**The University of West Alabama**

**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**

**Bell Conference Center**

**Livingston, Alabama**

**December 11, 2023 - 10:30 a.m.**

1. **Call to Order**

Mr. Hal Bloom called the meeting to order and requested Ms. Terry to call the roll.

1. **Roll Call**

Board members attending were Ms. Jennifer Agee, Ms. Jody W. Beard, Mr. Hal Bloom, Mr. Joseph

Brown, Mr. Jerry Groce, Mr. Matthew Lavender, Mr. Tom Perry, Mr. Jerry F. Smith, and Mr. Victor Vernon. Ms. Terry announced that a quorum was present. Also attending were Mr. Mike Kendrick, university attorney; Dr. Ken Tucker, university president; and Ms. Toni Terry, assistant secretary to the board, recording minutes.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

***Mr. Tom Perry moved to approve the agenda; Mr. Jerry Groce seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.***

**IV. Approval of Minutes from September 11, 2023**

Mr. Bloom asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2023 meeting. ***Mr. Tom Perry made a motion to approve the minutes; Ms. Jody W. Beard seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.***

**V. Report from the Institutional Advancement Committee**

Mr. Bloom advised that Dr. JJ Wedgworth provided a report regarding fundraising comparisons and project goals, alumni events and objectives, strategic communications projects and initiatives, an overview of contracts and grants for the last two fiscal years, and an update regarding the UWA Cahaba Biodiversity Center. As one of many worthwhile areas, Mr. Bloom encouraged the trustees to consider alumni scholarships when contemplating giving opportunities.

**VI. Report from the Athletic Committee**

Mr. Bloom advised that Mr. Kent Partridge provided a report regarding athletic standings and results after Fall 2023, athletic communications coverage and reach, upcoming opening dates for winter/spring sports, new staff and position changes, and future initiatives related to athletics.

**VII. Report from the Facilities Committee**

Mr. Joseph Brown advised that Mr. Chris Egbert provided a report regarding the track facility and soccer field, renovations of Foust Hall, the UWA Amphitheater, the final phase of the Black Belt Development Center, the turf at Tartt Field, the Homer Field House addition, and campus-wide paving projects. UWA’s management of additional projects in-house will likely be explored in the future.

**VIII. Report from the Finance Committee**

Mr. Bloom advised that Mr. Clete Beard provided a report regarding the year-end financial summary for the year ending September 30, 2023, budgets versus actuals for Fiscal Year 2023, and a summary revenue and expense comparison for 2018 through 2023. Highlighting the bottom line of revenue over expenses for the year of approximately $18.5 million, Mr. Bloom specified that a significant portion (roughly $16 million) was considered one-time money received via appropriations from the State.

**IX. Report from the University President**

*2024 Loraine McIlwain Bell Trustee and Nellie Rose McCrory Award Winners*

Dr. Tina N. Jones announced and congratulated the 2024 Loraine McIlwain Bell Trustee and Nellie Rose McCrory Service Excellence Award recipients:

Loraine McIlwain Bell Trustee Awards

Support Staff Excellence Award Ms. Shelly Fast

Professional Staff Excellence Award Mr. Chris Theriot

Trustee Professor Award Ms. Rhonda Faulkner-Wooley

Nellie Rose McCrory Service Excellence Award

Dr. Valerie Burnes

*Fall 2023 Record Enrollment*

Dr. Ken Tucker reported that UWA recorded its highest enrollment in university history for Fall 2023, with a total enrollment of 6,195, a nearly six percent increase from Fall 2022. Undergraduate enrollment, specifically, increased by more than 10% to 2,674. The total represented on-campus and online students and included increases in first-time, full-time freshmen; students living in campus housing; transfer students; and dual enrollment students.

*Commencement*

Dr. Tucker shared that four graduation ceremonies were held for summer and fall graduates over December 7-8, 2023, with 1,147 total graduates (summer-422; fall-725): nearly 50 more students from the previous summer and fall. Dr. Tucker also advised that the feedback had been overwhelmingly positive since moving the ceremonies from Pruitt Gymnasium to the UWA Auditorium.

Mr. Bloom conveyed that all trustees were invited and encouraged to participate in the commencement ceremonies to display support for the University and its graduates.

*The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges*

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) recently held its annual meeting, where two groups from UWA presented on topics related to quality enhancement planning and the process surrounding Strategic Doing; presenters included Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Planning Bill Adkison, Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Melissa Haab, Dean of the College of Liberal Arts Amy Jones, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs Tina N. Jones, and Vice President of Institutional Advancement JJ Wedgworth. Dr. Tucker proudly reported that SACSCOC had reaffirmed the University’s accreditation for the next ten years. Dr. Tucker expressed appreciation to faculty and staff for the tremendous work and effort involved throughout the reaffirmation process.

**X. Report from the Board President**

*Board Meeting Attendance*

Mr. Bloom thanked the trustees for attending board meetings on campus when possible, conveying that their presence on campus is also well-received among faculty and staff.

*Presidential Search Committee*

As chair, Mr. Brown provided an update from the Presidential Search Committee advising that two committee meetings had been held regarding search organizations, attributes, and expectations, adding that it would be challenging to find a candidate that could reach the bar set by Dr. Tucker. The next meeting will be held in February 2024, and the committee will also make a final selection regarding an executive search firm. Generally, an extensive nationwide search would take approximately four and a half to five months to complete. With this in mind, Mr. Brown shared the committee’s goal of having several candidates on campus for interviews by September 2024 and having the new president named and possibly on campus to meet with Dr. Tucker by the latter part of October 2024, noting that the projected timeline is dependent upon other factors and may need to be altered.

**XI. New Business**

There was no new business.

**XII. Other Business**

Mr. Jerry F. Smith indicated that he planned to resign his position on the UWA Board of Trustees when his current term expires on December 27, 2023. Mr. Smith shared that he had thoroughly enjoyed serving on the board for 12 years and only missed one meeting. Mr. Smith thanked Dr. Tucker and acknowledged Former UWA Board President Terry Bunn's leadership during an especially difficult time.

Mr. Bloom thanked Mr. Smith for his service as former president of the board and all of his hard work relating to the University's endeavors.

Dr. Tucker shared his appreciation for Mr. Smith’s guidance, wise counsel, and the years he dedicated on the board in service to UWA.

Mr. Brown thanked Mr. Smith for his service, commitment, and leadership, adding that working alongside him had been an honor.

**XIII. Adjourn**

***Ms. Jody W. Beard made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Tom Perry seconded, and the motion was approved.*** The meeting adjourned at 11:13 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Toni Terry*