

FLORIDA **A&M** UNIVERSITY

Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes
February 13, 2025

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Kristin Harper, Chair

Chair Harper called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Trustees Brown, Crossman, Ellison, Figgers, Gainey, Gibbons, Harper, Lawson, May, Perry, and Reed established a quorum. Trustee White joined the meeting later.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no requests for public comments.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Timothy Beard, Interim President

- **University Achievements:**
 - Ranked as the #1 HBCU in America.
 - Focus on social mobility and research advancements.
 - Strategic plan updates, including goals to improve academic coaching, faculty and staff retention, and licensure passage rates.
 - Progress on a \$25 million fundraising goal and a \$60 million R&D expenditure target.
 - Importance of maintaining a balanced budget, with potential hiring freeze if necessary.
- **Recognitions:**
 - Acknowledgment of newly appointed Trustees: Earnie Ellison, Emery Gainey, and Nicole Washington.
 - Recognition of employees for extraordinary service.
- **FAMU College of Law Report:**
 - Study conducted by Attorney Simone Marstiller detailing challenges and improvement recommendations.
 - Establishment of a Special Committee chaired by Trustee Belvin Perry to address bar exam passage rates, academic programming, and other key issues.
 - Consultant will be engaged to advise the committee.
 - Committee update scheduled for the June 2025 Board meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Trustee Kristin Harper, Board Chair

- Chair Harper thanked President Beard and his team for their leadership.

- **Highlights:**
 - Highest four-year graduation rate in FAMU’s 137-year history.
 - Assurance that the University will overcome the challenges posed by the newly released Board of Governors SUS 30 Strategic Plan.
 - Special recognition of Trustee Kelvin Lawson for his work on the Board of Governors Strategic Planning Committee.
 - Upcoming events:
 - **March 25, 2025** - Trustee Lobbying Day at the Capitol
 - **March 26, 2025** - Board of Governors meeting at FAMU
 - **April 9, 2025** - FAMU Day at the Capitol
- **Recognitions:**
 - Former Trustees Otis Cliatt and Kenny Stone received plaques for their service.
 - New trustees Nicole Washington, Emery Gainey, and Earnie Ellison were welcomed and allowed to make remarks.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT

Trustee Loryn May, SGA President

- Reported significant progress with 78% of their platform completed.
- **Key Achievements:**
 - Successful events like World Mental Health Day Expos, student vendor surveys, and the homecoming experience.
 - Ongoing conversations with FAMU Police to address campus safety concerns.
 - Increased student engagement through initiatives such as SGA Week, Pie A Student Leader, and advocacy drives.

FACULTY SENATE REPORT

Trustee Jamal Brown, Faculty Senate President

- **Key Points:**
 - Faculty and staff continue to excel in academic programs, research, and community work.
 - Updates from the February 2025 Board of Governors meeting included discussions on faculty contributions to publications, research, and community development.
 - Ongoing efforts include the compensation study, DRS salaries, AI engagement, and faculty involvement.

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH UPDATE

Trustee Deveron Gibbons, Committee Chair

- **Timeline:**
 - Contract with Myers McRae Search Firm executed on December 28, 2024.
 - Initial meeting held January 14, 2025.
 - Presidential Search Committee's second meeting held on February 4, 2025, to develop a marketing plan and criteria.
 - Listening sessions scheduled on February 17, 2025 with stakeholders across the University community.

- Candidate recommendations will be presented at the June 2025 Board meeting.
- **Motion:** Trustee Perry moved to approve the position criteria. Trustee Reed seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Trustee Perry, Committee Member

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee met on yesterday. The following trustees were present: Jamal Brown, Earnest Ellison, Natlie Figgers, Loryn May, Belvin Perry, and Nicole Washington. A quorum was established.

The committee recommended approval of the following items:

- Minutes for the December 4, 2024 meeting and
- Amendment to Regulation 2.015 (Admissions)

The committee also heard updates on admissions, financial aid, and hazing prevention. In addition, an update on the academic prioritization was provided.

Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee

Trustee Michael White, Chair

Yesterday the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee met. The Committee took up two action items and hosted a Risk workshop on Risk-aware Governance.

ACTION ITEMS

The Committee approved the **Minutes** for the December 4, 2024, meeting; and the Performance-based Funding Data Integrity Audit and Certification. These items are included in the Consent Agenda for the full Board meeting.

Deputy Chief Operating Officer, and Chief Risk Officer Deidre Melton facilitated a Board discussion on Risk-aware Governance.

Chief Compliance and Ethics Officer Calhoun and Chief Privacy Officer Baker provided informational items.

Deputy Chief Operation Officer Melton provided updates on the Gift Report corrective actions and the Office of Enterprise Risk Management.

Finally, VP Maleszewski and Audit Director Wright presented several information items including:

- I. Audit and Investigative Follow-up
- II. Internal and External Audit Updates
- III. Division of Audit Update

Budget, Finance, and Facilities Committee

Trustee Craig Reed, Chair

The Budget, Finance, and Facilities Committee met on Wednesday, February 12, 2025. The February meeting agenda consisted of four (4) action items and three (3) information items.

Action Items:

The action items consisted of **(1) Minutes from December 4, 2024, Committee Meeting;** **(2) The approval of Construction Manager- Contract Authority for four projects:** (a) Campus Utility Infrastructure North Loop, (b) Howard Hall Renovation Project (c) Benjamin Banneker Demolition Project and (d) FAMU Student Health Learning Center Renovation Project; **(3) Resolution to Approve Drainage Easement for Southeast Housing Partners;** **(4) Authorization for the installation of a Commemorative Bench in Honor Dr. Norma Solomon White.**

Information Items:

The Budget, Finance, and Facilities Committee heard presentations by SVP Rebecca Brown, Trustee Reed, and Dr. Erick Akins on three (3) information items.

The Sr. Vice President for Finance and Administration's Report, facilitated by SVP Rebecca Brown, included **a) Quarterly Financial Report – Budget to Actuals,** **(b) Project Updates,** and **(c) Compensation Study Update.** The **second** information item presented was the Budget, Finance, and Facilities Committee Action Plan 2024-2025. This was followed by the **third** information item, Dr. Akins' presentation on the Stimulus Funding Expenditure Report to Date.

Items identified for follow-up action:

1. Prepare and provide a spreadsheet detailing all ongoing construction projects, including funding sources and status updates.
2. Develop and provide a detailed timeline to expedite the conduct of an updated feasibility study to accommodate the anticipated growth in student population on campus.
3. Continue discussions on public private partnership (P3) opportunities to focus on their potential benefits for campus development.
4. Establish a subcommittee with experts and within the Foundation to develop a strategic plan to assess the real estate and asset footprint on and around campus.
5. Host an annual Small Business Expo to attract more businesses from the local community and student entrepreneurs.

The Small Business Symposium will be added the June 2025 agenda.

Direct Support Organizations and Athletics Committee

Trustee Kristin Harper, Chair

The Direct Support Organizations and Athletics Committee convened on February 12, 2025.

The Committee recommended approval of the following items:

- 1) Approval of six (6) Foundation Board Members for another 4-year term on the Board of Directors.
- 2) Approval of the Faculty Senate Representative for another 1-year term on the Foundation Board of Directors
- 3) Approval of the SGA Representative for a 1-year term on the Foundation Board of Directors.
- 4) Approval of the Men's Basketball Coach Contract Extension.

The Committee was presented with the following informational items:

- 1) The 2024-2025 BOT Annual Committee Action Plan.

- 2) Divisional Updates for University Advancement and the Direct Support Organizations.
- 3) AD Suggs provided an update on the Athletics Department.
- 4) SWAC Commissioner Charles McClelland provided an update on the House Settlement and its impact on NCAA Member Institutions.

Governance Committee

Trustee Belvin Perry, Chair

The Governance Committee met yesterday and approved the December 4, 2024 committee minutes.

