

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA
FLORENCE, ALABAMA
9:00 a.m., Friday, June 10, 2022**

The Board of Trustees for the University of North Alabama met on Friday, June 10, 2022, in Banquet Hall C of the Guillot University Center in accordance with Section 6 of Act No. 773 of the 1967 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature. A letter from three Trustees (dated May 20, 2022) was sent via email to Governor Kay Ivey in care of her Director of Constituent Affairs, requesting that the Governor call the quarterly meeting for June 10. Proposed letters calling the Board to the meeting also were sent for the Governor's signature as per standard practice, and the same were mailed from the Governor's office to Trustees in advance of the meeting under the date of May 25, 2022. On June 2, Board members were advised via email that the agenda, proposed resolutions, and supporting documents for items of discussion were available for individual electronic access in the Canvas software system.

Board President Pro Tempore Simpson Russell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

I. INVOCATION

Dr. Ron Patterson offered the opening invocation.

II. ROLL CALL

President Kenneth D. Kitts called the roll, and the following members were present in the meeting room:

Trustee Marty Abrams	Trustee Jim Page	Trustee Will Trapp
Trustee Joel Anderson II	Trustee Simpson Russell	Trustee Anne Whitaker
Trustee Wendell Gunn	Trustee Gary Smith	

Trustees Steve Pierce and Nancy Sanford were present via videoconference.

Therefore, a quorum was in attendance.

Ex officio member Governor Kay Ivey and Trustee Marcus Maples were absent.

Others present for all or part of the meeting:

- Dr. Ross Alexander, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Mr. Jason Cochran, Exec. Director of Governmental Relations and Economic Development
- Ms. Amber Fite-Morgan, General Counsel (*via videoconference*)
- Mr. Kevin Haslam, Vice President for University Advancement
- Dr. Josh Looney, Athletics Director
- Mr. Ron Patterson, Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Mr. Evan Thornton, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs
- Mr. Duell Aldridge, Coordinator for University Center Operations and Event Management
- Mr. Logan Baer, Network and Instructional Technology Specialist
- Dr. Sara Lynn Baird, Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering
- Ms. Melissa Bolton, 2021-2022 President of Staff Senate
- Dr. Joy Borah, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Vince Brewton, Dean of the Cole Honors College
- Dr. Greg Carnes, Dean of the College of Business and Technology
- Ms. Minnette Ellis, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students
- Ms. Michelle Eubanks, Director of University Media and Public Relations

- Dr. Andrea Hunt, 2021-2022 Chair of Shared Governance Executive Committee
- Dr. Katie Kinney, Dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences
- Dr. Tera Kirkman, Interim Dean of Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions
- Mr. John McGee, Executive Director of Educational Technology Services
- Dr. Amber Paulk, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Dean of Graduate & Online Education, and Board of Trustees Parliamentarian
- Mr. Jake Russell, Instructional Designer in Educational Technology Services
- Ms. Amber Sandvig, 2022-2023 President of Student Government Association
- Ms. Regina Sherrill, Senior Assistant to the President for Administration
- Dr. Jason Watson, 2021-2022 President of Faculty Senate
- Dr. Chunsheng Zhang, Senior Vice Provost for International Affairs

Also present: *TimesDaily* reporters Bernie Delinski and Kevin Taylor, and photographer Dan Busey.

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Russell submitted the agenda for consideration. Upon motion by Mr. Page and second by Mr. Trapp, the agenda was approved as presented by unanimous vote.

IV. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Russell submitted the following items for consideration for collective approval:

- A. Minutes of March 4, 2022, Quarterly Board Meeting
- B. Resolution of Commendation to Jake Statom, 2021-2022 Student Government Association President, University of North Alabama
- C. Resolution of Commendation to Jason Watson, 2021-2022 Faculty Senate President, University of North Alabama

Upon motion by Mr. Page and second by Mr. Trapp, the consent agenda items listed above were approved separately and severally by unanimous vote.

V. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Kitts gave a brief summary on the state of the University from a prepared text. Topics included:

- Sustained enrollment growth at UNA in spite of a national enrollment decline last year;
- Anticipated NCAA vote this summer to conclude transition period to Division I athletics classification;
- Frustrating disconnect between institutional performance and state funding;
- Recent reappointment of Trustees Maples, Pierce, and Trapp to new six-year service terms; and
- Commendation of Mr. Russell as he concludes four years of service as Board president pro tempore.

VI. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Trapp presented items from this committee's June 9 discussions that were on the agenda for the full Board at today's meeting:

A. Resolution Approving a Master of Health Administration (MHA) Degree Program

Following summary comments by Mr. Trapp, with the recommendation of the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee and upon motion by Mr. Trapp and second by Dr. Gunn, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

B. Resolution Approving a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in Innovation and Entrepreneurship Degree Program

Following summary comments by Mr. Trapp, with the recommendation of the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee and upon motion by Mr. Trapp and second by Mr. Smith, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

C. Resolution Endorsing the University of North Alabama's Free Speech Compliance Report for Academic Year 2021-2022 Pursuant to Section 16-68-5 of the Code of Alabama

Following summary comments by Mr. Trapp, with the recommendation of the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee and upon motion by Mr. Trapp and second by Ms. Whitaker, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

D. Reorganization of Academic Departments within the College of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering

Dr. Alexander gave brief descriptive comments. There were no questions concerning this information item, and this matter required no action by the Board.

E. Accomplishments with Regard to 2019-2024 Strategic Plan

Dr. Alexander and Mr. Trapp provided summary comments on this update shared with the Board twice each year as an information item. There were no questions, and this matter required no action by the Board. As additional notes, Dr. Alexander reported that international students from over 50 countries will comprise approximately 10% of the student body this fall, and over 700 students will be enrolled in the Cole Honors College during the coming academic year.

VII. ADVANCEMENT AND UNIVERSITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Whitaker highlighted topics covered in this committee's June 9 meeting, including:

- Record giving with \$17.7 million in private gifts raised so far this year;
- High level of participation in 1830 Giving Day held during entire month of March (1,027 donors from 36 states and three foreign countries);
- Over \$50,000 raised for recent Athletics Giving Day; and
- Continued push for Legacy Initiative to meet \$1 million goal to sustain Harrison Plaza.

One information item from the previous day's committee discussions – **Update on UNA Foundation and University Endowments** – was on the agenda for the full Board at today's meeting. There were no questions, and the endowment report had been reviewed in the committee setting the previous day.

VIII. CAMPUS LIFE, ATHLETICS, AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Pierce gave an overview of an action item from this committee's June 9 meeting – **Resolution Authorizing the Transfer of Ownership of Federal Trademark Registration No. 2,140,320 from the Board of Trustees to the University of North Alabama**. This was now brought forward for consideration by the full Board. With the recommendation of the Campus Life, Athletics, and Diversity Committee, and upon motion by Mr. Pierce and second by Mr. Abrams, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Pierce then reported on the array of topics covered during the preceding day's committee meeting, including...

- Diversity: Update on various diversity initiatives/accomplishments
- Athletics: Status of NCAA Division I reclassification, impressive academic performance of student-athletes this year, recent financial gifts in support of athletics program, and personnel changes
- Campus Life: SGA annual report and goals for next year, recent accomplishments in Student Affairs area, high demand for campus housing and projected full occupancy for fall, and UNA Bass Club's national ranking in the Collegiate Bass Fishing Series.

IX. FINANCE, FACILITIES, AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Abrams presented items from this committee's June 9 discussions that were on the agenda for the full Board at today's meeting:

A. Review of Financial Information for Quarter Ending March 31, 2022

The quarterly financial report was thoroughly reviewed in the committee setting. Revenue and expenses are as expected at the end of the second quarter. Mr. Abrams noted that the Board strategically passed a deficit budget for the past two years as a means to hold tuition level. FY 2021-2022 also will end with a deficit. Scholarship expense is significantly over budget, but that is a strategic recruiting measure that is reaping benefits in enrollment increases. There were no questions, and this information item required no action by the Board.

B. Resolution Approving Proposed University Tuition and Fees for 2022-2023 Academic Year

Mr. Abrams pointed out that the proposed 5% cost of attendance increase for the coming year signals the first tuition increase in three years and still is well below the most recently reported 8.6% national inflation rate. He emphasized that despite inflation, the University likely could keep tuition increases to a lower percentage if it received equitable state funding. It was clarified in the discussion that the proposed tuition and fees for next year signify a 5% increase in cost of attendance (which includes housing and meal plans) – not a 5% increase in tuition alone. With the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abrams and second by Mr. Smith, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

Before leaving this topic, Ms. Sanford asked Mr. Thornton to comment on how UNA compares to other universities in terms of cost. UNA ranks 12th of the 14 Alabama universities in cost of attendance and therefore, remains at a very competitive price. Approximately 75% of all freshmen who enroll this fall will have a scholarship or some other form of financial assistance, which helps to reduce personal/family obligation for tuition costs.

C. Resolution Authorizing Additional Funding to Proceed with Previously Approved Facilities Project: Computing and Mathematics Building

Mr. Abrams noted that the higher-than-anticipated cost of this construction project is indicative of the current national economic environment and that academic programs to be housed in this new campus facility are important to workforce development enrollment efforts. With the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abrams and second by Ms. Whitaker, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

D. Information Items

Mr. Abrams noted two additional items brought forward by the Committee, neither of which required any action by the Board:

- (1) **Public Posting of Financial Disclosure Information** – This information item is provided in the meeting materials as a part of each June agenda.
- (2) **2020-2021 Audit** – The University achieved another clean opinion with no issues of concern in its latest financial audit report now posted on the UNA website.

X. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Trustees Annual Reaffirmation of Acknowledgement of Fiduciary Duties

Following comments by Mr. Russell, Board members collectively acknowledged their fiduciary role with the University by submitting signed individual reaffirmation statements at the conclusion of the meeting. These signed statements will be held on file in the President's Office as documentation in support of compliance with SACSCOC accreditation standards.

B. Results of 2022 Board of Trustees Self-Assessment Survey

Mr. Russell thanked the Board members for participating in the recent self-evaluation process. He noted the favorable 82% participation rate that yielded positive and encouraging responses. All Trustees received the final survey report, and the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee reviewed the evaluation in greater detail at its meeting the preceding afternoon. This item required no action by the Board at today's meeting.

C. Report from Committee to Nominate 2022-2024 President Pro Tempore and Vice President Pro Tempore of the UNA Board of Trustees

On behalf of the nominating committee consisting of Trustees Abrams, Gunn, and Whitaker, Mr. Abrams submitted the recommendation that Mr. Trapp and Ms. Sanford serve as President and Vice President Pro Tempore of the Board, respectively, for the 2022-2024 term. There being no other nominations, the same were approved by unanimous vote. In concluding his four years of service as President Pro Tempore, Mr. Russell expressed appreciation to fellow trustees for their collaborative and cooperative spirit in keeping the best interests of the university at the forefront of all discussions and decisions.

XI. MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Russell noted that an executive session was needed to discuss a matter from a Board committee and to discuss the status of a pending legal issue. As an attorney licensed to practice law in the State of Alabama, Ms. Fite-Morgan could affirm that the Board's discussion of these matters in executive session was authorized under Section 3 of the Code of Alabama that allows for executive session to discuss the general reputation and character of individuals and to discuss legal ramifications of pending litigation. Therefore, an executive session would be in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, and she provided that opinion in writing to Mr. Russell and Dr. Kitts prior to today's meeting. Upon motion by Mr. Trapp, second by Dr. Gunn, and a unanimous vote, the meeting recessed at 10:04 a.m. for a short break and to enter into executive session.

At approximately 10:15, the Board entered into executive session. Ms. Fite-Morgan, Dr. Alexander, and Mr. Haslam remained in the room with Dr. Kitts and the Board during this closed session. Mr. Haslam exited the room following the discussion of a proposed naming of a new academic program. Ms. Fite-Morgan and Dr. Alexander remained in the room with Dr. Kitts and Trustees for the duration of executive session.

The Board reconvened in regular session at 10:25 a.m. On behalf of the Advancement and University Relations Committee, Ms. Whitaker presented an action item that was considered in executive session and viewed favorably by the Board: **Resolution Authorizing Honorary Naming of the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in Innovation and Entrepreneurship Degree Program for Joel R. Anderson.** Mr. Russell noted that Trustee Joel Anderson II had stated his intention to abstain from voting on this matter due to his familial relationship with Joel Anderson, and Mr. Abrams also would abstain due to his close personal friendship and working relationship with Joel Anderson prior to his death. Upon motion by Ms. Whitaker and second by Dr. Gunn, the resolution was approved by a vote of eight in favor, none opposed, and two abstentions. The Board had no other action items to present from its discussions in executive session.

Mr. Page shared information about a signature alumni event being planned in connection with this fall's homecoming weekend and encouraged his fellow trustees to attend.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no other business to come before the Board, upon motion by Mr. Smith, second by Mr. Anderson, and a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

Approved September 9, 2022



President Pro Tempore



Secretary