

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT'S CABINET
Minutes

Meeting date: May 24, 2021

Members in attendance: President William LaForge (via Zoom), Dr. Vicki Bingham (via Zoom), Dr. Kurt Keppler (via Zoom), Mr. Mike Kinnison (via Zoom), Dr. Charles McAdams (via Zoom), Mr. Rick Munroe (via Zoom), Dr. Michelle Roberts (via Zoom), Mr. Jamie Rutledge (via Zoom), Ms. Nakikke Wallace (via Zoom), Dr. Andrew Wegmann (via Zoom), and Mr. William Young (via Zoom) (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: Ms. Robin Douglas, COVID-19 Response Coordinator

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held via Zoom video conference on May 24, 2021. 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. Wegmann, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on May 17, 2021.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge announced Governor Tate Reeves recently announced his appointments to the IHL Board of Trustees: 1) Dr. Ormella Cummings, of Itawamba County, has been appointed to represent the Third Supreme Court District. She currently serves as Chief Strategy Officer for North Mississippi Health Services. She is a graduate of the University of Mississippi. 2) Ms. Teresa Hubbard, of Lafayette County, has been appointed to represent the Third Supreme Court District. She serves as President and CEO of CITE Armored, with locations in Holly Springs and Batesville. She is a graduate of Delta State University. 3) Mr. Gregg Rader, of Lowndes County, has been appointed to represent the Third Supreme Court District. He serves as Executive Chairman of Columbus Recycling Corporation. He is a graduate of Mississippi State University. 4) Mr. Hal Parker, of Hinds County, has been reappointed to represent the First Supreme Court District. He was first appointed in 2012. He currently serves as General Partner of Parker Land, LLC. He is a graduate of Mississippi State University. The appointments are pending Senate confirmation, but the appointees are allowed to begin their service.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from the last week. The Institutional Executive Officers met last week. A few of the topics discussed during their meeting included: the legislature created a Peer Studies Committee to review tenure processes throughout the system; campuses' continued responses to COVID-19; Center for Disease Control and Prevention's recommendations on masks; and, each university ending their work from home policies by July 1. During the IHL Board of Trustees meeting on Thursday, the Board of Trustees approved the following items for Delta State: the university's short-term extension in our contract with Ellucian; razing and

removing 316 Shumate from the university's inventory; approving the university's tenure requests; and the continued accreditation of our nursing programs. President LaForge and Dr. McAdams had a meeting with Cleveland School District Superintendent Otha Belcher to renew our collaborations and partnerships within the district. Dr. McAdams shared with Dr. Belcher information on our gateway to STEM program, as well as opportunities with the College of Education and Human Sciences and the Department of Commercial Aviation.

- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The baseball team lost in the final round of the Gulf South Conference Championship tournament to the University of West Florida. However, our baseball team was selected to compete in the NCAA DII South Regional tournament, and their first game will be Thursday at 11:00 a.m. against the University of Tampa.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The remainder of the roofing project materials will not be delivered until July 1. The contractor for the roofing project plans to hire additional crew members in order to finish the project by the agreed upon deadline of August 8. The renovation projects in the residence halls are in full force and on schedule. Mr. Rutledge plans to meet with the architects for the School of Nursing expansion project within the next few weeks to turn their plans into construction documents. Facilities Management is working on renovating the previous residences of the President and Provost for future use the . Mr. Rutledge will meet with Dr. Jana Donahoe soon to discuss the Children's Advocacy Center project in further detail in order to begin the project.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. Summer Session I began today. Dr. McAdams informed Cabinet members summer enrollment is down 6% from last year. President LaForge has an interview with Delta News on Wednesday regarding the College of Business and Aviation's Master of Business Administration ranking in *Fortune* magazine. The Bolivar County Alumni Crawfish Boil will take place on Wednesday on the Quadrangle, and approximately 100 to 150 alumni and friends are expected to attend. The first Visioning event for the Capital Campaign will be held at President LaForge's home on Thursday night for staunch supporters of the BPAC. Martha Reeves performs at the BPAC Thursday evening. The Memorial Day holiday is Monday, May 31, and the next Cabinet meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 1.

CABINET TOPIC

None

BUSINESS

Action

COVID-19 Protocols – revised..... President LaForge

Ms. Douglas provided an overview of the recommended revisions to the COVID-19 Protocols. She recommended revising the COVID-19 Protocols to reflect recent changes to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines with regards to international travel. The CDC recommends not to travel internationally until you are fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated travelers are less likely to get and spread COVID-19. However, international travel poses additional risks and even fully vaccinated travelers are at increased risk for getting and possibly spreading new COVID-19 variants. Delta State's revised protocols for international travel will be based on whether or not a person is vaccinated with an USA approved vaccine.

Fully Vaccinated

- If you are fully vaccinated with an FDA-authorized vaccine or a vaccine authorized for emergency use

by the World Health Organization:

- You should continue to follow CDC's recommendations for traveling safely and get tested 3-5 days after travel.
- You do NOT need to get tested before leaving United States unless your destination requires it.
- You do NOT need to self-quarantine after arriving in the United States.

