

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: April 10, 2017

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Mr. Keith Fulcher, 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: None

Guests: Dr. Lizabeth Carlson, Dean Emeritus, Robert E. Smith School of Nursing

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on April 10, 2017. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Jurgenson, seconded by Ms. Parker, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on March 27, 2017.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- Cabinet Members recognized Dr. Lizabeth Carlson, Dean Emeritus of the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing, for her service to the Cabinet as the Academic Council Representative for the 2015-16 year. Dr. McAdams commended Dr. Carlson for her work in the School of Nursing and growing the school in quantity and quality. Dr. Leslie Griffin shared that she valued Dr. Carlson as a dean and colleague. Mr. Rutledge stated Dr. Carlson is a great representative of the DSU family as she still shows her pride in DSU by picking up trash while she walks around the campus.
- President LaForge stated the Winning the Race Conference was very successful and had great attendance from campus and community members.
- Dr. William Bell of Casey Family Programs, was a keynote speaker during the Winning the Race Conference and also was recognized by the House and Senate. President LaForge met with him while he was on campus to discuss partnership opportunities with Casey Family Programs.
- Dr. David Abney brought a great array of successful alumni to Delta State for the International Business Symposium. President LaForge stated the symposium went very well. President LaForge had a chance to brief Dr. Abney on the Capital Campaign while he was on campus.
- Last week, President LaForge briefed Dr. Fred Carl and Mr. Tim Harvey on the Capital Campaign. Through suggestions from the Campaign Strategy Study Committee and the consultants, the Executive Committee has reconciled and updated the Case Statement. President LaForge plans to bring the updated version to Cabinet in the coming weeks.
- President LaForge attended the BPAC performance of The Illusionists last week with his guests — newly elected student government officers and Dr. William Bynum, President of Mississippi Valley State University.

- President LaForge traveled to Phoenix, AZ to attend the NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Final Four tournament. He stated it was a great event.
- Dr. Bennett informed Cabinet Members that Greek Week went very well. Several events were well-attended, including the Multicultural Step Show and the Greek Awards.
- The Alumni-Foundation Office hosted two events last Thursday evening. A reception was held in honor of the Board for the S. H. and D. W. Kyle Educational Trust and their scholarship recipients. Also, the annual Bolivar County Alumni Crawfish Boil occurred. The crawfish boil was well-attended. Mr. Fulcher asked Cabinet Members to submit to him any critiques on how the event could be made better.
- President LaForge welcomed guests to the 20th Annual Sammy O. Cranford Memorial History Lecture last week. He stated it was a great program and an excellent way to remember Dr. Cranford.
- President LaForge welcomed parents to Parents Day last Friday. He stated this is a great concept that should be expanded upon and continued.
- The Alumni Association and Foundation Boards met last Friday. Mr. Fulcher said the Foundation Board responded well to the Visioning Principles and the Case Statement. The Alumni Association is ready to meet the needs of the university.
- The Go Green Weekend events consisted of a combination of alumni, student, and athletic activities. Dr. McAdams stated he met several out of state guests. The weather was terrific and the event was well received.
- Mr. Mayers provided an athletics update. The Baseball team swept the series and is 4.5 games ahead in the conference. If they continue to win, we will host the conference tournament, which will occur graduation weekend. The softball team won two out of three games. The athletics department raised a lot of money for Make-A-Wish, and they had a good turnout for the Easter egg hunt. Signing day for winter and spring sports took place recently. We may have up to 40 on the men’s swimming and diving team. The spring football game is scheduled for 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday. They are in the process of conducting interviews for the new Academic Athletic Student Success program.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the week. He plans to attend the River Kings 2 Tour events on Tuesday, and will give a welcome at the College of Education and Human Sciences Recognition of Achievement Ceremony Tuesday afternoon. President LaForge invited all Cabinet Members to attend the Colloquia Series lecture with Dr. LouAnn Woodward on Wednesday. A pre-event reception will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the conference room and the lecture begins at 6:00 p.m. in Jobe Hall. On Thursday, President LaForge will speak to Dr. AHM Reza’s Environmental Regulations class about public policy.
- President LaForge reminded Cabinet Members that Friday is Good Friday and is a holiday.

