

LANDER UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Lander University
Greenwood, South Carolina

Tuesday, December 12, 2023
2:00 p.m.

Presiding: Don Scott

Other Members of the Board in Attendance:

Robert Barber
Holly Bracknell
John Craig
Linda Dolny
Ray Hunt
Marcia Hydrick
Catherine Lee
Don Lloyd
Peggy Makins
Terry Pruitt
Robert Sabalis
Jim Shubert
DeWitt Stone
Angela Strickland
Anne Walker

Others in Attendance: President Richard Cosentino; Dr. Jim Colbert, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Joe Greenthal, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Adam Taylor, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff; Boyd Yarbrough, Vice President for Student Affairs; Brian Reese, Director of Athletics; Todd Gambill, Vice President for Enrollment and Access Management; Robyn Hoffmann, Vice President of University Advancement; Matt Braaten, Assistant Vice President for Planning Analytics and Decision Support; Megan Price, Assistant Vice President of University Relations and Publications; Sadie Erwin, Executive Assistant to the President; and Graham Duncan, Project Coordinator for University and Governmental Relations.

Guests: Lindsey Hodges, of the Index-Journal; Dr. Emily Prince, Chair of the Faculty Senate; and Patrick Moore, Chair of the Staff Senate.

Chair Scott called the meeting to order.

Adam Taylor stated for the record that appropriate publicity had been disseminated in order to comply with the Freedom of Information Act, and that the meeting was in compliance with that Act.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Anne Walker motioned to approve the September 12, 2023 board meeting minutes; seconded by Robert Sabalis.

The board meeting minutes from September 12, 2023 were approved by unanimous vote.

II. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Academic Affairs

Robert Barber was recognized to share the updates found in the Academic Affairs Committee report. The committee brought forward one action item:

1. Master of Science in Criminology and Criminal Justice

This is an application-oriented degree with required courses in crisis communication; crisis leadership; mental health and first responders; and policy; in addition to courses in research methods and theory. The distinctive core courses would give graduates greater preparation to serve in leadership roles within law enforcement, government, and non-profits and have knowledge and analytical capacity about such legal and social problems that plague South Carolina as addiction, domestic violence, and human trafficking. All courses would be within an ethical framework and informed by best practices based upon research. With this application-oriented, ethical framework and these distinctive core courses, this master's degree program aims to assist retention efforts of law enforcement officers and help to recruit high-quality officers and specialists into the state's law enforcement agencies, public safety departments, and correctional institutions.

Discussion followed.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

B. Enrollment and Access Management / Student Experience and Quality Assurance

Holly Bracknell was recognized to share updates from the Enrollment and Access Management / Student Experience and Quality Assurance Committee report. The committee brought forward no action items.

The committee noted that enrollment for the spring semester was up from the same point in cycle in 2022-23. Applications for the 2024-25 academic year were also up from the same point in 2022-23.

C. Finance, Facilities, and Audit / Governmental and Strategic Initiatives

Don Lloyd was recognized to share the updates found in the Finance, Facilities, and Audit, and Governmental and Strategic Initiatives Committee reports. The committee brought forward one action item:

1. Approval of Proposed Projects

Lander University requested approval of the following projects with cost estimates within \$1 million to \$2 million, as required by Proviso 117.140:

- a. Science Building Laboratory Ventilation Controls - \$1,100,000
- b. Construct Student Parking Lots - \$1,100,000
- c. Parking Lot #02 Repair/Resurfacing - \$1,250,000
- d. Athletic Complex Competition Field Surface - \$1,800,000
- e. Cambridge Hall Renovation - \$1,100,000

Discussion followed.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

D. Institutional Advancement

John Craig was recognized to share updates from the Institutional Advancement Committee

report. The committee brought forward no action items.

The committee mentioned the success of the annual scholarship dinner, as well as Lander University's participation in the Day of Giving on Tuesday, November 28. President Cosentino agreed to take a "polar plunge" in the university's recently completed pool after the campaign raised \$75,000 for student scholarships. This event will take place during Homecoming.

E. Policy

Robert Sabalis was recognized to share updates from the Policy Committee report. The committee brought forward the following action items:

1. Faculty Emeritus, 4-Year Review
2. Staff Emeritus, 4-Year Review
3. Hazardous Weather Other Emergency Conditions, 4-Year Review
4. Solomon Amendment
5. Federal Funds Expenditures
6. Vendor Debarment Verification
7. Compressed Gas Cylinder Safety
8. Fire Extinguisher Use & Maintenance
9. Electrical Safety

Robert Sabalis gave brief remarks on each of these policies and indicated that, if there were no comments or questions, they could be adopted as a package.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

F. Student Affairs / Intercollegiate Athletics

Ray Hunt was recognized to share updates from the Student Affairs / Intercollegiate Athletics Committee report. The committee brought forward no action items.

