

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: April 13, 2020

Members in attendance: President William LaForge (via Zoom), Dr. Vernell Bennett-Fairs (via Zoom), Dr. Tricia Killebrew (via Zoom), Mr. Mike Kinnison (via Zoom), Dr. Charles McAdams (via Zoom), Dr. Beverly Moon (via Zoom), Mr. Rick Munroe (via Zoom), Mr. Cetin Oguz (via Zoom), Dr. Michelle Roberts (via Zoom), Mr. Jamie Rutledge (via Zoom), and Ms. Elizabeth Swindle (via Zoom) (recorder – Ms. Claire Cole)

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: Chief Jeffrey Johns, Chair-Elect, Administrative Staff Council (via Zoom)
Mr. Jeff Slagell, Representative, Academic Council (via Zoom)
Dr. Jonathan Westfall, President-Elect, Faculty Senate (via Zoom)

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held via Zoom conference call on April 13, 2020. 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. McAdams, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on March 30, 2020.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from last week. He participated in a conference call with a regional representative for Sodexo to give an evaluation of their services rendered. President LaForge participated in a Zoom conference with Mr. Glenn Trammel of Ellucian in order to meet their new General Manager, Mr. Scott Ferguson. Mr. Munroe arranged a Zoom conference call with the Kyle Educational Trust Foundation Board of Directors and President LaForge to discuss the Kyle Trust scholarship. Ms. Swindle gave a recap of the State of the Student Union address, and she shared the recorded address has been viewed more than 600 times. This morning, President LaForge participated in a special called Zoom Conference with the GSC Board of Directors.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. All GSC athletic directors continue to have a weekly conference call to discuss the effects of COVID-19 on their respective campuses and the overall picture of athletics. The athletic directors also discuss possible schedule adjustments to upcoming seasons and cost saving measures for the upcoming year. The swimming and diving team had 19 members receive All American recognition. Mr. Kinnison updated Cabinet members on the Head Coach search for the Lady Statesmen soccer team. Mr. Mark Hiller accepted the position of Head Coach. He served as an Assistant Coach at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette the past three years.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. Facilities Management continues to examine campus to determine if any major damage was caused by last night's storms. So far, they have

discovered that some fallen limbs broke glass around campus. Mr. Rutledge will provide a full report tomorrow on the extent of the damage. The roofing projects on Walter Sillers Coliseum, Holcombe-Norwood Hall, and the Facilities Management Building are behind schedule by three to five weeks. Mr. Rutledge continues to work with the contractor to expedite the process. Good weather is needed in order for the projects to progress. The Bureau of Building awarded the bid for the Mayers' Aquatics Center HVAC project, and the Notice to Proceed should be received in the next two weeks. Also, the Bureau of Building awarded the bid for the roofing project for the residence halls. The Notice to Proceed should be received in three weeks. The HVAC project and the roofs for the residence halls will begin 30 to 45 days after the Notice to Proceed is received. Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet members he will share with them the results from the Sodexo evaluation survey. Delta State was granted permission to extend its contract with Ellucian, and Mr. Rutledge is working with Ellucian to negotiate parts of the contract. He will bring the final contract details to Cabinet for review.

- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. President LaForge will participate in the IEO and IHL Board meetings via conference calls this week. The Delta State University Foundation Board meets on Friday via Zoom.

CABINET TOPIC

FY21 Budget Plan Proposal Mr. Rutledge

President LaForge complimented the Executive Committee on their extensive work and combined contributions to the FY21 budget plan proposal. Executive Committee members sought advice and counsel from their constituencies for suggestions on enhanced revenues along with reductions in expenses. The proposal presented today is preliminary and not set in stone. Cabinet members will have time to give additional suggestions and vote on the final budget in the coming weeks. President LaForge asked Mr. Rutledge to present the proposed budget plan to Cabinet members. Mr. Rutledge reminded Cabinet members the final budget voted on by Cabinet members could change as the State budget will not be decided until June or July. During the budget planning process, \$8,116,737 in facility requests were made during Phase I. Of that amount, \$7,316,270 can be funded through bond proceeds received from the State. The remaining requests were put into priority order to be funded through R&R funds, and Delta State should receive \$626,000 in R&R funds from the State this year. During Phase II of the budget planning process, \$675,600 in requests were made for new and expanded activities — \$357,650 for one-time requests and \$317,950 for recurring requests. Currently, funds are not available to fund any requests made during Phase II. Phase III of the budget planning process will include reviewing and balancing budget worksheets for each department on campus. Snapshots of the individual budgets were taken on March 31, and they will be sent out to the President's direct reports on April 15. Revised budget worksheets are due to Mr. Rutledge on April 30. Mr. Rutledge will present any changes from the worksheets to Executive Committee members on May 7 and Cabinet members on May 20. Since the beginning of March, all Executive Committee members, Mr. Kinnison, and the Academic Deans worked with their individual departments/divisions/units to engage in a program/unit review and determine ways to align resources with needs. Faculty and staff members were encouraged to contact their supervisor/budget manager or the Faculty Senate President/Staff Council Chair with ideas for new and enhanced revenue or thoughts about ways to minimize expenses. The Executive Committee reviewed all suggestions submitted by faculty and staff on enhancing revenues and minimizing expenses, and they compiled suggestions of their own. Executive Committee members and Mr. Kinnison shared their proposed expense minimizing suggestions for their respective units.* The suggestions of the Executive Committee and Mr. Kinnison total \$1,779,805 in budget reductions and included a one-time transfer of \$169,114 of TFA funds to help reconcile the budget. The FY21 budget has several inevitable expenses that must be added including: \$500,000 for cash reserves; \$500,000 for a contingency fund; and, an increase of \$35,000 for workers' compensation

