

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: August 20, 2018

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Dr. Severine Groh, Mr. Charlie King, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Dr. Michelle Roberts, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (recorder – Dr. Roberts)

Members not in attendance: Dr. Billy Moore and Mr. Rick Munroe

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on August 20, 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 Mr. Mayers, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on August 13, 2018.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members a farewell letter from Mr. Patrick Hundley.
- Dr. Bennett reported on New Student Week. She said average attendance ranged from 177 to 193. She will evaluate the program and make changes, as needed.
- President LaForge thanked Cabinet members for assisting with the Ice Cream Social on Tuesday for new students.
- The IEO and IHL Board meetings were held on Wednesday and Thursday, respectively, of last week. Both were productive meetings. IEO meeting topics included: sports betting, internal audit issues; change to Board policy on performance evaluation of Board members for SACS regulations; weapons on campus policies; IEO compensation; relationship with Bureau of Buildings; and, enrollment reporting related to media releases.
- Convocation was held on Thursday. Dr. McAdams said he was pleased with the attendance, especially the large number of community members in attendance, and he has heard positive comments about the State of the University address.
- The Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce's Welcome Back Reception was held on Thursday evening. There was good attendance by faculty, staff, retirees, and community members.
- Following the Chamber Reception, President LaForge had dinner with the Malones and McGuffees, as well as other supporters of Delta State.
- The Welcome Back luncheon for faculty and staff was held on Friday. Mr. Charlie McGuffee, who sponsored the luncheon, was able to attend and was very pleased with the event and the amount of camaraderie among faculty and staff.
- President LaForge spoke to SGA officers on Friday, as part of the SGA Officer Retreat. Afterwards, he gave remarks at the Statesmen Convocation Ceremony, as part of New Student Week.
- The Memorial Service for Dr. Cheryl Cummins was held on Saturday. President LaForge stated it was a nice event, and the family seemed grateful to be able to have the event in Ewing.

- Move-in Day for students took place on Sunday. President LaForge said the weather cooperated, and everything seemed to go well.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The work on Zeigel Hall is complete, and the Music Department faculty are pleased with the work. However, the furniture was delayed six weeks due to paperwork being held up at the Bureau of Buildings. Work on Young-Mauldin Cafeteria continues to show progress. However, the equipment and furniture will not be here until October due to paperwork being held up at the Bureau of Buildings. The striping of Statesmen Boulevard was postponed due to weather. Also, there is now enough money in the project to pave the baseball parking lot. The landscaping of Caylor/White-Walters Hall and Zeigel Hall will be finished in the next couple of weeks.
- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. Last week was a great week for Athletics. They received a \$275,000 grant from the Bolivar Medical Foundation. They hope this will turn into a multiyear grant to support health and wellness in Bolivar County, hiring athletic trainers and strength coaches, and educating high school and junior high students on health and wellness. Personnel updates: two new assistant coaches for baseball – Mr. Slater Lott and Mr. Blake Matthews; new assistant men’s basketball coach Mr. John Redman; and, they have a vacancy in the Head Coach position for tennis. They had a football game day operations meeting this morning to get prepared for home games. They have implemented a new ticketing system for faculty and staff that includes being able to scan their activity card for entry to games. The first football game is scheduled for August 30 against Tarleton State in Texas. The following week, we will host Grand Valley State University.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the week. Student Welcome Week starts today. Dr. Bennett said the foam party is scheduled for tonight; however, they will move inside and have inflatables if the weather is bad. President LaForge is scheduled to have lunch with Mr. Bill West, Vice President with FedEx and DSU alumnus, on Tuesday. He announced that he will teach his Leadership Class again on Tuesdays this Fall. He will give a welcome at the FYS Okra Rally on Wednesday. The Employee Benefits Fair will be held on Thursday in the Union. On Sunday, President LaForge will visit with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority members as part of his initiative to meet with all Greek organizations.

CABINET TOPIC

None

BUSINESS

Action

Grants and Contracts policy (revised – final reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge and Dr. McAdams recently discussed the Grants and Contracts policy, and are now recommending that we add a section related to “Tuition Remission, Degree Completion Compensation, and Merit Raises” to specify the process and procedures for these items. The Federal Government has changed the way grants can be used, and so Mr. Rutledge asked that the following information be added: “Grant employees are not eligible for benefits for spouse and children, and the Grant is to fund the benefits and salary.” The suggestion was made to change the word “should” to “must” in the line related to prior approval. Also, in that same sentence, the suggestion was made to change “applicant” to “PI” to clarify the person responsible for obtaining approval.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the revised Grants and Contracts policy for final reading and seconded by Dr. Charles McAdams. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Naming Committee RecommendationPresident LaForge

President LaForge received a letter from the Naming Committee recommending that the football team meeting room be named “The Miller and Rebekah Arant Family Meeting Room” in honor of Mr. Hugh M. Arant III and his wife Rebekah. President LaForge said he will send a letter to the requestor to let them know he has granted approval.

