

**MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Board of Governors Minutes**  
**June 16, 2021**  
**Billingsly Student Center**  
**Ball Room**

The June 16, 2021 meeting of the Missouri Southern State University Board of Governors was called to order by Alison Hershewe, Chairwoman. Governors in attendance were T. Mark Elliott, Bill Gipson, Carlos Haley, Alison Hershewe, Anita Oplotnik, Ron Richard, and Dr. Benjamin Rosenberg. Others in attendance were Jon Dermott, Kevin Greim, Lorinda Hackett, Heather Lesmeister, Dr. David Locher, Michael Opfer, Cori Reid, Dr. Dean Van Galen, Hayley Ward, Dr. Julie Wengert, Rob Yust, Linda Eis, and Laura Boyd. Governor Mariann Morgan was in non-attendance.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Chairwoman Hershewe called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m., and welcomed everyone including Dr. David Locher (new Faculty Senate President), and Michael Opfer (new Staff Senate President). Chairwoman Hershewe also acknowledged the official retirement of Jon Dermott, Missouri Southern board legal counsel.

**MINUTES**

Chairwoman Hershewe asked if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes of the March 17, 2021 Board meeting; none were noted.

*A motion was made by Carlos Haley and seconded by Ron Richard to approve minutes of the March 17, 2021 Board meeting as submitted. Motion passed unanimously. (Minutes are archived in the permanent record book).*

**President (Dr. Dean Van Galen):**

*Note: Highlights of Dr. Van Galen's report are as follows. Additional information can be found in a handout distributed to the Board that is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book.*

**Legislative Session**

Dr. Van Galen acknowledged the Missouri General Assembly and local legislative delegation for their support during the 2021 legislative session. Key legislative actions (still require approval by Governor Parson) include:

- A 3.7% core increase for all public higher education institutions for fiscal year 2022 (beginning July 1, 2021). This results in approximately \$880,000 being added to the MSSU core budget;
- A \$2 million core increase specifically for Missouri Southern;
- A capital projects bill that includes \$2.5 million for the repair and reopening of the Taylor Performing Arts Center;
- A higher education policy bill that would remove the current cap on tuition for five years, granting governing boards full discretion on setting base tuition and implement differential tuition.

**LaunchPad**

Dr. Van Galen noted a meeting took place on May 11, 2021 to share information and answer questions regarding this project. Participating groups included the Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Joplin School District Board, Joplin City Council, and the MSSU Board of Governors, including leadership from the Missouri Southern Foundation.

**President (continued):**

On May 17, 2021, the Joplin City Council approved ballot language to consider a \$10 million bond (that would renovate the former downtown library). It is presumed, Joplin citizens will vote on this project ~ April 2022.

**Transitions ~ Leadership Teams**

Dr. Van Galen welcomed Rob Mallory (Director of Athletics), and Lorinda Hackett (Interim Provost, and Vice President of Academic Affairs), and acknowledged Dr. Paula Carson (Provost, and Vice President of Academic Affairs, for her 6 years of service to Missouri Southern, and noted Dr. Carson has helped Missouri Southern forward in a few areas including; reaccreditation of the Higher Learning Commission, development of new research opportunities for faculty and students, and development of new academic degrees and certificates. Dr. Van Galen also acknowledged Cori Reid (Interim, Director of Athletics), for her outstanding commitment to faculty, staff and students since March 2021.

**Closing**

Dr. Van Galen noted the last 15 months have been challenging, but through this historic time, the university has pulled together to continue to provide high quality educational opportunities for our students. Dr. Van Galen noted (with enthusiastic optimism and anticipation) the administration is looking forward to a *more normal* fall semester with the return to the immersive learning opportunities and personal engagement.

Dr. Van Galen shared a video message that will be aired on local television stations soon. Designed to promote “Roaring back to Campus” with face-to-face classes and focus on our MOSO Merit Scholarships and Financial Aid.

**Executive Vice President (Kevin Greim ~ in the absence of Dr. Brad Hodson):**

*Note: Highlights of Dr. Hodson’s report are as follows. Additional information can be found in a handout distributed to the Board that is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book.*

**Scholarship Match**

Mr. Greim noted in February 2020, the Missouri Southern Foundation board of directors allocated \$200,000 to match newly created endowments. This incentive was for donors who created a new endowment of at least \$25,000 and would be matched with \$10,000 from the Foundation. Mr. Greim noted as of June 1, 2021, all 20 available matching opportunities have been utilized.