CABINET TOPIC

Visioning Goal #9: Core Values..... Ms. Parker

Ms. Parker shared with Cabinet Members the goals and strategies for Visioning Goal #9: Core Values with regards to the students. Ms. Parker stated some goals were goals from the student body and others are her ideas. Their goals for core values include: resurgence of Delta State’s Renaissance program; establishing more campus-wide health initiatives to promote a healthier environment for faculty, staff, and students; encouraging mental health awareness on campus; and, improving the athletic environment for students and student athletes. Dr. Jurgenson agreed with Ms. Parker on the need for a healthier environment on campus including food options. President LaForge asked Dr. Bennett, Dr. Jurgenson, and Ms. Parker to attend a meeting between Aramark and Mr. Rutledge to discuss concerns with food options, closing early, and not being open on holidays. President LaForge explained to Cabinet Members the Renaissance program ended due to lack of interest and funds.

BUSINESS

Action

Coahoma County Higher Education Center..... President LaForge

President LaForge informed Cabinet Members that due to budget cuts, Delta State can no longer afford to contribute to the partnership we have with Coahoma Community College for the Coahoma County Higher Education Center. Delta State’s annual investment is approximately \$100,000. President LaForge and others have been in contact with Coahoma Community College, Clarksdale and Coahoma County officials, foundations, and historical groups that may have an interest in the property. President LaForge wants to make sure it will be a seamless process. Dr. McAdams reported Dr. Valmadge Towner, President of Coahoma Community College, stated CCC is able to continue covering their portion of the partnership, but they cannot afford to pick up Delta State’s costs. Dr. McAdams asked Dr. Towner to consider funding their portion over a six-month period to continue operations until the end of the calendar year. The Coahoma County Higher Education Center will be removed from our operational budget effective June 30, 2017. President LaForge plans to write a letter to the donors to inform them of Delta State’s decision. Mr. Rutledge is working with Ms. Leigh Patterson at IHL to develop a short-term lease agreement with CCC.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams that Delta State cease all operations at the Coahoma Community Higher Education Center as of June 30, 2017 and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. **The motion was approved.**

Hiring RequestsDr. McAdams/Mr. Rutledge/Dr. Bennett

In response to the Cabinet’s decision that only those vacant positions deemed essential to university operations will be filled, and that requests to fill these essential positions be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Cabinet, Dr. McAdams, Mr. Rutledge, and Dr. Bennett brought to Cabinet several positions for consideration. The positions presented do not impact the salary savings identified previously to offset the mid-year budget cuts.

Academic Affairs Faculty Requests

The Robert E. Smith School of Nursing requests to hire a non-tenure track, Instructor of Nursing for FY18 as a current instructor filled the open tenured track position.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the searching and hiring of the Instructor of Nursing position for FY18 and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. **The motion was approved.**

Academic Affairs Staff Requests

The Center for Community and Economic Development requests to hire an Academic Counselor for the TRIO grant. This position is funded with Federal grant funds.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the searching and hiring of the Academic Counselor for the TRIO grant and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. **The motion was approved.**

Finance and Administration Staff Requests

Facilities Management requests to hire 16 student workers for the summer to help with the grounds, painting, and moving furniture since many Facilities Management employees will be striping/waxing floors. The payment for the student workers will be \$8,320 for thirteen weeks.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the searching and hiring of 16 student workers for Facilities Management and seconded by Dr. McAdams. **The motion was approved.**

Student Affairs Staff Requests

The Police Department requests to search for and hire a police officer and sergeant for FY17.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve the search and hire of a new police officer and sergeant for the Police Department for FY17 and seconded by Mr. Mayers. **The motion was approved.**

Housing Deposit FeeDr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett explained that systems used in Housing and Residence Life are outdated and need to be automated. Dr. Bennett would like to change the current refundable housing deposit of \$50 to a non-refundable application fee of \$75. The fees would be used to purchase the housing component of the CRM to allow Housing and Residence Life to run efficiently. Dr. Bennett asked Dr. Debbie Heslep if our current CRM has the component for housing and it does not. Ms. Julie Jackson, Director of Residence Life, is securing quotes for the component.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve changing the \$50 refundable, housing deposit fee to a non-refundable \$75 application fee, effective immediately for 2018 and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. **The motion was approved.**

Emergency Response Team Incident Preparedness PlanDr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett presented to Cabinet Members the updated Emergency Response Team Incident Preparedness Plan. Dr. Jurgenson asked Dr. Bennett if the plan outlined specific drills for incidents. Dr. Bennett stated there would be a yearly tornado and fire drill and an active shooter drill each semester. Dr. Roberts informed Dr. Bennett of the Emergency Response Task Force and the work they did to update this plan. She felt this document had not been updated to the level it needed to be. Dr. Bennett proposed that the task force come back together to discuss the plan to make sure it is complete. This item was tabled.

Tuition Increase Mr. Rutledge

President LaForge informed Cabinet Members all universities are going to request an additional increase in tuition for FY18 to help offset the budget cuts FY17 and FY18 budget cuts. Delta State will request an increase of two percent. The proposed tuition increase will not change Delta State’s position with the other universities with regard to the cost of tuition.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to request an additional two percent increase in tuition for FY18 and seconded by Dr. Jurgenson. **The motion was approved.**

Discussion

Budget Update Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet Members that Delta State will receive a cut of approximately 4.75% in appropriations after the mid-year budget cuts, which brings the total cuts since the beginning of FY17 to 10%. Mr. Rutledge stated we are forced to make hard decisions, and that the Executive Committee is looking into several options to offset this cut. Ms. Rocconi informed Cabinet Members the State will no longer stack scholarships. Students will be eligible for only one State scholarship. This effects approximately 70 Delta State students. Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet Members the Executive Committee has been discussing facilities’ requests for FY18 and will discuss new and expanded activities next.

Legislative Update Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts informed Cabinet Members that Sine Die occurred a few days early. A special session will have to take place since decisions were not finalized for the budgets for the Mississippi Department of

Transportation and Attorney General. In order for the bond bill to be brought up again, the Governor will have to include it in the call for the special session. Dr. Roberts believes the special session will take place at the end of May or first of June.

Other Discussion

- For the Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day, Mr. Rutledge and Ms. Rocconi agreed that some of the Facilities Management employees will attend the morning session and lunch.
- Mr. Mayers invited Cabinet Members to attend the annual Green and White Awards ceremony on Monday, April 24.
- Dr. McAdams informed Cabinet Members that, at the request of students, the hours for the Library have been extended during the week prior to finals. Mr. Jeff Slagell put together the costs, and President LaForge has agreed to fund the increase through the use of Foundation funds. The Library will be open: Monday – Thursday, 7:30 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.; Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.; Saturday, 12:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.; and, Sunday, 12:00 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.
- Mr. Fulcher informed Cabinet Members that a wonderful reception was held honoring Ms. Margaret Walker for her generous donation to the Music Department.
- Ms. Parker informed Cabinet Members of “The Big Event” scheduled for April 21. SGA is sponsoring this event, along with the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce.
- Dr. McAdams gave an update on recruiting. He believes enrollment will be flat or have a slight increase for Fall 2017. Enrollment may be affected by the tuition increase as well as dual credit arrangements.
- President LaForge informed Cabinet Members that Dr. Randy Grierson will be the principal of the new Cleveland Central High School, and Mr. Steven Craddock will be the assistant principal. Mr. Craddock has been charged with the dual credit program. President LaForge believes this will be a perfect opportunity to get Cleveland students to stay in Cleveland for college. President LaForge asked Dr. McAdams to contact Mr. Craddock regarding Delta State providing dual credit classes for their students.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Colloquia Lecture Series, Dr. LouAnn Woodward, April 12, 6:00 pm, Jobe Auditorium
- Good Friday holiday, April 14
- Retirement and Service Awards Program, April 21, 2:00 pm, Union 2nd Floor
- Josh Turner, April 27, 7:30 pm, BPAC
- Reception/Dinner for Honorary Degree Recipients, May 5, 6:00 pm, Leroy E. Morganti Atrium, Kent Wyatt Hall
- Spring Commencement, May 6, 10 am and 2:00 pm, BPAC
- Wayne Blansett Staff Development Day, May 18

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, April 17 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Visioning Goal # 9: Core Values (Christie)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:39 p.m.