

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT'S CABINET

Minutes

Meeting date: January 20, 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, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Mr. Jeff Slagell, Mr. Mikel Sykes, Dr. Myrtis Tabb, and Ms. Leigh Emerson.

Members absent: Ms. Marilyn Read

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on January 20, 2015. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge discussed an interview he and Dr. McAdams had with *The Chronicle of Higher Education* about the process we used for making cuts to our academic programs.
- President LaForge met with Dr. Clifton Wingard, Chair of the Mathematics Department, to discuss his recent trip to Cuba. President LaForge asked Dr. Garry Jennings, through the Madison Center, to work with Dr. Wingard to share this experience with the campus.
- President LaForge held the initial First Friday meeting in 2015 with faculty last week, and he had several good visits and discussions.
- President and Mrs. LaForge attended the Community Foundation of Northwest Mississippi's Crystal Ball Gala on Saturday, and he was asked to make the announcement about Delta State being the only university in Mississippi to provide the EverFi finance program to our first year experience students. President LaForge also visited with State Treasurer Lynn Fitch about internship possibilities for our students.
- Dr. McAdams discussed the Okra Scholars program, which will help retain students and was created using the \$1.6 million "First in the World" grant. We will have 50 students in the program. Faculty members are being trained, and they plan to enroll students in the program in February.
- Dr. Roberts gave a legislative update. She said the House appropriations' subcommittee and full committee held hearings for IHL last week. The Senate appropriations' subcommittee held their hearing for IHL on Monday. Commissioner Hanks Bounds gave the presentation to all three groups. The IHL request includes: (1) additional spending authority of approximately \$400,000 for financial assistance for FY15 and an additional \$5 million, above the Legislative Budget Committee's recommendation, for FY16; (2) Capital Improvement funding of \$18 million (DSU's portion would be approximately \$800,000); and, (3) funding for faculty and staff pay raises at a cost of \$36 million which would equate to an average raise of 5%.
- Mr. McClellan stated that the Bureau of Buildings returned \$362,000 to Delta State for the Caylor-White/Walters project. We have selected architects for Young Mauldin, Zeigel Hall, and Walter Sillers Coliseum. It is a slow process, but the projects are underway. We will also pave the streets around campus this summer.

- President LaForge announced that we received the official letter from SACS regarding our reaffirmation. Overall, it was positive and was what we expected. We have two areas to address: faculty competence and financial stability. They also asked for an executive summary of our Quality Enhancement Plan.
- President LaForge shared with Cabinet members a letter he received from the Mississippi Personnel Board requesting nominations for the 2015 Excellence in Government Awards.
- President LaForge will meet with Matt Holleman, with the Hearin Foundation, tomorrow while he is in Jackson for the IHL Board meeting.
- President LaForge announced that he will attend several Grammy events in Los Angeles next month including meeting with officials from the University of Southern California regarding internships for our Delta Music Institute students. Twelve students from the DMI will travel to Los Angeles for Grammy Week, and eight of them will perform. President LaForge said he has signed several letters of support for Grammy Museum contracts. They will make a lot of progress in the next several months.
- President LaForge discussed a piece of property on Court Street that has been offered to Delta State for purchase by a former faculty member.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Dr. Hebert, seconded by Dr. Blansett, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on January 12, 2015.

CABINET TOPIC

Student Programming..... Dr. Blansett and Mr. Sykes

Dr. Blansett recalled the discussion at the Cabinet Retreat this summer regarding ways to get students more involved on campus. He said Mr. Sykes and the Student Government Association members have been working on this. Mr. Sykes gave a presentation on the student involvement activities including: meeting with all student organizations, utilizing social media, and re-establishing the Presidents Council. Also, the Union Program Council hosted Welcome Week, Laser Tag, Haunted House, and Casino night. They are working on the following for Spring: "Finish in Four" video, electronic advertising in the Union, and a big event during Go Green Weekend.

Mr. Sykes also discussed the recent decision by the Executive Committee not to allow students to use academic classrooms for meetings. He stated there have been a few issues in the past, but he asked that we not punish all student groups for what a few have done. He said they need the space because there isn't enough room in the Union.

* Mr. Sykes will draft guidelines for the use of certain academic spaces, and Dr. Blansett will bring it back to Executive Committee for approval.

BUSINESS

Facility Use – Special Request Dr. Blansett

Dr. Blansett stated that the Cleveland Volunteer Fire Department is asking for a classroom rental fee waiver of \$50. There are a number of faculty and staff on the fire department, and they help us with fire safety for our students.

Motion: Moved by Dr. Blansett to approve the fee waiver and seconded by Mr. Slagell. **The motion was approved.**

Update on Race Conference..... Dr. Tabb
Dr. Tabb distributed information and a tentative schedule for the “Winning the Race through Hearts and Minds” conference. It will be held on March 30-31. The Opening Session will start at 6:30 pm. We have created an external advisory committee, and the goal for this group is for them to help build partnerships for us in the future.

Discussion

- Dr. Tabb stated that we have sold 560 tickets for Tuesday night’s performance of “Anything Goes” at the BPAC, and they are working on selling more.
- Dr. Heslep announced an e-blast will be sent this afternoon to the campus, alumni, and potential students about the DSU Day in Memphis. We have 1,500 alumni in Memphis and 702 email addresses. We will email them, and ask them to bring a student to the event.
- Mr. Mayers attended the NCAA meeting, and Delta State was recognized for the amount of money we raised for the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- BPAC performance “Anything Goes”, January 27, 7:30 p.m.
- Delta State Recruiting Day in Memphis, February 3, 4:30-6:30
- Race Conference, March 30-31
- Retirement and Service Award Program, April 24, 2:00 pm, Union 2nd Floor Lobby

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Tuesday, January 27, 2015 at 1:30 p.m.
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Foundation Support for the University (Keith)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.