

FLORIDA **A&M** UNIVERSITY
Board of Trustees

Meeting Minutes

October 12, 2023

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Kelvin Lawson, Chair

Chair Lawson called the meeting to order. Trustees Brown, Cliatt, Crossman, Harper, Lawson, Mondelus, Perry, Stone, Washington, and White established a quorum. Trustees Figgers and Gibbons joined the meeting after the roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no requests for public comments.

HONORING ALTHEA GIBSON

Former Congressman Al Lawson addressed the Board regarding a proposal to name a portion of Wahnish Way, Althea Gibson Way. He shared that Althea Gibson came to FAMU in 1949, two days after completing high school. She was recruited to FAMU to Coach Jake Gaither on a basketball scholarship; however, she quickly became a pioneer in tennis. After graduating from FAMU, she became the first African American to win Wimbledon and the US Open. She also won eleven grand slam tennis tournaments. She is a member of the International Women’s Sports Hall of Fame.

Because of her great accomplishments, Mr. Lawson asked the Board to support naming a portion of Wahnish Way after Althea Gibson. He asked the Board to formally request that the City of Tallahassee and Leon County rename Wahnish Way, from FAMU Way to Orange Avenue “Althea Gibson Way.” He said that there are only about three private houses on that section and the rest of the property is owned by FAMU.

Chair Lawson recommended that the Board offer a motion to allow President Robinson and the team to propose this action to the City of Tallahassee for approval. Trustee Perry moved that the Board of Trustees authorize President Robinson and the administration to take action necessary to name this street after the great Althea Gibson. Trustee Harper seconded the motion, and it was approved without opposition.

PRESIDENT’S EVALUATION

The next order of business was approval of the President’s evaluation. Chair Lawson moved that the Board accept the evaluation, as presented by the Governance Committee. The motion was seconded by Trustee Perry and passed with a unanimous vote.

CONTRACT EXTENSION

Trustee Perry moved approval of the one-year extension of President Robinson’s contract. Trustee Cliatt offered the second, and the full Board approved it.

TRIBUTE TO CHAIR LAWSON

Before the transition to the election of officers, President Robinson presented Chair Lawson with a plaque, in recognition of his service to the University as a member of the Board of Trustees from 2011 – 2023 and his service as chair of the Board from 2016 – 2023. Members of the Board also thanked Chair Lawson for his service and leadership of the Board.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Next, Chair Lawson recognized Trustee Stone to oversee the election. Trustee Stone se noted that candidates were nominated during the June meeting, but according to Robert’s Rules of Order, the Board was still required to open the floor for nominations.

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For Board chair, Trustee Kristin Harper was nominated. There were no further nominations, and she was elected unanimously.

Next, Trustee Stone stated that Trustee Deveron Gibbons was nominated for vice chair during the June meeting. He then opened the floor for additional nominations. Trustee Cliatt nominated Trustee Stone for vice chair, and he accepted the nomination. Due to Trustee Stone accepting the nomination, Trustee Lawson oversaw that election and asked for a roll call vote.

<u>Trustee</u>	<u>Vote</u>
Trustee Brown	Gibbons
Trustee Cliatt	Stone
Trustee Crossman	Gibbons
Trustee Figgers	Gibbons
Trustee Gibbons	Gibbons
Trustee Harper	Gibbons
Trustee Lawson	Gibbons
Trustee Mondelus	Gibbons
Trustee Perry	Gibbons
Trustee Reed	absent
Trustee Stone	Stone
Trustee Washington	Gibbons
Trustee White	Gibbons

Trustee Deveron Gibbons was elected vice chair of the Board of Trustees.

Newly elected chair, Trustee Kristin Harper took a few moments to congratulate Trustee Gibbons on his election and to thank the Board for selecting her as its chair. She said that becoming chair of the Board is one of her greatest honors and responsibilities and credited FAMU with preparing

her for this role. Trustee Harper said that she plans to steward FAMU so that thousands of other students can realize their potential and discover what they can become.

REPORTS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Larry Robinson, President

President Robinson shared that the University actively enhances the community through teaching and learning, research, and community involvement. Student Success remains a top priority as the University is committed to transforming students' lives – meeting them where they are, to guarantee that they realize their potential, now and in the future.

During the 2022-2023 academic year, FAMU was recognized for notable achievements and accolades. As it continues its quest to become the first HBCU to obtain the Research 1 Carnegie Classification, the University community is proud of its move to number 91, in the US News & World Report rankings of national public universities. FAMU is the Highest Ranked Public HBCU for the fifth consecutive year and is Number 21 among all colleges and universities in social mobility. FAMU is also ranked as the Number 3 HBCU overall.

President Robinson stated that the University is moving towards its 2027 targets and that significant strides have been made toward his goals. The successes include:

- A majority of the first-time in college, full-time freshmen from Fall 2021 returned to FAMU for their sophomore year.
- Over the last five years, FAMU's four-year graduation rate increased from 22.5% to 28.4%.
- The University developed data-driven licensure pass rates action plans for nursing, law, pharmacy, and physical therapy.
- University fundraising efforts surpassed \$25.7 million for FY 2022-2023.
- FAMU also received a record \$96.4 million in research awards.

- The University is implementing operational efficiency and customer service initiatives in support of strategic priorities five and three, Organizational Effectiveness and Transformation, and Leveraging the Brand.
- The University partnered with the Segal Group, a national human resources consulting firm, to evaluate and provide recommendations for competitive compensation to attract, retain, and engage a talented workforce.

President Robinson shared a video highlighting accomplishments and events.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT

Trustee Lundy Mondelus, SGA President

Trustee Mondelus introduced her branch heads, covered her goals and strategies, gave an update on her at-risk projects, and highlighted the enhancement of student life and her progress on her goals. Her goals are:

- Encourage and enforce professionalism,
- Reconstruct outdated material and documents,
- Build and repair key relationships with administration, faculty, and staff,
- Realign with the purpose of student government, and
- Repair trust with students to increase transparency and accessibility between students and SGA.

The brand for this year is “Thinking Like Rattlers,” which encourages going back to the basics. Their strategies for achieving the goals include attending conferences and workshops, tracking the progression of goals and measures, and encouraging and implementing strict accountability measures related to professionalism.

Regarding at-risk projects, she wants to create a sustainable environment. To enhance students’ lives, the SGA is considering hosting an HBCU conference and a career readiness event and foster a better relationship with the College of Law.

To date, the SGA has hosted its inauguration, 80 Gadsden County students on campus, completed SGA week, and hosted its annual crab boil.

FACULTY SENATE REPORT

Trustee Jamal Brown, Faculty Senate President

Trustee Brown shared that the Faculty Senate had its swearing-in ceremony, with General Counsel Denise Wallace officiating. He thanked President Robinson, COO Palm, and Provost Watson for attending the Faculty Senate meetings. Three faculty members received awards:

- Dr. Askal Ali – Faculty Advisor and Mentor of the Year, College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences and Public Health
- Dr. Rebecca Blankenship - Advanced Teacher of the Year, College of Education
- Dr. Lucy Ngatia – Teacher of the Year, College of Agricultural and Food Science

The Faculty Senate Executive Board includes Dr. Jamal Brown - President, Dr. Ezzeldin Aly – Vice President, and Dr. Jian Jones - Secretary. The Senate coordinator is Ms. Tenele Dennard.

The September Senate meeting had a special guest, Dr. Maurice Edington, President of the University of District of Columbia. He was invited to share in the celebration of the University breaking into the top one hundred.

In closing, Trustee Brown shared his presidential initiatives: interdisciplinary research collaboration, striking scholars roll call (highlighting faculty across the campus for research awards), and social events for faculty.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Trustee Nicole Washington, Committee Member

Trustee Washington reported that the committee recommended approval of the academic calendar for the 2024 - 2025 school year and requests for leave of absence from Nandi, Reilly, Amina Shakir, and Elise Simmons. The committee also heard updates on the Career Center, hazing prevention, distance learning, and post-tenure review.

Audit and Compliance Committee

Trustee Belvin, Committee Vice Chair

Trustee Perry was recognized and shared that the committee approved its June 8, 2023 meeting minutes. It also approved the risk appetite statement and the Division of Audit's work plan. Chief Compliance and Ethics Officer Rica Calhoun, Vice President Maleszewski, and Deidre Melton presented informational items and provided office updates.

Budget, Finance, and Facilities Committee

Trustee Belvin Perry, Committee Member

Trustee Perry shared that the committee recommended approval of the 2022 – 2030 Campus Master Plan update. It also heard updates regarding the University Ticket Box Office, the Quarterly Financial Report, the compensation study update, the stimulus funding expenditures year-to-date report, and the 2023-2024 Budget Finance and Financial Committee Action Plan.

Direct Support Organizations Committee

Trustee Belvin Perry, Committee Chair

The committee recommended the approval of two new FAMU Foundation members: FAMU Faculty Senate representative Dr. Ebenezer Oriaku and SGA representative Kyla Mays. The

committee heard updates on the DSO Committee Action plan and divisional activities. He reported that University Advancement raised a record \$25.7 million dollars for the 2022 - 2023 fiscal year and as of October 4, 2023, it has raised another \$11 million dollars. The committee received updates from the FAMU Foundation, the FAMU National Alumni Association, and the FAMU Rattler Boosters.

