

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: October 3, 2016**

**Members in attendance:** President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Dr. Chris Jurgenson, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Ms. Allie Rose Parker, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Christie Rocconi, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

**Members not in attendance:** Mr. Keith Fulcher

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on October 3, 2016. The meeting convened at 2:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

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

On motion by Mr. Mayers, seconded by Dr. McAdams, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on September 26, 2016.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge and several Cabinet members attended the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet last week. He said it was a nice event, and Delta State was well represented.
- Dr. Temika Simmons met with President LaForge last week to give him an update on the planning of the 2017 Winning the Race Conference. President LaForge said plans for the conference are shaping up nicely.
- President LaForge, Ms. Rocconi, and Ms. Caitlyn Thompson visited Canton Academy, Holmes Community College, and St. Joseph Catholic School last week to continue Delta State's efforts of developing a pipeline into the Jackson area. President LaForge said they were well received by the schools.
- President LaForge attended the opening reception of the Annual Faculty Art Exhibition and later toured the exhibit with Mr. Ron Koehler. He encouraged Cabinet Members to visit the exhibit to see artwork prepared by our faculty.
- President LaForge gave an update, in Mr. Fulcher's absence, on the Foundation Board meeting. The meeting focused primarily on the upcoming capital campaign. During the meeting, Board members heard from a consultant from Alexander Haas about their involvement with the campaign, and President LaForge gave an update on enrollment and campus events.
- President LaForge asked Dr. Bennett to give an update on the Okra Idol event that took place over the weekend. Dr. Bennett stated 80-100 students were in attendance. Mr. Scottie Willis won first place, and Ms. Karlee Ponder and Mr. Travon Harris took second and third place, respectively.
- President LaForge asked Mr. Mayers to give an update on athletics. Mr. Mayers said he was pleased with the great turnout for Delta State's win against Mississippi College last week. He suggested that Ms. Parker work with the Student Government Association President at MC to create a new Heritage

Bell that includes the current mascots. Also, he stated the Cross Country team is doing well, and the Athletics Department is gearing up for Homecoming.

- The International Conference on the Blues began on Sunday at Dockery Farms. President LaForge said it was well attended and was a great start for the conference. Monday morning’s plenary session began with a wonderful welcome by Dr. Rolando Herts who set the stage for the remainder of the conference. The Levitt AMP Concert Series, with the Cedric Burnside Project, is tonight at 7:30 p.m., and Mississippi Grounds’ “Blues in the Round” event will follow. Tuesday morning will begin with a keynote brunch at GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi with Boo Mitchell as the keynote speaker.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the upcoming week’s activities. The Avett Brothers will perform at the BPAC on Tuesday evening. President LaForge will speak to the Diversity Committee on Wednesday. On Thursday, President LaForge will attend the Cleveland Music Foundation Board meeting, meet with University Press of Mississippi Director Craig Gill, and participate in the Cleveland Bolivar County Young Professionals Homerun Derby. The BPAC Recital Hall Series begins on Thursday evening with a performance by the Los Angeles Guitar Quartet. President LaForge announced Octoberfest is Friday and Saturday. On Saturday, President LaForge will cook pancakes for the Rotary Pancake breakfast and will have lunch with Dr. Stuart Rockoff of the Mississippi Humanities Council and Mr. William Adams of the National Endowment of the Humanities. On Sunday, President LaForge plans to attend the Wiley Planetarium re-opening event.
- Amtrak is breaking ground for a new regional station in Marks, MS on Friday. President LaForge was heavily involved, prior to coming to Delta State, with bringing this station to the Delta, and so he plans to attend the groundbreaking ceremony.
- President LaForge asked Dr. McAdams to give an update on his travel to Russia next week. Dr. McAdams said he leaves for Perm State National Research University on Sunday to represent Delta State University during their centennial anniversary program. This is a great opportunity to continue growing our partnership with this university. President LaForge thanked Dr. McAdams for his willingness to attend.
- President LaForge gave an update on two ailing members of DSU family — Coach Boo Ferriss and Mr. James Donald Cooper. He asked for Cabinet Members to join him in a moment of silence for them.

