

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: November 29, 2021

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vicki Bingham, Mr. Mike Kinnison, Dr. Eddie Lovin, 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: Mr. Rick Munroe

Guests: Ms. Cayce Friesenhahn, Assistant Director, Graduate Admissions
Dr. Beverly Moon, Dean, Graduate and Continuing Studies

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on November 29, 2021. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Novobilski and seconded by Dr. Lovin, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on November 15, 2021.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- Cabinet members paused for a moment of silence to honor the memory of Dr. Gray Kane. The Office of Academic Affairs hosted a remembrance ceremony for Dr. Kane on November 23, and a memorial service will be scheduled for 2022.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members for their review and consideration an article from the *Clarion Ledger* titled "College professors have right to provoke, upset you."
- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from last week. Bayou Academy hosted a college fair, and President LaForge attended along with Office of Admissions staff and other campus departments. President LaForge spoke with Mr. Walt Bettinger, and he confirmed his plans to be the Commencement Speaker in May and to receive an honorary doctorate degree from Delta State. The Institutional Executive Officers and the IHL Board of Trustees met last week. The Office of Admissions hosted a High School Preview Day and there was exceptional attendance. President LaForge met with Miss Presley Jackson, who was recently crowned Miss Delta State University. President LaForge spoke with NCAA DII Vice President Terri Steeb Gronau about the NCAA DII Implementation Committee. President LaForge has agreed to co-chair the committee to help implement the NCAA constitution changes within DII. President LaForge had a departmental visit with the School of Nursing. The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce hosted the rescheduled Welcome Back Reception for faculty and staff.
- Mr. Kinnison provided an update on athletics. The men's basketball team has competed in three games since the last Cabinet meeting. They travel to Southern Arkansas University tonight, and they will host

the University of Alabama-Huntsville and the University of West Alabama this weekend. The women's basketball team has competed in three games since the last Cabinet meeting, and they defeated the University of Arkansas at Monticello. They will host the University of Alabama-Huntsville and the University of West Alabama this weekend. The 2021 C Spire Conerly Trophy presentation is tomorrow night, and Delta State's nominee is Mr. Marvin Terry.

- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on facilities management projects. The campus-wide roofing project should be completed by the end of February. Roofs are being installed on Ward Hall and the Odealier Morgan Laundry building currently, and the residence hall roofs are being completed. The bids for the School of Nursing project are released this week. The architects for the project are not expecting a good return on bids, and so Mr. Rutledge is preparing a plan to present to the Executive Committee in case the return is poor. Mr. Rutledge has not yet received confirmation on the second phase of the MDOT sidewalk project. Facilities Management is working on R&R projects funded by HEERF II and HEERF III funds. HEERF II funds must be spent by December 31. Mr. Rutledge is working to schedule a meeting to talk about facilities' issues within Broom Hall. The university should receive \$15.6 million in State infrastructure (ARPA) funds.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. Mr. Jeff Jackson, Electrical Manager, was honored as Employee of the Month this morning. In lieu of a student forum, Dr. Lovin and Mr. Young hosted a Coffee Q&A this morning in the Nowell Union for students to have open conversations with President LaForge, Dr. Lovin, and Mr. Young. A second session occurs on Tuesday afternoon. The Omicron Delta Kappa induction ceremony occurs tonight followed by a reception at the President's home. President LaForge will be the guest speaker for the National Society for Leadership and Success on Tuesday evening. Delta State's Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony is scheduled for Wednesday at 3:00 p.m. in the Leroy E. Morganti Atrium in Kent Wyatt Hall. On Wednesday evening, President LaForge will attend The Red Carpet Guild's Sparkle and Twang Gala at GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi. On Thursday, the Delta Council hosts their Mid-Year Board Meeting. The Major Foundations Task Force will meet on Thursday. The Cleveland Christmas Parade begins at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, and the staging area will take place on Delta State's Quadrangle.

