

# MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY

## Board of Governors

### Minutes

Thursday, July 23, 2020

Billingsly Student Center, Ballroom

In Person or Via Conference Call

A Special meeting of the Board of Governors took place on Thursday, July 23, 2020 to discuss the FY21 budget and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m. by Alison Hershewe, Chairwoman. Governors in attendance were T. Mark Elliott, Carlos Haley, Alison Hershewe and Ron Richard. Governors attending (via phone) were Bill Gipson, Mariann Morgan, Anita Oplotnik, and Dr. Rosenberg. Others in attendance were Jared Bruggeman, Dr. Paula Carson, Jon Dermott, Darren Fullerton, Dr. Brad Hodson, Rob Yust, Dr. Dean Van Galen, Linda Eis, and Laura Boyd.

Chairwoman Hershewe welcomed everyone to the meeting including, Dr. Van Galen to his first MSSU Board of Governors meeting, and reminded everyone that today's meeting would be taking the place of the scheduled August 12, 2020 meeting. Chairwoman Hershewe also noted a new ad hoc committee has been added to help in the Coronavirus Task Force on campus.

#### **Budget Audit Committee (Carlos Haley):**

Governor Haley noted the Budget Audit Committee met before today's Board meeting to discuss the FY21 Budget and acknowledged everyone for their time and attention to this project. Governor Haley noted due to the challenges with COVID-19 and state appropriations, changes are inevitable, but does remain optimistic - that together working as a team - it will be manageable for this coming year.

Governor Haley also noted that every employee should do what they can to increase our student population to help weather additional revenue offsets moving forward.

On behalf of the Budget Audit Committee, Governor Haley brought forward a recommendation before the board to authorize the Administration to adopt a revenue budget of \$70.7 million for FY2021.

\*Governor Haley noted: the proposal will be re-evaluated in six months.

*A motion was made by Carlos Haley and seconded by T. Mark Elliott to authorize the Administration to adopt a revenue budget of \$70.7 million for FY2021 (which will be re-evaluated in six months). Motion passed unanimously. (A copy of the FY2021 Budget is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book).*

In addition, on behalf of the Budget Audit Committee, Governor Haley brought forward a proposal of a Voluntary Retirement Incentive program. Currently there are 57 faculty and staff members who meet criteria for this opportunity.

*A motion was made by Ron Richard and seconded by Anita Oplotnik to approve the Voluntary Retirement Incentive program as presented. Motion passed unanimously. (A copy of the Voluntary Retirement Incentive program is attached to the minutes in the permanent record book).*

#### **Pandemic Advisory Committee (Bill Gipson):**

Governor Gipson noted this committee was appointed by Chairwoman Hershewe mid-June, 2020. The selected members include Governor's Mariann Morgan, Dr. Rosenberg, Ron Richard, and himself. The committee's task, set by Chairwoman Hershewe, is: "In consultation with the University's COVID

**Pandemic Advisory Committee (continued):**

Task Force, investigate and review methods and contingencies to accomplish the University's mission safely, effectively, and efficiently during the COVID pandemic."

Governor Gipson noted the committee met June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 and in addition to the committee members, most of the other Governors were able to participate. Although no vote was taken, there was a broad support for a face covering policy at the university.

Governor Gipson noted the University did in fact adopt a policy that went into effect on July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Governor Gipson also noted the committee met again yesterday (July 22, 2020) and shared with the Board some highlights from Mr. Fullerton, who chairs the University's Task Force:

- There has been a broad campus involvement on the task force;
- There are quarantine requirements for those arriving on campus from outside the continental United States;
- Resident students are expected to execute an assumption of risk statement with an expectation of acknowledgment of the policy by non-resident students; and
- IT is testing an app called Campus Clear, developed by Creighton University to assist with communications, contact tracing and personal health screening. The committee expressed security concerns, particularly personal health information security, but IT has assured the security protocols are solid.
- 10,000 masks have been ordered for faculty, students and staff. Face shields have also been ordered for all faculty.
- The committee anticipates face-to-face classes in the fall, including fall and Thanksgiving breaks. Faculty are expected to be prepared to hold online or hybrid format contingencies.
- Rentals of university facilities to outside entities will not be allowed through the end of 2020.

Governor Gipson noted at the time of the committee meeting yesterday (July 22, 2020), the disinfection of classroom, labs and other areas of instruction was still under review and discussion by the task force. After the meeting yesterday, the task force settled on the purchase of disinfecting wipes to be placed in each of the classrooms or other locations where students and instruction will be taking place. (Southern's physical plant will be tasked with purchasing the wipes and disinfectant). Students will be expected and encouraged to wipe down their work area/desks prior to class beginning. Governor Gipson also emphasized – "this is a lot of disinfecting wipes and I think obtaining the quantity needed will be challenging at best."

Governor Gipson noted while participating in the weekly University Task Force conference calls, he has found the task force to be well attended, quite functional and individual engagement high. Governor Gipson also noted the members of the task force, in his opinion, are doing an excellent job with a most difficult task.

*Chairwoman Hershewe asked if there were any questions.*

Governor Haley noted due to Southern having the same consistent schedule in the fall, questioned Thanksgiving and Christmas breaks, and if students would have campus re-entry protocols or additional screening if necessary.

Darren Fullerton noted it's difficult to restrict students from traveling. The app Governor Gipson mentioned earlier will be used by students to self-analyze each day, but at this time there are no restrictions to leave or come back to the United States.