The committee provided timelines for the completion of the president's evaluation and the board's self-evaluation. Board members were encouraged to complete the self-evaluations as soon as possible so that data analysis can be completed in a timely manner. Afterwards, Vice President Sowell presented the Government Relations update.

Important dates to remember:

- **March 25, 2025** - FAMU BOT Lobbying Day at the Capitol
- **March 26, 2026** - Board of Governors meeting at FAMU
- **April 9, 2025** – FAMU Day at the Capitol

Follow-up items:

- Liaison to schedule meeting with Committee Chair and President Beard to discuss evaluation expectations.
- VP Sowell to revisit Blueprint Tallahassee for possible additional funding for university projects.
- Research avenues to increase budget for FAMU Day at the Capitol.
- Conduct training for University stakeholders for FAMU Day at the Capitol.
- Identify Rattlers in legislative roles throughout the country and locally.

Special Committee on Athletics Operating Model

Trustee Deveron Gibbons, Chair

The Special Committee on the Athletics Operating Model met yesterday and Chair Harper presented the committee charge which included the purpose, scope of work, alignment with strategic plan, timeframe, responsibilities, goals, and committee members.

Strategic Planning and Performance Measures Committee

Trustee Kristin Harper, Chair

The Strategic Planning and Performance Measures Committee met on Wednesday, February 12, 2024. The meeting was attended by Chair Lawson, Vice Chair Harper, Trustee Brown, Trustee Crossman and Trustee Washington. A quorum was present.

Action Items:

Approval of Minutes from December 4, 2024 meeting.

The committee approved the minutes from the December 4, 2024 meeting.

Chair Harper introduced an overview of the SUS 2030 Strategic Plan, highlighting its evolution, impact, and FAMU's alignment with the goals. He noted FAMU has the #1 system in the country and is the most affordable for students to attend.

- **Dr. Jones** presented a PowerPoint on the SUS 2030 Strategic Plan, covering:
 - 2030 Strategic Timeline
 - Revised Mission
 - 2030 Values Impact
 - Strategic Priorities
 - One SUS System fostering
 - National Rankings
- **Discussion Points:**
 - Action Items for the next meeting:
 1. Dr. Jones to gather information on Elevating Student Success by College and School.
 2. Explore what needs to change for students not eligible for PELL to graduate at comparable rates.
 3. Trustee Brown to investigate how DRS metrics can be integrated into the SUS 2030 Strategic Plan.

CONSENT AGENDA

- **Items Approved Unanimously:**
 - Board Minutes (December 5, 2024).
 - Amendment to Regulation 2.015 (Admissions).
 - Performance-based Funding Data Integrity Audit/Certification.
 - Contract Authority – Construction Manager
 - Campus Utility Infrastructure North Loop
 - Howard Hall Renovation Project
 - Benjamin Banneker Demolition Project
 - FAMU Student Health Learning Center Renovation Project
- **Items Voted on Separately and Approved Unanimously**
 - Resolution for Drainage Easement for Southeast Housing Partners.
 - Authorization for Installation of a Commemorative Bench for Dr. Norma Solomon White.
- **Removed Items:**
 - **DSO Board Members:** Trustee Lawson motioned to table the re-election of Foundation Directors with the exception of the SGA Representative until bylaws are reviewed and approved passed with a 9-2 vote. The roll call vote was:

Trustee Brown	Yes	Trustee Lawson	Yes
Trustee Crossman	Yes	Trustee May	Yes
Trustee Ellison	Yes	Trustee Perry	Yes
Trustee Figgers	Absent	Trustee Reed	No
Trustee Gainey	Yes	Trustee Washington	Absent
Trustee Gibbons	Yes	Trustee White	Yes
Trustee Harper	No		
 - **DSO Board Member SGA Representative:** Approved unanimously.
 - **Men’s Basketball Coach Contract Extension:** Approved unanimously.

CLOSED SESSION FOR CYBERSECURITY

A closed session was held for cybersecurity discussions, led by VP Joseph Maleszewski. The Board then returned to open session.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business for the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.