insurance. The total for these inevitable expenses is \$1,035,000. Additionally, Mr. Rutledge was advised by the IHL CFO, Dr. John Pearce, to plan for a decrease of 5% in State appropriations. A 5% decrease for Delta State equals \$837,000. In order to get back to the FY20 base, Delta State needs to reduce expenses or find new revenues in the amount of \$1,872,000. Mr. Rutledge explained to Cabinet members several expenses are paid each year, but those expenses were never budgeted. Going forward these expenses will be added to the budget: GIT Instructor salary; Dissertation Committees fees; Compliance expenses; Radio Station expenses; Athletic Department travel; Student-Athlete meals; Student-Athlete insurance; escalation clauses for long term contracts; and, travel and moving expenses for faculty. These non-budgeted items total \$508,000. With the addition of the non-budgeted items, Delta State needs to reduce expenses or find new revenues in the amount of \$2,380,000. Cabinet members have discussed several items that could bring in new, enhanced revenue and offset some of our expenses including: a \$1,000 per year tuition increase for international students, a decrease in Phi Theta Kappa Scholarships by \$117,000, \$150,000 worth of scholarships rolling off the budget that will not be added back, and a 6% tuition increase. The tuition increase for international students will generate an estimated \$100,000, and the 6% tuition increase will generate an estimated net of \$825,984. An additional way to increase revenue would be to increase Dual Enrollment fees for an extra \$27,500. These enhanced revenue streams could offset expenses by \$1,220,484. Mr. Rutledge shared additional expenses that should be added to the budget in order to stay relevant. Those expenses include computer upgrades for \$300,000; additional technology upgrades for \$150,000; six vehicle replacements for \$120,000; and, an increase to the marketing budget of \$50,000. If these expense items are added to the budget, Delta State needs to reduce expenses or find new revenues in the amount of \$3,000,000. Mr. Rutledge assured Cabinet members these items would not be purchased until enrollment figures are finalized in October or November. Ultimately, the proposed changes to Delta State’s budget allow for a sustainable and dependable budget that reflects the university’s mission and priorities. *(see handouts)

Campus Budget Review Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts provided Cabinet members an overview of the upcoming Campus Budget Review. The event will be held on Thursday, April 23 at 3:00 p.m., and faculty and staff will participate via Zoom. President LaForge will provide context and perspective on the budget prior to Mr. Rutledge recapping budget issues and sharing the budget plan. The potential negative impacts — COVID-19, State appropriations, enrollment, and fundraising — will be discussed, and Mr. Munroe and Mr. Rutledge will share budget timelines with regards to the legislature and IHL. Faculty and staff can submit their questions to Dr. Killebrew or Mr. Oguz prior to the event or live during the event during Google Voice text messaging services. The moderators, Dr. Roberts and Dr. Edwin Craft, will unmute microphones for questions to be asked. Access to the event will be provided to Delta State faculty and staff and the SGA president. President LaForge will release today a Campus Update with information on the Campus Budget Review in order to begin publicizing the event, and Dr. Killebrew and Mr. Oguz will share the event with their constituencies. President LaForge and Mr. Rutledge will work on a topic outline to release to faculty and staff prior to the event.

BUSINESS

Action

Faculty Annual Evaluation policy – revised (first reading) Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation and approval of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the revised Faculty Annual Evaluation policy for a first reading. If a faculty member receives a rating of “unsatisfactory” or “needs improvement” in any category of the Faculty Annual Evaluation, a Professional

Improvement Plan is required. Also, members of the Annual Evaluation Appeals Committee are to be Associate or full Professors with at least four years of service to Delta State. The Faculty Senate President will also nominate two faculty members to this committee with the same restrictions.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Faculty Annual Evaluation policy for a first reading and seconded by Mr. Kinnison. The motion was approved.