*Chairwoman Hershewe asked Mr. Fullerton to elaborate on how students would be living in the dorms.*

Mr. Fullerton noted Residence Life has been working with the Health Center on campus and the Joplin Health Department. There will be no changes to the Quads (4 bedroom/4 bath), and the Health

**Pandemic Advisory Committee (continued):**

Department did not recommend changes to the apartments, however; adequate spacing of 5% occupancy is being recommended for isolation and/or quarantine.

Mr. Fullerton also noted most universities in Missouri are asking if a student is living in a three-hour radius, to go home and quarantine (MSSU will be following this protocol as well). Mr. Fullerton noted dorm visitors will be limited, check in and out times have been scheduled for each student, and the men's and women's residences will have low occupancy.

*Chairwoman Hershewe asked Dr. Carson how the in-person classrooms would be set up.*

Dr. Carson noted the university would be operating at a 50% capacity with physical markings and seating configuration, scheduled times for students to enter the classroom and staged exits. Dr. Carson noted the administration is asking faculty to have face-to-face classes every week to ensure that every student has the opportunity for face-to-face interaction with the faculty member while respecting the social distancing, and also teaching online for students who want or need to learn on-line (the instructors will literally be repeating the class twice). Dr. Carson also noted the administration is asking faculty members to spray down their classrooms after each class, students to take responsibility and disinfect, and perhaps offering voluntary community service hours to students who would like to help with sanitation on campus. Dr. Carson also noted at this time her team is looking at venues on campus that have not been used as classrooms before, to meet the demands of social distancing.

Mr. Fullerton noted since the last Task Force Committee meeting (July 22, 2020), Southern's COVID website page has been revised with new information and frequently asked questions. Mr. Fullerton acknowledged University Relations in gathering all the information that the committee has been putting together in a rough draft brochure "Returning to Campus" that is currently being circulated through the committee for comments and additions. Mr. Fullerton anticipates the brochure to be published, and on the webpage next week for faculty and staff so that everyone understands the safety concerns and what Missouri Southern is doing for the fall semester.

Dr. Van Galen noted there have been two Q & A Town Hall meetings regarding COVID-19 concerns, and FY21's budget. Dr. Van Galen noted we do not have all the answers at this time regarding COVID-19 but, the administration and local health authorities are certainly working through this together.

Governor Gipson noted he would like clarification from Mr. Fullerton regarding faculty and staff disinfecting classrooms

Mr. Fullerton noted in conclusion of yesterday's Task Force meeting, the preferred method would be for each student or faculty member to clean their personal areas utilizing the hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes that will be distributed from the administration.

**Academic Affairs Committee (Dr. Paula Carson)**

Dr. Carson noted at this time there are 22 unfilled faculty positions for the 2020-2021 academic year and 20 faculty members who are on the list for the Voluntary Retirement Incentive program. The Academic Affairs budget cuts will include the loss of 10% of faculty, and an additional 50% operational cut with greater impact on Library and International. Travel will be restricted and conferences cancelled as well. Dr. Carson noted while this is necessary, we can manage while offering student progress and quality of learning.

Governor Oplotnik noted this committee has requested to review all programs under the direction of Dr. Carson and Dr. Van Galen - and the leadership team of Missouri Southern - and present that information to the Board at the next meeting.

**Closed Executive Session:**

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

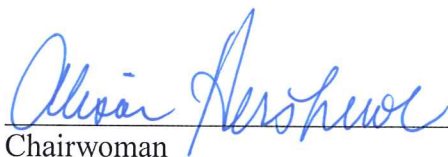
**RSMo 610.021 (1)** Legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving a public governmental body and any confidential or privileged communications between a public governmental body or its representatives and its attorneys. However, any minutes, vote or settlement agreement relating to legal actions, causes of action or litigation involving a public governmental body or any agent or entity representing its interests or acting on its behalf or with its authority, including any insurance company acting on behalf of a public government body as its insured, shall be made public upon final disposition of the matter voted upon or upon the signing by the parties of the settlement agreement, unless, prior to final disposition, the settlement agreement is ordered closed by a court after a written finding that the adverse impact to a plaintiff or plaintiffs to the action clearly outweighs the public policy considerations of section 610.011, however, the amount of any moneys paid by, or on behalf of, the public governmental body shall be disclosed; provided, however, in matters involving the exercise of the power of eminent domain, the vote shall be announced or become public immediately following the action on the motion to authorize institution of such a legal action. Legal work product shall be considered a closed record; and

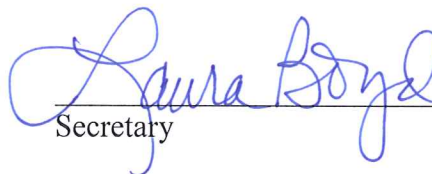
**RSMo 310.021 (3)** Hiring, firing, disciplining or promoting of particular employees by a public governmental body when personal information about the employee is discussed or recorded.

*For the purpose of going into closed executive session, a Roll Call was made by Laura Boyd, Board Secretary, with each attending Board member voting in favor of the closed session. Results of the Roll Call are as follows:*

T. Mark Elliott – present  
Bill Gipson – present  
Carlos Haley – present  
Alison Hershewe – present  
Mariann Morgan – present  
Anita Oplotnik – present  
Ron Richard – present  
Dr. Rosenberg – present

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

  
Chairwoman

  
Secretary