

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: May 29, 2018**

**Members in attendance:** President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Dr. Dave Breaux, Mr. Patrick Hundley, Dr. Charles McAdams, Ms. Christie Rocconi, Dr. Michelle Roberts, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge  
(Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

**Members not in attendance:** Dr. George Beals, Ms. Ashley Griffin and Mr. Ronnie Mayers

**Guests:** Dr. Severine Groh, President, Faculty Senate  
Dr. Billy Moore, Representative, Academic Council  
Dr. Christy Riddle, Chair-Elect, Administrative Staff Council

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on May 29, 2018. The meeting convened at 9:00 a.m. with President LaForge presiding.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Mr. Rutledge and seconded by Dr. Breaux, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on May 22, 2018.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge gave Cabinet Members an update on Mr. Mark Cummins. President LaForge called Mr. Cummins last week to offer his condolences and check on his healing process. President LaForge stated Mr. Cummins was in good spirits, and he is very appreciative of the concern, assistance, and prayers for his family. Mr. Cummins provided an update on the arrangements for Dr. Cheryl Cummins. Prior to the celebration of life services to be held at a later date, a private family graveside service will take place. Mr. Cummins requested the use of a Delta State facility for the celebration of life services since their church isn't large enough. President LaForge assured him the university would work with his family to reserve a larger space.
- President LaForge had a great campaign update with Mr. Tom Gresham, Mr. Walton Gresham, and Mr. Bill McPherson last week. These men and their families are great donors for the College of Business and Aviation and our marketing plan. Their companies are the model for the perfect scholarship cycle. Their scholarship has helped several students during their time at Delta State and has led to job opportunities within their companies for the students after they graduate.
- President LaForge attended the BPAC President's Award dinner last week. The award was presented to Planter's Bank for their wonderful support and their help in underwriting programming.
- In Mr. Mayers absence, President LaForge gave an update on Athletics. Delta State's baseball team lost to Mississippi College in the NCAA DII South Regional Tournament. Florida Southern College won the tournament, sending them to Cary, NC for the NCAA Men's Baseball Championship. Delta State's golf team finished 11<sup>th</sup> in the nation. They had a wonderful season this year.

- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. They are getting ready to start pouring sidewalks at Statesmen Boulevard, and the project should be complete by the first of August. Mr. Rutledge has toured Zeigel Hall, and all looks good. The second floor is complete and the finishing touches are in progress for the first floor. Mr. Rutledge hopes the project will be finished by the end of June so that the move in process can begin the first of July. The contractors for Young-Mauldin Cafeteria state the project will be finished by mid-August in order to begin serving students upon their return in the fall. The lighting project in the Roberts-LaForge Library is almost complete. All outdoor light fixtures have been updated to LED lights, and they will remain on during the duration of the summer to keep the campus lit and safe.
- President LaForge announced Summer Session I begins today. Dr. McAdams stated summer school participation continues to decrease due to the disparity in costs between community colleges and universities. Dr. McAdams created a task force to look at alternatives for summer school, and Dr. Moon will head this task force. She will work closely with the deans and chairs going forward to see what works best in terms of class offerings.
- President LaForge travels to Pensacola tomorrow for the Gulf South Conference Annual meeting. President LaForge’s term as president of the Gulf South Conference concludes at this meeting, and Dr. Don Dowless of Shorter University will begin his term as president. Delta State is well represented in the Gulf South Conference through Mr. Mayers and Ms. Dana George and their array of knowledge on the Gulf South Conference and Division II. President LaForge mentioned that the University of North Alabama will leave the conference at the end of June to move to Division I, and Auburn University at Montgomery will begin their last probation year prior to becoming a full member of the conference.
- Delta Council hosts their Annual Meeting on Delta State’s campus on Friday, June 1 at 10:30 a.m. Dr. Bennett will give the university welcome in President LaForge’s absence. Mr. Rutledge asked that all questions regarding the event be filtered through his office.
- Mr. Rick Munroe arrives on Friday, June 1 and will work with Mr. Hundley on the transition process for three weeks in June. He officially begins his new role on July 1.
- Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet Members that the pay raise cycle went well. He stated some of the allocated funds for pay raises were not used, and this will provide funding for other projects.
- President LaForge welcomed the incoming Academic Council representative, Dr. Billy Moore, to Cabinet.

