

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: May 18, 2022

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Joshua Armstrong, Ms. Caroline Fletcher, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Ms. Lucia Chacon Habis, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, Mr. Rick Munroe, Dr. Andy Novobilski, Dr. Michelle Roberts (by phone), and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (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 May 18, 2022. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Rutledge and seconded by Dr. Novobilski, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on May 2, 2022.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge welcomed Dr. Armstrong, Ms. Fletcher, Dr. Griffin, and Ms. Habis to their first Cabinet meeting as voting members.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from the last two weeks. The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors met for its monthly meeting, and the GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi Board of Directors met for its quarterly meeting. President LaForge and Dr. Novobilski met with Dr. Natasha Barnes and Ms. FaDerricka Harvey to debrief the Winning the Race Conference. The Office of Academic Affairs and the Registrar's Office hosted a special commencement ceremony for the baseball players who would be unable to attend the regular graduation ceremony due to the Gulf South Conference Baseball Tournament. Institutional Executive Officers, Chief Academic Officers, and Chief Information Officers of the IHL System participated in a conference call with Ellucian officials to discuss leveraging technology within the IHL system. President LaForge and SGA co-hosted a Graduation Celebration for international students. President LaForge hosted a dinner in honor of the Spring 2022 Commencement Speaker and Honorary Degree recipient Dr. Walt Bettinger. President LaForge visited with Ms. Habis and her mother before her mother's return to Guatemala. President LaForge and Dr. Novobilski met with FedEx officials to discuss the future of the FedEx Purple Runway Scholarship program. The Centennial Campaign Steering Committee met. Dr. Novobilski hosted representatives from the University of Mississippi ROTC program to discuss an agreement for Delta State students to participate in the ROTC program. The Delta State Foundation staff held another Capital Campaign Visioning event last week, and President LaForge traveled to Indianapolis to participate in the NCAA DII Implementation Committee meeting.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The contractor for the campus-wide roofing project missed their deadline, and they have begun to pay liquidated damages. The project

should be completed in approximately 30 days. The parking lot behind Fugler-Hammett Hall will be completed this weekend. Repair of the Whitfield Hall roof was sent out for bid. Additional roofs to be repaired soon are Jobe Hall, the Dave “Boo” Ferriss Museum, Holcombe-Norwood Hall, and Kent Wyatt Hall. Mr. Rutledge created a spreadsheet for Repair and Renovation funds projects that includes time frames and project cost. The School of Nursing project has not started yet due to a change order issue. The excess cash funds provided by the State to use for bond projects will be used to renovate Foundation Hall, add an elevator to the BPAC, demolish the Court of Governors, and create pre-plan documents for Ward Hall and Hugh White Hall.

- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The baseball team advanced to the NCAA South Regional Baseball Tournament, and their first game is tomorrow against Rollins College. The Athletics Department hosted 21 high school football teams last week for camp. The camp was a great recruiting opportunity for our football coaches. Mr. Kinnison has three coaching positions and one administrative position to fill.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. The Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day is tomorrow. The IHL Board meets tomorrow, and President LaForge will officially introduce Dr. Lovin and Dr. Novobilski to the IHL Board. President LaForge will participate virtually in a meeting with Casey Family Programs on Thursday. President LaForge departs on Friday to visit Delta State’s sister institution in Bulgaria. The next Cabinet meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 6.

CABINET TOPIC

None

BUSINESS

Action

Building Closures for Summer 2022..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge announced the tentative building closures for Summer 2022. A building closure is defined as a non-occupied building with lights switched off, appliances unplugged, and the temperature set at 78°. The university closes buildings during the summer to save on utilities. The residence halls closed for Summer 2022 are Lawler-Harkins Hall, Fugler-Hammett Hall, Cain-Tatum Hall, and Foundation Hall. All summer school students and camp participants will reside in Brumby-Castle Hall and Blansett Hall. The academic buildings closed for Summer 2022 are Jobe Hall, Holcomb-Norwood Hall, and Broom Hall. Four academic buildings will have partial closures: Zeigel Hall, Gibson-Gunn Hall, Robert E. Smith School of Nursing, and Caylor-White/Walters Hall. Specific areas within the academic buildings with partial closures will have a lower temperature and ability to turn on lights and use appliances. At the request of Dr. Armstrong, Mr. Rutledge will request Mr. Gerald Finley, Director of Facilities Management, work with Department of Music staff to ensure that the air temperature in Zeigel Hall (for all areas that house musical instruments) is at the proper level while the building is closed for the summer. Mr. Rutledge will send an update via email to the campus about the building closures. *(see handout)*