Unvaccinated

- If you are not vaccinated with an FDA-authorized vaccine or a vaccine authorized for emergency use by the World Health Organization:
 - Get tested with a viral test 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel.
 - Even if you test negative, stay home and self-quarantine for the full 7 days.
 - If your test is positive, isolate yourself to protect others from getting infected.
 - Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; Isolate immediately and contact Student Life for testing if you develop symptoms.

Ms. Douglas will post the update to the COVID-19 webpage on the Delta State website, and the revised protocols will be sent to the campus via the listserv.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bingham to revise the COVID-19 protocols to reflect the CDC's recommendation on international travel and seconded by Dr. Wegmann.

Ms. Douglas provided an overview of an additional recommended revision to the COVID-19 Protocols. She recommended revising the COVID-19 Protocols to reflect recent changes to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines with regards to vaccinations and masks. The CDC recommends that fully vaccinated individuals can resume activities without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations. Individuals are required to wear masks when traveling on public transportation into, within, or out of the United States. Individuals should continue to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19. If an individual has not been vaccinated, they should continue to wear a mask to help protect themselves and others. The individual should continue social distancing and sanitizing their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer often. Cabinet members discussed at length Delta State's protocols about masks. Dr. Wegmann suggested to include in Delta State's protocols positive language about wearing masks even if vaccinated. Delta State's revised COVID-19 protocols with regards to masks are:

- If you are fully vaccinated with an FDA-authorized vaccine, you are not required to wear a mask. However, you may continue to do so.
- If you are not fully vaccinated with an FDA-authorized vaccine, you should continue wearing a mask that covers your nose and mouth to help protect yourself and others. The University holds out the expectation that those who have not been fully vaccinated will continue to wear a mask, in addition to practicing social distancing. Also, the university highly encourages all employees and students to receive the vaccination as soon as possible so that all members of the Delta State family can safely become mask free.

President LaForge requested Mr. Rutledge order N95 masks for use by employees on campus who may want one. Also, President LaForge requested Mr. Munroe work with Communications and Marketing on a campaign about getting the COVID-19 vaccination in order to not wear a mask in the Fall.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to revise the COVID-19 protocols to reflect a fully vaccinated individual is

not required to wear a mask, but a non-vaccinated individual should continue to wear a mask and seconded by Mr. Munroe. The motion was passed with one abstention.

Class Attendance policy (revised – first reading).....Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation of the Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought the revised Class Attendance policy to Cabinet for a first reading. The Class Attendance policy was revised prior to the 2020-21 academic year to include a COVID-19 Pandemic response that allowed the university to be able to not penalize students for staying home if they felt ill. The COVID-19 Pandemic response is to be deleted from the Class Attendance policy for the 2021-22 academic year. The policy was revised to state students should not attend class if they are ill, and students are expected to provide documentation for missing class due to illness.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Class Attendance policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. Wegmann. The motion was approved.

Freshmen Residency policy (revised – first reading) Dr. Keppler

Dr. Keppler brought the revised Freshmen Residency policy to Cabinet for a first reading. Full-time, Delta State students are required to live on campus for two years or four academic semesters. If a student is under 21 years of age as of August 31 (Fall)/January 31 (Spring) or have completed fewer than 60 earned credit hours by the end of Summer Session II, the student must live on campus. Exceptions are authorized with proper documentation for married students, single parents, recent veterans, and for those students who live with a parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and commute from a distance of no more than 30 miles. Exemption requests with proper documentation must be submitted in writing to the Office of Housing and Residence Life. President LaForge requested Dr. Keppler produce an informational sheet to provide to students that shows the cost savings of living on campus versus living off campus, as well as a list of other reasons/benefits of living on campus (GPA, campus involvement, safety, etc.).

Motion: Moved by Dr. Keppler to approve the Freshmen Residency policy for a first reading and seconded by Dr. McAdams. The motion was approved.

Family Housing policy (revised – first reading)..... Dr. Keppler

Dr. Keppler brought the revised Family Housing policy to Cabinet for a first reading. Delta State has 40 apartment units available for use in Hill Apartments. To be eligible for occupancy, the lessee must be an undergraduate student who is married or is a single parent with a minor child in residence; a non-traditional undergraduate student; or, a graduate student. A full-time university employee may be eligible after review of application and availability. A student must be enrolled as a full-time student at Delta State University, and must maintain the full-time student status throughout the year, except during the summer. Dr. Roberts suggested to rename the policy to the Hill Apartments policy as the policy deviates from its original intention of family housing. She also suggested removing the ability for employees to live in Hill Apartments; however, Cabinet members discussed and agreed an employee can reside in Hill Apartments after review of application, availability, and Cabinet approval.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Keppler to approve the revised Family Housing policy, and to rename the policy to Hill Apartments policy and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Wayne Blansett Staff Development Appreciation WeekMs. Wallace

