**The University of West Alabama**

**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**

**Bell Conference Center**

**Livingston, Alabama**

**June 3, 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. Jennifer Agee, Ms. Jody W. Beard, Mr. Hal Bloom, Mr. Jerry

Groce, Mr. Randy Hillman, Mr. Michael Maddox, Mr. Tom Perry, Mr. Scott Stadthagen, 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**

***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 March 4, 2024**

Mr. Bloom asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the March 4, 2024 meeting. ***Mr. Jerry Groce made a motion to approve the minutes; Ms. Jennifer Agee seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.***

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

Mr. Randy Hillman advised that Dr. JJ Wedgworth provided a report regarding fundraising comparisons and distributions, development project goals, alumni events and initiatives, strategic communications' expansion and focus on special projects, and an overview of contracts and grants for the last two fiscal years. Mr. Hillman commended Dr. Wedgworth and her staff, indicating that the department was doing a great job.

**VI. Report from the Athletic Committee**

Mr. Scott Stadthagen advised that Mr. Brett Gilliland provided a report regarding an update for spring sports, including Gulf South Conference honors; a student-athlete academic update; the announcement of a new women's basketball head coach; several athletic facility projects; and noteworthy dates related to the upcoming football season. Mr. Stadthagen expressed excitement regarding the appointment of Mr. Gililand as interim athletic director, adding that the future was bright for athletics at UWA.

**VII. Report from the Facilities Committee**

Mr. Bloom advised that Mr. Chris Egbert provided a report regarding Foust Hall, the UWA Amphitheater, the Black Belt Development Center, the Tartt Field turf project, campus-wide paving, and the Student Union and Recreation Center. Mr. Bloom credited Mr. Egbert and his staff for their masterful job managing the extensive projects in progress throughout campus.

**VIII. Report from the Finance Committee**

Mr. Bloom advised that Mr. Clete Beard provided a report regarding the quarterly financial summary for the second quarter of Fiscal Year 2024 and the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2025. A balance of $16,631,469 was reported in revenue over expenses as of March 31, 2024. The proposed new budget reflected an estimated surplus of $478,251, no tuition increase, and an across-the-board two percent salary increase for all full-time employees, with an allowance for additional increases based on performance (equal to four percent of the total University salary line item); a slight increase to the meal plan fee was also noted. Mr. Bloom recognized Mr. Beard and the immense work undertaken to ensure such a positive financial standing for the University. ***A motion was made by Ms. Jody W. Beard and seconded by Mr. Tom Perry to adopt the budget for Fiscal Year 2025 as approved by the Finance Committee. The motion carried.***

**IX. Report from the University President**

*Spring Commencement*

Dr. Ken Tucker advised that for Spring 2024, three commencement ceremonies were held at the UWA Auditorium over two days on May 2-3, 2024, and approximately 700 degrees were awarded, including associate, bachelor, master, education specialist, and doctoral degrees. Dr. Tucker especially thanked Trustee Michael Maddox for his participation in the ceremonies.

*Legislative Update*

Dr. Tucker provided a legislative update, advising that UWA received a 13% increase (approximately $3.6 million, from $27.7 million to $31.3 million), nearly twice the average of other universities, in the operation and maintenance budget from the Education Trust Fund. Regarding one-time restricted funding, UWA also received an overall combined increase: $6.6 million for advancement and technology and $11.8 million for the supplemental budget. In addition to the many friends and supporters of UWA in Montgomery, Dr. Tucker especially thanked Representative Danny Garrett, Governor Kay Ivey, Senator Arthur Orr, Finance Director Bill Poole, and Representative Scott Stadthagen.

*International Programs*

Spring 2024 was a landmark term for international programs, with 100 students from over 40 countries on campus, enriching the environment and marking a four-year high in international student enrollment. Aiming to help address the teacher shortages in Alabama in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, new partnerships have been formed with South Korea and Vietnam, and officials from Ho Chi Minh City University of Education in Vietnam visited campus in April 2024 to sign an agreement with UWA. There is also a focus on new partnerships in India; representatives from UWA, along with a delegation of Alabama senators, are planning to travel to India to visit four universities in October 2024. Dr. Tucker applauded the work of Dean of International Programs Mark Davis and his team.

*Enrollment*

Dr. Tucker announced that enrollment for Spring 2024 was record-setting at 6,015, including 2,428 undergraduate students and 3,587 graduate students. Looking ahead to Fall 2024, a five percent increase is anticipated for campus, while a six percent increase is expected for online. Dr. Tucker added that nationally, apart from the large capstone universities, most universities are struggling with enrollment, with many dropping majors, closing programs, laying off employees, and, in the most extreme cases, closing their doors permanently.

*Recent Press*

Dr. Tucker proudly shared that UWA and the University Charter School (UCS) were prominently featured in the most recent issue of *Business Alabama*, which focused on Greene, Hale, Marengo, and Sumter Counties. Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Quality Enhancement Plan Director Amy Jones and Vice President of Institutional Advancement and UCS Head of School JJ Wedgworth were highlighted in the issue.

*Presidential Search Committee*

In his absence, Chairperson Joseph Brown requested that Dr. Tucker provide an update regarding the Presidential Search Committee. Dr. Tucker reported that an initial outreach list, not including local or internal applicants due to confidentiality, had been developed with 326 potential individuals. Marketing and outreach efforts are underway, and a pre-questionnaire will be available. The anticipated timeframe below was also shared:

* July 19, 2024 - The search will close.
* July 22, 2024 - The committee will begin its review.
* July 29-30, 2024 - The committee will meet to discuss candidates and make selections for video interviews.
* August 12-16, 2024 - Video interviews will be conducted for up to 10 candidates.
* August 26-30, 2024 - Interviews for finalists will be conducted on campus.
* September 2-6, 2024 - The committee will make its final selection.

*Alabama School of Healthcare Sciences*

Dr. Tucker conveyed that UWA will collaborate with local leaders and the University of Alabama at Birmingham regarding the recently approved Alabama School of Healthcare Sciences (ASHS) to be built in Demopolis. The University will have a seat on the board of directors and be instrumental in curriculum development. The school will be designed as a specialized residential high school to prepare students to enter the workforce in various healthcare settings immediately upon graduation or transition into higher education. Given the University's program options in healthcare sciences, opportunities exist for students to continue their education at UWA. UWA also plans to collaborate with ASHS regarding housing, considering the time involved in constructing a new residential facility.

**X. Report from the Board President**

*Approval of Executive Committee Minutes from June 29, 2023*

Mr. Bloom asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 29, 2023 meeting. ***Ms. Jody W. Beard made a motion to approve the minutes; Mr. Tom Perry seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.***

*Board Meeting Schedule*

Mr. Bloom presented the tentative board meeting schedule for September 9, 2024, through June 2, 2025. ***A motion was made by Ms. Jody W. Beard and seconded by Mr. Tom Perry to approve the schedule as presented; the motion carried.***

*Board Appointments Committee*

Mr. Bloom appointed the following board members to a committee to work with him and in cooperation with the governor's office regarding nominees for board seats that may need to be filled: Ms. Jennifer Agee (chair), Mr. Joseph Brown, Mr. Michael Maddox, Mr. Tom Perry, and Mr. Scott Stadthagen.

**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. Tom Perry seconded, and the motion was approved.*** The meeting adjourned at 11:11 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Toni Terry*