

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT'S CABINET
Minutes

Meeting date: October 21, 2019

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

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: None

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on October 21, 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 October 14, 2019.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities and events from the past week. President LaForge and Dr. McAdams had dinner with PeopleShores CEO Mr. Murali Vullaganti to discuss potential partnerships between Delta State and his company. Delta State University hosted members of Alcorn State University's Executive Committee last week as they observed our auxiliary services. President LaForge attended the IEO and IHL Board meetings last week. During the IEO meeting, several issues were discussed including the new Bachelor of Applied Technology degree; alcohol sales on campuses; a threshold for contract limits for projects in which IHL doesn't have to be involved; Title III funding; and, the potential challenges of the upcoming legislative session. The Okra Out event occurred last week, and it went very well. President LaForge continued his internal relations on campus by visiting with the cross country and men's basketball teams.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on Facilities Management projects. The construction documents for the Mayers Aquatics Center are almost complete, and the construction should begin in March. The Walter Sillers Coliseum project is on schedule. The roofing project for Fielding Wright Art Center/Holcombe-Norwood Hall and the Facilities Management Building is on schedule. Last Friday, our redundant connections for our internet and phone lines proved to be useful when a fiber was cut in Jackson. Had we not had our redundant connection, the university would have been out internet and phone for ten hours.
- Mr. Kinnison gave an update on Athletics. The football team won against the University of West Alabama over the weekend, and they will compete again on November 2. During their break, the football coaches will be heavily recruiting for the next season. Over the weekend, a football alumni reunion occurred, and 60 former players and their families were in attendance. The men's soccer team

was victorious over Oakwood University and Talladega College, and the women’s soccer team was victorious over University of West Georgia and lost to Valdosta State University. Both teams will compete against Mississippi College on Thursday. The cross country team runs at University of Montevallo this week. The swimming and diving competes at Lindenwood University this weekend. The Athletic Department hosts the Coaches Club Luncheon at Cleveland Country Club tomorrow beginning at 11:45 a.m.

- President LaForge shared with Cabinet Members some of the meetings and events planned for the week. The Commercial Aviation Department has their accrediting agency on campus this week. President LaForge will host another faculty and staff luncheon on Tuesday, and he is scheduled to visit with the BPAC staff, Center for Economic Education and Research, swimming and diving teams, and the softball team later this week. Delta Arts Alliance hosts the Empty Bowl fundraiser on Friday from 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Delta State’s Statesmen Shelf food pantry is one of the recipients of the funds raised. The Desoto County Alumni chapter meets Saturday evening. President LaForge travels to Atlanta on Monday for the NCAA DII Presidents’ Council meeting, and he will have dinner with Dr. David Abney while there. Following his return from Atlanta, President LaForge will visit Cleveland Central High School and attend the Red Carpet Gala at GRAMMY Museum® Mississippi. The Delta State Foundation Board meets on Saturday, November 2. Mr. Munroe stated there has been a good response for attendance.

CABINET TOPIC

None

BUSINESS

Action

Vapor and Tobacco Free Environment policy (revised – first reading)Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett brought the revised Vapor and Tobacco Free Environment policy to Cabinet for a first reading. The policy was revised to add the use of vapor devices. Cabinet members gave Dr. Bennett suggestions on revising the policy further including the change of university grounds to university property, consistency of language, and adding specifics about fines under the Enforcement Authority.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Bennett to approve the revised Vapor and Tobacco Free Environment policy and seconded by Ms. Swindle. The motion was approved.

Budget Revisions Mr. Rutledge

President LaForge and Mr. Rutledge provided Cabinet members with an update on the proposed budget revisions and improvement plan, which were developed in response to information received recently regarding inaccurate information being provided during the Spring 2019 budget planning process, as well as a decline in Delta State’s cash balance due to unrealistic revenues and an increase in scholarship expenses. Mr. Rutledge emphasized the proposed plan includes permanent cuts, as well as temporary cuts, and the proposed plan does not cut programs or personnel. President LaForge stated IHL approved the improvement plan and they are appreciative of Delta State’s efforts. The proposed budget revisions and improvement plan will be shared with faculty, staff, and students at the campus forums.

Motion: Moved by Mr. Rutledge to adopt the proposed budget revisions and improvement plan and seconded by Dr. Moon. The motion was approved.

Discussion

Campus Forums..... Dr. Roberts

Dr. Roberts announced the date of the Faculty, Staff, and Student forums changed to Thursday, October 31. The locations and times for the forums remain unchanged; the staff and faculty forums will be in the H. L. Nowell Student Union Room 302A at 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. and the student forum will be at 12:15 p.m. in the H. L. Nowell Student Union 2nd Floor West Lobby. The main topics of the forums will be the budget revisions, enrollment, new initiatives, upcoming legislative session, capital improvement and bond funds, and other topics suggested by the constituency group leaders. If there are suggestions for additional topics, please send them to Dr. Roberts.

Fall 2020 Recruitment Initiatives.....Dr. Bennett

Dr. Bennett shared with Cabinet members the Office of Admissions is preparing for Fall 2020. The Office of Admissions has worked with Communications and Marketing on creating an Admission Hub on the Delta State website. This hub contains all information a new, undergraduate student would need in one place including an admissions calendar, housing and financial aid information, and much more. Free Application Day occurs on Thursday, October 31. The Office of Admissions will host Spotlight Day on Monday, November 11, and 11 schools are currently registered with 17 more awaiting approval from their respective districts to attend.

New Options for ACT Test.....Dr. McAdams

Dr. McAdams shared with Cabinet members new testing options offered by ACT will begin next school year. The new options include individual section retesting, online testing on national test dates, and superscore calculations. Students who have already taken the test will be allowed to retake individual ACT section tests, rather than having to take the entire ACT test again. At select ACT test centers initially, students will have the option of online or paper testing on national test days. Online testing offers faster results compared to traditional paper-based administration. ACT will report a superscore for students who have taken the ACT test more than once, giving colleges the option to use the student’s best scores from all test administrations, rather than scores from just one sitting, in their admission and scholarship decisions. New ACT research suggests that superscoring is actually more predictive of how students will perform in their college courses than other scoring methods.

Additional information

- Dr. Bennett announced the Walk a Mile in Her Shoes event is Thursday, and she has 99 participants.
- President LaForge announced Cabinet will not meet the week of October 28.
- Dr. Bennett shared with Cabinet members she has extra tickets for the Empty Bowl fundraiser. The tickets are \$15.
- Ms. Swindle announce she and another SGA member are teaming up with Representative Abe Hudson to create legislation for the upcoming legislative session.
- Ms. Killebrew announced the Heritage Bowl Blood Drive sponsored by the Administrative Staff Council, Faculty Senate, and SGA will be Wednesday, November 6 and Thursday, November 7.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Empty Bowls Fundraiser, October 25, 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- Drew Holcomb and the Neighbors, October 29, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Presidential Forums, November 5 (Staff-10:00am, Students-12:15pm, Faculty–3:00pm)

- Homecoming, November 8-9
- Delta State football vs. University of West Georgia, November 9, 2:00 p.m., Parker Field. President's Reception at 1:30 p.m., Dorgan Center
- Tedeschi Trucks Band, November 11, 7:30 p.m., BPAC

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, November 4 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – TBD

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:44 p.m.