

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: May 22, 2018

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

Members not in attendance: Ms. Ashley Griffin and Dr. Michelle Roberts

Guests: Dr. Severine Groh, President, Faculty Senate
Mr. Charlie King, President, Student Government Association
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 22, 2018. 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. Breaux, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on April 30, 2018.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge welcomed the incoming Cabinet Members for 2018-19—Dr. Groh, Mr. King, and Dr. Riddle.
- Cabinet Members observed a moment of silence in memory of Dr. Cheryl Cummins, Director of Field Experiences, who was killed in an automobile accident last week. Dr. McAdams gave an update on Mr. Mark Cummins, an Aircraft Repair Technician at Delta State, who was severely injured in the accident. He stated Mr. Cummins has several surgeries ahead of him and a long road to recovery. The family will postpone any services for Dr. Cummins until Mr. Cummins is well enough to attend. Dr. McAdams thanked Ms. Rocconi and Dr. Groh for organizing ways for faculty and staff to assist the Cummins family. A few ways to give back are through monetary donations, donated personal/medical leave, and/or giving to a memorial set up by the Courtesy Committee. An email was sent to faculty and staff with additional details. At a later time, a scholarship will be set up in Dr. Cummins honor.
- President LaForge thanked Dr. McAdams for stepping up and finalizing grant funding from the Hearin Foundation in his absence. Dr. McAdams informed Cabinet Members Delta State will receive a \$200,000 grant to help fund scholarships and an additional \$80,000 to fund a pilot program for the Planetarium as an outreach program to introduce students to STEM.
- President LaForge congratulated Dr. Bennett and Ms. Rocconi on being selected as co-winners of the Dancing with the DSU Stars event. Dr. Bennett stated the event had a great turnout including faculty, staff, students, and community members.
- President LaForge announced that Mr. Rick Munroe accepted the position of Vice President for

University Advancement and External Relations. His official start date is July 1; however, he will be here some in June to work with Mr. Hundley in the interim.

- Mr. Hundley stated the Bolivar County Crawfish Boil was a tremendous hit and had great attendance. He stated one amazing feat of this year's event was the amount of community support through sponsors.
- President LaForge stated it was a pleasure to host Dr. Glen Jones and Dr. Mavis Staples on campus for Commencement weekend and to bestow upon Dr. Staples an honorary degree. He informed Cabinet Members that her Fireside Chat was tremendous, and she shared wonderful words of wisdom. Dr. McAdams reported Commencement weekend went well, and the Recital Hall was used for overflow. He will do a debriefing session with the Registrar's Office, and any issues will be revisited in Academic Council.
- Dr. Bennett stated eight students were inducted into the Student Hall of Fame. The banquet went well, and the speaker was Ms. Ann Marie Pate.
- President LaForge gave an overview of his time teaching at KUL in Lublin, Poland. He informed Cabinet Members that KUL is a public university supported through federal funding, and they have a student body five times larger than Delta State's. During his time at KUL, President LaForge taught fifteen short course classes on Business/Government Relations and taught approximately forty-five students. Each student received a certificate for participation in his course. When President LaForge wasn't teaching, he had meetings with faculty members, deans, and the Vice Rector to discuss exchange programs in various areas. Also, he signed Delta State's new agreement for exchange with KUL. This agreement is very important as KUL relishes their relationship with Delta State. After President LaForge's departure, one of Delta State's English faculty members, Dr. Gabriel Scala, arrived at KUL for an Erasmus+ staff mobility for teaching program. Delta State will receive our first Fulbright Fellow, a professor from KUL, in January. She will teach at Delta State through May.
- Dr. McAdams and Mr. Rutledge attended the May IHL Board meeting last week. Dr. McAdams stated the Board of Trustees formally approved our tuition and fees, room and board rates, student activity fees, Mr. Rick Munroe as the Vice President for University Advancement and External Relations, the awarding of tenure, and the transfer of the Coahoma County Higher Education Center to Coahoma Community College. The highlight of the Board of Trustees meeting, according to Dr. McAdams, was the commencing of our four new Board of Trustees terms. Also, Dr. Donzell Lee was named the Interim President for Alcorn State University, as Dr. Al Rankins will take Dr. Glenn Boyce's place as Commissioner beginning on July 1.
- Ms. Rocconi gave an overview of the Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day. She stated it was an amazing day for boosting morale, and she received great feedback. She thanked Athletics for allowing Staff Council to host the luncheon at McCool Stadium and to use University Field for the annual softball game. She informed Cabinet Members several community businesses donated door prizes including Aramark donating a television and \$300 flex. President LaForge suggested to Ms. Rocconi to have all door prize winners write a thank you note to the business their door prize came from as a way to continue showing mutual support.
- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. The golf team is at the University of North Alabama competing in the NCAA DII Men's Golf Championship. As of yesterday, the golf team was tied for 13th place. Mr. Mayers announced all other regional championship tournaments have finished and none of the first seed teams will travel to Cary, NC for the NCAA Championship tournament. Delta State's baseball team is currently playing University of Montevallo and winning 7-3 in the bottom of the 8th inning. Also, Mr. Zack Shannon is a semifinalist for the USA Golden Spikes award, which is presented to the top amateur baseball player in the nation.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. He is working with the Executive Committee on creating a list of priorities for when the bond money is issued. Cleveland received two

