

**Athens State University  
Board of Trustees  
External Affairs Committee  
Minutes  
January 17, 2025, 1:15 PM  
Chapel**

**Call of Order** - Mr. Jim America, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:15 PM.

**Roll Call** - Ms. Brandy Conway conducted roll call. Members absent: Jamie Mikell, Zachary Griffin. A quorum was present.

**October 18, 2024 Minutes** - Mr. Jim America presented the minutes. Motion to approve by Bill Hopkins. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Donna Coleman. Motion passed.

**Updates**

- **LaunchBox** - Mr. Tyler Jones shared a handout with the committee. Since our last meeting, LaunchBox has conducted 13 one-on-one consultations with new or existing small businesses. One new start-up business launched. Four new LLC formations. LaunchBox hosted 7 workshops and networking events. The office partnered with the alumni association for the Athens Main Street Sippin' Cider Festival and served 500 community members. They also hosted Tanner High School's entrepreneurship class. In response to the December 29<sup>th</sup> tornado, LaunchBox is serving as a drop-off location for relief supplies and is providing workspace for CEI Bookstore and WolfeCo Media. They are also facilitating meeting with the Alabama Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network and local business owners impacted by the storm.
- **Learning Partnerships** - Ms. Brandy Conway reported there are 57 current partners. We signed 5 new partners since our last meeting. Huntsville Hospital System continues to be our largest participating partners with 54 students enrolled for the spring semester. Four of the five were signed through the tuition savings pathway with Wallace State Community College. For the spring semester, Huntsville Hospital System is our largest participating partner with 54 students. As of January 14, the total enrolled student count was 2,826. 5.3% of these students are from a learning partner. We had 148 students for Spring 2025. That resulted in tuition and fees of \$454,000; and net tuition and fees of \$419,000. 35 students are receiving the discount for the first time. 116 are continuing students. Of those, 20 are receiving the discount for the first time. 15 are first time students.

- Government Relations - Dr. Keith Ferguson reported that the legislative session will begin on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Our 2025/2026 budget proposal will be presented at that time. We are recommending a 13.59% increase in our budget. ACHE is recommending 7.01%. On February 5<sup>th</sup> the governor will submit her budget to the legislature. This year our efforts are focused more on the governor's office. Our budget will be submitted to ACHE in November. ACHE will make a recommendation to the Governor's Office.
- Alumni Affairs - Denise Santos reported on behalf of Dr. Rachel O'Sullivan. The alumni mixer held in Florence had 23 attendees. Our next event is planned for February 6<sup>th</sup> from 5-7:30 PM at the LaunchBox. We have 34 RSVPs. We are planning a Trash Panda night in early May. Homecoming is planned for July 25<sup>th</sup> with 50-year club celebrations on July 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Marketing - Mr. Chris Latham reported that the marketing is working with enrollment management on the current marketing campaigns. The digital campaign started in August 2024. So far 1,300 contact submission forms have been received. Our advertisements had 18 million impressions and 159,000 click-throughs. For spring semester, the number of applications is up 17.9% for undergrad and 43.4% for graduate. Chris noted that the decision cycle for adult learners is longer. The applicant-to-student ratio is 15%. Enrollment management switched from Admissions Pro to Target X so reporting is still being set up.
- Alumni Association - Ms. Betty Ruth-Oliver informed the group of the passing of Tony Smith, the Alumni Association Board President.

No new business was discussed.

Mr. Jim America requested a motion to adjourn. Motion by Donna Coleman. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Pammie Jimmar. The meeting adjourned at 1:43 PM.