**Planned Giving Marketing**

Mr. Greim noted his office recently formed a partnership with Crescendo, a national company specializing in planned giving marketing, and recently designed a planned giving website (plannedgiving.mssu.edu), which is now live. The Missouri Southern’s Foundation Office is currently working with this company to develop marketing materials that will drive prospective planned giving donors to the website including direct mail campaigns focused on charitable gift annuities, and gifting from IRA’s.

**Lion Pride Visit Days**

Mr. Greim noted the next Lion Pride Visit Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 26, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

**Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Lorinda Hackett):**

*Note: Highlights of Ms. Hackett’s report are as follows. Additional information can be found in a handout distributed to the Board that is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book.*

**ACACIA Center**

Ms. Hackett noted grant monies (Child Care and MO Excel Workforce Development awarded last September) have been allocated towards the renovation of the former MSSU Child Development Center located in the Gene Taylor Education building to serve as the ACACIA Center for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) through the collaboration of the current MSSU Lion Cub Academy and the MSSU Psychology Department. The Center will open in August 2021 and will provide educational resources to

**Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (continued):**

meet the unique academic, social and emotional needs of our community's children. MSSU students enrolled in the ABA courses will have the opportunity to earn a certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis as well as an emphasis in our psychology degree (wide range of children with autism).

**Nursing Program**

Ms. Hackett noted on May 25, 2021, the Missouri Board of Nursing approved the MSSU nursing program site visit report and the new interdisciplinary curriculum. The nursing faculty, under the leadership of Dr. Lisa Beals (department chair), anticipate 30 new nursing students to begin fall 2021.

**Children's Lifetime Sports Academy**

Ms. Hackett noted the annual MSSU Children's Lifetime Sports Academy (CLSA) celebrated 25 years with a variety of activities based on age and skill level consisting of 95 participants, ages 7-12. The Missouri Department of Conservation and House of Bounce collaborated with the Kinesiology Department to assist with outdoor activities.

**Art Department**

Ms. Hackett noted the family of the late Dr. Mel Mosher, a professor emeritus in the MSSU Chemistry Department, has donated a collection of Inuit carvings (20 pieces of soapstone) to the Art Department.

**Interim Vice President for Student Affairs (Dr. Julie Wengert):**

*Note: Highlights of Dr. Wengert's report are as follows. Additional information can be found in a handout distributed to the Board that is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book.*

**Enroll-A-Thon**

Dr. Wengert noted the end of semester *annual* event recently took place, and as a result, the seven professional advisers representing three departments, enrolled 32 students in 346 credit hours for the fall 2021 semester. Additionally, seven students were enrolled in 35 credit hours for the summer 2021 semester. Dr. Wengert noted 86% of those eligible, have enrolled.

**Retirement**

Dr. Wengert acknowledged Cheryl Dobson, who will be retiring from Missouri Southern on June 30, 2021, after serving 30 years in a variety of roles and institutional committees, most recently Registrar.

**Lions Forward Team – Campus Vibrancy**

Dr. Wengert noted Ryan Orcutt, director of Global Leaders will chair this committee (has hosted one meeting since commencement). This diverse committee includes members from Admissions, Alumni, Athletics, First-Year Experience, Honors, International Studies, Residence Life and Student Activities. The primary goal is to increase the vibrancy of campus in ways to connect students, faculty, staff, and the community to MSSU. The committee will focus on resource optimization, intentionality planning and cross-campus collaborations.

**Piloting “Ready to Roar”**

Dr. Wengert noted enthusiasm regarding a “summer bridge” program beginning July 2021, built for first time freshman to bridge the gap between high school and college. More information to follow.

**Vice President for Business Affairs (Mr. Rob Yust):**

*Note: Highlights of Rob's report are as follows:*

**Residence Hall**

Mr. Yust noted this morning's tour of the residence hall complex went well and is on track for completion next month for student's occupancy this fall. The project will be an approximately 92,000 square foot, four-story facility which will house approximately 300 students.

**Trail project with the City of Joplin**

Mr. Yust noted Missouri Southern is still waiting on the conveyance of property from the City to MSSU. Fitness equipment will be installed (purchased from the Wellness Committee funds), once the ground is solid enough in allowing a cement truck in the field.

### **Vice President for Business Affairs (continued):**

A formal ribbon cutting is anticipated for September 2021.

### **Campus Improvements**

Mr. Yust noted several campus improvement projects are out for bid and should begin soon. The first phase will be the re-paving of International Avenue, and a large portion of University Parkway, and crosswalks and raised walkways in the main parking lot. The second phase consists of entrances to the buildings on the Oval, sidewalk widening and lights on the Oval. Mr. Yust anticipates all improvements to be completed in the fall of 2021.

### **Taylor Performing Arts Center (TPAC)**

Mr. Yust noted an engineering company is working on construction drawings in order to put this project out to bid. Although our institution has been notified we will be receiving \$2.5 million in capital appropriations for the repair and reopening of the Taylor Performing Arts Center, it could take up to two years to complete due to the significant construction cost increases and a lengthy lead time on materials.

### **Interim Director of Athletics (Mrs. Cori Reid):**

*Note: Highlights of Cori's report are as follows. Additional information can be found in a handout distributed to the Board that is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book.*

### **Academic Report**

Ms. Reid noted the Athletics Department had an overall GPA of 3.08, the sixth straight semester with a department-wide GPA of 3.0 with softball being in the lead with a 3.49. There were 14 student athletes with a perfect 4.0.

### **MIAA (Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association)**

Ms. Reid noted the below:

- Southern placed second in the MIAA Commissioner's Cup standings. The women's outdoor track and field won championship this season, and took second place in the indoor track and field competition. The men's track and field team were runners-up in the outdoor championships. The Lion's had third-place finishes in both baseball and softball this spring, as well as in men's basketball (last season).
- The softball team finished their season 30-15-1, and finished third in the MIAA after being picked 11<sup>th</sup> in the pre-season poll. Southern's coach, Hallie Blackney, was named MIAA Coach of the Year, and 8 students were named to the All-MIAA team including Josie Tofpi, who was also named to the D2CCA (Division II Conference Commissioners Association) All Central-Region Team.
- The baseball team finished with a 30-13 (#25 national ranking). Ten students earned All-MIAA honors, including Zach Parish as MIAA Pitcher of the Year, and Tommy Stevenson was named MIAA Freshman of the Year. Zack Parish was also named a consensus first-team All-American by the American Baseball Coaches Association, the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association and the D2 Conference Commissioner's Association. Mr. Parish was also the regional and national Pitcher of the Year for the NCBWA and the D2CCA, and named ABCA First Team All-American.
- The track and field programs received 15 All-American performances at the 2021 NCAA D2 Outdoor Track and Field Championships. The women finished 7<sup>th</sup> nationally, while the men finished 8<sup>th</sup>. Rajindra Campbell won National Championship in *discus and shot put* and was named National Field Athlete of the Year by the United States Track and Field and Cross-Country Coaches Association.

### **Hall of Fame 2021**

Ms. Reid noted 4 individuals and 2 teams will be inducted on October 30, 2021 including: Steve Forbis (football), Chuck Pittman (baseball), Kimi Shank Reed (women's track and field/cross country), Jamie Burnham (track and field/cross country), and the 1986 and 1990 softball teams.

**Treasurer (Mrs. Linda Eis):**

**Cash Graph:**

Mrs. Eis noted in reviewing the statements for the period ending May 31, 2021, the current balance is \$13.85M which reflects a decrease of \$459k from the prior year.

**Statement of Net Position:**

Mrs. Eis noted the restricted cash reflects \$12.1M ~ within this is the remaining bond funding to be used toward the Lion Village and older campus facilities. Federal stabilization monies have also been separated for campus improvements.

**Total Assets**

As of May 31, 2021, Total Assets are \$177M. Mrs. Eis noted when looking at Total Liabilities, the institution has \$126M and Total Net Position of \$51M.

**Comparative Statement of Revenues Expenses and Changes in Net Position:**

- **Total Operating Revenues** When looking at the “difference” column appearing cumulative, a decrease (\$6.6M) over the prior year.
- **Total Operating Expenses** reflect a decrease of (\$4.8M).
- **Non-Operating Revenue** increase of \$4.9M due to the \$1.8M federal stabilization the university has been given through the end of May and the \$7.2M HEERF Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (CARES) monies for FY2021.
- **Income (Loss) Before Other Revenues** reflects a gain in the current year \$2.0M, and the prior year reflects a loss of (\$1.2M) reflecting an increase of \$3.2M from the prior year.

**Other:**

Mrs. Eis noted BKD had delayed the compliance piece of the annual audit due to the delayed issuance of Federal Compliance Guidance on the HEERF funding. You will recall the finance portion of the audit (known as the “short form”) was presented in January. Linda noted her office recently received the compliance information needed and there were no findings. This report format is known as the “long form” as it includes the compliance portion. The unmodified, clean report, reflects completion of the required annual audit report - the university is officially compliant with FY2020. Due to HEERF funding coming through for FY2021, Mrs. Eis anticipates the same process for next year and acknowledged teams in Financial Aid and the Bursars office for all their collaboration and hard work that went into making the audit a success. As we finish the FY2020 audit, work begins next week, Monday, June 21, on the current FY2021 audit.

