

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT'S CABINET
Minutes

Meeting date: November 6, 2017

Members in attendance: President William LaForge, Dr. George Beals, Dr. Vernell Bennett, Dr. Dave Breaux, Ms. Ashley Griffin, Mr. Patrick Hundley, Mr. Ronnie Mayers, Dr. Charles McAdams, Dr. Michelle Roberts, Mr. Jamie Rutledge, and Ms. Caitlyn Thompson (Ms. Claire Cole – recorder)

Members not in attendance: None

Guests: Mr. Jeffrey Farris, Director, Alumni Relations
Ms. Sylma Samuel-Ferreira, Instructor, Languages and Literature
Ms. Arlene Sanders, Chair, Diversity Committee

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the President's Cabinet was held in the President's Conference Room on November 6, 2017. The meeting convened at 1:30 p.m. with President LaForge presiding.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Rutledge, seconded by Dr. Breaux, all Cabinet Members present and participating voted unanimously to approve the Minutes of the Cabinet Meeting held on October 30, 2017.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

- President LaForge offered his condolences to Dr. Charles McAdams on the passing of his mother, Mrs. Jimmie McAdams, and to the family of Mr. A. C. Prewitt. Cabinet Members remembered them with a moment of silence.
- President LaForge invited Mr. Jeffrey Farris to lead the discussion on Homecoming activities. Mr. Farris stated the Alumni-Foundation Office is gearing up for Homecoming 2017. He distributed the calendar of Alumni Association Homecoming events. The Alumni Awards Gala will be held on Friday evening and it will include the Golden Circle induction of the featured class of 1967. Alumni Association President, Ms. Sayward Fortner, will preside over the event. Dr. Bennett informed Cabinet Members that on Friday evening, Student Affairs will host the Getting Fired Up for the Green and White Pep Rally and Bonfire. Statesmen Park will remain open until 12:00 a.m. on Friday and 10:00 p.m. on Saturday. The basketball tournament begins on Friday evening. The Union will be the hub for all Homecoming events. Java City, Chick fil A, Jimmy R. Williams Bookstore, and the Welcome Center will be open on Saturday. The Statesmen Stroll begins at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday. This event encourages guests and alumni to revisit campus and see the open houses. The Statesmen Pride on Parade has 56 entries and begins at 11:30 a.m. Ms. Griffin stated the Homecoming Court will be presented at half-time during the football game, and Mr. and Miss Green and White will be recognized.
- President LaForge visited with Grenada High School and Water Valley High School for recruiting purposes last week. He stated both were great recruiting visits. President LaForge said he has enjoyed discovering alumni who work at the high schools.

- President LaForge welcomed employees of Atmos Energy to campus during their annual Leadership retreat last week.
- President LaForge continued his department visits last week with the Division of Teacher Education, Leadership, and Research. He stated the visit went well and was very educational. President LaForge hopes the outreach is valuable to the departments, as well.
- The Office of Enrollment Management hosted their second Experience DSU Day last week for Tupelo High School students. President LaForge was able to welcome these students to campus. Ms. Thompson stated approximately 20 students participated in Experience DSU Day.
- President LaForge met with the International Faculty Association Executive Committee last week for a formal introduction. He stated the group is willing to help in any way they can. They are interested in getting involved. President LaForge advised the committee to meet with Dr. McAdams.
- President LaForge hosted guests for the BPAC performance of Ailey II. He said the performers were very athletic, and the event was well-attended.
- President LaForge and members of the Executive Committee hosted a thank you breakfast for Enrollment Management, Graduate and Continuing Studies, and Student Success Center for their hard work in achieving an enrollment increase for Fall 2017.
- Mr. Mayers gave an update on Athletics. Athletics has filled all vacancies for academic coaches. Last weekend, the Cross Country team competed in the regionals and one of the student-athletes placed in the top 25. The football team won against North Greenville University. This weekend, men's basketball hosts the GSC Sunshine Challenge Tournament on campus. Women's basketball will travel to Union University. The football team plays Florida Institute of Technology on Saturday. If the team wins, there will be a chance of post-season play. The Swimming and Diving teams will be in Arkadelphia for a meet at Henderson and Ouachita Baptist on Friday.
- Mr. Rutledge gave an update on facilities. The Statesmen Boulevard project remains on track. Mr. Rutledge stated the contractors plan to lay one coat of asphalt before the rain season starts, and will complete the project once the rain season ends in February. Zeigel Hall will be completed by the first of March. The demolition portion of the dining hall project is complete. Facilities Management has installed wall pack lights throughout campus and will continue to do so.
- President LaForge attended the Kent Wyatt Lecture Series, hosted by the College of Education and Human Sciences this morning. He stated this event was created as part of Dr. Wyatt's 50th Anniversary Celebration. The event was great and did a nice job of honoring him.
- President LaForge gave an overview of the activities for the current week. Omicron Delta Kappa will initiate 11 new members tonight. President LaForge will participate in an interview session with SuperTalk Radio on Tuesday to promote Delta State. Executive Committee Members will meet with Clarksdale officials on Tuesday to discuss the Coahoma County Higher Education Center. President LaForge will host a Faculty and Staff luncheon on Wednesday. The Cleveland Music Foundation Board meeting has its monthly meeting on Thursday. On Thursday afternoon, President LaForge will volunteer at the St. Gabriel Mercy Center. The Student Government Association will host the Miss Delta State University Pageant on Thursday at 7:00 p.m. The Alumni Association and Foundation Boards will meet on Friday. Delta State plays Florida Institute of Technology on Saturday. The kickoff is at 2:00 p.m. and the President's reception begins at 1:30 p.m.
- Mr. Hundley invited Cabinet Members to attend the Alumni Association and Foundation Board meetings on Friday. The Alumni Association will present a few changes to their board. The definition of an alumni chapter has changed to include: 1) each chapter must provide a \$1,000 scholarship to the university; 2) a chapter cannot be created unless at least 400 alumni live in that area; 3) the chapter must provide marketing funds for advertising in that area; and 4) the chapter must provide names of 10 prospective students. Mr. Hundley stated the Foundation Board will consider their new fee structure.