**CABINET TOPIC**

**Visioning Process Implementation ..... President LaForge**

President LaForge stated it is time for the owners of the visioning principles to create goals for the short term, intermediate, and long term, as well as to create strategies for each. President LaForge has developed a template to help guide the owners when forming goals. The template includes the visioning principle, goal, owner, stakeholder, current status, timeline, start and finish dates, desired outcome, strategies, milestones, and resources needed. The template will help each owner use the same language and process as everyone else when developing a goal. The goals will be part of the operational document used for the budgeting process as well as to help with determining priorities for each budget cycle. President LaForge created a hypothetical goal for each visioning principle to articulate his idea for the template, and shared these examples with the Cabinet (see attached).

**BUSINESS**

**Action**

**Honorary Degree recommendation..... Dr. Roberts**

Dr. Roberts brought to Cabinet a recommendation from the Honorary Degree committee. The person being recommended has family ties to the Delta through their father and siblings, has worked to

improve race relations, and is considered an American musical icon. Upon Cabinet approval, President LaForge will make the pitch to this person later this month to see if the December or May Commencement schedule works for their schedule.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. Roberts to approve the honorary degree recommendation and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. **The motion was approved.**

**Discussion**

**Mississippi Flag..... President LaForge**

President LaForge said the conversations on Delta State’s campus surrounding the Mississippi flag issue have been wide ranging. He had a conversation yesterday with an African American employee that stated the flag is just a piece cloth and it doesn’t bother him if it is flown or not. If we continue to fly the flag, the conversation about its barrier to progress continues and the university pays respect to the state. President LaForge said he is aware that Delta State will offend someone, no matter the stance taken on the flag. Ms. Parker said the referendum on the homecoming ballot stated, “Would you like to see the Mississippi flag taken down at Delta State?”, and students were given three voting options: yes, no, and undecided. She reported that approximately 950 students voted in the election, and the results were 25.7% to take the flag taken down, 58.3% to keep the flag up, and 16.1% were undecided. Ms. Parker believes most students are set in their opinions and that holding a forum or sending more surveys won’t make a difference. President LaForge thanked Ms. Parker for her diligence of gathering student opinions.

**Academic Affairs Distinguishing Characteristics.....Dr. McAdams**

In August, Dr. McAdams asked his direct reports to give him a list of distinguishing characteristics for their colleges and/or departments. Dr. McAdams stated the list he provided to Cabinet Members is unedited, but it is a great way to educate Cabinet Members and the campus on offerings within specific departments. This list is also a great recruiting tool and has been provided to Communications and Marketing to use for press releases. Also, this list folds nicely into our visioning principle on distinguishing factors. For additional information about anything on the list, Dr. McAdams suggested that Cabinet members contact the deans.

**Other Discussion**

- Dr. Griffin reminded Cabinet Members of the Kent Wyatt Lecture Series, which is scheduled for Monday, October 10 at noon. Dr. Jeff Passe will be the guest lecturer for this event and will speak on building viable partnerships between university educator/school professional preparation programs and their surrounding K-12 schools.
- Mr. Mayers announced that the Athletics Hall of Fame and Alumni Awards Gala will be held on Friday, October 14 at the BPAC. Dr. Bennett stated she has had a great response to the parade and has had several entries. She will need volunteers to help feed the high school bands participating in the parade.
- Dr. Roberts informed Cabinet Members of the Octoberfest Sponsors dinner on Thursday night at the Cleveland Country Club beginning at 6:00 p.m. As a gold sponsor, Delta State received ten tickets. If anyone would like to attend, please contact Ms. Cole.
- Dr. Bennett arranged for two charter buses to take faculty, staff, and students to the Delta State vs. University of West Alabama game on Saturday. Nineteen seats are still available.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- International Conference on the Blues, October 2-4
- The Avett Brothers, BPAC, 7:30 pm
- Kent Wyatt Lecture Series, October 10, 12:00 noon, Jacob Conference Center
- Homecoming, October 14-15
- DSU vs. Univ. of W. Florida, October 15, 4:00 pm (Wear Green), Reception – 3:30 pm
- Mavis Staples and the Blind Boys of Alabama, BPAC, October 20, 7:30 pm
- DSU vs. Univ. of N. Alabama, October 29, 2:00 pm (Wear White), Reception – 1:30 pm
- Colloquia Lecture Series, Congressman Bennie Thompson, November 9, 6:00 pm, Jobe Auditorium

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, October 10 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Mobile Website (Dr. Roberts)

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m.