

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: January 29, 2018**

**Members in attendance:** President William LaForge, Dr. George Beals, Dr. Dave Breaux, Ms. Ashley Griffin, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Christie Rocconi, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

**Members not in attendance:** Dr. Vernell Bennett and Mr. Patrick Hundley

**Guests:** Ms. Deborah Cox, Chief Financial Officer, University Advancement

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on January 29, 2018. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Mr. Rutledge, seconded by Dr. Breaux, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on January 22, 2018.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge hosted his seventh faculty and staff luncheon last week, and it was very successful.
- President LaForge continued updating the Campaign Strategy Study Committee on the campaign results last week with a visit to Dr. Rose Strahan and a phone conversation with Dr. David Abney. He stated both conversations went very well.
- Germantown High School brought 75 juniors to campus last week for a visit. President LaForge had the opportunity to welcome the group, and he stated the students had a great visit.
- President LaForge met with Miss Delta State University, Gillian Oakley, last week. Delta State will sponsor an ad page for her in the Miss Mississippi program.
- President LaForge received an update on the Race Conference last week from co-chairs, Dr. Temika Simmons and Dr. Charles Westmoreland. Plans are in place for a great conference. The dates of the conference are Monday, March 26 and Tuesday, March 27. President LaForge will extend personal invitations to several donors and organizations to attend the conference.
- President and Mrs. LaForge attended the BPAC performance of The Sound of Music last week. President LaForge believes it was one of the most outstanding performances held at the BPAC.
- President LaForge continued his department visits last week with the Student Success Center. President LaForge stated it was a pleasure to visit with this group and to see what they have planned for the future. He thanked them for their efforts with retention and all the great things they are doing.
- Dr. McAdams informed Cabinet Members Enrollment Management has made a conscious effort in the last few years to attract higher caliber students. These students tend to be attracted to universities that provide substantial scholarships, so Delta State created a full-ride scholarship, called the Statesmen Scholarship. The Statesmen Scholarship is given to 10 deserving students following a two-

part interview process. The second annual Statesmen Scholarship Day boasted a 50% increase in attendance from last year. Even though each student couldn't receive the full-ride scholarship, most qualified for other attractive scholarships. He stated this is an opportunity for Delta State to add to the intellectual climate of the academy. The financial investment in these students now will pay dividends in the future.

- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. Delta State hosts University of West Georgia on Thursday night and University of Montevallo on Saturday for basketball. The Statesmen baseball team travels to Florida this weekend to play Lynn University, Nova Southeastern University, and Palm Beach Atlantic. The Lady Statesmen softball team begins their play this weekend in Gulf Shores with the Gulf Coast Invitational.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. Statesmen Boulevard has been on hold due to weather. Young Mauldin Cafeteria and Zeigel Hall continue to be on schedule. President LaForge has reached out to the Commissioner of Transportation and MDOT regarding replacing the light poles at the intersection of Fifth Avenue and Highway 8.
- President LaForge began his Greek visits for the year. He visited with Phi Mu Fraternity last night and will visit with Kappa Delta tonight.
- President LaForge attended the Employee of the Month celebration today. He stated it was a great time celebrating the past winners as well as Dr. James Robinson for his support of the program and his birthday. Dr. Robinson has been a generous donor to this initiative.
- President LaForge gave an overview for the week ahead. He will welcome and visit with the Casey Family Programs delegation on campus on Tuesday. On Wednesday, he will meet with Ms. Magdalena Kiczuk, Erasmus Coordinator for KUL. President LaForge will travel to Greenville on Thursday to speak at the Greenville Rotary Club meeting.

## CABINET TOPIC

None

## BUSINESS

### Action

#### **Prospect Management System policy – new (final reading) ..... Mr. Hundley**

In Mr. Hundley's absence, Ms. Cox brought to Cabinet the new Prospect Management System policy for a final reading. Ms. Cox made the requested changes throughout the document with regards to referencing who is responsible for specific tasks. Dr. Beals suggested changing the word "suspect" on page three to individuals and/or entities as to not offend any potential donors. Under the Procedures section on page three, Dr. Beals suggested changing the amount of time allotted to record all substantive contacts with prospects in a contact report in the Banner System within five working days of the visit instead of ten working days. It was requested that Mr. Hundley spend time explaining the new policy to deans and chairs as well as Athletics staff.