Boy Scouts Merit Badge College.....President LaForge

President LaForge received a request from Ms. Emily Havens, on behalf of the Boy Scouts, to partner with Delta State to host their annual Merit Badge College. The event is scheduled for Saturday, January 5, 2018. In return for providing a reduced rate for use of the facilities, Delta State will receive the following: 1) credit in all publications, printed materials, and publicity as a co-sponsor of the merit badge college; 2) invitation to showcase the university for the Scouts through introductory/welcoming remarks by an appropriate official; and, 3) invitation to set up a recruiting table to provide university information to Scouts and to answer any questions they may have. The Executive Committee approved this request.

Campus visit from IHL Commissioner Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts reminded Cabinet members that IHL Commissioner Dr. Al Rankins will visit all IHL universities during his first 100 days in office. He is scheduled to visit Delta State on Thursday, August 23. Dr. Roberts distributed a copy of the revised schedule for the IHL Commissioner’s Listening Tour at Delta State. During his visit, Dr. Rankins would like to meet with Cabinet Members, Academic Council, Staff Council, student leaders, Faculty Senate, and local media, and he will have an open forum for the entire campus community. His tour will end with a reception in his honor with community members and alumni. Dr. Roberts asked Cabinet Members to coordinate the sessions for their areas. A final schedule will be shared with Cabinet Members at a later time. President LaForge stated this is a chance for all campus constituencies to have a face-to-face meeting with the Commissioner.

Statesmen Junior and Senior Club.....Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett presented to Cabinet Members the poster created to promote the new Statesmen Club program for high school juniors and seniors. There is also a community college aspect to the program. Dr. Bennett believes this program will be a great way to get prospective students on campus.

President’s Home Update Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge met with Foundation officials recently to discuss items for the MOU between the university and Foundation for the building of the new president’s home. The IHL Board approved the exterior drawings at their meeting last week. Mr. Rutledge will meet with the architect, contractor, and bank representative on Tuesday to discuss next steps. He hopes to have all contracts signed by Friday and to start moving dirt next week. The IHL Commissioner hasn’t signed the ground lease yet, but Mr. Rutledge hopes to receive it from IHL today.

Golf Course Project Update..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge reported that he is still in discussions with a potential developer regarding the golf course project. Mr. Rutledge and Mr. Munroe met with the potential developer, and the person plans to send to Mr. Rutledge additional information as well as a pro forma of how the revenue will be allocated to the university. We should receive the plan and pro forma on Thursday, and Mr. Rutledge will share the documents with the Executive Committee on Friday.

GeoSurfaces Settlement Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge reported that the lawsuit regarding the football field turf has concluded, and Delta State was victorious. Delta State does not have to pay the remaining balance on the turf project, and the money receiving from the settlement will be used to reduce the debt on the new football field.

Food Services RFP Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge announced that our food services contract ends on June 30, 2019. The Request for Proposals will be distributed the first of October. He believes four vendors will submit proposals. Mr. Rutledge has appointed the committee that will review the proposals, and he wants to ensure that we get the best contract for Delta State.

Additional information

- President LaForge met recently with Dr. Rose Strahan, Chair of the Athletic Director search. She plans to review the position description with the committee soon. Once the search and interview process is complete, the committee will present up to three unranked recommendations to President LaForge.
- Mr. Rutledge reported that the new Assistant Comptroller will begin on September 3.
- Dr. Bennett gave an update on enrollment for Fall 2018. Dr. Riddle reported that we have 62 new international students.
- President LaForge asked Mr. Rutledge and Dr. McAdams to meet with Ms. Cora Jackson (Social Work) and Dr. Dave Breau to discuss the Social Work department’s office space in Kethley.
- Mr. Rutledge stated that he and Dr. McAdams will review the proposals for use of the three vacant spaces on campus: Laundry, Natatorium, and Marshall Home Management House.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Day and night classes begin, August 20
- Welcome Week, August 20-24
- Employee Benefits Fair, August 23, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Second Floor, East Lobby, H.L. Nowell Student Union
- Commissioner Al Rankins’ Campus Visit, August 23
- Legislative Facilities Tour – meeting, August 29, 3:30 p.m., President’s Conf. Room
- Legislative Facilities Tour – dinner, August 29, 6:00 p.m., TBD

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, August 27 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

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