Governance Committee

Trustee Kenny Stone, Committee Chair

The Governance Committee recommended approval of:

- President Robinson’s annual evaluation
- Extending President Robinson’s contract through December 2024
- Granting President Robinson an 18% bonus; and
- Approving the Office of Public Policy Engagement

The committee also received an update regarding Government Relations, President Robinson’s goals, the candidates for BOT chair and vice chair, and the Governance Committee’s Action Plan.

Special Committee on Athletics

Trustee Kelvin Lawson

The Special Committee on Athletics convened and approved the June 7, 2023 meeting minutes. The committee recommended the approval of the Women’s basketball coach’s contract. Athletic Director Sykes presented her report, which included updates on the Athletic Action Plan and the Athletics’ overall department and budget.

Special Committee of the College of Law

Trustee Otis Cliatt, Committee Chair

Dean Keller provided a report on the status of the College of Law’s improvement initiatives. She shared the profile of the incoming Fall 2023 cohort and discussed the July 2023 bar passage rate for first-time exam takers. During the discussion, Dean Keller indicated that the College of Law needs a writing center to help address the students’ writing skills. The Committee had a robust discussion regarding the possible root causes of the performance on the bar exam and viable solutions. The dean was told to look at short-term and long-term fixes to address the bar passage rate.

Strategic Planning/Performance Measures Committee

Trustee Kristin Harper, Committee Chair

The committee received information regarding the implementation for year one of the 2022 to 2027 strategic plan. Dr. Jones highlighted the strategic priorities, performance indicators, progress during year one, and the year two implementation timeline. Chair Harper shared that she provided follow-up items for the next meeting: the strategic planning process, an update on the strategic priorities, year two action updates, and the implementation timeline for year two.

CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Harper reviewed the Consent Agenda with the Board. She then removed the Women’s Basketball coach’s contract from the Consent Agenda, as it would be voted on separately. Trustee Lawson moved approval of the Consent Agenda. Trustee Gibbons seconded the motion, and it passed with a unanimous vote.

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- A. Board of Trustees Minutes (BT)
 - 1. BT1 June 8, 2023
 - 2. BT2 August 3, 2023
 - 3. BT3 September 27, 2023

- B. Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASA)
 - 1. ASA1 Academic Calendar 2024 – 2025
 - 2. ASA2 Leaves of Absence
 - a. Nandi Riley
 - b. Ameenah Shakir
 - c. Elise Simmons

- C. Athletics Committee (AC)
 - ~~1. AC1 Women’s Basketball Coach’s Employment Agreement~~

- D. Audit and Compliance Committee (AACC)
 - 1. AACC1 Risk Appetite Statement
 - 2. AACC2 Division of Audit Workplan Updates
 - 3. AACC3 Office of Compliance and Ethics Annual Report

- E. Budget, Finance, and Facilities Committee (BFF)
 - 1. BFF1 2020-2030 Campus Master Plan

- F. Direct Support Organizations Committee (DSO)
 - 1. DSO1 FAMU Foundation Members
 - 2. Faculty Representative
 - 3. Student Representative

- G. Governance Committee (GC)
 - 1. GC1 President’s 2023-2024 Goals
 - 2. GC2 President’s Annual Evaluation
 - 3. GC3 President’s Contract Extension and Bonus
 - 4. GC4 Office of Public Policy Engagement

AD Sykes and Attorney Self provided information regarding the women’s basketball coach, Bridgette Gordon’s experience, and her proposed contract. Trustee Perry moved approval of the contract. Trustee Lawson seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

CLOSED SESSIONS FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Attorney Kentavia Coates provided instructions regarding the closed sessions on collective bargaining. She indicated she would be joined in the session by President Robinson, COO Palm, Provost Watson, VP Brown, Dr. Reginald Perry, Attorney Larken, Attorney Thomas, and Dr. Scott.

The Board moved into its closed sessions.

The closed sessions concluded, and the Board reconvened into its open session. Trustee Lawson moved that the Board ratify the FAMU Board of Trustees and AFSCME tentative agreement of Articles 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 17, 19, and 20, including agreement to Article 23 through an MOU, which collectively represents the full book of the collective bargaining agreement between the FAMU Board of Trustees and AFSCME and authorizes the President to sign the agreement on behalf of the Board as the public employer. The motion was seconded by Trustee Perry and was approved by a unanimous vote.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for the Board, the meeting adjourned.