

MINUTES

BOARD OF REGENTS

March 15, 2011

The Board of Regents met in session at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, March 15, 2011, in the Louisiana Purchase Room, Claiborne Building, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Chairman Robert Levy called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Executive Assistant Carolyn Blanchard called the roll and a quorum was established.

Present for the meeting were:

Robert Levy, Chairman
Mary Ellen Roy, Vice Chair
Charlotte Bollinger, Secretary
Ed Antie
Robert Bruno
Maurice Durbin
Joseph Farr
Chris Gorman
Donna Klein
W. Clinton Rasberry, Jr.
Albert D. Sam
Victor Stelly
Harold Stokes
Joseph Wiley
Demetrius Sumner

Absent from the meeting was:

Scott Ballard

PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS' RESPONSE TO SENATE RESOLUTION 123

Chairman Robert Levy welcomed everyone to the meeting regarding the delivery of postsecondary education in the New Orleans area. Regent Levy also informed everyone that the meeting was being streamed over the internet to allow citizens across the state to view the meeting. He also informed the audience of the format for making public comments. He stated that public comments would conclude at 11:00 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS BY ADMINISTRATORS OF SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY SYSTEM,
SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AT NEW ORLEANS, AND THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA
SYSTEM

➤ **Dr. Victor Ukpolo, Chancellor of Southern University New Orleans (SUNO)**

Dr. Ukpolo thanked the consultants for their report and agreed that the status quo is unacceptable. However, he did state that the data used by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) was flawed. He said the data does not reflect today's SUNO. He also noted that since selective admissions began, the ACT scores of students at SUNO had increased from 15.5 to 19.

➤ **Dr. Ronald Mason, President. Southern University System**

Dr. Mason said he came back to Louisiana because he felt he had a unique opportunity to work on a system-wide basis to try to impact higher education in the State. He said that the NCHEMS analysis was directly on-point. He agreed with issues such as, (1) a higher education unit is needed to diagnose educational needs, (2) the need to place students in the appropriate learning settings, and (3) preparing students with the skills necessary to acquire a quality higher education degree. He also noted some key deficiencies in the NCHEMS report such as, (1) the unit should be a Delgado/SUNO joint venture, (2) the University College should be residential, (3) the approach should be smaller than recommended, and (4) SUNO should remain in the Southern System where it is an essential component of serving the population of poor, working poor, and underprepared African-Americans. In addition, Dr. Mason disagreed with changing the name of SUNO and making it one of two units in a new university with one President in a new management system. He further stated that the HBCU status of SUNO would become an issue if this happened. He said that even FEMA money could be at risk. Dr. Mason offered a proposal entitled *The Honoré Center for Undergraduate Student Achievement* that he felt was not status quo, but far-reaching.

President Mason presented several resolutions to the Board which oppose a merger or elimination of Southern University at New Orleans. The resolutions submitted include the following:

1. A resolution from the Board of Supervisors for the Southern University and A&M College System.
2. A resolution from the National Officers of the Southern University Alumni Federation.
3. A resolution from the Faculty Senate of Southern University and A&M College.
4. A resolution from the members of the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
5. A resolution from the Black Churches and Black Colleges University Network.
6. A resolution from the National Association of Black County Officials.

➤ **Dr. Randy Moffett, President University of Louisiana System (UL System)**

Dr. Moffett noted that the UL System was not endorsing either alternative but several things needed to be kept in mind when making the choice: (1) this is an emotional issue, (2) the timeline is challenging and compact, and (3) the consultants' work is as complete and thorough as possible. He also noted that if Alternative B is adopted, it should be recommended as a blueprint and not as an explicit edict or mandate of the plan. He said extensive data was presented and needs to be further examined by Regents' staff and existing management boards affected by either Alternative. He said there is a need for a thorough analysis of data regarding the ACT student profile of existing and potential students, and not just looking at averages. He went on to say that additional input was necessary from faculty, administrators and students of proposed options and alternatives. Dr. Moffett stated that duplication of programs must be reviewed, as well as the organizational structure. He also suggested a discussion with Dr. Belle Wheelan and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools regarding accreditation issues. Dr. Moffett stressed that if Alternative B is adopted, the UL System was committed to work diligently to make the plan a success.

