda for the Cabinet Advance, which will be held on Tuesday, July 25 and Wednesday, July 26 at the Sanders’ Studio. The main focus will be the Campus Master Plan, Budget plans, Capital Campaign, and an update on the Visioning Principles. Mr. Rutledge and Dr. Roberts will facilitate the Campus Master Plan portion by reviewing the campus needs in by sections. Mr.

Rutledge will facilitate the Budget issues portion, and he will give Cabinet Members a look at where we are and where we are going. Mr. Hundley and Mr. David Shufflebarger, consultant with Alexander-Haas, will facilitate the Capital Campaign portion, and they will give Cabinet Members a more detailed look at the progress of the campaign. President LaForge and Dr. Roberts will facilitate the Visioning Principles portion, and each direct report will give a progress report of their individual goals. Dr. Roberts discussed the logistics for the meeting stating discussions will begin promptly at 9:00 a.m. each morning, and she asked everyone to minimize their cell phone/email usage during the sessions. Periodic breaks will be provided in order for members to check email or to check in with their offices. Breakfast, snacks, and lunch will be provided both days. The attire for the Advance is business casual (no ties or jackets for the men). Dr. Roberts asked Cabinet Members to come equipped with ideas and ready to engage.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Transfer Orientation III, July 18
- Statesmen Boulevard Groundbreaking Ceremony, July 19, 2:00 pm, Dorgan Center
- Cabinet Advance (FY18 Cabinet Members), July 25-26, Sanders Studio
- Convocation, August 17, 3:00 pm, BPAC
- Welcome Back luncheon, August 18, 12:00 noon, Second Floor, H.L. Nowell Union
- Day and night classes begin, August 21

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Cabinet Advance, Tuesday, July 25 and Wednesday, July 26
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:36 p.m.