

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: May 4, 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)
Mr. Richard Word, President-Elect, Student Government Association (via Zoom)

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held via Zoom conference call on May 4, 2020. 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 April 27, 2020.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge welcomed and congratulated Mr. Word on his election as president of the Student Government Association for the 2020-21 academic year.
- Ms. Swindle announced the run-off results for the SGA elections—Ms. Lindsey Griffin was elected Secretary; Ms. Mollie Pinion was elected Attorney General; and, Mr. Evan Anthony was elected Chief Justice.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from last week. President LaForge participated in a conference call with Commissioner Rankins and the other Institutional Executive Officers to discuss guidelines for distributing the CARES Act funds last week. President LaForge will discuss the guidelines during the COVID-19 Campus Response Update.
- 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 GSC Board of Directors had a conference call this morning to begin discussions regarding developing plans for the Fall.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The Bureau of Buildings and the contractors for the roofing projects for Walter Sillers Coliseum, Holcombe-Norwood Hall, and the

Facilities Management Building assured Mr. Rutledge the projects would be complete by May 18. The Mayers Aquatics Center HVAC project will begin in 30 to 45 days. The roofing project for the residence halls came in over bid at \$2.6 million due to COVID-19 and storm damage across the state. The Bureau of Building staff advised Mr. Rutledge to reject the bids and rebid the project at a more strategic time. The first floor of the H. L. Nowell Union will be under construction this summer to renovate the food court. The construction should be complete by August 1. The sidewalk project will be advertised this week, and Mr. Rutledge hopes to begin the project by the first of June. The elevator project will be advertised next week and should be complete by the beginning of the Fall semester. Mr. Rutledge has secured personal protective equipment for Facilities Management employees; however, this will be a large expense for the university.

- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members some of the meetings and events planned for this week. President LaForge announced Mr. Scott Coopwood’s new newspaper The Bolivar Bullet begins Wednesday. Mr. Coopwood plans to work with Mr. Munroe on circulating complimentary copies of the newspaper to faculty members.
- Dr. Killebrew announced the DSU LEADS program will finalize their first co-hort with a ceremony to showcase their projects once campus reopens.

CABINET TOPIC

FY21 Budget Plan Proposal Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members the final FY21 budget plan proposal. 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 or \$837,000. Several expenses paid each year that have never been a part of the budget will be added in FY21 budget including: GIT Instructors’ salaries; 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. 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. These enhancements to the university will not be purchased and/or implemented until tuition totals are known. 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. The budget proposal suggested by the Executive Committee and Mr. Kinnison totals \$1,779,805 in budget reductions and includes a one-time transfer of \$163,387 of TFA funds to help reconcile the budget. Budget reductions are: \$753,055 from Academic Affairs; \$111,439 from University Advancement and External Relations; \$100,000 from Athletics; \$35,000 from Executive Affairs; \$494,462 from Finance and Administration; and \$122,173 from Student Affairs.

Mr. Rutledge shared several variables that could affect the FY21 budget. The proposed budget reflects a flat enrollment with a 6% increase in tuition; however, the Board of Trustees may not have an appetite for a tuition increase this year. Also, Delta State could experience a reduction in enrollment including international students and Dual Enrollment students that leads to less revenue. As advised by IHL staff, a 5% decrease in State Appropriations was included in the proposed budget; however, IHL staff is fearful that the decrease could reach 10%. With the COVID-19 crisis still looming, it is uncertain how the Fall semester will take shape. If the semester has to be partially or all online, additional expenses will incur. If any of these variables occur, the budget will be adjusted. The Executive Committee has begun to look into additional reductions should any of these unknowns transpire.

BUSINESS

Action

FY21 Budget Plan Proposal Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge presented to Cabinet members the proposed FY21 budget for approval. Action will be taken knowing the fluidness of the unknown variables and the possibility of altering the budget in the coming months.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to approve the proposed FY21 budget and seconded by Dr. Roberts. The motion was approved.

