

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: March 21, 2022

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, and Mr. William Young (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: Dr. Josh Armstrong, President-Elect, Faculty Senate
Dr. Natasha Barnes, Chair, Winning the Race Conference
Ms. Caroline Fletcher, Chair-Elect, Administrative Staff Council
Dr. Leslie Griffin, Representative-Elect, Academic Council
Ms. FaDerricka Harvey, Winning the Race Conference Committee

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on March 21, 2022. The meeting convened at 2:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Lovin and seconded by Ms. Wallace, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on March 7, 2022.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- On behalf of Cabinet members, President LaForge wished Ms. Cole an early happy birthday for her special day on Wednesday.
- Dr. Natasha Barnes provided an overview of the upcoming Winning the Race Conference. The theme for the conference this year is "You are the 'I' in Team." The conference begins on Sunday with the Opening Recognition Ceremony at the Amzie Moore House Museum. The ceremony will recognize Dr. Lusia Harris, Ms. Lucy Seaberry, Mr. Sank Powe, and Mr. Reggie Barnes. On Monday, the conference will have a coaches' panel and a community panel discussing how they institute diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts into their positions. Dr. Abe Hudson will provide the keynote address for the President's Luncheon at noon on Monday. On Tuesday, forums will be held for faculty members, as well as for Delta State students. Dr. Barnes encouraged Cabinet members to register for the conference. Currently, 150 guests have registered to attend.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from the last two weeks. Beautiful: The Carole King Musical took place at the BPAC. President LaForge participated in meetings with the NCAA Implementation Committee and the Budget Subcommittee of the NCAA Implementation Committee. The Honorable David Bowen served as the lecturer for the Spring Colloquia Speaker Series. President LaForge thanked Mr. Young and Ms. Lucia Chacon Habis for participating as panelists during the lecture; Dr. Wegmann and other faculty members for inviting Congressman Bowen to speak to their

classes; and, Dr. Lovin for inviting student leaders to attend the luncheon. The Annual Juried Student Art Exhibition opened, and Ms. Bonnie Jean Dillion was awarded the President’s Art Award for “Sammy’s Zinnias” and Ms. Laken Templeton was awarded the Cabinet Art Award for “A Willing Poet.” Both winners will be invited to a future Cabinet meeting to share their artwork. The Large Foundations Taskforce met to strategize on ways to contact foundations for potential grant funds. President LaForge filmed another segment of his Statesmen Insider with Dr. Natasha Barnes regarding the upcoming Winning the Race Conference. President LaForge had lunch meetings last week with Dr. Kent Wyatt and with Dr. Wayne Blansett. President LaForge spoke with Mr. Walt Bettinger last week and confirmed his participation in the Spring Commencement ceremony as the speaker. Mr. Bettinger will receive an honorary doctorate degree during the ceremony, as well.

- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The campus-wide roofing project will be completed in April due to weather delays. Mr. Rutledge received bids on the Broom Hall water damage project and the parking lot behind Cain-Tatum Hall and Fugler-Hammett Hall. The bids for the Delta Music Institute are due next week. All three projects will be funded by Repair and Renovation funds or by insurance funds. The IHL system received an extension deadline for utilizing FY22 Repair and Renovation funds.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The softball team won their last five games against University of Arkansas at Monticello and University of West Georgia. They travel to Arkansas on Wednesday to compete against Ouachita Baptist University and Henderson State University. The baseball team won two of three games against University of West Georgia over the weekend. They host Southern Arkansas University on Wednesday and University of Southern Indiana this weekend. The golf team competes in the Arkansas Cup next Monday and Tuesday. The men’s and women’s tennis teams are in Florida competing against University of West Florida and Valdosta State University, and they will travel to Auburn University-Montgomery on Saturday. The football team begins their spring practices on Wednesday. The Athletics Hall of Fame Banquet is scheduled for April 8 at GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi. Sixteen individuals will be inducted. Mr. Kinnison shared he is in the process of hiring a Lady Statesmen Basketball Coach. Also, Mr. Kinnison shared with Cabinet members the student-athletes’ community service project for the year is to volunteer at the Salvation Army.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. President LaForge met with Dr. Novobilski, Dr. Roberts, and Dr. Beverly Moon this morning to discuss the university’s strategic plan. Dr. Moon will visit with the Executive Committee and Cabinet in the coming weeks to continue the discussion of Delta State’s reaffirmation process with SACSCOC. Mr. Rutledge and the School of Nursing hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the new addition to the School of Nursing. On Tuesday, President LaForge will participate in the bi-monthly conference call with Commissioner Al Rankins and the IEOs to discuss COVID-19 related issues. The Office of Admissions will host a DSU Spotlight Day on Wednesday and Delta Streets Academy on Thursday, and President LaForge will provide a welcome to both. The Budget Subcommittee of the NCAA DII Implementation Committee will meet on Thursday. The DSU Foundation Office will host a Vision Event for Athletics on Thursday in Jackson. The Big Band Bash, featuring the DSU Jazz Ensemble, is scheduled for Saturday at the Cleveland Country Club. The Opening Recognition Ceremony for the Winning the Race Conference will be held at the Amzie Moore House on Sunday.

