

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH ALABAMA
FLORENCE, ALABAMA
9:00 a.m., Friday, March 15, 2024**

The Board of Trustees for the University of North Alabama met on Friday, March 15, 2024, in Banquet Hall C of the Guillot University Center in accordance with Section 6 of Act No. 773 of the 1967 Regular Session of the Alabama Legislature. A letter from three Trustees (dated February 23, 2024) was sent via email to Governor Kay Ivey in care of her Director of Constituent Affairs, requesting that the Governor call the quarterly meeting for March 15. Proposed letters calling the Board to the meeting also were sent for the Governor's signature as per standard practice, and the same were mailed from the Governor's office to Trustees in advance of the meeting under the date of February 29, 2024. On March 7, Board members were advised via email that the agenda, proposed resolutions, and supporting documents for items of discussion were available for individual electronic access in the Canvas software system.

Board President Pro Tempore Will Trapp called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

I. INVOCATION

At the invitation of Mr. Trapp, the opening invocation was offered by Rev. Dr. Callie Plunket-Brewton, Rector at Trinity Episcopal Church in Florence.

II. ROLL CALL

President Kenneth D. Kitts called the roll, and the following members were present in the meeting room:

Trustee Marty Abroms	Trustee Jim Page	Trustee Nancy Sanford
Trustee Joel Anderson II	Trustee Steve Pierce	Trustee Will Trapp
Trustee Kyle Buchanan	Trustee Simpson Russell	

Trustees Gary Smith and Anne Whitaker were present via videoconference.

Ex officio member Governor Kay Ivey and Trustee Wendell Gunn were absent. A quorum of voting members was in attendance.

Others present for all or part of the meeting:

- Mr. Jason Cochran, Executive Director of Governmental Relations and Economic Development
- Ms. Minnette Ellis, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, and Chief Diversity Officer
- Ms. Amber Fite-Morgan, General Counsel
- Mr. Kevin Haslam, Vice President for University Advancement
- Dr. Katie Kinney, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Dr. Josh Looney, Athletics Director
- Mr. Evan Thornton, Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs
- Dr. K.C. White, Vice President for Student Affairs
- Mr. Duell Aldridge, Coordinator of University Center Operations and Event Management
- Dr. Vince Brewton, Dean of the Cole Honors College
- Ms. Sheena Burgreen, Executive Director of Health and Well-Being
- Dr. Greg Carnes, Dean of the Sanders College of Business and Technology
- Ms. Cindy Conlon, Associate Vice President for Facilities Administration and Planning

- Ms. Michelle Eubanks, Director of University Media and Public Relations
- Mr. Brian Ford, 2023-2024 Staff Senate President
- Dr. Matt Green, Interim Dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences
- Dr. Lauren Killen, 2023-2024 Faculty Senate President
- Dr. Tera Kirkman, Dean of Anderson College of Nursing and Health Professions
- Ms. Kerigan Mardis, newly elected SGA President for 2024-2025
- Mr. John McGee, Executive Director of Educational Technology Services
- Ms. Mandy McGinnis, newly elected SGA Vice President for 2024-2025
- Dr. James DaSambiagio-Moore, Instructional Designer
- Dr. Amber Paulk, Deputy Provost and Board of Trustees Parliamentarian
- Ms. Amber Sandvig, 2023-2024 Student Government Association President
- Ms. Regina Sherrill, Senior Assistant to the President for Administration
- Ms. Julie Taylor, Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management
- Dr. Ryan Zayac, Interim Dean of the College of Arts, Sciences, and Engineering

Also present: *TimesDaily* reporter Bernie Delinski

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Trapp submitted the agenda for consideration. Upon motion by Mr. Russell and second by Mr. Pierce, the agenda was approved as presented by unanimous vote.

IV. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mr. Trapp submitted the following items for consideration for collective approval:

- A. Minutes of December 15, 2023, Quarterly Board Meeting**
- B. Minutes of January 12, 2024, Board Executive Committee Meeting**

Upon motion by Mr. Anderson and second by Mr. Abrams, the consent agenda items listed above were approved separately and severally by unanimous vote.

V. REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Kitts gave a brief summary on the state of the University from a prepared text. Topics included:

- UNA's position in the Alabama Legislature's current budget deliberations
- UNA's decentralized model for diversity/equity/inclusion, how it aligns well with new state legislation, and how the upholding of the value of diversity is a campus-wide responsibility
- Recent news that UNA will receive \$13 million in the FY24 federal spending bill for a STEM project, the largest amount of line item federal funding in the university's history
- Enrollment outlook for next fall based on various current indicators
- Notable decreases in key categories: amount of needs-based loans secured by students, average length of time it takes students here to complete a degree, and student loan default rate

VI. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Page presented items from this committee's March 14 discussions that were on the agenda for the full Board at today's meeting:

A. Resolution Adopting Policies for Double Majors and Combination Degrees at the University of North Alabama

Following summary comments by Mr. Page, with the recommendation of the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee and upon motion by Mr. Page and second by Mr. Buchanan, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

B. Resolution Approving Updates to the Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies Degree Program and the Addition of the Public Safety and Applied Educational Studies (Non-Licensure) Areas of Emphasis

Following summary comments by Mr. Page, with the recommendation of the Academic Affairs and Enrollment Management Committee and upon motion by Mr. Page and second by Ms. Sanford, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Page also commended the leadership of the deans, the faculty, and the enrollment team as UNA continues to develop and adjust academic programs to meet market demands and to provide career paths for graduates.

VII. ADVANCEMENT AND UNIVERSITY RELATIONS COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Whitaker highlighted topics covered in this committee's March 14 meeting, including:

- New members selected for UNA Foundation Board of Directors
- Potts Leadership Award given posthumously to Dr. Raymond Isbell, originator of the Isbell Scholars Program
- 1830 Giving Initiative throughout March and the hope of 100% Board of Trustees participation
- Growing expansion in number of unique donors to the university

Ms. Whitaker then presented one action item from the Committee – **Resolution Approving Set of Bylaws for The 1830 Foundation**. With the recommendation of the Advancement and University Relations Committee and upon motion by Ms. Whitaker and second by Mr. Page, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

Two information items from the previous day's committee discussions – **Update on UNA Foundation and University Endowments** and **Annual Endowment Report for UNA Trustees Scholarship Fund** – were on the agenda for the full Board at today's meeting. There were no questions, and both of these had been reviewed in the committee setting the previous day.

VIII. CAMPUS LIFE, ATHLETICS, AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MATTERS

In light of the one action item on today's agenda under this committee section, Mr. Trapp drew attention to the new **2024-2029 "Pride in the Gold Standard" Strategic Plan** that the Board adopted at its last meeting in December. He read aloud the institutional "Mission and Vision" statement and noted that several "Themes" in the **Plan** – e.g., Student-Centric Excellence, Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure, and Community Engagement and Partnerships – all are supported by construction of an on-campus stadium. He reminded the Board to be mindful that while Bank Independent Stadium is a major capital project that requires the expenditure of significant dollars, UNA has a proven track record of being able to accomplish much with little.

Mr. Trapp then called on Committee chair Pierce for a report of topics covered during this committee's March 14 meeting. These included:

- Diversity: Black History Month events, DEI bill under consideration in Legislature, Presidential Mentors Academy
- Campus Life: student activities, applications for residential housing this fall, Family Portal, large UNA student group at Higher Education Day in Montgomery last month
- Athletics: national publicity for ASUN institutions, status of various sports teams, Steve Spurrier as keynote speaker for Lions Athletic Club fundraiser in August

Mr. Pierce asked Dr. Looney to provide an overview of the site layout for Bank Independent Stadium while a graphic (*see below*) was shared for viewing during the meeting. Dr. Looney described the design process to date and how plans for various elements of the area maximize the building site for future expansion.



Mr. Pierce then presented one action item from the Committee -- **Resolution Authorizing Payment for Services to Contractual Firms Overseeing Program Management and Design of Bank Independent Stadium**. With the recommendation of the Campus Life, Athletics, and Diversity Committee and upon motion by Mr. Pierce and second by Mr. Russell, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

IX. FINANCE, FACILITIES, AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MATTERS

Committee chair Abroms reported on topics covered in this committee's March 14 meeting. On the agenda today for the full Board were:

A. Review of Financial Information for Quarter Ending December 31, 2023

Mr. Abroms reported that revenues are on track and expenditures are in line as would be expected for the first quarter of the fiscal year. The quarterly financial report was thoroughly reviewed in the committee setting. There were no questions, and this information item required no action by the Board.

