**The University of West Alabama**

**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**

**Bell Conference Center**

**Livingston, Alabama**

**September 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, Ms. Sheila Cloud, Mr. Jerry Groce, Mr. Randy Hillman, Mr. Matthew Lavender, Mr. Michael Maddox, 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. Joseph Brown moved to approve the agenda; Ms. Sheila Cloud seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.***

**IV. Approval of Minutes from June 5, 2023**

Mr. Bloom asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 5, 2023 meeting. ***Ms. Jody W. Beard made a motion to approve the minutes; Mr. Joseph Brown 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 accreditation updates, recently approved programs and tracks, UWA’s Quality Enhancement Plan: Pro-Certified, college and faculty accomplishments, renovations and classroom upgrades, and economic and workforce development.

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

Ms. Jody W. Beard advised that Dr. Melissa Haab provided a report on enrollment, on-campus enrollment successes, accomplishments, changes within the division, and future goals.

**VII. Report from the Facilities Committee**

Mr. Joseph Brown advised that Mr. Chris Egbert provided a report on the track facility and soccer field, amphitheater, renovations of Foust Hall, roof replacements at Pruitt and Webb Halls, the new parking lot addition behind Julia Tutwiler Library, the final phase of the Black Belt Development Center, the turf at Tartt Field, and the Homer Field House addition.

The resolution regarding capital projects was presented to the board for their consideration:

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the University of West Alabama (the "Board") desires to undertake the following Capital Projects (the "Projects"):

* Amphitheater,
* Black Belt Development Center,
* Homer Field House Addition,
* New Student Recreation and Fitness Center,
* Tartt Field Turf; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to authorize and direct the President of the University to undertake and complete the Projects as soon as reasonably practicable.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the University of West Alabama Board of Trustees, at a regular meeting duly called on September 11, 2023, a quorum being present, as follows:

1. That the Board of Trustees of the University does, by the adoption of this Resolution, authorize and direct the President of the University to take all reasonable steps necessary to undertake and complete the following Capital Projects (the "Projects"):
   * Amphitheater,
   * Black Belt Development Center,
   * Homer Field House Addition,
   * New Student Recreation and Fitness Center, and
   * Tartt Field Turf.
2. That the cost of the Projects shall be paid from proceeds of State appropriations, PBI Grant and fundraising activities.
3. That the President of the University is authorized to take any and all action necessary in order to institute and complete the Projects on behalf of the University.
4. That this Resolution shall become effective immediately by its adoption by the Board of Trustees of the University.

***A motion was made by Ms. Jody W. Beard and seconded by Ms. Shiela Cloud to approve the***

***resolution as presented; the motion carried.***

**VIII. Report from the Finance Committee**

Ms. Sheila Cloud advised that Mr. Clete Beard provided a report regarding the financial summary for the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2023 and updates relating to the compliance audit, the financial audit, and the UWA Campus Master Plan. The committee approved a proposal to move the financial audit from CDPA, PC, to the Alabama Department of Examiners of Public Accounts. ***Mr. Joseph Brown made a motion to approve moving the audit to the Alabama Department of Examiners and Public Accounts; Ms. Jody W. Beard seconded, and the motion was approved.***

**IX. Report from the University President**

*International Travel Update*

Dr. Ken Tucker reported that he had traveled to Japan and South Korea with Dean of International Programs Mark Davis on July 17-28, 2023. Although demanding, the trips were highly productive, especially from a recruiting standpoint. Meetings, presentations, and signing ceremonies were held with presidents, senior leaders, and students at three universities in Japan and three universities in South Korea. These partnerships should bolster UWA’s International Programs and draw significant numbers of new students to campus.

*University Charter School (UCS) Campus Dedication and Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony*

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at UCS on August 4, 2023. Donar Steve Campora, UCS Board Chairperson Micky Smith, and UCS Head of School JJ Wedgworth provided special remarks and expressions of gratitude. Additionally, Dr. Tucker led the formal campus dedication in honor of Former UWA Trustee Justin L. Smith. This event was well-attended, and there was much excitement regarding the new facility.

*Sumter County Public School System Meeting*

The Alabama Department of Education took control of Sumter County schools on August 10, 2023, citing four major areas of concern: personnel, facilities, financial, and student impact. Along with Dr. Tucker, Dean of the College of Education Jan Miller, and Director of Government and Community Affairs Tom Tartt met with Sumter County School District Superintendent Marcy Burroughs and Sumter County Board of Education Member Eleanor James on August 28, 2023, to discuss potential ways in which UWA could assist. Five different avenues were identified: helping to design a grow-your-own teacher pipeline, helping to expand student internship placements, helping to create a teacher cadet program, assisting with providing mentors for new school leaders, and assisting with providing professional development opportunities.

*General Faculty Staff Meeting and Reception*

Dr. Tucker advised that the UWA General Faculty Staff Meeting was held on August 14, 2023, with a reception at the Campora Athletic Complex that afternoon. There was a great crowd at the reception, many of whom had not been able to view the complex since its renovation.

*First Home Football Game*

The first home football game was on August 31, 2023. There was a large turnout for the game, and based on the numerous positive comments, guests were extremely impressed and excited by the new complex and other facilities around campus.

*Women’s Rodeo Team National Championship*

The women’s rodeo team claimed the first team national championship in UWA Rodeo history at the 2023 College National Finals Rodeo held in Casper, Wyoming, in June 2023. Also, individual national titles were won by Mr. JT Ellison (steer wrestling) and Ms. Taycie Matthews (barrel racing).

*Retirement Announcement*

Dr. Tucker announced that he would be retiring from the University with the expiration of his current contract, effective January 1, 2025. Dr. Tucker indicated that he was making the announcement early out of respect and consideration for the board and to give ample opportunity to find the best candidate to take UWA to even greater heights. Dr. Tucker expressed that the incoming president will have an outstanding senior leadership team to help with the transition and continue moving the institution forward. Dr. Tucker shared his pride in the many and varied accomplishments that had been achieved by working together as a team of board members, faculty, staff, and students, including the financial turnaround; numerous new academic programs, including two doctoral programs; facility enhancements; the athletic and academic successes of the student-athlete population; the response to Covid-19; UCS; and countless other initiatives. Dr. Tucker expressed his appreciation to the board for their guidance, leadership, and support throughout the years and as he continues to work and serve in his role.

Mr. Bloom shared that in all his years affiliated with UWA, he had never known anyone to work harder or bring the University further than Dr. Tucker and his remarkable leadership team. Mr. Bloom indicated that Dr. Tucker will be leaving the University in a far better position than when he entered his role as president. Mr. Bloom thanked Dr. Tucker for his dedication and hard work, adding that he looked forward to continuing working with him over the next 15 months.

**X. Report from the Board President**

*Presidential Search Committee*

Mr. Bloom appointed the following board members to the Presidential Search Committee: Mr. Joseph Brown (chair), Ms. Jody W. Beard, Mr. Jerry Groce, and Mr. Tom Perry.

Mr. Brown conveyed that he was honored to be asked to chair the committee and added that finding the right person to be Dr. Tucker’s successor would be crucial. Based on Dr. Tucker's tremendous job throughout his tenure, and with the assumption that he would be willing, Mr. Brown shared his intent to involve Dr. Tucker in the selection process for UWA’s next leader.

**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. Joseph Brown seconded, and the motion was approved.*** The meeting adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Toni Terry*