

MINUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FLORENCE, ALABAMA
9:00 a.m., Friday, September 12, 2025

The Board of Trustees for the University of North Alabama met on Friday, September 12, 2025, 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 August 22, 2025) 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 September 12. 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 to Trustees from the Governor's office in advance of the meeting under the date of September 2, 2025. On September 3, 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 Will Trapp called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

I. INVOCATION

Mr. Trapp 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 Abroms
Trustee Ann Berry
Trustee Kyle Buchanan
Trustee Jim Page

Trustee Steve Pierce
Trustee Simpson Russell
Trustee Nancy Sanford

Trustee Gary Smith
Trustee Will Trapp
Trustee Anne Whitaker

Trustee Joel Anderson II was present via videoconference.

Ex officio member Governor Kay Ivey was absent. A quorum of voting members was in attendance.

Others present for all or part of the meeting:

- Mr. Jason Cochran, Chief of Governmental Relations and Regulatory Affairs
- Dr. Minnette Ellis, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and Executive Director for University Priorities
- Ms. Amber Fite-Morgan, General Counsel
- Mr. Kevin Haslam, Vice President for University Advancement
- Dr. Josh Looney, Athletics Director
- Dr. Brien Smith, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Mr. Evan Thornton, Senior Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs
- Dr. K.C. White, Vice President for Student Affairs
- Dr. Vince Brewton, Dean of the Cole Honors College
- Ms. Cindy Conlon, Associate Vice President for Facilities Administration and Planning
- Dr. James DaSambigi-Moore, Senior Instructional Designer
- Ms. Michelle Eubanks, Executive Director of University Media and Public Relations
- Dr. Sarah Franklin, Associate Vice Provost for Academic Excellence
- Dr. Andrea Hunt, 2024-2025 Faculty Senate President

- Dr. Katie Kinney, Dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences
- Dr. Tera Kirkman, Dean of the Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions
- Dr. Amber Paulk, Deputy Provost
- Ms. Anna Leigh Rossi, 2025-2026 Staff Senate President
- Mr. Jake Russell, Director of University Events
- Ms. Regina Sherrill, Senior Assistant to the President for Administration
- Student Government Association officers for 2025-2026:
 Ms. Alex Rhoades, President --- and --- Mr. Matt Hanback, Treasurer
- Ms. Julie Taylor, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Dr. Ryan Zayac, Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

IV. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

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

A. Minutes of June 13, 2025, Quarterly Board Meeting

B. Resolution Authorizing the President to Budget Additional Funds for FY 2025-2026

Upon motion by Mr. Abrams and second by Mr. Pierce, 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. While noting several goals and accomplishments that are part of daily business, he emphasized that efforts at ensuring a quality institution are to the end that students have access to an affordable education, that they feel safe while here, and that they have an excellent college experience. He then spent a few minutes re-introducing the individual members of the University's Executive Council and commending them for their work on behalf of our students and as ambassadors for UNA.

VI. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MATTERS

As committee chair, Mr. Anderson highlighted topics covered in this committee's September 11 meeting, including:

- Recommendations of Work Group to Enhance Music and Fine Arts to ensure facilities are adequate for a quality education (*several trustees commented on the need for modern facilities*);
- Fall enrollment, with increases in both headcount and credit hour production over fall 2024
- "Raising Academic Excellence" academic plan for continued and expanded success

- Current branding study underway with plans for new brand identity launch in spring/summer 2026

The committee had no action items to present at today's meeting.

VII. ADVANCEMENT AND UNIVERSITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE MATTERS

As committee chair, Ms. Whitaker pointed out that the usual **"Update on UNA Foundation and University Endowments"** was on the agenda for the full Board at today's meeting. This information item had been reviewed in the committee setting the previous day, and the investments continue to do well in the current market. Mr. Trapp pointed out that the combined endowment balance now stands at over \$66 million, more than double its market value a decade ago. There were no questions concerning these reports at today's meeting.

Ms. Whitaker also highlighted topics covered in this committee's September 11 meeting, including:

- This year's \$15 million fundraising goal surpassed as third most successful fundraising year in UNA history
- Number of unique donors to date (from 45 states and 14 countries) at 90% toward this year's goal of 2,500
- Total gifts to comprehensive campaign now at 92% of \$100 million goal, with celebration event being planned to align with first football game in Bank Independent Stadium in 2026
- Continued contacts with state and federal officials concerning UNA's funding needs
- Recent election of four new mayors in Shoals area cities, along with several new City Council members and work to enhance town/gown engagement

The committee had no action items to present at today's meeting.

VIII. CAMPUS LIFE AND ATHLETICS COMMITTEE MATTERS

As committee chair, Mr. Pierce reported on the array of topics covered during this committee's September 11 meeting, including:

- Continued planning for UNA's bicentennial celebration in 2030
- Student-athletes' single year record GPA and community service/volunteer activities
- Athletic facilities upgrades, coaching contract extensions, and stadium construction update
- High occupancy levels in student housing this fall
- ~450 students using military/veterans benefits for UNA enrollment

The Committee had one action item on today's agenda, a **Resolution of Appreciation to the City of Florence for its Plans to Address Safety Concerns along Pine Street**. Following summary comments by Mr. Pierce, with the recommendation of the Campus Life and Athletics Committee and upon motion by Mr. Pierce and second by Mr. Buchanan, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

IX. FINANCE, FACILITIES, AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MATTERS

As committee chair, Mr. Abroms reported on topics covered in this committee's September 11 meeting. On the agenda today for the full Board were:

A. Review of Financial Information for Quarter Ending June 30, 2025

The quarterly financial report was thoroughly reviewed in the committee setting. Revenues were on track and expenditures were in line as would be expected for the third quarter of the fiscal year. Mr. Abroms noted that the FY 25 budget should finish with a surplus thanks to infusion of some one-time state funds. While these state dollars are appreciated and there has been some success with the Progress 208 initiative, the critical need remains for equitable funding on a recurring annual basis. There were no questions, and this information item required no action by the Board.

B. Resolution Approving University of North Alabama Proposed FY 2025-2026 Budgets

Mr. Abroms reported that the committee is comfortable with the proposed operating budget for next year. It does reflect a \$3.9 million deficit, but the committee is satisfied that some supplemental state Advancement and Technology (A&T) funding next spring will lead to an eventual balanced budget. The University continues to operate conservatively and efficiently with its finances, and the level of budgeted deficit has been declining in recent years. With the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abroms and second by Mr. Smith, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote. Dr. Kitts noted that the FY 2025-2026 budget includes a 3% cost-of-living salary adjustment for faculty and staff effective October 1.

C. Deferred Maintenance Budget for FY 2025-2026

The list of deferred maintenance items continues to show how projects in need of attention exceed the dollars available to address them. While \$2 million is allocated to the prioritized list for the coming year, the list may shuffle somewhat if critical repair/maintenance issues arise unexpectedly. There were no questions, and this information item required no action by the Board.

D. Resolution Authorizing Expenditures

Mr. Abroms provided summary comments about the four expenditure items covered in this resolution:

- (a) Increased allocation for parking lot construction near fraternity village
- (b) Records management software used by Health Services (Medicat Service Agreement)
- (c) International student insurance (Trawick International)
- (d) Student-athlete insurance (AG Administrators/CBIZ)

With the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abroms and second by Mr. Russell, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Report from Ad Hoc Presidential Evaluation Committee – and – Resolution Approving Revised Terms to Presidential Employment Agreement

Committee chair Russell reported on the outcome of the annual survey that Trustees were asked to complete that resulted in a very positive and favorable satisfaction rating of the President's job performance. The average tenure of a college president is 5.6 years, whereas Dr. Kitts is in his 11th year at UNA. Mr. Russell also listed several significant UNA accomplishments during Dr. Kitts' time in office, and as committee chair, presented in the form of a motion a resolution containing his recommendations as to extension of employment contract and the determination of presidential performance goals/objectives for the coming year. Mr. Abrams seconded the motion, and the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

B. Trustee Appointee to UNA Foundation Board of Directors

Mr. Trapp reported that Mr. Pierce has agreed to continue serving as the Board of Trustees representative on the Foundation Board for the coming year (i.e., October 2025 through September 2026).

XI. MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Trapp noted that an executive session was needed to discuss proposals from a Board committee and to hear updates on pending legal matters. 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 potential legal issues/litigation. Therefore, an executive session would be in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, and Ms. Fite-Morgan provided a written opinion to that effect to Mr. Trapp and Dr. Kitts prior to today's meeting. Upon motion by Mr. Page, second by Mr. Pierce, and a unanimous vote, the meeting recessed at 10:38 a.m. for a short break and to enter into executive session. At approximately 10:45, the Board entered into executive session. Ms. Fite-Morgan, Mr. Haslam, Dr. Looney, Dr. Smith, and Mr. Thornton remained in the room with Dr. Kitts and the Board during this closed session. Upon motion by Mr. Pierce, second by Ms. Sanford, and unanimous vote, the Board closed its executive session at 11:00 a.m.

The Board then reconvened in regular session, at which time Ms. Whitaker presented two action items from the Advancement and University Relations Committee that were considered in executive session and viewed favorably by the Board:

A. Resolution Authorizing Honorary Naming of the Entertainment Industry Program for David and John Briggs

Upon motion by Ms. Whitaker and second by Mr. Pierce, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

B. Resolution Authorizing Honorary Naming of "Gary Elliott Court" within CB&S Bank Arena in Flowers Hall

Upon motion by Ms. Whitaker and second by Mr. Buchanan, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote. UNA Athletics is making plans for a public celebration and unveiling on November 7 in connection with the start of basketball season.

The Board had no other action items to present from its discussions in executive session.

As a matter of information, Mr. Page noted that he and fellow Trustees Buchanan and Anderson had been involved in Launch Regional Partnership, a collaboration among north Alabama counties, entities, and business and community leaders to foster economic growth and workforce development. UNA was instrumental in development of the Partnership's strategic plan with the assistance of retired Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Kimberly Greenway leading that effort. The interactions among the various participants across north Alabama brought much favorable exposure for UNA.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no other business to come before the Board, upon motion by Mr. Smith, second by Mr. Abrams, and a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Approved December 5, 2025



President Pro Tempore



Secretary