**CABINET TOPIC**

None

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**Annual Operating Budget ..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge distributed a report outlining the proposed E&G Operating Budget for FY19 (see report). Delta State will show an increase in revenue for FY19 due to tuition, online course fees, State appropriations, and a local grant. Budget savings will be realized from one time expenditures from 2016-17. As a result of the savings and additional revenue from tuition and other sources, Delta State has \$1,306,304 in available funds to apply to other areas. First, Delta State has three mandated expenditures of a health insurance increase, accident insurance increase, and Department of Education audit finding fees totaling \$183,000. Additionally, Delta State’s Canvas and other online fees increased by \$95,000. The Executive Committee was diligent in making sure scholarships increased in proportion to the increase in

tuition, thus creating an expenditure of \$549,471. Dr. Breaux stated that the budget for graduate assistants should also increase as tuition increases. Dr. McAdams will work with Dr. Beverly Moon to determine the budget amount needed to fund the positions based on the tuition increase, and will present the information during next year's budget process. With the remaining revenue funds, Delta State will provide employees with salary increases, as promised by President LaForge during his State of the University address. First, those who make less than the living wage of \$22,000 will be raised to the living wage, for a total expenditure of \$101,069. Next, a 3% salary increase for all employees was set aside, for an expenditure of \$579,344. Delta State's E&G budget for FY19 will be \$47,571,149. The annual operating budget will be voted on by the Board of Trustees at the June IHL Board meeting and will be final upon their approval. Mr. Rutledge distributed an additional report on the annual operating budget, using the format required by IHL. He informed Cabinet Members the largest increases are seen in Total Instruction and Institutional Support, which covers salary increases.

**Motion:** Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the operating budget for FY19 as presented and seconded by Dr. Roberts. The motion was approved.

**Discussion**

**Surplus Equipment Disposal process..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet an explanation of the surplus equipment disposal process. He stated there are three reasons to dispose of property: 1) obsolete, 2) stolen or lost, or 3) trade in/insurance claim. If an item is obsolete, the office personnel responsible for inventory will fill out an Inventory Disposal Form and will submit it to the Inventory Clerk for verification. Once the property has been verified by the Inventory Clerk, Facilities Management is notified to pick up the property and to dispose of it. Facilities Management will return the inventory sticker on the property to the Inventory Clerk, and the Inventory Clerk will remove the property from inventory. If a piece of property is stolen or lost, an additional step is added into the process of filing a police report. If a piece of property is eligible for trade-in, a copy of the invoice has to be submitted showing the trade-in amount prior to the process beginning.

**President's Home..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet Members the university has been trying to secure funding through bonds from the State for the new President's home; however, the funding never became available. The university began looking into alternate funding streams and decided to work with the DSU Foundation to get a loan through local banks in Cleveland. Delta State will offset some of the costs the university charges to the Foundation for operations. Delta State will be able to do this because the debt for Blansett Hall, which is approximately \$450,000 per year, will be paid off in December. The architect on the project gave the plans for the President's home to three local builders and received an estimated quote of \$1.3 million. By securing our own funding and not receiving State bonds, the Bureau of Buildings does not have to be involved, thus leading to a less expensive bottom line and a faster completion time. The next step is to interview the home builders and receive a letter of intent from the banks to issue the loan for the project. Once the university has selected the homebuilder and received the letter of intent from the banks, IHL Commissioner Glenn Boyce will approve the land lease to the Delta State University Foundation and the startup of the project. The DSU Foundation plans to pay the loan back in four to five years. Mr. Rutledge believes construction will begin at the end of August or the first of September.