PUBLIC COMMENTS BY LEGISLATORS

➤ **Representative Wesley Bishop, Louisiana House of Representatives**

Representative Bishop stated that he had chosen to attend SUNO and also served as the student government body president. He wanted the Board to understand the heart and soul of SUNO. He said students receive not only a quality education at SUNO, but are fostered, nurtured and graduated when no one else in the State wants them. Representative Bishop said SUNO was not a mistake and asked the Regents not to punish SUNO for the mission given the institution by the State. He said if the Regents chose the wrong thing to do, he hoped the Legislature would do the right thing during the Regular Session.

➤ **Representative Patricia Haynes Smith, Louisiana House of Representatives**

Representative Smith felt that a decision had already been made, and the Regents did not care about the stories presented to them today. She said the Regents would not go against the Governor. If the decision was truly about students, she said, everything heard would matter. She said she visited SUNO in 2008 and was appalled at the conditions of the campus. She hoped a similar study would be done in the entire state regarding higher education, not just in New Orleans. She asked the Regents to give the students the continued opportunity to be nurtured at SUNO.

➤ **Representative Regina Barrow, Louisiana House of Representatives**

Representative Barrow said she came today to appeal to the Board's moral conscience. She said she could not support the measure presented today and asked that the Regents do what is right in their hearts.

PUBLIC COMMENTS BY STUDENTS, CONCERNED CITIZENS, ETC.

The following individuals offered public comments regarding a variety of topics including, but not limited to their experience as a student at SUNO, graduation rates, retention rates, flawed data, closing or merging SUNO, etc.

- Mr. Johnny Anderson, Save Southern University
- Ms. Derrlyn Mosby, student at SUNO
- Ms. Catherine Williams, SUNO
- Reverend Lawrence Terrell, SCLC
- Dr. Joseph Bouie, SUNO Faculty Senate
- Mr. Darryl Brown, SUNO
- Ms. Millie Charles, New Orleans Association of Black Social Workers and former Dean of the SUNO School of Social Work
- Ms. H. M. K. Aman, New Orleans Association of Black Social Workers
- Ms. Lisa Stewart-Clark, SUNO
- Mr. Dominique Townsend, SUNO
- Ms. Selena Smith, student at SUNO
- Ms. Nikkisha Napoleon, SUNO
- Ms. Shavonda Chambers, SUNO alumni
- Ms. Sherlenia Roach, SUNO
- Mr. Joshua Trainer, student at SUNO in social work
- Ms. Shatiqua Wilson, Director of Library, SUNO
- Mr. W.C. Johnson, Community United for Change
- Ms. Linda Tolbert-Mosley, SUNO
- Mr. Hylton Campbell, SUNO
- Reverend S. Dixon, Southern University
- Mr. Ellis Brent, SUNO Student Government Association
- Ms. Elnora McNeil, SUNO School of Social Work
- Ms. Erika Evans, Southern University History Club
- Ms. Shantel Harris, SUNO

WRITTEN COMMENTS

- Mr. Donald Wade, representing Southern University said he opposed any plan that would destroy SUNO or a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) and remove it from the Southern University System.
- Ms. Angela Evans said that SUNO had changed her life and she would like to use that change to change someone else.

RESPONSE TO SENATE RESOLUTION 123

Chairman Robert Levy noted the compassionate pleas made at today's meeting. He said there would be a question and answer session to follow where each Board member could ask

questions of the panel (Dennis Jones, President, NCHEMS; Aims McGuinness, NCHEMS; Tom Layzell, advisor to the Board; Alvin Schexnider, Blenda Wilson and Richard Rhoda were among three of the five members of the advisory group present today who assisted NCHEMS with the study of postsecondary education in the New Orleans region). Mr. Levy reviewed the credentials of the five members of the advisory group.

