

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT'S CABINET
Minutes

Meeting date: March 30, 2020

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett-Fairs (via Zoom), Dr. Tricia Killebrew (via Zoom), Mr. Mike Kinnison (via Zoom), Dr. Charles McAdams (via Zoom), Dr. Beverly Moon (via Zoom), Mr. Rick Munroe, Mr. Cetin Oguz (via Zoom), Dr. Michelle Roberts, Mr. Jamie Rutledge (via Zoom), and Ms. Elizabeth Swindle (via Zoom)
(recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: Chief Jeffrey Johns, Chair-Elect, Administrative Staff Council (via Zoom)
Mr. Jeff Slagell, Representative, Academic Council (via Zoom)
Dr. Jonathan Westfall, President-Elect, Faculty Senate (via Zoom)

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room and via Zoom conference call on March 30, 2020. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Ms. Swindle and seconded by Mr. Kinnison, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on March 23, 2020.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge extended congratulations on behalf of Cabinet members to Dr. Killebrew for receiving her doctoral degree.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. Two members of the Lady Statesmen basketball team received post season honors: Ms. Quantasha Patterson and Ms. Zyaire Ewing. Ms. Patterson received Division II Conference Commissioner Association 3rd Team All-American honors, and Ms. Ewing received Women's Basketball Coaches All-American honorable mention honors. Mr. Maalik Cartwright, a member of the Statesmen basketball team, was named GSC's Freshmen of the Year for the 2019-20 season. Mr. Zach Zediker received a prestigious honor as he was selected to be a part of the United States team for the Arnold Palmer Cup. He was one of ten selected, and the only one from Division II. Mr. Kinnison updated Cabinet members on the Head Coach search for the Lady Statesmen soccer team. The pool of applicants was narrowed down to six, and the Athletics Department will conduct Zoom conference calls this week to continue moving forward with the search. All GSC athletic directors have a weekly conference call to discuss the effects of COVID-19 on their respective campuses and the overall picture of athletics.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The roofing projects on Walter Sillers Coliseum, Holcombe-Norwood Hall, and the Facilities Management Building are a few weeks behind.

The HVAC project for the Mayers Aquatics Center was awarded to Upchurch Plumbing, and Mr. Rutledge is hopeful to have a contract in 45 days. The roofing project for the residence halls was bid out, and the bids came in high due to the COVID-19 virus. The Executive Committee will review the bids and decide on the next course of action. Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet members 18-20 members of the Facilities Management staff are working on campus currently.

- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. President LaForge and other campus representatives are scheduled to speak to a Sodexo representative to give an evaluation of their service on campus thus far. Cabinet members gave President LaForge feedback for his call. On Thursday, President LaForge will participate in the State of the Student Union Address via Zoom. Ms. Swindle informed Cabinet members she plans to finalize this afternoon the questions for Cabinet members participating, and she will email the questions to them tonight.

CABINET TOPIC

Coronavirus Action Plan..... President LaForge

President LaForge shared with Cabinet members that no significant changes were made to Delta State’s COVID-19 Action Plan since the last Cabinet meeting. He thanked Communications and Marketing for their diligence in keeping the university website up to date with all new information as it is released. Cabinet members discussed ways to help Facilities Management reduce exposure in buildings such as putting all trash in one bin and placing it by the office entrance and putting closed signs on offices not in use.

BUSINESS

Action

Year-Round Four-Day Work Week proposal President LaForge

President LaForge reminded Cabinet members a suggestion for a year-round four-day work week was made as another means of increasing the university’s savings. Mr. Rutledge reminded Cabinet members the potential savings would be \$220,000. When the proposal was first discussed in a Cabinet meeting on March 16, President LaForge requested Cabinet members to consider any interruptions their constituencies may have with a year-round four-day work week. Despite the successes seen during the summer work-schedule utilizing a four-day work week, Cabinet Members stated that the early response to a year-round four-day work week was negative. Ms. Swindle shared students felt the university would be viewed as more of a suitcase college and a community college. From a Student Affairs perspective, a year-round four-day workweek would hinder student engagement. Dr. McAdams shared the Academy would experience significant scheduling issues, and he suggested conducting more research on different models prior to a decision. Mr. Kinnison stated this model would not work for Athletics as days would be lengthened, and student-athletes would miss practices/weightlifting/etc. Also, Athletics wants support for student-athletes at weekend competitions. Ms. Killebrew stated most staff were in favor of the year-round four-day work week if it benefitted the university financially. Staff Council members want to make sure those staff members with children would be able to modify their schedules, as needed. President LaForge thanked Cabinet members for the thoughtful and thorough discussion.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the year-round four-day work week and seconded by Mr. Munroe. The motion was not approved.