**Golf Course RFP..... Mr. Rutledge**

Mr. Rutledge updated Cabinet Members on the Request For Proposal (RFP) process for developing the Golf Course. The RFP was released on May 4 and the university has received five package requests from

interested parties. Two of the interested parties have taken tours of the Golf Course. Mr. Rutledge’s office has received questions from the interested parties, and answers to those questions will be sent out on May 29. Bids from the interested parties are due on June 12. The Executive Committee will review the bids and narrow the selection to two vendors. These two entities will be invited to present their proposals to the Executive Committee. Mr. Rutledge hopes to choose the entity to develop the Golf Course by June 29.

**Grants Update.....Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams shared with Cabinet Members the FY18 Grants and Contracts information. The first page of the document shows the grants awarded in FY18 totaling \$3,446,649.19. This amount includes two large grants from the Robert E. Hearin Foundation and Department of Education, which are multi-year awards. The second page of the document covers ongoing grants and contracts, and \$3,331,221.83 was received from those. The grants and contracts cover a wide array of campus activities, and a few of them pay administrative costs. Dr. McAdams asked Cabinet Members to contact Ms. Heather Miller, Director of Institutional Grants, if they have questions.

**Cabinet Advance ..... Dr. Roberts**

Dr. Roberts informed Cabinet Members that the date for the Cabinet Advance has been set for Tuesday, July 10 and Wednesday, July 11. She explained to the incoming members that the tentative schedule for the two days includes a continental breakfast at 8:30 a.m. and discussions beginning at 9:00 a.m. Lunch will be served on site, and discussions will conclude each day around 4:30 p.m. Three topics to be covered include: 1) the Campus Master Plan, 2) Golf Course development, and 3) university marketing initiatives. Additional information on the location and topics will be provided closer to time. President LaForge asked Cabinet Members to submit proposed Cabinet Advance topics to Dr. Roberts.

**Personnel Changes..... Cabinet**

President LaForge asked Cabinet Members to give an update on any personnel changes occurring in their area. Dr. Bennett announced Mr. Jim Miller begins as Director of Career Services on June 1. Mr. Rutledge announced University Accounting has a vacancy with the position of Assistant Comptroller. Dr. Breaux stated the College of Arts and Sciences has several vacancies, but only one chair position vacant—Speech and Hearing Sciences. Ms. Rocconi stated she has two more Staff Council meetings to chair and then Dr. Christy Riddle will take over as chair. Dr. Billy Moore announced the Chair of the Department of Commercial Aviation plans to return to a faculty position. Mr. Rogel Campbell will assume the role as Interim Chair. Mr. Sam Washington has accepted a position as the Director of the Greenville airport. Dr. Tomeka Harbin has been named Chair of the Division of Management, Marketing, and Business Administration. Dr. McAdams stated he will have several searches open later in the summer, including a position in the Office of the Registrar and a position in Institutional Research and Planning. President LaForge announced that the Enrollment Management portfolio will shift from Academic Affairs to Student Affairs, under the direction of Dr. Bennett. President LaForge thanked Dr. McAdams for overseeing Enrollment Management the last few years.

**Additional information:**

- Dr. Bennett announced the first summer orientation session for students will be held on June 11. The structure of orientation has been remodeled. Orientation will begin this year in Walter Sillers Coliseum for the opening session and will move to Caylor/White-Walters Hall for advising.
- President LaForge announced the fifth annual Mayors’ Summit is scheduled for June 19. He began this summit as a way to engage leaders from local municipalities from surrounding counties on ways Delta State could partner with them and get them involved in university activities. He stated this is a great example of our Visioning principle #10.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Summer Session I begins, May 29
- Delta Council Annual Meeting, June 1, 10:00 a.m., BPAC
- Memphis Area Alumni Event, June 8, 6:00 p.m., Memphis, TN
- Orientation Session I, June 11
- Mayors' Summit, June 19, 1:00 p.m., Simmons Room
- Orientation Session II, June 28

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, June 4 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Restructuring of Alumni Chapters (Mr. Hundley)

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 10:19 a.m.