The committee had the opportunity to tour the university's new pool, and heard from members of Lander's student body concerning their campus experience. The committee also noted the hard work of the Lander University Office of Career Services. The recent Fall Career Fair hosted 43 employers from across the Southeast, and the recent Fall Graduate School Fair had 22 institutions in attendance.

III. OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/REPORTS

A. Faculty Senate

Dr. Prince was recognized to give a report from the Faculty Senate.

B. Staff Senate

Patrick Moore was recognized to give a report from the Staff Senate.

IV. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The president gave the following updates to the Board of Trustees:

College of Science and Mathematics Students: The president invited two students from the College of Science and Mathematics to share their recent research presentations with the Board of Trustees. Nathan Mugande, a chemistry major, shared his presentation, *Synthesis and Characterization of Diamino Dibenzo Cyclooctane*, which he completed under the advisement of

Professor of Chemistry Dr. Lisa Brodhacker. Sam Williams, a biology major, shared his presentation, *Shedding Some Light on Artificial Illumination's Effects on Mammal Diel Activity*, which he completed under the advisement of Associate Professor of Biology Dr. Emily Prince. Both students recently presented their research at regional academic conferences. Their travel was made possible by a student travel fund, an initiative of President Cosentino to increase Lander's reputation as a leader in undergraduate research.

Vice President for Academic Affairs: The president has selected Dr. Jim Colbert to serve as Lander's new provost and vice president for academic affairs. Dr. Colbert has been serving in this role in an interim capacity since January of 2023. The president noted that his selection was made after consulting with the Faculty Senate, which enthusiastically supported Dr. Colbert's selection as the permanent provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Holiday Gift: Lander University announced that it will give every employee a choice of spiral ham or turkey breast to express appreciation for their hard work and dedication.

Parents Organization: Administrators are working to expand communication efforts with the parents of Lander students. The president stressed that parents are an important constituency of the university, and that there is room for improvement in keeping them involved on campus.

Attendance: The president has asked staff to explore technology that can help faculty track student attendance more efficiently. Regular class attendance is crucial for retention, and new tools will help student success coordinators identify students who may benefit from additional support.

Antidiscrimination: In light of recent events on college campuses across the country, the president shared with board members that staff are developing policies that deal with discrimination, antisemitism, and inciting violence toward members of the Lander community.

Commission on Higher Education: The president referred board members to a recent report of the South Carolina Inspector General, which found that the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education had collected approximately \$152 million in lottery scholarships that were not distributed to in-state students.

Campus Expansion Plan: The president shared an updated campus expansion plan with the Board of Trustees. This new plan includes several of the university's ongoing capital projects, including the new nursing building, the pool and pavilion, and the new information commons building.

Enrollment: Administrators are closely studying the current pace of student enrollment, which included nearly 4,400 students at the start of the 2023-24 academic year. The president said the university will consider slowing its current enrollment growth while working on its current expansion plan.

SACSCOC Accreditation: The president praised the rigorous standards set by the university's accreditation team. He expressed his thanks to staff for continuing to meet every standard set by SACSCOC, the university's regional accreditor.

Matthew Hammett: The president announced that higher education veteran Matthew Hammett has been selected to serve as Inaugural Director of the South Carolina Institute on the Prevention of Sexual Violence on College Campuses, following an extensive national search. Prior to this appointment, Hammett worked as the Director for Civil Rights and Student Risk Assessment, and Title IX Coordinator at Wofford College. He holds degrees from Lander University and Clemson

University, and will soon defend his doctoral dissertation at Converse University.

Trustee Elections: The South Carolina General Assembly is still working to catch up on elections for trustees of the state's colleges and universities. Adam Taylor, Secretary to the Board of Trustees, said that trustees who have not yet been officially re-elected by the General Assembly will continue to serve in their current roles, per state law. It is expected that lawmakers will take up these elections in 2024, and more information will be shared with board members when it is made available.

Artificial Intelligence: The president is encouraging faculty to research artificial intelligence (AI) and begin implementing its use in classrooms, when appropriate. He shared with board members that many companies are now looking for candidates who have experience using AI, and he believes that it is important that Lander provide students with this experience while studying at the university. The president also mentioned that faculty are looking at partnering with other universities to offer courses on AI to students.

Cybersecurity: The president reiterated the importance of investments in cybersecurity and IT infrastructure. He shared with board members that Lander University recently experienced a cyber-attack, but fortunately lost no data. This experience served as a reminder that cybersecurity continues to be an issue in higher education, and thanked the Board of Trustees and the General Assembly for supporting the university's investments in cybersecurity and IT infrastructure upgrades.

Workforce Development: The president will serve on the state's Coordinating Council for Workforce Development. Membership includes officials from institutions of higher learning, industry leaders, and various state agency professionals who meet regularly to discuss how to increase the efficiencies of South Carolina's education and workforce systems.

Retreats: The president is planning a retreat to discuss the university's strategic plan and a comprehensive capital campaign. Details of these retreats will be shared with board members once they are finalized.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made by Linda Dolny to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Robert Barber.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.