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities policy – revised (final reading)Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation and approval of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the revised Faculty Rights and Responsibilities policy for a final reading. All faculty members have a teaching load of 24-26 hours for the regular academic year regardless of teaching graduate or undergraduate programs.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Faculty Rights and Responsibilities policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Faculty Promotion policy – revised (final reading)Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation and approval of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the revised Faculty Promotion policy for a final reading. In observance of the new standards for submitting agenda items to IHL, all submission deadlines for the Portfolio Review and Appeal portions of the promotion process were pushed back two weeks.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Faculty Promotion policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Faculty Promotion – Library Services policy – revised (final reading).....Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation and approval of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the revised Faculty Promotion – Library Services policy for a final reading. In observance of the new standards for submitting agenda items to IHL, all submission deadlines for the Portfolio Review and Appeal portions of the promotion process were pushed back two weeks.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Faculty Promotion – Library Services policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Faculty Tenure policy – revised (final reading).....Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation and approval of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the revised Faculty Tenure policy for a final reading. In observance of the new standards for submitting agenda items to IHL, all submission deadlines for the Portfolio Review and Appeal portions of the tenure process were pushed back two weeks.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Faculty Tenure policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Faculty Tenure – Library Services policy – revised (final reading)Dr. McAdams

On the recommendation and approval of Academic Council, Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet the revised Faculty Tenure – Library Services policy for a final reading. In observance of the new standards for submitting agenda items to IHL, all submission deadlines for the Portfolio Review portion of the tenure process were pushed back two weeks.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the revised Faculty Tenure – Library Services policy for a final reading and seconded by Mr. Rutledge. The motion was approved.

Search and Hire approvals Cabinet Members

There were no requests for search and hire approvals brought to the Cabinet.

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 the Governor’s Safer at Home orders were issued April 24. This Safer at Home order extends through May 11.

President LaForge participated in a conference call with Commissioner Rankins and the other Institutional Executive Officers to discuss guidance on distributing CARES Act grant funds. The funds will be distributed in three phases. The first phase will be grants to students. Once IHL allows universities to proceed with distribution, an application for students will be available. The application will be sent to students’ email accounts and posted to their Canvas accounts. To receive funds, students must have been enrolled in Spring 2019 courses; completed their FAFSA; and, be able to document a disruption in their life caused by COVID-19. Dr. Megan Smith, Director of Financial Assistance, will be the one reviewing the applications. The second phase of funds will go to the universities to help reimburse for refunds given to students for housing, meals, and parking fees. The university will have approximately \$300,000 left to help with other expenses incurred during the COVID-19 crisis. The final phase of CARES Act grant funds will be distributed by the State. The State Legislature and the Governor will decide how the money is distributed, and IHL believes there is a great advocacy for higher education.

Mr. Rutledge shared the guidelines the university plans to use to provide refunds to eligible students for housing, meals, and parking expenses that are due because of your abbreviated time on campus. Refunds will be effective as of March 16—the first day classes would have resumed if spring break had not been extended an extra week. Refunds will first be applied to any outstanding balances that students owe to

Delta State. The remainder of the refunds will be issued to eligible students as a direct payment through student accounts by direct deposit or checks. Students are not eligible for refunds for the following reasons: Students who officially withdrew from Delta State prior to March 16; Students whose housing or meal plans have been paid through institutional scholarships designated for housing or meal plans; and, Students who remained in campus housing. Students eligible for refunds for housing and meals plans were identified, and the amounts for refunds have been calculated. The process of identifying students who are eligible for parking permit refunds continues, and this process should be complete by the first of next week. Refunds will begin processing on May 15, and any balance that is owed by the student will be deducted from the refund amount. Payments will be made via check or direct deposit, depending on the student's current refund method established with Student Business Services.

Currently, Governor Reeves' Safer at Home orders end at 8:00 a.m. on May 11. A plan on reopening the university has not been finalized, but it will be shared with the Cabinet upon completion.

All travel and camps are cancelled/postponed for May. A decision for June will occur after Governor Reeves make's his announcement this week. A plan for opening this Fall remains contingent upon national and state guidelines. The IHL Safe Start Task force will guide all eight universities in their re-opening plans. The task force will make recommendations to Commissioner Rankins by the end of May.

President LaForge will release a campus update later this week. The update will include plans for re-opening campus (dependent on Governor Reeves update), CARES Act funds, guidelines and process for refunds for housing/meals/parking, summer school, and the Fall semester. Cabinet members requested President LaForge discuss how to return textbooks to the Jimmy R. Williams Bookstore and to update students on the plans for the Fall semester.

End-of-Year Recognitions/Ceremonies.....Cabinet

Cabinet members shared how end-of-year recognitions and ceremonies would take place in their respective areas.