Ms. Wallace announced the Administrative Staff Council will sponsor a staff appreciation week July 12-15. The annual staff development day was changed to a staff appreciation week in an effort to practice social

distancing and keep staff members safe. The schedule, subject to change, is: bingo and other games from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Monday, July 12; an ice cream social from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 13; a cake-walk from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 14; and, a staff luncheon and years of service presentation from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, July 15. Ms. Wallace is not requesting for offices to shut down during the allotted times each day, except on Thursday. Staff can rotate during the allotted times on the first three days. Ms. Wallace stated a professional development event will occur during the week, but it is not finalized at this time. She will provide to Cabinet next week more information on the staff development portion of the program. Staff Council will make it clear to all staff members that the options are to: 1) participate in staff development appreciation day events, or 2) remain in the office.

Motion: Moved by Ms. Wallace to approve the Wayne Blansett Staff Development Appreciation Week events, and for offices to have the option to close on Thursday, July 15 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for employees to attend the staff luncheon and years of service presentation and seconded by Dr. Wegmann. The motion was approved.

FY22 Budget Plans Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members a revision made to the FY22 budget approved by Cabinet members at the April 12, 2021 Cabinet meeting. An increase was made to the Higher Education Emergency Relief funds transfer for loss revenues for a total of \$1,232,624 to allow for 100 employees to have a salary increase to adjust for market, equity, or compression disparities. The expenditures will reflect this change with an increase to Other Salary Increase for \$232,624 to cover the salary increases and fringes. The proposed university budget will increase to \$50,098,223.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the FY22 budget revision and seconded by Dr. McAdams. The motion was approved.

Discussion

FY21 Budget Update Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge provided an update on the FY21 budget. Mr. Rutledge will send the Cash Flow Statement for April to Cabinet members later today or tomorrow. The university is in excess of \$2.5 million from last year at this time. The university did not receive several reimbursements in April: \$340,000 reimbursement for storm damage from the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency; \$400,000 reimbursement from CARES funds; and \$260,000 from federal CARES funds. All reimbursements are scheduled to be received in May. If the university continues to meet its targets, the university should have \$9.5 million to \$10 million, which translates to 55 to 60 days, of cash on hand at the end of the fiscal year.

FY22 Salary Increases for Market/Equity/Compression Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members the FY22 salary increases for market, equity, and compression. In the "Cabinet approved" FY22 budget proposal, an additional \$101,385 were set aside for salary increases for market, equity, and compression, as well as \$20,277 for fringes. To determine which employees would receive a salary increase for market, equity, or compression, the Executive Committee asked Human Resources to create a report listing all staff members with their rank on the pay scale. Dr. McAdams created a report listing all faculty members with their rank on the pay scale. Each vice president reviewed their respective area's listing of employees, and then made recommendations for salary adjustments. Based on the recommendations, there are 58 staff members and 42 faculty members who will receive salary adjustments based on compression, equity, or market. A total of \$295,238 is needed to

make an adjustment for all 100 employees. President LaForge asked Mr. Rutledge to review all areas of the budget to see if there were any funds available for additional salary increases; however, the best option was to increase the amount of the Higher Education Relief fund (HEERF) transfer for loss revenue for FY22. The one-time HEERF transfer would be \$1,232,624 to allow for all salary increases plus fringes. By increasing the amount of the HEERF transfer, the university will have to regain the revenues in FY23. The Executive Committee believes the revenues can be achieved through increased enrollment of 136 students. If the increased revenues are not achieved, the university will have to look into increased tuition or other budget adjustments. Additionally, the vice presidents reviewed their budgets to see if line items could be adjusted to allow for additional salary adjustments. From this exercise, an additional 48 employees will receive salary increases for market, equity, and compression, totaling \$111,393. The FY22 budget will not change for this exercise since these funds will simply be reallocated to different areas. Any employee receiving a salary increase for market, equity, or compression will have it documented in their employment contract/letter sent out by Human Resources in June. President LaForge stated this is a great opportunity for the university, and it will help with the retention of our employees.

Additional information

- Dr. Bingham announced the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing received a grant from the Bolivar Medical Center Foundation that will allow the School of Nursing to partner with Bolivar Medical Center providers to pilot a program on skills competency training.
- Mr. Rutledge announced the remainder of the sod will be planted around the sidewalks before the first Orientation session.
- Dr. Wegmann shared with Cabinet members that his new book, French Connections, won the prestigious Wilson Book Prize from the Wilson Institute for Canadian History at McMaster University. President LaForge asked Dr. McAdams to have his office work with Dr. Wegmann and the President's Office to host a "book signing" in the Fall.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Bolivar County Alumni Crawfish Boil, May 26, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m., Quadrangle
- Martha Reeves performance, May 27, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Delta Council Annual Meeting, June 4
- Orientation Session #1, June 8, in person
- Clay Walker performance, June 10, 7:30 p.m., BPAC

NEXT MEETING:

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

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:51 p.m.