Appendix 8: New Degree Program Proposal: Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Administration.....

.....**Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams shared with Cabinet members plans for a new degree program proposal to be offered by the College of Business and Aviation. The Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Administration is specifically designed to serve the needs of adults who have completed a technical associate degree program, such as an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) from a SACSCOC accredited community college in the state of Mississippi or comparable regionally accredited community college from another state. This degree program is an opportunity for students from across the state to continue their education at the bachelor’s level and is designed to provide students with the skills, knowledge, and qualifications to be successful in their chosen technical field. This new degree program will have five concentrations including Computer Information Systems, General Business in Marketing and Management, General Business in Human Resources, Healthcare Administration, and Hospitality Services Management.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve Appendix 8: New Degree Proposal: Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Administration and seconded by Dr. Roberts. The motion was approved.

Appendix 8: New Degree Program Proposal: Bachelor of Applied Science in Aviation Management.....

.....**Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams shared with Cabinet members plans for a new degree program proposal to be offered by the College of Business and Aviation. The Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Aviation Management is specifically designed to serve the needs of adults who have completed a technical associate degree program, such as an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) from a SACSCOC accredited community college in the state of Mississippi or comparable regionally accredited community college from another state. This degree program is an opportunity for students from across the state to continue their education at the bachelor’s level and is designed to provide students with the skills, knowledge, and qualifications to be successful in their chosen technical field. The new degree program will have five concentrations including Air Traffic Control, Airport Operations, Aviation Security, Logistics, and Unmanned Aerial Systems.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve Appendix 8: New Degree Proposal: Bachelor of Applied Science in Aviation Management and seconded by Dr. Roberts. The motion was approved.

Academic Calendar 2019-20 – revised

.....**Dr. McAdams**

With the approval of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought the revised Academic Calendar for 2019-20 to Cabinet for review and approval. Due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak, Academic Council moved the last day to withdraw from a course from March 27 to April 23. The change allows students more options should they not handle the change to online instruction well.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Academic Calendar 2019-20 and seconded by Ms. Swindle. The motion was approved.

Search and Hire approvals

.....**Cabinet Members**

There were no requests for search and hire approvals brought to the Cabinet.

Discussion

Budget Update

.....**Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet members the Executive Committee continues to discuss the FY21 budget, and of the need to combine new, enhanced revenue along with substantial reductions to our expenses. Ultimately, Delta State’s budget going forward needs to be sustainable, dependable, and reflect the

