

**MINUTES OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY**

January 9, 2023

The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of Athens State University (the “University”) held a meeting at 12:00 noon on Monday, January 9, 2023, in Sandridge Student Center 126, Athens, Alabama.

I. PRESIDING: Senator Arthur Orr

The Board of Trustees Executive Committee meeting was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by Senator Orr. On roll call, the following members of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees of the University answered present:

Senator Arthur Orr (Chair)

Mr. Jim America

Mr. Dus Rogers (electronically)

Mrs. Missy Ming Smith

Cathy Dickens was absent.

The members present and in-person constituted a quorum to conduct business.

Also present, Dr. Catherine Wehlburg, Jackie Gooch, Secretary to the Board of Trustees (Recording), Mr. Shane Black (Legal Counsel), Mr. Jonathan Craft, Dr. Keith Ferguson, Dr. Kim LaFevor, Ms. Sarah McAbee, and Mr. Mike McCoy. In addition, 31 other individuals joined via zoom.

II. Approval of Agenda

On a motion made by Mrs. Smith and seconded by Mr. America, the Executive Committee approved the agenda by affirmative votes (4-0) of members answering present.

III. Approval of Meeting Minutes – On a motion made by Mrs. Smith and seconded by Mr. America, the Executive Committee approved the November 14, 2022 minutes by affirmative votes (4-0) of members answering present.

IV. Reports

Financial Update – McCoy

Mr. McCoy distributed a draft of Budget Amendment #1. Mr. McCoy reviewed the details of this amendment that covers the shortfall for the Fall semester (approximately \$650,000) and an update on where the budget currently stands for Spring (shortfall of approximately \$215,000). The shortfall for spring will change daily from now until next Wednesday. January 18th is the

drop date and we should have more accurate numbers on January 19th. Might be some fluctuation from January 19th until the official census date when data is frozen on January 27th.

Mr. McCoy confirmed that the budget amendment that will be recommended on January 20th will include both the shortfall in Fall and the shortfall in Spring.

Senator Orr reiterated that we must operate “within our means”. There is no appetite to dip into reserves to cover day-to-day expenses. Other members of the Executive Committee concurred.

University Priorities – Dr. Wehlburg

Dr. Wehlburg was asked by the Chairman to provide a list of priorities for the University. Dr. Wehlburg provided an overview of these priorities.

Senator Orr thanked Dr. Wehlburg for stepping up on January 1st and her willingness to be the Acting President and stated that these priorities were a good start. Senator Orr reiterated that the Board has great confidence in Dr. Wehlburg’s capabilities. It is the desire of the Board to continue pushing the University forward and not just maintain. Other members of the Executive Committee concurred.

Interim President Recommendation/Interim President Expectations

Senator Orr reviewed a proposed recommendation for action from the Executive Committee to the full-board to be presented at the January 20th Board meeting. This recommendation states:

The Executive Committee of the Athens State University Board of Trustees recommends to the full board that:

1. Dr. Catherine Wehlburg be named as Interim President for Athens State University, effective January 20, 2023 and until a new President is appointed.
2. The Interim President Expectations be approved as presented.

On a motion made by Mr. Rogers and seconded by Mr. America, the Executive Committee approved this recommendation by affirmative votes (4-0) of members answering present. Mr. Rogers and Mrs. Smith echoed the former comments made by the Senator and reiterated the need to establish a leadership team that communicates.

V. Other Business – None.

VI. Adjournment

Senator Orr adjourned the meeting at 12:31 pm



ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION

DATE: January 20, 2023

ACTION ITEM TITLE: Appointment of Interim President
and Approval of Interim President
Expectations

RECOMMENDATION:

The Executive Committee of the Athens State University Board of Trustees recommends to the full board that:

1. Dr. Catherine Wehlburg be named as Interim President for Athens State University, effective January 20, 2023 and until a new President is appointed.
2. The Interim President Expectations be approved.

Senator Arthur Orr, Chair pro tempore

1/9/23
Date

Jim America, Vice Chair pro tempore

1/9/23
Date

Cathy Dickens

Date

Dus Rogers (electronic approval)

1/9/2023

Dus Rogers

Date

Missy Ming Smith

Date

Jackie Gooch

Jan. 9 2023
01/09/2023

Jackie Gooch, Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Date

INTERIM PRESIDENT EXPECTATIONS

In an effort to establish a platform for success of the 38th President of Athens State University, the Board of Trustees affirms the appointment of an Interim President whose primary role is to properly carry out the duties of the University President as outlined in the existing job description and any enabling legislation.