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the building closures for Summer 2022 and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Bond Plan for FY24 Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members the bond plan for FY24. Each year the university compiles a list

of projects to be funded by bonds and provides the list to the Bureau of Buildings and the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning. Each institution's priority list is shared with the Mississippi Legislature during the legislative session to help determine funding. During the next legislative session, Delta State is scheduled to receive \$6.8 million in bond funds to complete capital projects for FY24. The capital projects for FY24 are additional renovations to Walter Sillers Coliseum and upgrades to the university's HVAC and electrical systems. The renovations for Walter Sillers Coliseum in FY24 include altering the restrooms to be ADA accessible, remodeling the concession stand, adding an elevator, adding a room on the second floor for various functions, and remodeling the front entrance. Mr. Rutledge shared the remaining bond priorities list with Cabinet members. In FY25, bond funds will be used in the continuation of the Walter Sillers Coliseum renovation and to renovate Ward Hall. The renovations for Walter Sillers Coliseum in FY25 will include a complete interior transformation including offices and meeting rooms. Ward Hall will be renovated to accommodate the university's Honor's College. In FY26, bond funds will be used to renovate academic buildings and complete the renovation of Walter Sillers Coliseum. The final renovations to Walter Sillers Coliseum will include: an addition on the north side of the building to house a volleyball program; an atrium; and, training rooms. In FY27, bond funds will be used to transform Hugh White Hall into a visitor's center, as well as office spaces. In FY28, bond funds will be used for campus-wide roof repair and upgrades to the university's HVAC and electrical systems.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the bond plan for FY24 and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

MDOT Sidewalk Project – Phase II..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members that the university received notification on February 9, 2022 of a Transportation Alternative Award of \$746,851 from the Mississippi Department of Transportation. The awarded funds will be used to replace sidewalks on the Delta State campus. A condition of the award is a match of 20% or \$149,370. The university will use plant funds and insurance funds to cover the cost of the 20% match. Upon completion of the project, 95% of the university's sidewalks will have been improved.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve Delta State University participating in the Mississippi Department of Transportation's (MDOT) Transportation Alternative Program in order to complete the university's sidewalk project and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

FY23 Annual Operating Budget Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge stated he has been unable to complete the FY23 Annual Operating Budget (AOB) because the Legislative Budget Office and the Department of Finance and Administration have not yet come to an agreement as to how state agencies should report the State's excess cash funds that have been designated for facility projects (typically paid for by bond funds). The reporting of the funds will not alter the university's budget; therefore, Cabinet members agreed to give Mr. Rutledge the authority to proceed with submission of the university's AOB by the deadline of June 1 (*see FY23 Budget in Discussion*). Mr. Rutledge will provide a copy of the submitted AOB to Cabinet members.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Novobilski to give Mr. Rutledge the authority to proceed with submitting the university's Annual Operating Budget for FY23 and seconded by Dr. Lovin. The motion was approved.

Discussion

FY22 Budget Status Update..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge gave an update on the FY22 budget status. Spending has slowed down, with most procurement cards being suspended until July 1. The university requested \$1.5 million in Higher Education

Emergency Relief Funds, and it will be reflected in the June revenue statement. Mr. Rutledge reviewed the university's "budget to actual" statement, and the university is meeting expectations and should report an increase in our days of cash at year end.

FY23 Budget Plans Update Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge has completed the university's Annual Operating Budget; however, the submission deadline was postponed until June 1. The IHL System has questions on how to accurately report the State's excess cash funds provided to each university for bond projects. The reporting of the funds will not alter the university's budget; therefore, Cabinet members voted to give Mr. Rutledge the authority to proceed with submission of the university's Annual Operating Budget regardless of how the cash funds are reported. (see "FY23 Annual Operating Budget" under Action)

Enrollment Update/Overview Dr. Lovin

Dr. Lovin provided an enrollment update. Graduate enrollment continues to exceed all marks, thanks to the work of the Graduate Admissions office. He shared with Cabinet members the university needs 135 students to reach his goal of 551 new undergraduate students for Fall 2022. An updated enrollment report will be sent to Cabinet members today.

Institutional Effectiveness and Planning update Dr. Novobilski

Dr. Novobilski announced that the development of the university's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) proposal is almost complete, and the proposal should be presented in June. Each college/school is reviewing its respective strategic planning activities to make sure they correspond with the university's strategic plan.

Additional Information

- Dr. Novobilski stated that the Chief Academic Officers began a discussion during their monthly meeting about a system-wide contract with the Ad Astra program.
- Ms. Habis announced the new volleyball court (behind Foundation Hall) for students is complete.
- The Delta Council Annual Meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 17. Mr. Rutledge stated volunteers are needed, and he asked that interested parties reach out to his secretary, Ms. Joyce Shelton.
- Mr. Rutledge announced that the university's General Manager for Sodexo is no longer at Delta State. A new General Manager will be in place prior to the start of classes. An interim General Manager will be on campus soon. The cafeteria will not be open during for summer school due to the low number of students living on campus. These students will be provided with flex dollars for use in the Union.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day, May 19, 8:00 a.m., Forest E. Wyatt Gym
- Summer Session I begins, May 25
- Memorial Day Holiday, May 30

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, June 6, 2022 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm