

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA
FLORENCE, ALABAMA
9:00 a.m., Friday, March 17, 2023**

The Board of Trustees for the University of North Alabama met on Friday, March 17, 2023, 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 February 24, 2023) 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 March 17. 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 February 24, 2023. On March 9, 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 9:00 a.m.

I. INVOCATION

At the invitation of Mr. Trapp, the opening invocation was offered by Rev. Wesley Thompson, UNA alumnus and pastor of Bethel Colbert Missionary Baptist Church in Leighton, Alabama.

II. ROLL CALL

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

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

Trustee Marcus Maples was present via videoconference. Ex officio member Governor Kay Ivey was absent. A quorum of voting members was present.

Others present for all or part of the meeting:

- Dr. Ross Alexander, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Mr. Jason Cochran, Executive Director of Governmental Relations and Economic Development
- Ms. Amber Fite-Morgan, General Counsel
- Mr. Kevin Haslam, Vice President for University Advancement
- Dr. Josh Looney, Athletics Director
- Dr. Ron Patterson, Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Mr. Evan Thornton, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs
- Dr. K.C. White, Vice President for Student Affairs
- Mr. Duell Aldridge, Coordinator of University Center Operations and Event Management
- Dr. Sara Lynn Baird, Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering
- Dr. Jana Beaver, Associate Dean of the Sanders College of Business and Technology
- Ms. Melissa Bolton, 2022-2023 Staff Senate President
- Dr. Joy Borah, Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Vince Brewton, Dean of the Cole Honors College
- Ms. Cindy Conlon, Interim Director of Facilities Administration and Planning
- Ms. Minnette Ellis, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

- Ms. Michelle Eubanks, Director of University Media and Public Relations
- Dr. Katie Kinney, Dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences
- Dr. Tera Kirkman, Dean of Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions
- Mr. John McGee, Executive Director of Educational Technology Services
- Dr. Kristy Oden, 2022-2023 Chair of Shared Governance Executive Committee
- Dr. Amber Paulk, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Dean of Graduate & Online Education, and Board of Trustees Parliamentarian
- Ms. Amber Sandvig, 2022-2023 Student Government Association President
- Ms. Regina Sherrill, Senior Assistant to the President for Administration
- Dr. Jessica Stovall, 2022-2023 Faculty Senate President
- Ms. Julie Taylor, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Dr. Chunsheng Zhang, Senior Vice Provost for International Affairs

Also present: *TimesDaily* reporter Bernie Delinski

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Trapp submitted the agenda for consideration. Upon motion by Ms. Whitaker and second by Mr. Smith, 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 December 2, 2022, Quarterly Board Meeting**
- B. Minutes of January 30, 2023, Board Executive Committee Meeting**
- C. Resolution Approving the Use of Learning Agreements with External Entities as an Enrollment Mechanism at the University of North Alabama**
- D. Resolution of Commendation to Marcus M. Maples, Member, Board of Trustees for the University of North Alabama, 2014-2023**

Mr. Trapp also made comments of recognition/appreciation to Mr. Maples for his almost nine years of service on the Board. Upon motion by Mr. Page and second by Mr. Abrams, 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:

- Thanks to Mr. Maples for service as a Trustee
- Highly favorable outcome of this week's SACSCOC reaccreditation on-site visit, with zero recommendations for follow-up action
- Pedestrian safety issues along Pine Street
- Start of 2023 legislative session, status of FY24 state education budget, and continued Project 208 efforts
- Evidence of UNA's trajectory of growth while enrollments are declining at other institutions across the country

VI. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Page presented items from this committee's March 16 discussions that were on the agenda for the full Board at today's meeting:

A. Resolution Approving the Addition of a Power Generation Engineering Technology Option to the Bachelor of Science in Engineering Technology Degree

Mr. Page noted in his summary comments that a recent \$3 million allocation from the State of Alabama will assist with the launch of this academic program this fall. With the recommendation of the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee and upon motion by Mr. Page and second by Mr. Smith, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

B. Resolution Approving a Post-Master's Certificate Track Focused in Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

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

C. Dissolution of Department of Interdisciplinary and Professional Studies

Mr. Page gave an overview of this item. There were no questions, and this information item required no action by the Board.

Mr. Page also shared some academic highlights provided to the Committee during its meeting the preceding afternoon. The University continues to respond well to market demands and industry needs in the development of new academic offerings that provide career paths for students. Mr. Page also noted the impending retirements of Dean Sara Lynn Baird and Senior Vice Provost Chunsheng Zhang.