university's mission and priorities. The FY21 budget has several inevitable expenses that must be added including: \$500,000 for cash reserves; \$500,000 for a contingency fund; increase of \$90,000 for insurance premiums; and, increase of \$35,000 for workers' compensation insurance. The total for these inevitable expenses is \$1,125,000. Additionally, Mr. Rutledge was advised by the IHL CFO, Dr. John Pearce, to plan for a decrease of 5% in State appropriations. A 5% decrease for Delta State equals \$837,000. Due to the NCAA granting an additional year of eligibility to student-athletes whose spring sports were cut short due to COVID-19, an additional \$70,000 of athletic scholarships must be put into the budget. In order to get back to the FY20 base, Delta State needs to reduce expenses or find new revenues in the amount of \$2,032,000. Mr. Rutledge explained to Cabinet members several expenses are paid each year, but those expenses were never budgeted. Going forward these expenses will be added to the budget: GIT Instructor salary; Dissertation Committees fees; Compliance expenses; Radio Station expenses; Athletic Department travel; Student-Athlete meals; Student-Athlete insurance; escalation clauses for long term contracts; and, travel and moving expenses for faculty. These non-budgeted items total \$408,000. With the addition of the non-budgeted items, Delta State needs to reduce expenses or find new revenues in the amount of \$2,440,000. Cabinet members discussed several items that could bring in new, enhanced revenue and offset some of our expenses including: a \$1,000 per year tuition increase for international students, a decrease in Phi Theta Kappa Scholarships by \$117,000, \$150,000 worth of scholarships rolling off the budget that will not be added back, and a 6% tuition increase. The tuition increase for international students will generate an estimated \$130,000, and the 6% tuition increase will generate an estimated net of \$825,984. To help offset Delta State's expenses, Cabinet members agreed to keep the four enhanced revenue streams for budget consideration. Mr. Rutledge shared additional expenses that should be added to the budget in order to stay relevant. Those expenses include computer upgrades for \$300,000; additional technology upgrades for \$150,000; twelve vehicle replacements for \$120,000; and, an increase to the marketing budget of \$50,000. All budget items will be discussed and voted on by Cabinet members prior to creating the final FY21 budget. Mr. Kinnison will work with Mr. Munroe on an exact amount for additional athletic scholarships, and they will work to raise the funds for those scholarships. Ms. Swindle plans to reach out to the International Student Liaison on SGA to discuss the tuition increase for international students.

Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet members Delta State will meet its revenue and expense targets for March. Any effects to the budget due to COVID-19 will not be seen until April. Snapshots of each unit's budget will be taken tomorrow, and worksheets will be emailed to budget managers in a couple of weeks. Mr. Rutledge was pleased to share with Cabinet members the amount of increased revenues stemming from our new contracts with PepsiCo and Sodexo as well as the new facility rental policy. Commissions from PepsiCo for the current year are \$23,891 or \$20,150 more than the last year with our previous contract. Commissions from Sodexo for eight months of the current year are \$261,291 or \$54,436 more than last year with our previous contract. In 2017-18, facility rentals brought in \$58,249. Once the new facility rental policy was adopted, the university brought in \$196,547 for facility rentals.

Legislative UpdateMr. Munroe

Mr. Munroe informed Cabinet Members that the Mississippi Legislature has taken a recess until mid-May, and a budget won't be complete until June. During one of his Legislative Liaison conference calls, Mr. Munroe was advised the State may see lawsuits with regards to room and board charges in the coming months as Arizona currently has one in place.

Additional information

- Cabinet members discussed the current use of computer labs for those students who remain on campus. Mr. Slagell stated he would request the computer lab in the Union to open if capacity was met

consistently at the other labs. Yard-signs were placed around campus signifying Wi-Fi availability around campus.

- Ms. Swindle announced petitions for SGA elections will be released this week. She informed Cabinet members of the circulation of a petition for Delta State to refund room and board fees. The petition has over 1,300 signatures, but all signatures are not Delta State students. Ms. Swindle reached out to the creator of the petition, and she was able to give an update to all signees that Delta State will not be able to decide on refunds until further guidance is given by IHL and the Attorney General.
- Ms. Swindle announced the State of the Student Union Address would be pre-recorded, and she has invited several Cabinet members to participate. Once the address is complete, she will send a link to Cabinet members for viewing.
- Dr. Bennett-Fairs announced New Student Orientation will be offered in an online format. The dates for New Student Orientation are June 8, June 22, June 29, July 13, and July 27. Dr. Bennett-Fairs and the Office of Student Life have consulted with department chairs and directors to pull the experience together. Students will register for classes via Zoom meetings with professors.
- President LaForge thanked Dr. Bennett-Fairs and Ms. Julie Jackson on the great job of organizing the student move out due to the COVID-19 virus. Dr. Bennett-Fairs will email to Cabinet members the remaining number of students left to move out.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- ~~Colloquia Lecture Series, April 1, 6:00 p.m., Jobe Auditorium~~
- ~~Bolivar County Crawfish Boil, April 2, 5:30 p.m., In front of Walter Sillers Coliseum~~
- ~~Mississippi State Science and Engineering Fair, April 3, Walter Sillers Coliseum~~
- ~~Dionne Warwick, April 7, 7:30 p.m., BPAC~~

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, April 6 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:37 p.m.