**The University of West Alabama**

**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**

**Bell Conference Center**

**Livingston, Alabama**

**September 9, 2024 - 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 Mr. Hal Bloom, Mr. Joseph Brown, Mr. Jerry Groce, Mr. Matthew

Lavender, Mr. Michael Maddox, Mr. Scott Stadthagen, Mr. Victor Vernon, and Ms. Jody Wise. 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. Joseph Brown moved to approve the agenda; Ms. Jody Wise seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.***

**IV. Approval of Minutes from June 3, 2024**

Mr. Bloom asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 3, 2024 meeting. ***Mr. Victor Vernon made a motion to approve the minutes; Ms. Jody Wise seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.***

**V. Report from the Academic Affairs Committee**

Mr. Jerry Groce advised that Dr. Tina N. Jones provided a report regarding commencement, new faculty and staff, accreditation updates, the Division of Nursing’s 50th anniversary, continuous improvement initiatives, partnerships, the renovation of Wallace Hall, UWA’s Quality Enhancement Plan, and various spotlight news stories.

**VI. Report from the Student Affairs Committee**

Ms. Jody Wise advised that Dr. Melissa Haab provided a report regarding enrollment comparisons and successes, location and organizational changes, the termination of Risepoint’s services relative to campus enrollment and retention, the Caring Campus initiative, and future goals.

**VII. Report from the Facilities Committee**

Mr. Joseph Brown advised that Mr. Chris Egbert provided a report regarding Foust Hall, the UWA Amphitheater, the Black Belt Development Center, campus-wide paving, the Tartt Field turf project, and the Student Union and Recreation Center.

**VIII. Report from the Finance Committee**

Mr. Matthew Lavender advised that Mr. Clete Beard provided a report regarding the quarterly financial summary for the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2024, with a balance of $27,895,165 reported in revenue over expenses as of June 30, 2024, as well as three findings related to the University’s financial audit.

**IX. Report from the University President**

*Resolution of Gratitude and Naming Opportunity – Former Trustee Jerry F. Smith*

In honor of Former Trustee Jerry F. Smith, the resolution below was presented to the board:

WHEREAS, Mr. Jerry F. Smith graduated from Auburn University in August 1964, and in September 1964 enrolled at the University of West Alabama, then known as Livingston University (the “University”) to obtain his master’s degree; and

WHEREAS, in the spring of 1965, Mr. Smith initiated a cross-country and track program (the “Program”) at the University; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith continued as Coach of the Program for a period of seven (7) years, during which period the Program accomplished much success during Mr. Smith’s tenure; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith was appointed to the Board of Trustees of the University by Governor Robert Bentley on December 27, 2011, and served in that capacity until his resignation in 2024; and

WHEREAS, as a member of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Smith served on the Board’s Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Academic Affairs Committee, Athletic Committee and Facilities Committee, and served as Chairman of the Institutional Advancement Committee from 2013 to 2016; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Smith served as Vice President of the Board of Trustees from 2013 to 2016, and served as President of the Board from 2016 to 2019; and

WHEREAS, in addition to Mr. Smith’s long and dedicated service as a member of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Smith and his family have made substantial contributions and gifts to the University to enhance the ability of the University to provide an exceptional education experience for its students; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Board of Trustees to honor Mr. Smith’s long and dedicated service and career at the University by naming the newly constructed track and field facility as the “Jerry F. Smith Track and Field Facility.”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of the University of West Alabama, at a regular meeting, duly called on September 9, 2024, a quorum being present, as follows:

1. That the Board of Trustees does, by the adoption of this Resolution, direct that the newly constructed track and field facility on the University campus shall be known as the “Jerry F. Smith Track and Field Facility.”

2. That this Resolution shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Board of Trustees of the University of West Alabama.

***A motion was made by Mr. Hal Bloom and seconded by Mr. Jerry Groce to approve the resolution in honor of Mr. Smith; the motion carried.***

*Women’s Rodeo National Championship*

Dr. Ken Tucker reported that the women’s rodeo team claimed their second consecutive national championship at the 2024 College National Finals Rodeo held in Casper, Wyoming, in June 2024. The women’s team will be inducted into the UWA Athletic Hall of Fame on October 5, 2024. In addition, members from the men’s and women’s teams won multiple individual national titles.

*Upcoming Events*

Dr. Tucker shared the following upcoming dates and events for Fall 2024:

* October 3, 2024, and October 5, 2024: UWA Amphitheater Ribbon-Cutting and Inaugural Event
* October 24-27, 2024: Homecoming Weekend
* November 1, 2024: Track Dedication, Ribbon-Cutting, and Reception for Mr. Smith
* November 7, 2024: Dr. Tucker’s Retirement Celebration
* December 5, 2024: Black Belt Development Center Ribbon-Cutting

*SEEDS Grant Opportunity*

Dr. Tucker introduced Director of Economic Development Allison Brantley, who spoke to the board regarding grant opportunities available through the State Industrial Development Authority and the Site Evaluation and Economic Development Strategy Act (SEEDS) to speed the development of much-needed industry-ready sites across the state. $40 million has been appropriated for the program. Ms. Brantley conveyed the requirements and highlighted several benefits, including a potential partnership with the Sumter County Industrial Development Authority, quality of life improvement, local wealth reinvestment, job creation, industrial and economic development, and serving to reinforce UWA’s mission and strategic plan. A landowner is interested in selling property that would allow expansion of the Port of Epes Industrial Park. The grant is due September 30, 2024, with an award announcement anticipated in February 2025. ***A motion was made by Mr. Victor Vernon and seconded by Mr. Joseph Brown to move forward with the grant application and partnership with the Sumter County Industrial Development Authority; the motion carried.***

**X. Report from the Board President**

*Presidential Search Committee Update and Recommendations*

Presidential Search Committee Chairperson Joseph Brown recommended that the board enter contractual negotiations with Presidential Candidate Todd Fritch. Along with himself, Mr. Bloom appointed Mr. Brown to handle negotiations with the candidate. ***A motion was made by Mr. Scott Stadthagen and seconded by Ms. Jody Wise to accept the recommendation, approving Board President Bloom and Board Vice President Brown to begin negotiations with Dr. Fritch; the motion carried.*** Mr. Brown expressed his gratitude to the other committee members for their commitment and time. Mr. Bloom thanked Mr. Brown for his hard work and dedication to leading the committee. Trustees Groce and Wise echoed Mr. Bloom’s sentiments, adding that they appreciated the experience of working and serving on the committee.

**XI. New Business**

There was no new business.

**XII. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**XIII. Adjourn**

At 11:09 a.m., Mr. Bloom stated that the meeting would remain in recess, subject to the call of the chair.

Respectfully submitted,

*Toni Terry*