Governor Haley thanked Mrs. Eis and her team for a job well done.

Mrs. Eis noted her team recently mailed out the RFP for banking/depository bids to a dozen banks. Three proposals were submitted. After review and evaluation, Simmons Bank (current provider) has been selected, due to their low fees and guarantee of a minimum floor interest rate for a period of five years with subsequent one-year renewals if needed.

*A motion was made by Carlos Haley and seconded by Anita Oplotnik to approve the May 31, 2021 financial statements as presented. Motion passed unanimously. (A copy of the financial statements for May 2021 are attached to the minutes in the permanent record book).*

**Faculty Senate President (Dr. David Locher):**

*Note: Highlights of Dr. Locher’s report are as follows.*

Dr. Locher noted the Faculty Senate will continue to work on a number of agenda items that were not completed last year, including developing and refining an intellectual property agreement, policy language that allows promotion for non-tenure track faculty, and working on updates to Chapter 8 of the Faculty handbook, pertaining to Faculty Grievance and Termination policies.

Dr. Locher also anticipates looking forward to a semester with less fear and more normality. Chairwoman Hershewe acknowledged Dr. Locher and all the faculty for their flexibility shown this past year.

**Staff Senate President (Mr. Michael Opfer):**

*Note: Highlights of Mr. Opfer’s report are as follows.*

Mr. Opfer noted Staff Senate bylaws were recently changed, after sending through the President’s Cabinet for approval ~ including:

- Addition of Parliamentarian to the Executive Committee;
- Addition of procedures for ending one Senate year and beginning the next (two meetings will be held in June, one to end the Senate year, and one to begin the new Senate year);
- Removal of Compensation Sub-Committee; and
- Addition of Campus Committees list.

Mr. Opfer noted the 2021-2022 Staff Senate Executive Committee officers include:

- Mike Opfer ~ President, Custodial Supervisor;
- Ashley Brownfield ~ President-Elect, Coordinator of Project Management - IT;
- Laura Gullett ~ Secretary, Green Dot Program Coordinator;
- Shakira Rhoads ~ Co-Parliamentarian, Assistant Director of Career Services;
- Nick Reynolds ~ Co-Parliamentarian, Manager, End User Services - IT

**Student Senate President (Ms. Hayley Ward):**

Ms. Ward noted this would be her last meeting, and noted Brent Olson will be the new Student Senate President.

Ms. Ward also noted the senate recently updated verbiage to their bylaws and have sworn in new elected officers. Hayley thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as Student Senate President. Governor Gipson recognized Hayley for her work on the COVID Task Force.

**Board Committees:**

**Personnel/Compensation (T. Mark Elliott, Chair):**

Governor Elliott noted this committee met prior to the open board meeting and he will be providing a full report during the closed executive session.

**Academic Affairs (Anita Oplotnik, Chair):**

Governor Oplotnik noted this committee also met prior to the open board meeting and noted the following Degree Programs have been approved/accepted by the respective College Curriculum Oversight Committees (CCOC), Academic Policies (AP) and Faculty Senate (FS) as of May 14, 2021, which include:

- Undergraduate ~ Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Sciences; and
- Graduate ~ Master of Arts in Teaching.

*A motion was made by Dr. Rosenberg and seconded by T. Mark Elliott to approve the above Degree Programs. Motion passed unanimously. (A copy of the Degree Programs are attached to the minutes in the permanent record book).*

**Budget Audit Committee (Carlos Haley, Chair):**

Governor Haley reported the Budget Audit committee met before today’s Board meeting for the purpose of the following items: Tuition, Compensation, FY2022 Budget, and FY2020 Audit (long form).

On behalf of the Budget Audit committee, Governor Haley brought forward a recommendation before the board to authorize the administration to set the following tuition rates for FY2022 including:

- In-state and Lion Pride Oceanic tuition rate at \$258.73 per credit hour;
- Out-of-state tuition rate at \$529.86 per credit hour;
- Distance Learning tuition rate at \$309.88 per credit hour;

## **Board Committees:**

### **Budget Audit Committee (continued):**

- Graduate tuition rate at \$350.00 per credit hour (no change); and
- Dual Credit tuition rate at \$50.00 per credit hour. (no change).