CABINET TOPIC

SACSCOC Reaffirmation and QEP Dr. Novobilski

Dr. Novobilski introduced Dean of Graduate and Continuing Studies Beverly Moon and Assistant Director of Graduate Admissions Cayce Friesenhahn. Dr. Moon and Ms. Friesenhahn updated Cabinet members on current reports due, plans and timeline for Delta State's SACSCOC Reaffirmation process, and the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) process. Current reports due: The university has two reports due to SACSCOC in 2022: 1) Annual General Information and Enrollment Report, and 2) a Monitoring Report. 1) The Annual General Information and Enrollment Report is submitted to SACSCOC each year, and it provides the accrediting agency information on the university's enrollment based on FTE figures from IPEDS. This report is due January 18. 2) In March 2020, the university submitted a Fifth-Year Interim Report, and the university was found to be non-compliant in three areas, including two findings in finances and one in the student complaint process. A Referral Report was submitted in March 2020; SACSCOC was satisfied on two findings but asked for further explanation on one. On April 1, 2022, the university will submit the requested Monitoring Report to SACSCOC to provide proof that all non-compliance issues were addressed and that no further problems have occurred. The university will provide this proof through validation reports and process and procedural documents from each unit, most of which have been collected. The Reaffirmation process: To help prepare the university for the remainder of the Reaffirmation process, including the 2024 on-site visit by SACSCOC, several committees are needed to help finalize reaffirmation

documents and create the QEP. Some of the committees are: Steering Committee, Leadership Committee, QEP Committee, and Compliance Certification Committee. Faculty, staff, and administrators will be members of committees, as needed. The QEP: The QEP needs to be a Delta State mission-oriented program, be affordable, and help enhance student experiences and/or student learning outcomes. The final QEP proposal will be submitted to SACSCOC by at the latest, the middle of February 2024. Ideally, the QEP proposal will be complete by the end of Fall 2022 in order to pilot it in Spring 2023. Concerns: For all of the above-mentioned issues related to accreditation: the university needs to ensure all academic and non-academic units upload their annual reports to the Compliance Assist system. During the reaffirmation process, SACSCOC will want to review annual reports for the university, and there cannot be gaps within our reporting. Also, to ensure that the institutional effectiveness of the university be in evidence, Dr. Moon recommended assembling an additional committee to begin work on the next cycle of strategic planning for the university. The strategic plan needs to have specific and measurable aspirational goals, and it needs to be at the forefront in decision-making conversations. President LaForge urged Cabinet members to support and assist Dr. Moon and all committees during the reaffirmation process, as requested and needed, and to encourage their employees and students to do the same.

BUSINESS

Action

None

Discussion

Student Payment for Employment Dr. Novobilski

Dr. Novobilski received a request from the Geospatial Information Technologies Center to promote students to part-time employees and set their hourly pay rate at a level commensurate with their abilities. These part-time employees would be paid with grant funds and not university funds. Mr. Rutledge suggested creating a pay scale for the part-time employees with specific job descriptions and responsibilities attached to each level. Dr. Novobilski and Mr. Rutledge are to meet with Human Resources Director Lisa Giger to discuss the matter and develop a protocol for student payment that the entire campus can use.

FY23 Budget Timeline Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members the FY23 budget timeline. Phase I (Facilities) and Phase II (New and Expanded Activities) requests will be sent out to the President’s direct reports for dissemination on January 10. Requests are due to Mr. Rutledge on February 11 for his presentation to the Executive Committee on February 18 and presentation to Cabinet on February 28. Phase III (Ongoing Operations) requests will be sent out to the President’s direct reports on March 18. Requests are due to Mr. Rutledge on March 29 for his presentation to the Executive Committee on April 22 and presentation to Cabinet on April 25. In conjunction with the regular budget planning phases, Mr. Rutledge developed a timeline for a review of all areas of campus to identify budget savings. The Vice Presidents will use this timeline to create their own timelines in reviewing each area of their units with the help of their deans, chairs, directors, staff, faculty, etc.

Additional Information

- The annual Cabinet Christmas party will take place at the next meeting on Monday, December 6.

- Mr. Young announced the Game Room in the H. L. Nowell Student Union will open on Tuesday night. Also, Mr. Young is working with the Athletics Department to determine a possible student incentive to increase attendance at Thursday night's basketball games.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Delta State's "Giving Tuesday," November 30
- Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, December 1, 3:00 p.m., Leroy E. Morganti Atrium, Kent Wyatt Hall
- Mountain Holiday performance, December 7, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Fall Commencement, December 10, 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Walter Sillers Coliseum
- Winter Holidays, December 22 – December 31

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, December 6, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Marketing Initiatives and Analytics (Mr. Munroe)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:01 p.m.