MINUTES

STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Teleconference Meeting

February 22, 2023

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1. **Call to Order**

Chair Lamb called the meeting to order. The following Governors were present: Lamb, Silagy, Cerio, Diaz, Edge, Frost, Gabadage, Haddock, Jordan, Levine, Lydecker, Mateer, Michael, Scott. A quorum was confirmed.

1. **Chair's Report to the Board of Governors
and Remarks**

Chair Lamb mentioned the next board meeting is March, with legislative session beginning March 7. He stated Chancellor Rodrigues is working with staff to ensure the Board is fully briefed and prepared, and encouraged the Board members to visit Tallahassee to work with colleagues who are serving in the Legislature on important topics.

1. **Chancellor’s Report**

Chancellor Rodrigues reported legislative session will run from March 7 to May 5 and over the committee weeks, they have had the opportunity to sit down with key members of the Florida Senate and the Florida House of Representatives. He observed there is great support for the State University System, including performance-based funding which focuses on student success. The challenge is that requests to the Legislature for appropriations has been extremely voluminous and to secure appropriations for the SUS, it is important to demonstrate that supporting the SUS will continue to be a good return on investment. The Chancellor invited members to offer support to securing appropriation requests to the Legislature on the Board’s behalf, by meeting with members of the House or Senate.

1. **Public Comment**

Mr. Andrew Gothard, the President of United Faculty of Florida, commented on proposed Regulation 10.003, Post-Tenure Faculty Review. He indicated the proposed amendments are a good step in the right direction, but there remain concerns about a lack of due process, lack of progressive discipline, and lack of a real appeal. He shared he submitted a petition of over 3500 members who are concerned about this regulation. Mr. Eric Scarffe, faculty at Florida International University, agreed with Mr. Gothard’s comments. He suggested that it is important to focus on quality not quantity and to bring control back to the local governance level on making performance evaluations. Mr. Matthew Lata, a professor at Florida State University, shared that tenure is difficult to obtain, and evaluation of performance is welcome but it should be done by experts in their field and requested that the regulation continue to be improved upon and revised. Mr. Michael Buchler, a professor at Florida State University, said it is important to have bold and brave faculty who are willing to challenge their supervisors. He believes the post tenure review is the destruction of tenure, which will lead to faculty leave the state and to difficulty in attracting new faculty. Mr. Gregory Macomb, an associate professor at University of South Florida, shared the view that the regulation will create a “red-tape” problem and serious recruitment problems. Ms. Meera Sithareem, asked what the regulation adds that doesn’t already exist at a Research 1 university, like the University of Florida. She shared what currently exists in the tenure review process, and expressed concerns with the regulation as presented.

1. **Confirmation of Interim President for
New College of Florida**

Chair Lamb introduced Chair Debra Jenks of New College of Florida’s Board of Trustees to present Mr. Richard Corcoran for confirmation as Interim President of New College of Florida. Chair Jenks noted that New College is in need of significant assistance, and believes Mr. Corcoran is the best candidate to serve the institution. Chair Jenks reviewed Mr. Corcoran’s experience and qualifications, including working as Commissioner of Education, a member of the Board of Governors, and service in the legislature.

Governor Oliva shared that he would not support this item but it is not as a reflection on Mr. Corcoran, but rather due to a desire to construct better oversight of bonuses- how they are structured and awarded. Governor Michael shared a motion passed by the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates that opposed the unjustified removal and replacement of several members of the Board of Trustees and the former President of New College of Florida. Governor Michael asked Chair Jenks if she is committed to working with the Interim President to make sure they stabilize the academic environment that help the current and prospective students feel welcome. Chair Jenks confirmed they are committed to serve and protect the students. Governor Gabadage asked if New College could financially cover Mr. Corcoran’s contract. Chair Jenks confirmed that she relied on recent financial information that reflected they had funding available for this contract.

Governor Levine expressed disagreement with the idea that anyone was unjustifiably removed at New College, in response to the motion from ACFS. Further, he stated that the Board of Governors member on the presidential search committee reviews the presidential contract before it is offered to the Board and offers input and perspective on the contract to ensure historical precedent is considered in that contract. In this instance, this is an interim position and it is Governor Levine’s expectation that New College will go through the presidential search process. He also understands the speed at which this is happening, but power is delegated by the Board of Governors and the New College Board of Trustees quickly acted and exercised their lawful responsibility to make that decision. He agreed that Mr. Corcoran is an exceptional candidate to serve New College as an interim president.

Governor Scott asked if there was a term that applies for an interim president and with respect to compensation he mentioned getting bids for what would be competitive in the market. Specifically, he inquired as to how long interim presidents can remain interim. Chair Lamb observed that the term is usually 12 months or less, but has not seen multiple interim contracts. Governor Scott asked if, in general, there are guidelines for when there is a direct lead into a presidential search vs. start with an interim president. Chair Lamb said the Board has approval authority with either, but the Board can consider adding guidance on this topic going forward. Governor Mateer shared that running a small university that requires a structural and cultural turn around is a difficult task and warrants the type of pay package involved here and he trusts the Board of Trustees’ decision. Governor Cerio agreed with Governor Mateer and reminded the Board that the Board of Trustee positions were expired seats. Governor Michael asked for confirmation that this was only an interim contract, Chair Lamb confirmed it is an interim contract and called for a motion. Governor Levine made a motion to approve the confirmation of Mr. Corcoran as interim president and the contract, which was seconded by Governor Edge. The majority present voted in support, except for Governor Michael and Governor Oliva voting in opposition. The motion passed.

1. **Consent Agenda Items for Approval**
2. **Academic and Student Affairs Committee Report**
3. Approval of Notice of Proposed Amendment to Regulation 10.003
4. **Nomination and Governance Committee Report**
5. Consider Appointments of University Trustees

The consent agenda items were moved for approval by Governor Frost and seconded by and Governor Silagy and Governor Cerio, and the motion passed unanimously.

1. **Concluding Remarks and Adjournment**

Chair Lamb noted the action item regarding presidential contract considerations and adjourned the meeting.