CABINET TOPIC

FY23 Budget Recommendations..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the FY23 budget recommendations, which were drafted by the Executive Committee and Athletic Director in consultation with the appropriate units in their areas. The FY23 draft budget started with the FY22 approved budget of \$50,071,960. For FY23, it is projected that revenues will

decrease by \$3,443,353 in the following areas: reduction in projected tuition, and the availability of one-time Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF). Projected additional revenues for FY23 are: a one-time transfer of auxiliary funds; an increase to administrative fees collected from university designated funds; and, a 3% tuition increase (based on projected enrollment of 2,275). Additional revenue for FY23 is \$2,195,000. The budget recommendation currently includes flat funding from State appropriations, State earmarks, and Repair and Renovation funds from the State. Projected expenditure increases for FY23 are: the addition of a cash contingency to build towards the university's 90-day reserves; adjustment to student-athlete scholarships for tuition increase; adjustment to Graduate Assistantships for tuition increase; and, funding for Phase II priorities. The proposed budget for FY23 has several reductions in expenses from FY22: savings from converting Office of Information Technology services to in house; reduction of institutional scholarships; reduction of Regular Student Employment funds; reduction of one-time capital expenditures; and a reduction of each vice president's and Athletic Director's budgets. Mr. Rutledge reminded Cabinet members that the budget proposal could change based on IHL Board approval of the tuition increase request, as well as actions by the State Legislature regarding our appropriations. The budget proposal will be voted on by Cabinet members at a later date. During the budget discussions, Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members the Phase I and Phase II lists.

BUSINESS

Action

Staff Emeritus recommendations Ms. Johnson

Ms. Wallace shared with Cabinet members the names of three staff members who have been recommended for Emeritus status by the Administrative Staff Council. The staff members were unanimously approved for Staff Emeritus status by the Administrative Staff Council Executive Committee and their respective supervisors and vice presidents.

Motion: Moved by Ms. Wallace to recommend to President LaForge the names of the three staff members for consideration for Emeritus status and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Year-End Spending Deadlines Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members the year-end spending deadlines that will be implemented to help increase cash reserves by June 30. All requisitions received after April 8 must be approved by the respective vice president. Procurement cards will be suspended beginning on March 31. Any travel for the remainder of the fiscal year must be approved by the respective vice president, followed by approval by Mr. Rutledge. Departments needing special exemptions to the requisition, procurement card, or travel card dates must present the request to the respective dean, vice president, or direct report to the President. The request will then will be forwarded to the Accounting Department. The year-ending spending deadline email will be sent out to faculty and staff today.

Enrollment Update/Overview Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin reviewed with Cabinet members the enrollment update and overview from Thursday, March 3: 162 confirmed students; 908 admitted students; 2,085 incomplete applications (missing documents); 667 online applications started; and, 5,896 prospects — for a total of 9,718 students being targeted for undergraduate admissions. Currently, 195 students have signed up for registration.

Legislative UpdateMr. Munroe

Mr. Munroe provided Cabinet members with an update on the Mississippi legislative session. Last week was the deadline for original floor action on appropriations and revenue bills that originated in the opposite chamber and the deadline to concur or invite conference on amendments from the other chamber to appropriations and revenue bills. Thursday is the deadline to concur or invite conference on amendments from the other chamber to general bills and constitutional amendments. Saturday is the deadline for conference reports on appropriations and revenue bills to be filed.

SACSCOC UpdateDr. Novobilski

Dr. Novobilski shared with Cabinet members an update on the university’s SACSCOC reaffirmation process. The monitoring report on student financial aid is due on April 1; however, Dr. Moon will upload our report for submission this week. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Committee has narrowed down potential topics for the university’s next QEP and created subcommittees to research each potential topic. The potential topics for the QEP are: 1) updating and upgrading the First Year Seminar program, 2) career and professional preparation, and 3) onboarding and orientation. President LaForge, Dr. Novobilski, and Dr. Roberts met with Dr. Beverly Moon to discuss the university’s strategic plan and how to integrate the plan into the university’s long-term goals. The strategic plan will be aligned with the performance goals President LaForge submitted to the Institutions of Higher Learning. Dr. Moon will visit with the Executive Committee and Cabinet in the coming weeks to discuss key performance indicators; template-based information for annual reports; performance goals related to the strategic plan during annual performance evaluations; and, an annual review of the strategic plan.

Additional Information

- Dr. Roberts announced that Ms. Mary Helen Varner, Internal Auditor, will retire on March 31, 2022. A retirement reception will be held in her honor on Thursday, March 31. All Cabinet members will receive an invitation via email. Dr. Roberts asked Cabinet members to share the invitation with their departments and constituencies. Mr. Rutledge announced there are no candidates for the Internal Auditor replacement at this time.
- Dr. Lovin announced the Office of Student Life will host a Statesmen Shelf Cookoff on March 31 in the H. L. Nowell Union. The categories will be Kool-Aid, Pasta, and Jell-O.
- Dr. Griffin announced the F. E. Woodall Conference will take place next week.
- Mr. Young announced new initiates for ODK will be tapped throughout the week. The new initiates include ten students and two faculty members. The initiation ceremony is scheduled for April 11.
- Mr. Young announced that more than 200 students have signed up to participate in the Big Green Event, and they have approximately 20 community service projects.
- Dr. Novobilski announced additional judges are needed for the Region III Lower Science Fair. If anyone would like to volunteer, they should contact Ms. Elizabeth Joel.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Big Band Bash with DSU Jazz Ensemble, March 26, 6:30 p.m., Cleveland Country Club
- Winning the Race Conference, March 27-29
- Most Beautiful Pageant, April 5, 7:00 p.m., BPAC
- Leanne Morgan, April 7, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Go Green Weekend, April 8-9

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, March 28, 2022 at 2:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – SGA Cabinet to President’s Cabinet

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.