

**DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**PRESIDENT'S CABINET**  
*Minutes*

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**Meeting date: November 28, 2016**

**Members in attendance:** President William LaForge, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Mr. Keith Fulcher, Dr. Leslie Griffin, Dr. Chris Jurgenson, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Ms. Allie Rose Parker, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Ms. Christie Rocconi, and Mr. Jamie Rutledge (Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

**Members not in attendance:** None

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on November 28, 2016. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Dr. Jurgenson, seconded by Ms. Parker, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on November 15, 2016.

**GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- Coach David 'Boo' Ferriss passed away on Thursday, November 24. President LaForge announced the visitation is Tuesday from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Covenant Presbyterian Church and the Memorial service is Wednesday at Covenant Presbyterian Church beginning at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Mayers stated the family is doing well and is overwhelmed by the press coverage. The Athletics department is hosting coffee and donuts for former baseball players Wednesday morning at the Thigpen Annex, and the Boo Ferriss Museum will be open Tuesday and Wednesday for viewing. Mr. Mayers reminded Cabinet Members of the four memorial options set by the family: DSU baseball program, Mississippi Sports Hall of Fame, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and Covenant Presbyterian Church.
- President LaForge continued his annual visits of the residence halls and Greek chapters. He met with residents in Brumby-Castle Hall and Blansett Hall, and with members of Tri Delta and Kappa Delta Sororities. He will continue his visits later this week with residents in Cain-Tatum Hall and with members of Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity.
- President LaForge traveled to Jackson two weeks ago for the IEO and IHL Board meetings. During the IEO meeting, several important topics were discussed including: the need for additional financial aid; a textbook policy for lower costs, which was encouraged by Student Government presidents; the Compete 2 Complete Initiative; and, the fact that no additional budget cuts are foreseen in the near future. During the IHL Board meeting, the Foundation Affiliation Agreements for all of the universities were extended for three-months to allow extra time for review. Also, the Board approved the increase in President LaForge's salary supplement from the DSU Foundation and they granted permission for President LaForge to serve as a trustee for the Pittman Education Trust. While in Jackson, President LaForge met with Delta State alumnus and Editor of the *Mississippi Business Journal*, Ross Reily.
- President LaForge announced the Hearin Foundation approved Delta State's pre-proposal for the Local Government Training Academy. Within the coming weeks, President LaForge and others will begin

making decisions about the direction of the training program. The Hearin Foundation granted Delta State \$50,000 for the initial phase of the program. A full proposal will be requested once the program has been developed.

- President and Mrs. LaForge attended the Washington Redskins football game as the guests of FedEx CEO Fred Smith. President LaForge said we have invited Mr. Smith to be our Spring Colloquia series speaker. This would be another great connection with FedEx in addition to having student interns and alumni working there.
- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. The women's basketball team plays Tuesday at 5:30 p.m. in the Coliseum.
- President LaForge worked with three different groups in Facilities Management this morning to let the employees know how much their hard work is appreciated by the Delta State family. He stated the new Facilities Management Director, Mr. Jeff Barkman, is a great addition to the Delta State team.
- President LaForge has been asked to give the welcome at the Handel's Messiah performance tonight, which was made possible by a generous donation to Delta State's Music department.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the upcoming week's events. The Major Foundations Task Force meets on Tuesday, and President LaForge meets with Mr. Tyler Sullivan, the Spring 2017 Congressional Fellow, to brief him on the Fellowship. On Tuesday evening, GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi will present a lecture and performance by Nigel Hall. The Cleveland Music Foundation Board meets on Thursday, and President LaForge will meet with international students to discuss their concerns over the recent election results. The Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony in Kent Wyatt Hall takes place on Thursday afternoon at 3:00 p.m. President LaForge reminded Cabinet Members of the God's Anointed Voices concert, the Cleveland Christmas parade, and the BPAC performance of ELF on Friday.
- Dr. Bennett reminded Cabinet Members of her event, Carols for Cleveland, on Thursday evening beginning at 7:00 p.m. in Jobe Hall. Students, faculty, and staff will perform. Mrs. LaForge and Mayor Billy Nowell will bring welcoming remarks to the crowd. She encouraged Cabinet Members to attend.

