Board of Governors chair announces new committee and new committee assignments for members

TALLAHASSEE – Board of Governors Chair Sheila M. McDevitt today announced new committee assignments for board members and the establishment of a new committee to guide the board’s legislative affairs.

“The new Legislative, Governmental and Community Initiatives Committee will develop long-range strategies on legislative issues and will help the Board of Governors forge a strong and productive relationship with the Florida Legislature,” McDevitt said.

Members of the new committee are Ann W. Duncan of Tampa, Dr. J. Stanley Marshall of Tallahassee, Frank T. Martin of Tallahassee, student member Arthur “AJ” Meyer of Florida International University, Lynn Pappas of Jacksonville, Ava L. Parker of Jacksonville, Tico Perez of Orlando, faculty member Judith Solano of the University of North Florida, Carolyn King Roberts of Ocala, who will serve as vice-chair, and McDevitt, who will serve as chair.

McDevitt also announced that the Strategic Planning and Academic and System Oversight Committee will now be guided by co-chairs.

“This new structure is designed to better integrate the missions of individual institutions with the statewide system,” McDevitt said, ”and to better coordinate State University System policies with the business community’s goals and with Florida’s workforce needs.”

Lynn Pappas will lead the committee’s work on Forward by Design, on campus compacts, on establishing a higher-education accord with Florida’s political leadership, on seeking appropriate and predictable funding and on system structure issues.

Frank T. Martin will lead the committee’s efforts on accountability, on degree and program development, and on research issues.
McDevitt also has established two subcommittees under Strategic Planning and Academic and System Oversight:

- The Subcommittee on Health and Medical Education.

Carolyn King Roberts, former chair of the Board of Governors, will serve as chair of these two subcommittees.

Other committees and the chairs are:

- Audit and Compliance – Norman D. Tripp of Fort Lauderdale, chair.
- Facilities and Real Estate – Ava L. Parker, chair.
- Trustee Nominations and Board Procedures – Dr. Zachariah P. Zachariah of Sea Ranch Lakes, chair.
- Student Affairs and Campus Life – Ann W. Duncan, chair.

Sheila M. McDevitt, a Tampa area attorney, was elected chair at the June 19 meeting of the Board of Governors, and Ava L. Parker was elected vice-chair.

McDevitt is of counsel as a member of the Corporate Practice Group of the law firm of Akerman Senterfitt in its Tampa office and the president of Sheila M. McDevitt, P.L., a firm specializing in business, compliance and governance issues. Previously, McDevitt retired as senior vice president-general counsel and chief legal officer for TECO Energy, Inc. She remains actively involved in professional and community activities.

Prior to joining TECO Energy, McDevitt served as a trial attorney and branch office managing attorney for McClain, Walkley & Stuart, P.A., in Tampa. From 1967 to 1979, she served in various capacities for the Florida and Georgia legislatures.

McDevitt is a member of St. Leo University's Board of Trustees (Chair 2005-2007) and a member of the Board of Visitors of Florida State University's College of Law (Chair 2003-2005).

McDevitt received her Bachelor of Arts and Juris Doctorate degrees from Florida State University and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1978. She has been admitted to practice in all Florida state courts and the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida. In 1989, McDevitt was admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Ava L. Parker, the Board of Governors vice-chair, is a partner in the law offices of Lawrence and Parker, P.A., in Jacksonville and the president of Linking Solutions Inc.

As part of her law practice, Parker serves as general counsel of the 11th Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the First Born Church of the Living God Inc.
With her business interest, Linking Solutions, Parker provides community outreach, training and back-office support services.

Parker has served as the general counsel for Edward Waters College, assistant general counsel for the Florida Department of Transportation, an aide to the Florida Public Service Commission and an assistant public defender in Dade County. She is a recent appointee to the Jacksonville Transportation Authority.

Parker received her Bachelor of Science in Journalism and her Juris Doctorate degrees from the University of Florida.

_The Board of Governors is the constitutional body created by voters in 2002 to guide the State University System of Florida._

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