

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT'S CABINET
Minutes

Meeting date: December 9, 2019

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

Members not in attendance: Dr. Charles McAdams and Dr. Beverly Moon

Guests: Dr. Kent Wyatt, President Emeritus

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on December 9, 2019. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Ms. Swindle and seconded by Mr. Rutledge, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on December 2, 2019.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from the past week. The Christmas Tree Lighting held in Leroy E. Morganti Atrium went very well; however, President LaForge hopes to spread the word more next year. The BPAC performance of Charlie Brown Christmas Live occurred last week. President LaForge continued his departmental visits with a visit to Communications and Marketing, and he held a reception for graduating international students. Mr. Munroe shared the Retiree Christmas Party hosted by University Advancement went well and his staff is looking to make some changes next year. President LaForge participated in the ACUE Faculty Teaching Program Closeout Ceremony where 12 Delta State faculty members received professional training through our Center for Teaching and Learning. President LaForge welcomed attendees to the Alpha Phi Alpha Founders Day event over the weekend.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The women's basketball team has a current record of 7-1, and they compete again next week. The men's basketball team has a current record of 4-6, and they compete again next Saturday. The swimming and diving teams host their DSU Christmas Invitational December 18 through December 22. The Athletics Department will host a Student Day for area elementary students at noon on Wednesday, December 18 during the Lady Statesmen basketball game. All students receive free entry and a refreshment. The Athletics Department Christmas party begins at 6:00 p.m. tonight at The Warehouse.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The Walter Sillers Coliseum project should be finished by mid-January. Due to issues with the contractors for the Holcombe-Norwood Hall roofing project, the deadline will not be reached. The contractors want to change the original plans for the Ronald Mayers Aquatics Center project. Mr. Rutledge hopes to have an architect selected for the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing project before the semester is over. The elevator project was

initiated with IHL, and it will go out for bid in mid-January. Mr. Rutledge shared Delta State's plans for bond funds for the next several years should IHL request for bond funds be approved in the upcoming legislative session.

- President LaForge shared with Cabinet Members some of the meetings and events planned for the week. President LaForge is set to host his final Faculty and Staff luncheon for the semester on Tuesday, and the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce will host their Open House tomorrow evening at 5:00 p.m. The Executive Committee and the Foundation Board's Executive Committee are set to meet on Wednesday to discuss the internal control issues at the Foundation. Mr. Munroe will bring a summary of the meeting to Cabinet in January. President LaForge and Mr. Munroe continue to advance the capital campaign, and they are attempting to start a mini campaign with all past presidents of Delta State. President LaForge plans to call President Potter this week to discuss. The Robert E. Smith School of Nursing's White Coat Ceremony and Pinning Ceremony occur on Thursday. As a thank you to the Office of Admissions, President LaForge will take all of their staff to lunch on Thursday to show his appreciation for all of their hard work in recruiting. Fall Commencement is Friday at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. in the BPAC.

CABINET TOPIC

None

BUSINESS

Action

Performance/Evaluation – Non-Faculty policy (revised – first reading) Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge brought to Cabinet the revised Performance/Evaluation – Non-Faculty policy for a first reading. The policy was updated to reflect current practices. The majority of changes to the policy are in the rating scale which was altered to include a zero for unsatisfactory and the exclusion of four for outstanding. The Personal Improvement Plan section was updated to meet SACS requirements.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the revised Performance/Evaluation – Non-Faculty policy and seconded by Michelle. The motion was tabled until a later date.

Search and Hiring Requests..... 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, Mr. Munroe and Mr. Rutledge on behalf of Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet positions for consideration. The positions presented do not impact the salary savings identified previously to address the budget shortfall for this fiscal year.

Academic Affairs Staff Request

Mr. Rutledge presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire an International Assistant Advisor. The position is currently filled; however, the employee has accepted the position of International Admissions Specialist.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the searching and hiring of an International Assistant Advisor and seconded by Ms. Swindle. The motion was approved.

University Advancement

Mr. Munroe presented to Cabinet members the request to search for and hire an Athletic Development Officer. Currently, this position is not filled.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Munroe to approve the searching and hiring of an Athletic Development Officer and seconded by Dr. Bennett. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Memorandum of Agreement with Boy Scouts.....Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett informed Cabinet members the Chickasaw Council of the Boy Scouts of America wants to partner with the Office of Admissions. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was submitted by the Chickasaw Council, and it offers opportunities for joint projects as well as the Office of Admissions gaining access to the Chickasaw Council’s mailing lists. The MOU also details involving Delta State personnel in the Chickasaw Council’s visits to campus, as well as, Delta State personnel providing representation on the Chickasaw Council’s advisory board.

Student Athlete Drug Testing policy.....Mr. Kinnison

Mr. Kinnison shared with Cabinet members the updated Student Athlete Drug Testing policy vetted and approved by the Attorney General’s Office at IHL. Delta State and the Athletic Department are committed to maintaining a drug-free environment for their student- athletes. The primary objective of this program is to deter student-athletes from using and/or abusing drugs. The second objective of this program is to educate the student-athlete on the physical, psychological, and social effects of drug abuse. In addition, Delta State will hold educational sessions concerning drug and substance abuse periodically throughout the year. The third objective of the program is to identify through periodic testing those student-athletes who may be involved in drug use or abuse. Some major changes to the policy include: a shorter notification period prior to a drug test; students are responsible for payment of any subsequent drug tests administered after the first positive; parents are notified of positive tests; and, scholarships are revoked after the second positive. The policy also includes a Good Samaritan Policy that allows students to reach out to emergency personnel and/or their coaching staff during alcohol or drug related emergencies without the fear of facing sanctions related to the possession or consumption of alcohol or drugs. The revised policy will be in effect starting January 2020, and student-athletes will be notified through their coaches.

Budget update Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge gave Cabinet members an update on budget related items. In the past, Delta State has failed to finish bank reconciliations in a timely manner. Mr. Rutledge was happy to report the November reconciliation is complete, and he hopes to have all subsequent reconciliations completed by the 10th of each month. The accounting firm of Matthews, Cutrer, and Lindsay, P.A. was chosen as the firm to approve Delta State’s budget improvement plan, and we are waiting on them to sign the engagement letter. Mr. Rutledge believes they will be here by the end of the week. The Interim Comptroller will begin on January 2, and Ms. Crystal Beach will serve as the Interim Purchasing Coordinator. Mr. Rutledge was pleased to report new candidates have applied for the position of Comptroller, and he plans to conduct some interviews in January.

Additional information

- Ms. Swindle informed Cabinet members Mr. Will Young will assume the role as SGA Secretary. Mr. Young is a sophomore, Biology major.

- Ms. Killebrew reminded Cabinet members the Staff Council Holiday Breakfast is Tuesday at 8:30 a.m. in the Leroy E. Morganti Atrium.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Fall Exams, December 9-12
- Fall Commencement, December 13, 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., BPAC
- Christmas Holidays, December 23 – January 1
- Martin Luther King event, January 15, 3:00 p.m., Jobe Auditorium
- The Simon and Garfunkel Story, January 15, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Martin Luther King Holiday, January 20

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, January 13 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.