**Motion:** Moved by Ms. Cox to approve the Prospect Management System policy for a final reading and seconded by Ms. Rocconi. **The motion was approved.**

#### **IHL Appendix 13b: Modifications to Existing Academic Unit Proposal - Reorganization.....Dr. McAdams**

Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the IHL Appendix 13b: Modifications to Existing Academic Unit Proposal - Reorganization, based on the recommendation and approval of Academic Council. Dr. McAdams explained

that the university has to obtain IHL approval any time an academic division is formally reorganized. Dr. Breaux stated that the reorganization includes combining the Department of Biological Sciences, Department of Chemistry and Physics, and the Department of Mathematics into the Division of Mathematics and Sciences. The division will be led by a chair along with a coordinator for each academic discipline. Dr. Breaux stated that there is a need for a focused, consolidated STEM push for Delta State and a way to engage K-12 faculty and students in the Delta region. Consolidating the units will allow for a better method of communication among the faculty and sharing of information regarding collaborative research opportunities. The combined division will also provide a consolidated unit for recruitment of future STEM majors. Dr. McAdams stated that Delta State is not the only university to have a combined Mathematics and Sciences division, and the reorganization will not cost the university any money. Dr. Breaux will conduct an internal search for the new Chair of the Division of Mathematics and Sciences. Any tenured or tenure-track faculty member is eligible to apply. Ms. Griffin shared several concerns from students including budgets, ACS certification, one-on-one time with professors, and the speed of the decision to combine the departments. With regards to the budgets, Ms. Griffin stated students are concerned the amount of student jobs available will decrease and that a reduction in scholarships, research funding, and grants could occur. Dr. McAdams and Dr. Breaux assured Ms. Griffin they don't foresee any budget changes. There are no plans to take away any student worker positions, lab techs, or tutors. Fundraising for private and institutional scholarships will remain the same. Ms. Griffin stated students want to make sure Chemistry and Physics keep their ACS certification since it won't be a standalone department anymore. Dr. Breaux stated the ACS certification guidelines state if a program is part of a larger unit, the Chemistry faculty must have reasonable autonomy over certain factors. Ms. Griffin suggested having a forum for the students in these departments to answer their questions. Dr. McAdams thanked Ms. Griffin for her willingness to share student concerns, and he asked her to share the concerns with the new chair, once the person is appointed. On behalf of the faculty, Dr. Beals informed Cabinet Members that anxiety has spread through the academy due to the fast decision of the merger of the three departments. Dr. McAdams informed Cabinet Members the speed in the decision to combine the departments occurred at the rate it did due to deadlines for IHL. IHL recognizes reorganizations twice a year — in October and April. In order for the Appendix 13b document to be on the April IHL Board agenda, it has to be submitted to IHL by February 1.

**Motion:** Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve IHL Appendix 13b: Modifications to Existing Academic Unit Proposal – Reorganization and seconded by Dr. Breaux. **The motion was approved.**

**Discussion**

**Campaign Case Statement and Priorities .....President LaForge**

President LaForge distributed the revised Case Statement and Priorities documents. The new case statement splits the ambitious \$100 million priority list into two \$50 million tiers, with the priorities remaining in the same order. The next step is to give the final document to the development staff for their use in talking with prospective donors. President LaForge informed Cabinet Members the Center for Teaching and Learning was removed from the Case Statement since we recently received funding for the Center. Mr. Mayers suggested adding a catchall statement to the end of the document in case a donor has a preference on a gift not listed in the document. President LaForge asked Cabinet Members to email their suggested changes to Dr. Roberts by noon on Tuesday.

**Legislative Update..... Dr. Roberts**

Dr. Roberts presented to Cabinet Members IHL's proposed two-year bond plan for capital improvements. Delta State has four projects listed in the bond bill, totaling \$12,320,000 — \$6,996,075 for 2018 and \$5,323,925 for 2019. For 2018, Delta State's capital improvement projects include reconstruction of the President's home, campus roof repairs and other repairs, and ADA compliance requirements. For 2019,

Delta State's capital improvement projects include campus roof repairs and other repairs, ADA compliance requirements, and funding for the pre-planning of the Robert E. Smith School of Nursing addition. Dr. Roberts informed Cabinet Members there is a bill in the House of Representatives with IHL's proposed two-year bond plan for capital improvements. She stated this is a great start since a bond bill didn't pass last session. Last week, President LaForge and Dr. Roberts attended the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee Hearing, House of Representatives Appropriations Committee and Subcommittee Hearings, and the Universities and Colleges Committee meeting. Dr. Roberts distributed to Cabinet Members a copy of the presentation Commissioner Glenn Boyce made at the hearings. She stated he did an excellent job in refining the message on the needs of the IHL system. Dr. Roberts pointed out several strong arguments in his presentation including: 1) the IHL system has had a reduction of 13.8% in appropriations since FY16; 2) Louisiana and Mississippi are the only states in the southeast that have experienced a decrease in higher education funding; 3) Mississippi is on the lower end of the scale for average resident tuition and required fees for public universities in all fifty states; 4) weighted average salaries and salary rankings of full-time faculty show Mississippi is on the lower end as compared to contiguous states; 5) the IHL system's request for funding for FY19 is \$714,499,463. Dr. Roberts reminded Cabinet Members Delta State receives line-item funding for four areas in the appropriations bill — Aviation, Delta Center for Culture and Learning, DMI, and E-Learning.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Hamlet, February 6, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Academic Day for College of Business and Aviation, February 12
- Academic Day for Robert E. Smith School of Nursing, February 19
- Colloquia Series with Mr. Fred Smith, CEO of FedEx, March 21, 6:00 p.m., Jobe Hall

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, February 5 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.