VII. ADVANCEMENT AND UNIVERSITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Whitaker highlighted topics covered in this committee's March 16 meeting. Two information items from the previous day's committee discussions – **Update on UNA Foundation and University Endowments** and **Annual Endowment Report for UNA Trustees Scholarship Fund** – were on the agenda for the full Board at today's meeting. There were no questions, and both of these had been reviewed in the committee setting the previous day.

Ms. Whitaker presented one action item from the Committee – **Resolution in Support of Enhanced Pedestrian Safety on City Streets that Traverse the University of North Alabama Campus**. She noted that this resolution is an opportunity for the Board to stand with campus groups that have already collectively passed a similar resolution. With the recommendation of the Advancement and University Relations Committee and upon motion by Ms. Whitaker and second by Mr. Pierce, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

As other items of information from the Committee, Ms. Whitaker noted that the Advancement team has already surpassed this year's \$10 million fundraising goal by securing gifts of \$11.2 million while at the less-than-midway point of the fiscal year. The Committee expects to hear a report on the comprehensive campaign at its next meeting in June.

VIII. CAMPUS LIFE, ATHLETICS, AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Pierce reported on the array of topics covered during this committee's March 16 meeting. These included:

- Continued work on items in the Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Plan (70% complete to date)
- Higher student attendance at UNA sports events and greater level of cross-sport involvement among student-athletes
- Impressive revenue from marquee athletic contests and plans for August fundraising event featuring Archie Manning
- High number of student housing applications for fall and efforts to meet demand
- Support of veteran service members through the Military Heroes Scholarship

IX. FINANCE, FACILITIES, AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Abroms presented items from this committee's March 16 discussions that were on the agenda for the full Board at today's meeting:

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

Tuition net of scholarships is starting to trend upward after two years of decline thanks to higher enrollment and credit hour production. The FY 2022-2023 budget is operating at a planned deficit, but mitigation measures are in place to help relieve budget pressure. The quarterly financial report was thoroughly reviewed in the committee setting. There were no questions, and this information item required no action by the Board.

B. Resolution Approving Rental Rates in University-Owned Housing Facilities Effective Fall 2023

Mr. Abroms noted that the proposed housing rental rate increase of approximately 2% is necessary to offset rising costs, but is still far lower than the rate of inflation. With the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abroms and second by Mr. Pierce, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

C. Resolution Approving Student Meal Plan Prices Effective Fall 2023

The proposed meal plan prices for next year are reflective of general inflation but represent only an average increase of 2.7% thanks to negotiations with the Chartwells food service provider. The "dining dollars" fee will increase from \$150 to \$175/semester, but students have full use of those funds to spend as desired at various venues across campus. With the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abroms and second by Mr. Page, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

D. Resolution Approving a University of North Alabama Special Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program

Mr. Abrams noted in his summary comments that this is the third instance in ten years that the University has offered a retirement incentive program. Savings from prior implementations have been clear. The Committee has asked that the University carefully study advantages and disadvantages over the next few years and provide periodic status reports as to savings impact on the institutional budget. With the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abrams and second by Mr. Pierce, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

E. Resolution Authorizing Facility Expenditures

Mr. Abrams provided summary comments about projects planned for several buildings:

- Burford Science and Technology Building
- Wilson Park Medical Arts Building (416 N. Seminary Street)
- Norton Auditorium
- Flowers Hall
- Twin Oak Apartments
- Music Building
- Art Building
- Regional Public University building on Ripley Street in Montgomery (cost-sharing initiative among building tenants)

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.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Trapp expressed appreciation to students for greater involvement in the wide range of campus life experiences (particularly, athletics) that UNA has to offer. There is greater support from the local community, a growing number of corporate sponsorships, and enhanced alumni engagement. Benefits of UNA's transition to Division I classification are evident.

XI. MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Trapp noted that an executive session was needed to discuss matters from a Board committee and to review the status of a 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 the legal ramifications of pending litigation. Therefore, an executive session would be in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Upon motion by Mr. Pierce, second by Dr. Gunn, and a unanimous vote, the meeting recessed at 10:06 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, Mr. Haslam, and Dr. Looney remained in the room with Dr. Kitts and the Board during this closed session.

The Board reconvened in regular session at 10:33 a.m. Mr. Trapp reported that the Board had no action items to present from its discussions in executive session.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no other business to come before the Board, upon motion by Mr. Abrams, second by Mr. Smith, and a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 10:34 a.m.

Approved June 9, 2023



President Pro Tempore



Secretary