- Greek Awards – Dr. Bennett-Fairs announced the Greek Award winners for Panhellenic Council, Interfraternity Council, and the Pan-Hellenic Council were announced last Thursday and posted on the Student Life social media pages.
- Omicron Delta Kappa – Dr. Bennett-Fairs announced that ODK inductions for the Spring semester have been postponed to the Fall, and there will be a larger class inducted in the Fall semester.
- SGA Inauguration – Ms. Swindle announced the SGA Inauguration would take place in the Fall.
- Student Hall of Fame – Dr. Bennett-Fairs announced the Student Hall of Fame inductees would be announced this week, and the banquet will take place during Homecoming weekend during the Fall semester.
- Dr. McAdams shared the status of college award recognitions for Spring 2020:
 - The College of Arts and Sciences allows the individual departments and divisions to notify their own students of their awards and recognitions. All notifications should be wrapped up by the end of the week.
 - The College of Business and Aviation will mail out awards and certificates in the next couple of weeks.
 - The College of Education and Human Sciences has been working with Communications and Marketing to create a dedicated webpage on the College of Education and Human Sciences site to list the program of awards. Plaques and certificates will be mailed. Individual divisions are using their social media pages to recognize their students, as well.

- Robert E. Smith School of Nursing is in the process of selecting their award recipients. The recipients will receive notification and recognition through the mail with a certificate and letter of congratulations.
- Retirement and Service Awards Ceremony – Mr. Rutledge announced the ceremony will take place in July. A new date has not been set, but he will announce it soon.
- Green and White Awards – Mr. Kinnison announced the 52nd Annual Green and White Awards will be held virtually via YouTube on Thursday at 6:00 p.m. Highlights will be shared on the Athletics’ social media pages.
- Commencement – Dr. McAdams stated that a formal plan for Commencement has not been made, but the university wants to honor its graduates with an in-person ceremony. Ms. Emily Dabney, Registrar, is looking into all alternatives for the ceremony.
- S.E. Kossman Faculty Award Winner and H.L. Nowell Staff Award Winner – Dr. McAdams and Dr. Bennett-Fairs said the awards will be given at a later time, possibly in conjunction with Commencement.

Residence Halls Move-Out Day Dr. Bennett-Fairs

Dr. Bennett-Fairs announced Residence Halls Move-Out would take place from May 7-9 from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. each day. A total of 45 students will move out during this time.

Staff Evaluations..... Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge announced staff performance evaluations will take place the first of July. Due to the disruptions caused by COVID-19, changes will be made to the staff performance evaluations in the goal setting section with regards to scoring. Since staff members did not have a full year to complete their goals, they will not be scored for this section.

Budget Update Mr. Rutledge

Mr. Rutledge shared with Cabinet members last month’s report to IHL from Mr. Charles Lindsay showed Delta State was meeting its goals and its projections for June. In these projections, Mr. Lindsay had approximately \$600,000 of expenses in refunds, but he did not have any revenue coming in to the university. With guidance on use of the CARES Act funds, an adjustment will be made to this month’s report to increase the revenue projection. Delta State has done exceedingly well in our expenditures, but our problem area is revenues due to the shutdown from COVID-19. Delta State will be down around \$500,000 in projected revenues this month, and this trend will continue for the next few months.

Legislative Update Mr. Munroe

Mr. Munroe informed Cabinet Members that Governor Reeves is conducting a press conference right now updating the State on the Safer at Home orders. Also, the Mississippi Legislature resumed last Friday to pass a bill on plans to distribute the CARES Act funds.

Additional information

- President LaForge announced the next Cabinet meeting on May 11 will be the transition meeting for our rotating members — Academic Council representative, Administrative Staff Council Chair, Faculty Senate President, and Student Government Association President.
- Dr. Westfall announced Faculty Senate would meet this week for the final time this academic year. During this meeting, he will make a motion to have a meeting in August to prepare for the upcoming academic year. Also, the Faculty Senate needs a new Parliamentarian.
- Mr. Munroe announced the next issue of the alumni magazine will be sent out soon. This issue will feature alumni in the medical field.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Spring Exams, May 4-7
- Summer Session I, June 1
- New Student Orientation I, June 8

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, May 11 at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Plans for Fall Semester (Dr. McAdams)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.