

FLORIDA **A&M** UNIVERSITY  
**Board of Trustees**

**Meeting Minutes**  
**February 16, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME**

*Kelvin Lawson, Chair*

Chair Lawson called the meeting to order. Attorney Barge-Miles called the roll. The following trustees were present, establishing a quorum: Bell, Cavazos, Cliatt, Dubose, Harper, Lawson, Moore, Perry, Reed, and Stone.

**GREETING**

Mrs. Lisa LaBoo, Chair of the FAMU Foundation Board of Directors, greeted the Board on behalf of the Foundation. She shared that as the chair of the Foundation, she will focus on strengthening the endowment and continuing to develop the Foundation Board infrastructure by implementing best practices while focusing on the University's vision and mission.

**CONDOLENCES**

Chair Lawson and President Robinson shared remarks and paid tributes to the late Trustee Thomas Dortch, Jr. They highlighted his numerous contributions to FAMU, HBCUs, and Society. He was known for his philanthropic endeavors. Several years ago, he came up with the idea of the National Summit on the Sustainability of HBCUs, which showed his dedication to Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

**MASTER PLAN UPDATE AND HEARING**

The Board held a hearing and heard updates regarding the University's 2020 – 2030 Master Plan. The projected plans for the University include academic buildings, agricultural space, athletics space, parking, and additional student housing. It will be returned to the Board for final approval after further public hearings and comments from public agencies.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**CLOSED SESSIONS FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

Vice President Denise Wallace provided instructions regarding the closed session on collective bargaining. She invited the following individuals to participate in the closed-session: the Board of Trustees, President Robinson, Chief Operating Officer Edington, Provost Allyson Watson,

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Attorney Robert Larkin, Attorney Denise Wallace, Attorney Shira Thomas, Attorney Coates, Attorney McKenzie, Dr. Latrecha Scott, Nichole Murray, Herbert Bailey, Dean Sarah Price, and DRS Superintendent Michael Johnson.

The Board then moved into its closed sessions.

The closed sessions concluded, and the Board proceeded with its open session. Trustee Reed moved that the Board ratify the memorandum of understanding between FAMU BOT and the UFF that represents the increase of the academic advisors base salary from \$36,000 to \$42,000 and authorize the President to sign the MOU on behalf of the Board as the public employer. Trustee Perry seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Robinson thanked the Board and the Board of Governors for approving the one-year extension of his contract. He shared updates on the strategic plan, which sets ambitious goals, and provides a roadmap for the next five years. The goals include becoming a leader among the State University System institutions regarding performance outcomes and a top 100 national public university. The University aspires to be ranked in the top 10 regarding social mobility for national universities, become a Research One University, and top the production of talent of students in STEM, health, and business. Some milestones have already been reached in year one of the plan.

President Robinson shared that significant progress has been made on his annual goals, highlighting graduation and retention rates, annual giving, and research funding spending. He said this year's key initiatives focus on enhancing student success and faculty support, realigning academic programs, and evaluating the University's ranking reputation and impact.

He also stated that the University was implementing operational efficiency and customer service initiatives and engaged MGT Consulting to assist us in conducting a comprehensive analysis of the universities, policies, and procedures and to develop an implementation of the maintenance plan.

The work includes benchmarking FAMU against its peers and aspirational peers within Florida and across the nation. The University has also partnered with the Siegel group, a national human resources consulting firm, to evaluate and provide recommendations for competitive compensation to attract, retain and engage a talented workforce.

President Robinson stated that the following legislative initiatives for FAMU are included in the Governor's Legislative Budget:

- \$15 M for Elevating and Sustaining Student Success
- \$1.5M for Pharmacy Peaden Campus
- \$13.4M PECO for Howard Hall
- \$20.4M PECO for Chemical and Biological Research Lab Center

*President Robinson shared a video that highlighted University events.*

### **STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT**

Next, Chair Lawson recognized University Trustee and Student Government President Zachary Bell for his report. Trustee Bell shared that the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches have been busy. The Executive Branch has been working on student relief and community service; the Legislative Branch welcomed 12 new senators; and the Judicial Branch is filling its vacancies and is working with Parking Services to provide critical information to students. The student also marched to the Capitol regarding Black History, diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The SGA also participated in the Rally in Tally with all 12 State University system schools, and over 80 students had the opportunity to push our legislative priorities with the Florida Students Association.

The SGA's Spring initiatives include forming a partnership with Lyft for discounted student rides, re-launching the State of the Black Student Address, creating a campus environmental sustainability officer, and working with IT on the FAMU Application.

### **FACULTY SENATE REPORT**

Chair Lawson recognized Trustee Cavazos for an update regarding the Faculty Senate. She highlighted that faculty are committed to teaching scholarship, research, and service. They engage students in a manner that reinforces the principles of excellence in education, and they foster authentic support for personal, academic, and professional development.

Trustee Cavazos highlighted several professors:

- Dr. Jamal Brown's video went viral, landing him on Good Morning America. As a Pharmacy professor, he wanted to create a memorable way for his students to learn about diabetes, so he turned his lesson into a song.
- Dr. Islam El-Sharkawy, the principal investigator of the great genetics and breeding program, led the effort to establish the cutting-edge breeding platform, incorporating modern genomic tools that efficiently deliver cult.
- Dr. Patricia Broussard spearheaded the Martin Luther King Day of community service, which marked the fifteenth year of the Law School's MLK Day of Service. The College partnered with the Mayor and the MLK Commission to focus on beautifying the neighborhoods where the Law School is located.