CABINET TOPIC

Diversity Committee: 2016-17 Accomplishments and 2017-18 Plans..... President LaForge

President LaForge introduced Ms. Arlene Sanders, Chair of the Diversity Committee, and asked her to update Cabinet Members on the accomplishments of the Diversity Committee and their upcoming plans. Ms. Sanders explained the Diversity Committee continues to further their commitment of diversity and helping Delta State students to develop an interest in cultural events. The Diversity Committee has been busy and has collaborated with different groups across campus. This past year, the Diversity Committee presented programs celebrating voting rights, Hispanic culture, Black History month, Lebanese culture, LGBTQ History month, and Chinese heritage through panel discussions, movies, performances, and trainings. Programs afford students, faculty, staff, and the community opportunities to engage in discussions about diversity issues, and they promote the importance of understanding the impact of diversity in our schools and communities. Ms. Sanders informed Cabinet Members the Diversity Committee plans to extend its outreach to two public high schools. Members of the Diversity Committee have been invited to present at conferences, and Mississippi Home Extension Services reached out to request their services for entertainment for their upcoming program. Ms. Sanders stated the Diversity Committee, partnering with the College of Education and Human Sciences, has two field trips planned for the Spring semester. Students have the opportunity to visit the National Civil Rights Museum and the Japanese Internment Camp Museum. Ms. Sanders introduced Ms. Sylma Samuel-Ferreira, Instructor in Spanish, and asked her to explain the program the Diversity Committee plans to partner with in the future. Ms. Samuel-Ferreira stated Delta State and other universities plan to partner with groups in Guatemala and Nicaragua that sell bracelets and necklaces made by the indigenous people. Money received from the program will purchase supplies, such as books, for students. Ms. Griffin stated SGA appreciates the help the Diversity Committee gave them in increasing attendance at their programs. President LaForge commented the Diversity Committee has made admirable strides in expanding their outreach and partnerships.

BUSINESS

Action

2018-19 Academic CalendarDr. McAdams

Dr. McAdams brought to Cabinet a recommendation from Academic Council for the 2018-19 Academic Calendar. Three changes were made to the 2018-19 calendar from the 2017-18 calendar: 1) addition of the New Student Week on August 12-18; 2) four days of finals rather than five days; and 3) commencement will be held on Friday instead of Saturday. Dr. McAdams informed Cabinet members that Delta State’s Spring Break aligns with all universities that have reported their schedules thus far. Dr. Roberts asked Dr. McAdams the rationale behind moving commencement from Saturday to Friday. Dr. McAdams stated the answer was twofold: 1) the number of volunteers needed doubled when we added a second ceremony, and staff are more willing to volunteer on a weekday; 2) the university will not be required to pay overtime to those working the commencement ceremonies if the ceremonies are held during the regular workday. Ms. Griffin asked Dr. McAdams why students no longer receive a Fall Break. Dr. McAdams explained that holidays reduce the time available for class meetings. In order to meet the required amount of instruction time needed, the options for break include: 1) having a few days for Fall Break and a few days for Thanksgiving break, or 2) a full week at Thanksgiving. Dr. McAdams stated that, a few years ago, the previous Student Government Association president voted on behalf of the students for a full week at Thanksgiving.

Motion: Moved by Dr. McAdams to approve the 2018-19 Academic Calendar and seconded by Dr. Breaux.
The motion was approved.

Discussion

VP for University Advancement and University Relations President LaForge

President LaForge stated the Vice President for University Advancement and University Relations is the position Mr. Hundley and Mr. David Shufflebarger recommended to Cabinet Members. The plan is to elevate the current Executive Director position to a vice president position. The portfolio includes Alumni, Development, Foundation, Communications and Marketing, and Government Relations. Upon approval from IHL, President LaForge will create a seven-person search committee to vet the applicants. Prior to posting the position, President LaForge will share the full job description with Cabinet Members. President LaForge asked Cabinet Members to share their thoughts and comments about the position with any member of the Executive Committee. President LaForge said he will discuss the new position at the faculty, staff, and student forums in the Spring.

Additional Information

- President LaForge announced Cabinet would not meet on Monday, November 20.
- President LaForge referenced the email he sent to them today regarding talking points for the upcoming legislative session. He asked Cabinet Members to be equipped with knowledge, prior to the start of the budget cycle, on the higher education funding needed from the State.

INFORMATIONAL/CALENDAR ITEMS:

- Homecoming, November 10-11
- Delta State vs. Florida Tech, November 11, 2:00 p.m. (wear green), Parker Field. President's Reception at 1:30 p.m., Dorgan Center
- Thanksgiving Holidays for staff, November 23-24
- Christmas Tree Lighting, November 30, 3:00 p.m., Leroy E. Morganti Atrium
- Rhythmic Circus: Red and Green, November 30, 7:30 p.m., BPAC
- Fall Exams, December 4-8
- Fall Commencement, December 9, 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., BPAC

NEXT MEETING:

- Next Cabinet Meeting – Monday, November 13
- Next Cabinet Meeting Topic – Emergency Preparedness Audit (President LaForge)

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:07 p.m.