Search and Hire approvals Cabinet Members

In response to the Cabinet’s decision that all requests to search for and fill vacant positions will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Cabinet, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet a position for consideration. The position presented does not impact the salary savings identified previously to address the budget shortfall for this fiscal year.

Academic Affairs Faculty Request

Dr. McAdams presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire an Instructor or Assistant Professor of Practice in Entertainment Industry Studies. The current position will be vacated at the end of the semester

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the searching and hiring of an Instructor or Assistant Professor of Practice in Entertainment Industry Studies and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Campus Response to COVID-19..... President LaForge

President LaForge shared with Cabinet members recent updates to Delta State’s COVID-19 Action Plan. He informed Cabinet members this is an ever-changing document, and it will be updated as new information is released by IHL and the State. All eight public universities are trying to be consistent with their action plans, but each university has the authority to respond to unique requests and concerns. Delta State’s COVID-19 Action Plan was most recently updated after Campus Updates were distributed to the campus on Thursday, April 2 and Friday, April 10.

The computer labs set up by OIT in the Library and the Dorgan Center were closed due to the recent Shelter in Place orders. The computer lab in Foundation Hall remains open. OIT obtained laptops and hot spot devices to loan to students and faculty members in need. If any additional students or faculty members are in need, OIT has a few devices remaining.

Due to the Shelter in Place orders, all campus buildings are locked and closed to the public. All patrons for the Post Office are to use the West entrance of the Nowell Union. It will be open from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m., Monday – Saturday. The Counseling Center staff are available remotely to assist and support students. The Walking Trail remains open, but the exercise stations are closed. New Student Orientation transitioned to a virtual format for Summer 2020.

Faculty are to work/train/teach from their home, and most staff are to work from home due to the Shelter in Place orders.

The university received confirmation from the Department of Education that we can continue compensating Federal Work Study students. Legislation to allow universities to be able to pay Regular

Student Employment students has been requested. Per the opinion of the Attorney General and guidance of IHL, refunds/credits will be provided (on a pro-rated basis) for housing, meals, and parking.

Diversity Committee Chair Dr. Roberts

During the FY21 Budget Plan proposal discussion, Executive Committee members reviewed the budget for the Diversity Committee and discussed the stipend given to the Diversity Committee Chair. In the past, the Diversity Committee Chair received an \$8,000 stipend plus fringes and a two-course release time. When reviewing other committee chairs on campus, no other positions receive such a high level of benefits. The Diversity Committee will have a new chair in the coming year, so this would be the best time to make a change, if needed. Cabinet members discussed different ideas for the stipend and the position of the Diversity Committee chair. President LaForge asked Dr. Roberts, Dr. McAdams, Dr. Moon, and Dr. Westfall to work together to create a proposal based on all ideas presented today. President LaForge will include their proposal in the appointment letter he writes to the new chair.

Bookstore RFP Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge informed Cabinet members that the Bookstore RFP Committee recommended to him Barnes and Noble to be Delta State’s bookstore vendor for the next five years. Out of the four vendors, Barnes and Noble received the highest rating from the committee.

Legislative UpdateMr. Munroe

Mr. Munroe informed Cabinet Members that the Mississippi Legislature has taken a recess until mid-May. The Legislative Liaisons continue to have weekly calls to discuss any issues.

Additional information

- President LaForge extended his condolences, on behalf of Cabinet members, to Mr. Slagell and his family for the loss of his mother.
- Dr. Westfall announced Faculty Senate elected its new officers for the 2020-21 academic year. President-Elect is Dr. Andrew Wegmann, and the Secretary is Ms. Maia Wegmann. Dr. Westfall will serve as President.
- Mr. Rutledge announced he received confirmation from Ms. Jane Mapp at IHL for Delta State to move forward with signing the certification letter for the CARES Act funds. It is not known if the first half of the money can be used for student refunds, but he will know more soon.
- Dr. Moon suggested turning the lights off in Kent Wyatt Hall at the end of the day and on the weekends to save money. Mr. Rutledge stated the lights’ timer is broken, but he will turn the lights off each day when he leaves.
- Ms. Swindle announced campaigns for SGA elections end this week, and voting begins on Monday, April 20.
- Mr. Oguz shared with Cabinet members that some students are overly stressed due to receiving extra duties from their parents while being at home, in addition to their course work. Ms. Killebrew stated the Student Success Center reached out to students to inform them of their online services. Dr. Bennett-Fairs will work with Counseling and Testing to provide literature for parents on helping their students during this time.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Foundation Board Meeting, April 17, via Zoom
- Campus Budget Review, April 23, 3:00 p.m., via Zoom

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, April 21 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – FY21 Budget Plan proposal (Mr. Rutledge) and Campus Budget Review (Dr. Roberts)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:22 p.m.