B. Resolution Approving Rental Rates in University-Owned Housing Facilities Effective Fall 2024

Mr. Abroms described that the proposed housing rental rate increase of approximately 3% overall is necessary to offset rising costs, but he also noted that rates for certain cost-effective housing options will remain unchanged for the coming year. Ms. Sanford pointed out that our housing rates are in the mid-range of those rental costs at other universities. With the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abroms and second by Ms. Sanford, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

C. Resolution Approving Student Meal Plan Prices Effective Fall 2024

Mr. Abroms emphasized in his summary comments that the proposed meal plan prices for next year are reflective of general inflation but represent only an average increase of approximately 3% thanks to negotiations with the Chartwells food service provider. With the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abroms and second by Mr. Anderson, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

D. Resolution Authorizing Sale/Exchange of Residential Property Located at 529 N. Seminary Street – and – 535 Cumberland Street

Following summary comments by Mr. Abroms, with the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abroms and second by Mr. Russell, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

E. Resolution Authorizing Expenditures for Academic Software and Athletic Corporate Sponsorship

Following summary comments by Mr. Abroms, with the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abroms and second by Mr. Page, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

F. Resolution Authorizing Facility Expenditures

Mr. Abroms provided summary comments about several planned projects:

- Renovation of Memorial Amphitheater area of campus
- Phase I of Athletic Multipurpose Complex
- Roof replacement for Flowers Hall, 541 W. College Street, and 122 W. Tombigbee Street

Mr. Trapp highlighted the fact that these projects do not require any additional indebtedness. In addition, it was noted that the Phase I ground work can begin on the stadium site even as the design committee continues discussions as to final details. With the recommendation of the Finance, Facilities, and Personnel Committee and upon motion by Mr. Abrams and second by Ms. Sanford, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

X. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Biennial Board Self-Evaluation Survey for SACSCOC Compliance

Dr. Kitts reminded Trustees that it is again time this spring for the Board to conduct a self-assessment of its responsibilities and expectations as required by SACSCOC accreditation standards. This information item required no action by the Board at this time. Results of this survey will be reviewed in connection with the next regular Trustees meeting in June.

B. Appointment of Ad Hoc Committee to Nominate 2024-2026 President Pro Tempore and Vice President Pro Tempore of the UNA Board of Trustees

Mr. Trapp named Mr. Pierce, Mr. Page, and Mr. Buchanan to serve as a three-member committee to bring forward at the June meeting its nominations for Board officer positions for 2024-2026.

It had been noted earlier in the meeting that Dr. Killen and Ms. Sandvig would conclude their terms of service as Faculty Senate and SGA presidents, respectively before the next Trustees meeting in June. Mr. Trapp made comments on the importance of the shared governance process and commended both of them for their service to the University.

XI. MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Trapp noted that an executive session was needed to discuss matters from two Board committees and to hear updates on pending legal matters. As an attorney licensed to practice law in the State of Alabama, Ms. Fite-Morgan could affirm that the Board's discussion of these matters in executive session was authorized under Section 3 of the Code of Alabama that allows for executive session to discuss the general reputation and character of individuals and the legal ramifications of pending litigation. Therefore, an executive session would be in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. Upon motion by Mr. Pierce, second by Mr. Russell, and a unanimous vote, the meeting recessed at 10:27 a.m. for a short break and to enter into executive session. At approximately 10:35, the Board entered into executive session. Ms. Fite-Morgan, Mr. Haslam, Dr. Kinney, Dr. Looney, and Mr. Thornton remained in the room with Dr. Kitts and the Board during this closed session. Mr. Haslam and Dr. Looney exited the room at 10:50.

The Board reconvened in regular session at 11:08 a.m., at which time Ms. Whitaker exited the meeting. Mr. Trapp presented three action items that were considered in executive session and viewed favorably by the Board:

1. Resolution Authorizing Honorary Naming of UNA's Disability Support Services for Aubrey and Annie Looney

Upon motion by Mr. Trapp and second by Mr. Abrams, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

2. Resolution Appointing an Additional member to the Board of Directors for The 1830 Foundation

Upon motion by Mr. Trapp and second by Mr. Page, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

3. Resolution Approving Ground Lease for Development of New Practice Field

Upon motion by Mr. Trapp and second by Mr. Buchanan, the resolution was approved by unanimous vote.

The Board had no other action items to present from its discussions in executive session.


MOTION TO ADJOURN

There being no other business to come before the Board, upon motion by Mr. Abrams, second by Ms. Sanford, and a unanimous vote, the meeting adjourned at 11:12 a.m.

Approved June 14, 2024



President Pro Tempore



Secretary