*A motion was made by Carlos Haley and seconded by Bill Gipson to approve the tuition rates for FY2022 as presented. Motion passed unanimously. (A copy of the tuition rates for FY2022 are attached to the minutes in the permanent record book).*

*On behalf of the Budget Audit Committee, a motion was made by Carlos Haley and seconded by T. Mark Elliott to authorize the Administration to adopt a revenue budget of \$82.7million for FY2022. Motion passed unanimously. (A copy of the FY2022 Budget is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book).*

*On behalf of the Budget Audit Committee, a motion was made by Carlos Haley and seconded by Bill Gipson to authorize the Administration to increase compensation approximately \$500. Motion passed unanimously.*

*On behalf of the Budget Audit committee, a motion was made by Carlos Haley and seconded by T. Mark Elliott to approve the FY2020 Audit (long form) which incorporates the compliance audit that includes SFA (Student Financial Aid) and HEERF (CARES funding). Motion passed unanimously. (A copy of the approved Audit is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book).*

### **Academic Affairs continued (from earlier in the report):**

Governor Oplotnik introduced Lorinda Hackett whom acknowledged three department chairs: Dr. Susan Craig, Dr. David Sharlow, and Dr. Jason Willand who provided a brief overview of approved Degree Programs they helped to produce.

Chairwomen Hershewe and Governor Oplotnik thanked the faculty for their detailed work surrounding these new degrees.

### **OLD BUSINESS – N/A**

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Consideration of Academic Policies Proposals (Ms. Lorinda Hackett)**

On behalf of the recommendations of the Promotion and Tenure Committee, recommendations of the Provost, Dr. Paula Carson, recommendations of Dr. Van Galen, and recommendations of the Academic Affairs Committee, Lorinda Hackett brought forth a faculty list for Promotion and Tenure approval including:

- Amila Appuhamy, Mathematics ~ Tenure
- Rabindra Bajracharya, Chemistry & Physical Science ~ Promotion
- Jacob Boswell, Mathematics ~ Tenure/Promotion
- Jean Coltharp, Mathematics ~ Tenure/Promotion
- Bill Fischer, History ~ Promotion
- Ruben Rivera Galve, Spanish ~ Tenure/Promotion
- Amy Gates, English ~ Tenure
- Mikh Gunderman, Criminal Justice ~ Promotion
- Katie Kilmer, Biology & Environmental Health ~ Tenure
- David Penning, Biology & Environmental Health ~ Tenure
- Leslie Smith, Spanish ~ Tenure/Promotion
- Deborah Combs, Accounting ~ Tenure
- Megan Douglas, Marketing/Management ~ Promotion
- Stephanie Schartel-Dunn, Marketing ~ Tenure
- Claudia Wilson, Engineering Technology ~ Promotion

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Consideration of Academic Policies Proposals (continued):**

- Carissa Gober, Teacher Education ~ Promotion
- Lisa Beals, Nursing ~ Tenure
- James Capeci, Library ~ Tenure

*A motion was made by Anita Oplotnik and seconded by Dr. Rosenberg to approve Promotions and Tenure’s as presented. Motion passed unanimously.*

**Election of Board Officers (Chair Gipson):**

Chairwoman Hershewe noted it is time for the Board to hold its yearly election of officers for Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary and asked for nominations as follows:

**Treasurer:**

*A motion was made by Bill Gipson and seconded by Carlos Haley to nominate Linda Eis for Treasurer. No additional nominations were made, the motion was approved unanimously.*

**Secretary:**

*A motion was made by Carlos Haley and seconded by Anita Oplotnik to nominate Laura Boyd for Board Secretary. No additional nominations were made, the motion was approved unanimously.*

**Vice Chair:**

*A motion was made by T. Mark Elliott and seconded by Ron Richard to nominate Anita Oplotnik for Board Vice Chair. No additional nominations were made, the motion was approved unanimously.*

**Chair:**

*A motion was made by Anita Oplotnik and seconded by Ron Richard to nominate Alison Hershewe for Board Chair. No additional nominations were made, the motion was approved unanimously.*

**Future Meeting Date:**

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Friday, September 10, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

**Closed Executive Session:**

Chairwoman Hershewe noted the Board needed to go into closed Executive Session pertaining to the following state statutes:

**RSMo 610.021 (1)** Legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving a public governmental body and any confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body or its representatives and its attorneys; and

**RSMo 610.021 (3)** Hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting of particular employees by a public governmental body when personal information about the employee is discussed or recorded.

*A motion to go into a closed Executive Session was made by Bill Gipson and seconded by Anita Oplotnik under RSMo 610.021 (1 & 3). A roll call was made by Laura Boyd, Board Secretary, with each attending Board member voting in favor of the closed Executive Session.*

*At the conclusion of the Executive Session, a motion was duly made and passed to adjourn the meeting.*

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Chair

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Secretary