weeks of great weather allowing for additional work to be accomplished on Statesmen Boulevard. The project should be finished by August 1. Zeigel Hall is coming along very well. The move-in date will be July 1. Young-Mauldin Cafeteria should be finished by mid-August. Mr. Rutledge announced he has been contacted by five interested parties for the Golf Course RFP. Two of the interested parties have visited the golf course and Mr. Rutledge reached out to the other three to offer a time to view the property. The lighting project for the library will be completed this week. Following its completion, the next phase of the lighting project will be in Jobe Hall and then Fielding-Wright Art Center and Holcombe-Norwood Hall. All exterior lights have been changed to LED allowing the campus to be brighter and safer.

- President LaForge announced the BPAC President’s Award dinner occurs tonight at the BPAC. The recipient of this year’s President’s Award is Planter’s Bank for their wonderful support and their help in underwriting programming.
- President LaForge travels to Indianola on Tuesday to give a campaign update to Mr. Walton Gresham, Mr. Tom Gresham, and Mr. Bill McPherson. These gentlemen and their families are great donors for the College of Business and Aviation and our marketing plan.
- President LaForge reminded Cabinet Members of the Memorial Day Holiday on Monday, May 28.
- President LaForge announced Summer Session I begins on Tuesday, May 29.
- President LaForge travels to Pensacola on Wednesday for the Gulf South Conference Annual meeting.
- Delta Council hosts their Annual Meeting on Delta State’s campus on Friday, June 1. Mr. Rutledge and Ms. Rocconi voiced the need for additional volunteers and asked Cabinet Members to inform their staffs.
- President LaForge distributed a copy of an email from NCAA showing their support for federal sports wagering regulation. In order to ensure integrity in sports, the NCAA Board of Governors supports a federal model addressing legalized gambling and has suspended its championship host policy related to sports wagering, which will temporarily allow NCAA championship events to occur in states that offer sports wagering. The Board of Governors’ action does not impact NCAA rules that already prohibit sports wagering by student-athletes or member schools’ athletics employees. The Board of Governors may consider more permanent revisions of the championship host policy at future meetings.

CABINET TOPIC

None

BUSINESS

Action

Annual Operating Budget Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge stated the process of finalizing the annual operating budget is going well. A few evaluations have not been turned in, so he will check with the respective vice presidents for follow-up. The template for the Annual Operating Budget has not been released. Mr. Rutledge expects to get the template today. He will input the numbers, and will present the budget at next week’s Cabinet meeting.

Discussion

Demolition of rental property Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge stated Delta State owns six rental houses—several of which are in dire condition. Delta State has received notice from the City of Cleveland to take action on two separate properties, 301 and 303

Shumate Circle. Mr. Rutledge stated each house would take \$25,000 and \$35,000 to repair, respectively. Mr. Rutledge, with the approval of the Executive Committee, decided the best alternative was to demolish the houses in order to save money and keep the land. Mr. Rutledge has received a bid from a company in Greenville to demolish both houses for \$5,000.

Additional information:

- Mr. Hundley announced the TFA Summer Institute will have 60 additional members this year, and the total number of guests on campus for the Institute will be approximately 300.
- Mr. Hundley announced the Memphis Alumni Event is Friday, June 8 at Crosstown Brewing Company. He invited all Cabinet Members to attend. Also, Delta State will be represented at the Mississippi on the Mall event in Washington, D.C. and at the Mississippi in the Park event in Atlanta.
- Mr. Hundley announced a part-time radio manager was hired. The new hire is experienced and has great ideas for the station.
- Dr. McAdams informed Cabinet Members the Mississippi Department of Education lowered the required Praxis scores needed for math teachers in order to help fill the need for math teachers in the state. Mississippi had one of the highest required scores in the country. By lowering the score to 152, Mississippi is more in line with other states.
- President LaForge asked Dr. Bennett to work with the Police Department and for Mr. Hundley to work with Communications and Marketing to make sure campus is notified about the lowering of the flags and the reason behind it.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- BPAC President's Award Dinner, May 22, 6:00 p.m., BPAC
- Memorial Day holiday, May 28
- Summer Session I begins, May 29
- Delta Council Annual Meeting, June 1, 10:00 a.m., BPAC

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Tuesday, May 29 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 2:37 p.m.