#### **CABINET TOPIC**

None

#### **BUSINESS**

##### **Action**

None

##### **Discussion**

None

##### **Other Discussion**

- Dr. Bennett said that Interim Chief of Police, Mr. Jeffrey Johns, has been very active and has coordinated with the Cleveland Chief of Police to have ground training for Delta State's police officers. Three police officer positions are being advertised including the Chief of Police position. Also, Dr. Bennett announced that they are almost finished with updating the student handbook.
- Mr. Rutledge said he is working on the budget process calendar and plans to present it to EC on Friday. He also gave an update on various campus projects. The contractor for the demolition of the President's home was not meeting the deadlines established, and so Mr. Rutledge found a new contractor who will match the current contractor's bid if the original contractor doesn't follow through

on the established plan. The bids for the Zeigel Hall project open on Friday. The bids for Statesmen Boulevard open in two weeks. The final design and construction documents for Young-Mauldin Cafeteria will be submitted by December 15, and construction will begin in May. Mr. Rutledge is looking into the best option for food preparation services—whether with food trucks or converting the old laundry building. The paving project on campus is almost complete. The Caylor-White/Walters project is finished, minus a few items on Delta State’s list to be completed. Delta State’s cash position is better than it has been in 15 years. Mr. Rutledge believes that one more year of setting aside contingency funds should get our budget where it needs to be.

- Mr. Fulcher announced that tomorrow is “Giving Tuesday,” an international day of giving. The Alumni-Foundation staff sent out thousands of requests through mail and email. Mr. Fulcher has designated every Tuesday in December as “Giving Tuesday.” The Foundation will match gifts donated, up to \$2,000, for each college/school. The Alumni-Foundation office sent out mailers to encourage alumni to join the Quadrangle Oak Society, a planned giving program. The Alumni magazine is almost complete, and a spread is in the works for Coach Ferriss. The Campaign Consultants are conducting teleconferences on Fridays to check on progress and to make sure everything is falling into place for the next step in the campaign.
- Dr. Roberts informed Cabinet Members that Mr. Michael Martin is still out on medical leave and to direct any questions regarding the Postal and Copy Center to Ms. Leigh Emerson. Ms. April Mondy, Administrative Secretary in the President’s Office, is transferring to the College of Business to be an Instructor in Management. Dr. Roberts expressed her thanks to Cabinet members for participating in the Twelve Days of Christmas video. Also, Dr. Roberts plans to meet with Dr. Beverly Moon to discuss adding the strategic goals to the Visioning template. The updated template and timeline for submitting goals will be presented at the December 12 Cabinet meeting.
- Mr. Mayers announced that the Delta State Swimming and Diving Christmas Invitational is December 10-13. This meet determines if swimmers and divers make the cut for nationals.
- Ms. Rocconi announced Administrative Staff Council sponsored Feed-A-Family for Thanksgiving, and they collected enough food to donate 59 bags of food to Helping Hands and nine boxes of food to eight local churches.
- Ms. Parker and the Student Government Association are busy planning for next semester. Ms. Parker plans to have the Organizational Fair earlier in the year, bring back the crawfish boil, and start a mental health awareness week. Ms. Parker met with IHL Trustee Christy Pickering, and asked her to speak to Delta State students next semester about her experience with domestic abuse. Also, SGA is working to create a final exams kick-off party next week for students.
- Dr. Jurgenson informed Cabinet Members of his service to the search committee for the Center for Teacher and Learning position. Faculty Senate has passed a resolution to review all standing university committees to see if certain committees are needed.
- Dr. McAdams stated that the Pittman Education Trust money will be used for leadership scholarships and the Pivot Program. The Compete 2 Complete Initiative is proceeding slowly, and a statewide meeting will take place next week for Admissions and Registrars departments to discuss the next step. For this initiative, Delta State will have to create a degree program and have it approved by IHL. Discussions are taking place about what will happen to the outstanding debt that these students owe to universities, if they decide to come back to finish their degree. The debt can’t be waived. Dr. McAdams asked the platform party for commencement to be in the Green Room at the BPAC at 9:30 a.m. for robing and lineup.
- President LaForge has been asked to give remarks about Mr. Willis Frazer at the 2016 Distinguished Citizen Award Dinner for the Chickasaw Council, Boy Scouts of America event on December 8.
- President LaForge asked Cabinet Members to bring any outstanding items needing Cabinet approval to the December 12 Cabinet meeting.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Christmas Tree Lighting, Kent Wyatt Hall Atrium, December 1, 3:00 pm
- Elf the Musical, BPAC, December 2, 8:00 pm
- Fall Commencement, Graduate students, BPAC, December 10, 10:00 am
- Fall Commencement, Undergraduate students, BPAC, December 10, 2:00 pm
- Christmas Holidays, December 22 – January 2

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, December 12 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 2:37 p.m.