- **Dr. Alvin Schexnider**, graduate from Grambling State University; President, Thomas Nelson Community College (Virginia); Former Chancellor, Winston-Salem State University, North Carolina; and faculty and administrative positions at Southern University, Syracuse University, the Federal Executive Institute, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Wake Forest University.
- **Dr. Richard Rhoda**, Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commissioner (THEC); former senior official at Tennessee Board of Regents and Tennessee State University; and served at time of merger of UT-Nashville with Tennessee State University.
- **Dr. Blenda Wilson**, former President, California State University, Northridge, where she led the University in the enormous task of leading California State University, Northridge's recovery from the devastating 1994 Northridge earthquake; former Chancellor, University of Michigan's Dearborn Campus; former Executive Director of the Colorado Commission on Higher Education; and former President and Chief Executive Officer of the Nellie Mae Education Foundation.
- **Dr. Marybeth Gasman**, Professor, University of Pennsylvania and historian of higher education, has done research on historically black colleges and has been cited in various media venues including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, National Public Radio, *Inside Higher Education*, *U.S. News and World Report*, and CNN.
- **Dr. Shirley Raines**, President, Memphis State University, an urban university, and former Vice Chancellor for Academic Services and Dean of the College of Education at the University of Kentucky.

During the question and answer session by Board members, Regent Sumner requested his comments be recorded in the minutes. He said that after listening to the representatives from the National Center for Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), they do not consider Alternative B in the study as a merger. Regent Sumner disagreed and said he felt it is a merger.

After further discussion,

On motion of Regent Rasberry, seconded by Regent Wiley, a recommendation was made to accept the report and written findings presented by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) on the Study of Postsecondary Education Needs in the New Orleans Region: A Response to SR 123. The report and written findings would be filed with the Legislature with Alternative B as the recommendation of the Board of Regents. The documents presented by Dr. Ronald Mason, President, Southern University System entitled *The Honore'*

Center for Undergraduate Student Achievement and Southern University System's Initial Perspective on the NCHEMS Study along with all other written documents that were commentary (letter from Mr. Jerry W. Jones, Assistant Commissioner for Facility Planning and Control to Chairman Robert Levy dated March 14, 2011) will be added as an addendum to the NCHEMS report.

Regent Durbin offered a substitute motion.

On motion of Regent Durbin, seconded by Regent Klein, a recommendation was made to adopt and send the full report, including President Mason's reports, as a blueprint, without a specific option listed.

Ms. Klein noted that yesterday the Governor adopted Alternative B as a starting point and said he was going to introduce merger legislation. She said any recommendation that the Board of Regents makes today is irrelevant. Ms. Klein believed that the options in the report by NCHEMS are narrowly drafted and other options should be considered by the Regents.

Chairman Levy said the Constitution requires the Board of Regents to file written findings and recommendations to the Legislature.

Regent Rasberry called for the question.

A roll call vote was taken on the substitute motion made by Regent Durbin, seconded by Regent Klein.

Yea (4): Durbin, Klein, Sam, Stelly
Nay (11): Antie, Bollinger, Bruno, Farr, Gorman, Levy, Rasberry, Roy, Stokes, Sumner, Wiley

The first substitute motion failed with 11 nays and 4 yeas.

Regent Gorman offered a substitute motion.

On motion of Regent Gorman, seconded by Regent Sumner, a recommendation was made to refer the matter back to the Planning, Research and Performance Committee for the purpose of developing an accountability plan in conjunction with the University of New Orleans and Southern University at New Orleans and increase their performance measures with no recommendation sent to the Legislature.

Regent Wiley called for the question.

A roll call vote was taken on the substitute motion made by Regent Gorman, seconded by Regent Sumner.

Yea (7): Antie, Durbin, Gorman, Klein, Sam, Stelly, Sumner
Nay (8): Bollinger, Bruno, Farr, Levy, Rasberry, Roy, Stokes, Wiley

The second substitute motion failed with 8 nays and 7 yeas.

A roll call vote was taken on the original motion by Regent Rasberry, seconded by Regent Wiley.

Yea (9): Antie, Bollinger, Bruno, Farr, Levy, Rasberry, Roy, Stokes, Wiley
Nay (6): Durbin, Gorman, Klein, Sam, Stelly, Sumner

The original motion passed with 9 yeas and 6 nays.

OTHER BUSINESS

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 1:06 p.m.