



**Regular Meeting
Board of Regents
Minutes**

Friday, July 28th, 2023, 8:30 a.m.
Cashion Academic Center, Waco, Texas
Bill Mearse, Chair
Melissa Mines, Vice Chair

Regents Present: David Brooks; Jay Brown; Barbara Calhoun Cargill; Tyler Cooper; Angelique Cunningham; Xavier Dawes; Martha Delehanty; D. Diane Dillard; Sarah Gahm; Jack Harper; Carey Hendrickson; Ashley Beane Hooper; Paula Hurd (via Zoom); Katie Jo Lunningham; Jill Manning; JD McDonald; Bill Mearse; Melissa Mines; Alicia Monroe; Todd Patterson; Brian Raines; Todd Reppert; Mark Rountree; Manny Ruiz; Kim Stevens; Gail W. Stewart; Julie Turner (via Zoom); Steve Wells; Don Willett

Regents Absent: Michael Heiskell; Rene Maciel; Lesley McAllister; Michael McFarland

Chair Mearse called the meeting to order at 8:30am. Chris Holmes, General Counsel, certified that a quorum was present. The devotional was given by MDiv student Isaiah Baba, speaking from Philippians 1:3-6.

In his Chair's Report, Chair Mearse spoke to the board about its role, objectives, and perspectives, noting that the regents are stewards of Baylor's Christian mission, fiduciaries of Baylor University, and advocates for the Baylor family, framing his remarks in light of Colossians 3:1-2. Chair Mearse also spoke about the board mindset (Phil 2:3-4), including the aspects of humility, fiduciary, oversight not supervision, confidentiality/discipline, speaking as one voice (board chair is voice for the board), respect, and productivity.

Chair Mearse next covered Board Objectives, which are aligned with the President's goals, using 2 Timothy 1:7 as a scriptural reference. These objectives include the strategic planning process/outcome; operational effectiveness and risk management; fostering spiritual well-being of the Baylor family; assessing Baylor Benefit program and "best value" positioning; supporting growth in research, faculty & infrastructure; attending events/activities; promoting and providing financial support; and monitoring the hiring of the vice presidents for advancement and finance.

Chair Mearse also spoke about the vice chair role, providing expectations and responsibilities, relevant to the recent change from three vice chairs to one vice chair per the Governance Review Task Force report last year.

Chair Mearse next reviewed the membership and responsibilities of the Executive Committee, noting that he plans to schedule an Executive Committee meeting prior to every upcoming board meeting. He gave an overview of the agenda items covered in the Executive Committee meeting the previous day, including the results of the recent board assessment survey.

President Livingstone gave her President's Report, beginning with thanking the board for their prayers and support during her recent knee surgery recovery. Dr. Livingstone gave a high-level overview of her presidential goals, noting that she had met with Regent Gahm, Regent Rountree, and Chair Mearse in the spring to get feedback prior to the May board meeting. The board feedback was then shared with PC, and they worked together to come up with the goals for the coming year. These goals were then reviewed with the chair and vice chair, and shared with the Executive Committee the previous day. With a few minor changes made from that feedback, the board was provided with the updated goals on Wednesday for their review in Boardvantage. Dr. Livingstone then stepped through her list of goals.

Provost Brickhouse reported out from the provost's office, giving an update for the fall, with projected figures for first-year students for the 2023-24 school year. There will be a slightly higher total headcount, more in-state students, slightly fewer male students, a more diverse student population, more Pell eligible students, and a similar academic profile to the previous year. Projected retention rates show an increased retention rate for both all students, and Pell-eligible students, with the highest retention rates ever for first year students. Four-year graduation rates are also up, which the provost credited to the changes made in the core curriculum four years ago. She explained the focus on Pell Eligible students, including the Baylor Benefit program, and taking actions to increase their sense of belonging and academic success. She also shared data showing the increase in the percentage of graduate students at Baylor since 2017, with information about two graduate programs approved by the Board last May – MS in Business Analytics, and MS in Medical Sciences. Dr. Brickhouse gave data on the new faculty, as well as the new endowed chairs. Data was also given on research expenditures, which are outpacing other R1 private institutions without a medical school. Dr. Brickhouse gave the board an update on anticipated changes in the methodology of the US News and World Report rankings, including changes to methodology, focus on outcomes, and new measures focused on social mobility, which are anticipated to cause a disruption in this year's rankings.

President Livingstone then finished her report by covering additional fall update items, including the grand opening of the Mark & Paula Hurd Welcome Center on September 8. She also gave an update from the search committees for the two open VP positions – advancement and finance. The hiring goal is to have both positions filled by the end of the fall semester or early 2024. Finalists will also be interviewed by the chair and vice chair of board, as well as chair and vice chair of the Advancement and Finance and Facilities committees. She also shared about her trip to the Texas Baptists 2023 Family Gathering, which she and the First Gent attended, along with others. President Livingstone then shared data on research expenditures for R1 Private Institutions without a medical school as compared to other R1s, as well as some unaudited financial numbers, noting that Baylor ended the year with a budget surplus. Dr. Livingstone next shared data from Advancement and gave an update on work from the Commission on Historic Campus Representations, noting that the Burleson statue

will be coming back to campus on Oct 3, after extensive repair work. Groundbreaking for the Monument to the Unknown Enslaved is anticipated to take place in February 2024. Updates on campus construction projects – the Hurd Center, Foster Pavilion, Memorial/Alexander renovations, Collins Dormitory, and Fudge Football Center – were also given. The final update was on the new bear cubs, Indy and Belle, who are anticipated to be brought on campus in early August.


Chair Patterson brought a report from the Nominating, Governance, and Regent Leadership (NGRL) Committee, which met the previous day, committee-only, for planning purposes. Succession plans for regent positions were discussed, with one at-large position becoming available next year when Regent Stevens rolls off the board. Four items were addressed: the NGRL charge/calendar; other committee charges/calendars, for which NGRL is responsible; board assessment results; and potential new regent lists.

Chair Patterson then gave an update on approval of Baylor College of Medicine regent process. Noting that Sarah Gahm will not be able to serve as trustee on Baylor College of Medicine board (and with Regent Gahm excused from the meeting), Cary Gray was being brought forward as the candidate, with a motion from the NGRL committee. All voted in favor of the nomination.

Chris Holmes and David Iler gave a legal and legislative update.

A non-binding agreement between Baylor and the Baptist General Convention was presented. A motion to approve the ratification of the Memorandum of Understanding between Baylor and the BGCT for the conveyance of property for the purpose of a Baptist Student Center brought by motion from the Executive Committee, and was unanimously approved.

With no objections from those present, Chair Mearse adjourned the meeting at 12:20 p.m.



Staci Penn, Recordkeeper