**The University of West Alabama**

**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**

**Bell Conference Center**

**Livingston, Alabama**

**March 4, 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 Ms. Jody W. Beard, Mr. Hal Bloom, Mr. Joseph Brown, Mr. Jerry

Groce, Mr. Matthew Lavender, Mr. Michael Maddox, Mr. Tom Perry, and Mr. Victor Vernon. Ms. Terry announced that a quorum was present. Also attending were Mr. Mike Kendrick, university attorney; Mr. Scott Stadthagen, Alabama state representative; Dr. Ken Tucker, university president; and Ms. Toni Terry, assistant secretary to the board, recording minutes.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

***Ms. Jody W. Beard moved to approve the agenda; Mr. Tom Perry seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.***

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

Mr. Bloom asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 11, 2023 meeting. ***Ms. Jody W. Beard made a motion to approve the minutes; Mr. Tom Perry 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 the four graduation ceremonies held over December 7-8, 2023, the tenure and promotion of 11 faculty members, counseling and nursing accreditation updates, continuous improvement efforts, new partnerships relative to programs in education, and recent media highlights featuring the UWA Cahaba Biodiversity Center and the Alabama Black Belt National Heritage Area.

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

Ms. Jody W. Beard advised that Dr. Melissa Haab provided a report with updates and comparisons regarding enrollment, applications, and tours, noting that UWA was on track for record-setting enrollment for Spring 2024. Dr. Haab also reported on new initiatives, accomplishments, and future goals relating to enrollment management that prioritize growth and focus on the enhancement and improvement of experiences and processes for students.

**VII. Report from the Facilities Committee**

Mr. Joseph Brown advised that Mr. Chris Egbert provided a report regarding the renovation of Foust Hall, the UWA Amphitheater, the Black Belt Development Center, and campus-wide paving projects. The final construction drawings regarding Foust Hall are forthcoming. The amphitheater project is progressing according to schedule. UWA is working with the architect to handle the Black Belt Development Center work in-house. With the contract executed, campus-wide paving should begin in May 2024.

**VIII. Report from the Finance Committee**

Mr. Hal Bloom advised that Mr. Clete Beard provided a report regarding the quarter-end financial summary comparing December 31, 2020, through December 31, 2023, reflecting an overall surplus of $21,884,121 as of December 31, 2023. Mr. Beard also reported on the University’s credit rating of A3 stable through Moody’s Investors Service and UWA’s Written Information Security Program, created to safeguard information as part of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act and the Federal Trade Commission’s Standards for Safeguarding Customer Information.

**IX. Report from the University President**

*Education Trust Fund*

Dr. Ken Tucker advised that UWA was treated exceptionally well regarding the Education Trust Fund, based on the budget from Governor Kay Ivey’s office; however, the budget must still proceed through the Alabama House of Representatives and the Alabama State Senate, where changes may occur. Regarding funding for operation and maintenance, UWA stands to receive an increase of roughly $2.8 million, approximately 10% more than the previous year, which would be the highest percentage increase of any public university in the state, as most stand to receive, on average, only a six or seven percent increase over the previous year. In addition, $4.6 million and $10.5 million have been designated for the advancement and technology and supplemental budgets, respectively. Dr. Tucker especially thanked State of Alabama Finance Director Bill Poole for his support.

Dr. Tucker shared the sad news of the recent passing of Livingston Mayor and UWA Director of Government and Community Affairs Tom Tartt, who had been instrumental in helping the University secure substantial increases in funding throughout the years. Mr. Tartt was the youngest mayor when elected in 1980, as well as the longest consecutively serving mayor in Alabama. Mr. Tartt leaves an exceptional legacy, considering his significant contributions to the University, city, county, and West Alabama region.

*Upcoming Events*

Dr. Tucker advised that the Alabama Women’s Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony and Luncheon would be held on March 7, 2024, honoring the newest inductees: Ms. Janet Nolan and Ms. Mary Olive Enslen Tinder.

UWA’s Society of the Golden Key Induction Ceremony and the National Alumni Association Alumni Achievement Awards will be held on April 2, 2024. Golden key inductees include Mr. Brandon Essig, Mr. John Phillips, and Dr. JJ Wedgworth. The alumni awards will be across all colleges and divisions for two main categories: distinguished alumni and emerging leader.

*Administration and Human Resources*

Dr. Tucker welcomed and introduced Vice President of Administration and Human Resources Robert Upchurch to provide an overview and update related to the Office of Administration and Human Resources. Mr. Upchurch reviewed the responsibilities handled by the office, including the hiring process, payroll, benefits, policies, procedures, workers’ compensation, immigration status changes, employee management, and contract review. The office also serves as the point of contact for legal issues and as a liaison to the bookstore and dining services. Several recent successful initiatives were shared, including improving employee satisfaction, training/professional development, merit pay raises, staff equity, reduced summer work hours, and modernizing processes through digitizing forms. Mr. Upchurch commended the UWA Campus Police Department for excellently balancing the educational and enforcement aspects of their roles and implementing the UWA Student Nighttime Auxiliary Patrol as a safe way for students to be transported on campus at night. The department also provides school resource officers to the University Charter School.

**X. Report from the Board President**

*Presidential Search Committee*

As chair, Mr. Brown provided an update from the Presidential Search Committee advising that three committee meetings had been held thus far under confidentiality. The committee has selected Anthem Executive, a search firm out of Texas, and agreements are being finalized. Anthem is expected to visit campus on March 18, 2024, for a walk-through and to meet with several senior leadership team members.

**XI. New Business**

There was no new business.

**XII. Other Business**

There was no other business.

**XIII. Adjourn**

***Ms. Jody W. Beard made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Jerry Groce seconded, and the motion was approved.*** The meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Toni Terry*