In addition to these duties and in concert with the University Cabinet, the Board of Trustees authorizes the Interim President to make any necessary changes that are in the best interest of the University and the students we serve, specifically those pertaining to the efficient operation of the institution, including but not limited to, a full review of current program and delivery offerings as well as primary and ancillary business units.

The Board also expects that the Interim President will follow university/operating policies and procedures and keep the Board apprised of actions taken concerning University affairs.

Further, the Board charges the Interim President with the following objectives:

1. **Enrollment:** Work with all areas of the University to stabilize and increase enrollment in undergraduate and graduate programs. **(Enrollment and Student Services)**
2. **Alumni Relations:** Increase Alumni Relations and Donor Support and begin discussions for planning the next major campaign. **(University Advancement)**
3. **Visibility:** Increase visibility of the University and the Alabama Center for the Arts locally, regionally, and nationally to include the development of a new marketing/PR strategy especially focusing on digital and interactive marketing. **(University Advancement)**
4. **Budgeting and Planning:** Monitor University revenues and expenditures in order to maintain financial viability and provide a mid-year budget for the Board. **(Financial Affairs)**
5. **Technology:** Monitor and ensure current technologies are planned for and in place in order to augment teaching, learning, and business best practices. **(Technology)**
6. **Community:** Provide focus and direction to the ongoing stewardship of building global, corporate, and community engagement. **(Global, Corporate, and Community Relations)**
7. **Academics:** Continue to build and review academic programs to ensure timely, relevant, and appropriate credentials. Ensure any new and existing programs remain fiscally sustainable. **(Academic Affairs)**

January 6, 2022
9:47 am

Priorities for Athens State University

Thoughts from Catherine Wehlburg

January 9, 2023

We are in almost-unprecedented times in higher education. We're seeing some of the very foundations of higher education being challenged in different ways -- and this means that universities will need to adapt and adjust while still holding true to their core mission and values. Athens State University has a 200-year history of adapting and thriving. And, as we enter into our 3rd century of educating students, we must focus on intentional priorities that will move us forward and boldly hone our approaches.

The following priorities are outlined as a way to move forward with an understanding of our history and a recognition that we are, once again, re-inventing Athens State to take advantage of our strengths and the many opportunities in front of us.

1. **Stabilize and grow enrollment**
 - a. Provide a strong presence at our community college partners
 - b. Identify high school students who are interested in our programs and guide them to a 4-year plan (recognizing that many bring a great deal of dual credit with them)
 - c. Continue to develop and clearly market our short-term credentials
 - d. Grow our learning partnerships to invite collaboration and tap into potential working adult student populations
 - e. Continue the academic master planning process to strengthen programs and better focus our degree and credential opportunities
2. **Increase alumni relations and donor/community support**
 - a. Build on existing Athens State alumni events to connect alumni to the institution
 - b. Grow the existing annual Giving Day and Annual Fund to provide ways for donors to support our students (through scholarships) and our programs (through gifts)
 - c. Continue to provide opportunities for alumni, community members, and friends to be better connected to Athens State with both in-person and virtual events
3. **Increase our visibility to our potential students, our community, and beyond**
 - a. Showcase our academic "signature programs"
 - b. Seek additional external/3rd party evaluations of Athens State to illustrate our value
 - c. Add specific PR support to our current marketing team
 - d. Feature the ACA and our CLL and use these as a "entry point" for the community
 - e. Continue to bring in Visiting Scholars and Visiting Artists to work with our students, faculty, and our community
4. **Stewardship of our resources**
 - a. **Fiscal Resources** - Balance and adjust fiscal resources to meet our needs within existing and potential constraints by providing mid-year budget adjustments as needed
 - b. **Human Resources** – Support the learning, creativity, and productivity of our faculty and staff through transparent communication and open exchange of ideas on a regular basis
 - c. **Physical Resources** – Map and efficiently use space for classrooms, meetings, and work spaces
 - d. **Information and Technology Resources** – Identify replacement schedules for technology to ensure up-to-date software and equipment and protect the security of all information systems