### **STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Academic and Student Affairs Committee**

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*Trustee Kristin Harper, Committee Member*

Trustee Harper reported that the Committee recommended approval of the following items: Sabbatical and Professional Development Leave Regulation 2.001 and Regulation 2.006 and the Articles of Incorporation for FAMU Research Foundation. The Committee also heard updates on enrollment, the Ignite Program, financial aid, hazing prevention, and academic advising.

**Audit and Compliance Committee**

*Trustee Reed, Committee Member*

Trustee Reed shared that the Committee approved the performance-based funding data integrity certification. The Chief Compliance and Ethics Officer and the VP for Audit presented updates regarding their respective offices.

**Budget, Finance, and Facilities Committee**

*Trustee Belvin Perry, Committee Member*

Trustee Perry reported that the Committee considered ten action items and referred the banking resolution to the Board for consideration. The items identified for follow-up action included the following:

- Provide a compiled list of deferred maintenance projects that reports the progress toward completion based on expenditures. The distribution of that list will occur at the full board meeting on February 16 based on spending.
- Provide a rendering of the video board by or before the next committee meeting
- provide a report on the law school classrooms updated with technology by or before the next committee meeting.
- Regarding the compensation study, an inquiry was made regarding whether the ratings and guidelines would be included. The Associate Vice President for Human Resources will follow up with Provost Watson regarding the full-time faculty workload.
- The teams were asked to consider how items funded with stimulus fund relief will be supported once those funds have expired.

**Direct Support Organizations Committee**

*Trustee Stone, Committee Member*

The Direct Support Organizations Committee approved the minutes from the previous meeting and received updates on the Marching 100's annual cost projections, executive directors serving as board members at other State Universities in Florida. They were also updated on divisional activities for University Advancement, including an update on the Advancement Readiness Assessment conducted by the Alexander Haas consulting firm. The Committee also received

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updates on the FAMU Foundation, FAMU National Alumni Association, and the FAMU Rattler Boosters.

**Special Committee on Athletics**

*Kelvin Lawson, Committee Chair*

Chair Lawson shared Committee on Athletics heard updates regarding the athletic Budget, the Athletics Action Plan, and overall athletic department updates. The Committee welcomed the new athletic director Miss Tiffani-Dawn Sykes.

**Special Committee of the College of Law**

*Otis Cliatt, Committee Chair*

Dean Keller shared a presentation regarding recruitment and retention, staff infrastructure and facilities, faculty development, and fundraising.

Takeaways from the discussion include:

- Boot camp
- Course alignment - consider physical therapy and nursing model where courses align with subjects included on the licensure exam. Faculty should consider requiring students to take classes covered on the bar exam.
- Host town hall meeting re: bar passage rate
- Use SBI “Big Board” model regarding recognizing donors
- Assistance for students with 2.7 g.p.a. and below
- Support a separate LBR for a special appropriation for the College of Law
- Create a plan for filling the funding gaps for the College of Law

**Strategic Planning/Performance Measures Committee**

*Trustee Kristin Harper, Committee Chair*

The Committee heard updates regarding the strategic plan, including initiatives for Year One. In Phase Two, the University will continue communicating the Strategic Plan internally and externally. It'll be measured by 30 metrics, key performance measures, and success indicators. The Committee discussed establishing a new ad hoc special committee entitled “Talent and Culture.” Regular updates will continue to be provided to the Board and the constituents.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Lawson reviewed the Consent Agenda with the Board. Trustee Dubose moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Trustee Harper seconded the motion, and it passed with a unanimous vote.

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- A. Board of Trustees Minutes (BT)
  - BT1 December 8, 2022
  
- B. Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASA)
  - ASA1 Sabbatical and Professional Development Leave
  - ASA2 Regulation 2.001
  - ASA3 Regulation 2.006
  - ASA4 Articles of Incorporation for FAMU Research Foundation
  
- C. Audit and Compliance Committee (AACC)
  - AACC Performance-based Funding Data Integrity Certification
  
- D. Budget, Finance, and Facilities Committee (BFF)
  - BFF1 Bragg Memorial Stadium Parking Lot Construction Contract
  - BFF2 Demolition of Gibbs Residence Hall Vendor Contract
  - BFF3 Sierra-Cedar Contract
  - BFF4 John Wiley and Sons, Inc. Agreement Amendment Contract
  - BFF5 Medical Marijuana Education and Research Vendor Contracts
    - a. iHeart Media
    - b. SVI – Learner Mobile LLC
  - BFF6 Campus-wide Utility Infrastructure Project Architecture/Engineer Contract
  - BFF7 Deferred Maintenance/Renovation Projects – Continuing Service Contracts >\$1M
  - BFF8 Accounts Receivables Write-offs
  - BFF9 Surplus Property Write-offs

Chair Lawson recognized Attorney David Self to review the Banking Resolution, which added VP/CFO Rebecca Brown as a signatory. Attorney Self read the resolution into the record. Trustee Perry offered the motion to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Trustee Dubose and passed with a unanimous vote.

Trustee Harper recommended that the chair establish a special “Talent and Culture Committee” committee, which will help the University achieve related goals within the Strategic Plan. Chair Lawson appointed Trustee Michael Dubose as the chair. Other members of the Committee include Trustees Cavazos, Moore, Harper, Bell, Washington, and Lawson.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business for the Board, the meeting adjourned.