

# DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

## PRESIDENT'S CABINET

### *Minutes*

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**Meeting date: February 2, 2015**

**Members in attendance:** President William LaForge, Dr. Wayne Blansett, Mr. Keith Fulcher, Dr. David Hebert, Dr. Debbie Heslep, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Mr. Steve McClellan, Ms. Marilyn Read, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Mr. Jeff Slagell, Mr. Mikel Sykes, Dr. Myrtis Tabb, and Ms. Leigh Emerson.

**Guests:** Dr. Edwin Craft, Chief Information Officer (Ellucian) and Ms. Caitlyn Thompson, Coordinator of Communications and Marketing

**Call to Order:** A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on February 2, 2015. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

#### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

- President LaForge and other Cabinet Members attended the "Safe Space" training held last week on how to provide support while working toward being an ally for the LGBTQ community.
- President LaForge asked for feedback on the weather drill held last week. Most felt it went well and that the drill was needed. We need to tweak a few things. There were some issues with the text notification system, and they will work to address those.
- President LaForge distributed copies of the article from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* where he and Dr. McAdams were interviewed regarding budget cuts to academic programs.
- President LaForge said he notified the Outzs family that the university is not interested in purchasing the property, and he thanked them for giving Delta State the right of first refusal.
- President LaForge will be out of town for the first session of the Okra Scholars, and so he filmed a video to be shown at the session. Dr. McAdams will meet with the group.
- President LaForge reminded Cabinet members that he will be out of town at the end of the week for the Grammy event. He discussed the meetings he will have with Mississippi and Grammy officials to promote our Grammy museum. Also, our Delta Music Institute's All Star group will perform at Mississippi night on Thursday.
- President LaForge announced that Justice Leslie King will be our Colloquia Series speaker on March 4 with the possible topic of Perspectives on Social Justice.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members a request he received from Dr. Nick Cummins, Director of Choral Activities, to serve beer and wine at a reception on February 13 in the BPAC for counselors and teachers from the Honor Choir groups visiting our campus. No minors will be in attendance at the event. Cabinet Members agreed with the request.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet Members a request from the Cleveland-Bolivar County Chamber of Commerce to sponsor their Chamber Scholars program. We have provided two scholarships in the past. Cabinet members agreed to sponsor two \$400 scholarships again this year.

- President LaForge announced that Jeffrey Farris, Director of Alumni Affairs, will Chair the committee for Dr. Wayne Blansett’s retirement. Committee members include: Davlon Miller (Student Affairs), Julie Jackson (Student Affairs), Mikel Sykes (Student Body), Dr. Leslie Griffin (Faculty), Caitlyn Thompson (Staff), Mike Kinnison (Athletics), and Dr. Kent Wyatt (ex officio). Mr. Sykes will appoint another student and there will be a representative from the Dedicated Statesmen Association.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Mr. Slagell, seconded by Dr. Blansett, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on January 27, 2015.

**CABINET TOPIC**

**Delta State Day in Memphis .....Dr. Heslep and Ms. Thompson**

President LaForge shared with Cabinet members a copy of the wrap ad in Saturday’s *Commercial Appeal*. We had several alumni and community members to call and comment on how much they liked the ad and are glad that we are recruiting heavily in the Memphis area. Ms. Thompson discussed the ways Communications and Marketing has promoted the event in the North Mississippi/Memphis area, including: webpage, digital ads, posters distributed to area schools/counselors, Facebook ad campaign, and press releases. Media visits are planned for that day for Cabinet Members. She distributed a one-page information sheet to help with any questions the media may have.

Dr. Heslep discussed the details of the event. An e-blast invitation was sent to 1,176 alumni in the area inviting them to come and bring students with them. The e-blast was also sent to 1,813 students from Tennessee, Arkansas, and North Mississippi counties. The feedback we have received from the counselors has been positive. The goal is to have 200 students attend. We will have around 60 faculty and students travel from here. It will be a college fair type of setup with two breakout sessions. The president, financial aid, and Memphis recruiter will be the speakers for the breakout sessions.

**BUSINESS**

**Cell Phone Application to Replace Campus Emergency Phones.....Dr. Tabb/Dr. Craft**

Dr. Tabb introduced the topic and stated the request came from Cabinet to investigate the possibilities of having a mobile application on cell phones for emergencies. Dr. Craft stated it is possible, and he has worked with programs like Rave Guardian on other campuses. He has concerns that we don’t have enough personnel to answer the high number of calls that would be received in an emergency. The cost is approximately \$2 per student annually. He also discussed the issue with establishing the boundaries of the service (i.e. students who live off campus). Cabinet members discussed the need for such a service, and decided that additional lighting and security cameras would be a better investment.

**Cabinet Topic Schedule ..... Dr. Roberts**

Dr. Roberts distributed the Cabinet topics planned for the next two months. She also distributed the 2014-15 Cabinet Guide in preparation for the discussions in March.

**Schedule and Plans for the FY16 Budget Process ..... Mr. McClellan**

Mr. McClellan discussed the different pools of money we have for our budget/planning process: State Appropriations for Capital Improvement projects, Capital Improvement funds from the \$50/student fee, General State Appropriation dollars, and revenue from tuition and fees. We will have a three prong process: 1) Capital Improvements, 2) New initiatives/add-ons, 3) Continuation items.

**Discussion**

- Dr. Blansett congratulated Mr. Sykes on the great job he has done representing the student body as Student Government Association President.
- Dr. Tabb announced we have 24 applications so far for the Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment position, and it is still open. The committee has met and will continue to discuss the process.

**INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:**

- Popovich Comedy Pet Theater, Thursday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm, BPAC
- The Great Gatsby, Thursday, February 26, 7:30 pm, BPAC
- Go Green Weekend, March 27-28, Campus
- Race Conference, March 30-31
- Retirement and Service Award Program, April 24, 2:00 pm. Union 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Lobby

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Tuesday, February 10, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Foundation Support for the University (Keith)

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm.