

**ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2016, 10:03 A.M.**

The Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees (also referred to herein as the Board) held a meeting at 10:03 a.m. on Wednesday, September 14, 2016, in the Board Room of the Alabama Community College System building in Montgomery, Alabama. The meeting was called in accordance with Act No. 2015-125.

**PRESIDING: MR. AL THOMPSON
VICE PRESIDENT**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Thompson. The Pledge of Allegiance followed the invocation by Dr. Martha Lavender, President of Gadsden State Community College.

On roll call, the following Board members were present:

Mr. Al Thompson
Mr. Ron Fantroy
Mr. Frank Caldwell
Mrs. Crystal Brown
Mr. Milton Davis
Mr. Blake McAnally

Also present was Mr. Jimmy H. Baker, Acting Chancellor of the Alabama Community College System Governor Robert Bentley, Mrs. Susan Foy, Mr. Chuck Smith and Mrs. Mary Scott Hunter did not attend the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Mr. Davis, second by Mrs. Brown, the agenda was approved unanimously without discussion as presented.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Mr. Davis, second by Mr. Caldwell, the Board voted unanimously to adopt the Minutes of the August 10, 2016 meeting as presented without discussion.

**SECTION VI
PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were two individuals registered to speak. Those individuals were Mayor Terri Carter of the City of Repton and Representative Alan Baker – House District 66. Mr. Thompson called Mayor Carter to the podium.

Mayor Terri Carter spoke about the consolidation. She said it affects people in her area that would not otherwise have the opportunity to get a higher education. She said that she was not here to ask to stop the consolidation. She said we have never asked that, we have only asked for a delay. The reason for a delay is because we have many questions and those questions are putting up red flags for us. She said she doesn't believe the public has been properly informed during this whole consolidation period. Records have not been made fully available to the public. When they have been made available to the public, it seems to be at the last minute and sometimes not all of the documents are even there. Some say we came late to the party. She said that's because we thought this would be a continuous process where the public would be informed about this along the way and the decisions that were made, but that has not been done. She said all the public meetings that were supposed to be held in different areas were not, there were no public meetings in Thomasville, Jackson, Gilbertown or Brewton. She said there were meetings with public officials, faculty and luncheons with specific organizations but no public

meetings. She said the most important thing and the biggest red flag for her was we have no idea whether this consolidation will be beneficial or detrimental to our students and to our community. She said the reason for that was there have been no studies done on this and there have been no long range projections to give us any idea whether or not this is going to be good or bad. She added, "You never want to fly a plane when you are building it. Right now, without this documentation, I feel like we are flying a plane before it has been fully built. I don't want to do this with our students, our area or our community, I ask you to consider the same."

Mr. Thomson called Representative Alan Baker to speak to the Board.

Representative Alan Baker, House District 66, said that it was very refreshing to see this two-year Board in existence knowing that there are more opportunities to find successful and affordable education for our emerging workforce. He strongly supports the merger/consolidation efforts that have been proposed. He said, like most, he has strong concerns for any given community with an existing community college within their town. More than a year ago, it became known across his region in Southwest Alabama that the consolidation was being considered. Just over a year ago, he met with Chancellor Heinrich and now Acting Chancellor Baker to find out what those changes might entail. He said the original plan was to have Jefferson Davis Community College to come under Faulkner State Community (primary campus - Bay Minette) and Reid State Technical College would come under Alabama Southern Community College (primary campus - Monroeville). Alabama Southern Community College's President came forward with a recommendation that it would be in its best interest to have Alabama Southern Community College and Reid State Technical College moved under Faulkner State Community College.

Representative Baker has grave concerns with community interests. He said we, at the State level, are strapped for dollars. We are constantly looking for creating better efficiencies, whether by saving through administrative costs, sharing of instructors, providing course work among the institutions or allowing classes to be consolidated, if there are not enough students to make a class, by allowing for greater opportunities for students. Baring that in mind, he does support the consolidation. He said since his election to the Legislature, he has had a close association with President Branch of Faulkner State Community College. Seeing directly the operations under President Branch, he has a strong feeling of not only support, but a feeling that the best interest of each community and each campus will be preserved. He said we have an opportunity to improve what we have. He supports this merger/consolidation. He said that he serves on the Alabama Workforce Council and Workforce Development Board statewide. As part of this we have the Workforce Development regions. It is part of a collaborative effort between business, industry and education to better align both our community colleges with our workforce regions.

Mr. Thompson thanked Mayor Carter and Representative Baker for their comments today.

SECTION VII

(ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS, ADULT EDUCATION, FACILITIES, FISCAL, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT)

ADOPTED

REID STATE TECHNICAL COLLEGE PURCHASE OVERHEAD ELECTRICAL MEDIUM VOLTAGE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

On motion by Mr. Davis, second by Mrs. Brown, the Board authorized Reid State Technical College to purchase an overhead electrical medium voltage distribution system." Fiscal Consideration: \$600,000 Unexpended Plant Funds

On motion by Mr. McAnally, second by Mr. Caldwell, the Board approved the 2016-2017 budgets as presented by the Chancellor for the community and technical colleges, Alabama Technology Network (ATN) and Marion Military Institute (MMI). Fiscal consideration: The total 2016-2017 projected revenue for the twenty-five community and technical colleges, Alabama Technology Network (ATN) and Marion Military Institute (MMI) is \$925,684,522.

ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM OFFICE
2016-2017 BUDGET

On motion by Mrs. Brown, second by Mr. Davis, the Board approved the 2016-2017 budget for the Alabama Community College System Office and limits expenditures to available revenue. Fiscal consideration: The total amount of the 2016-2017 budget is \$67,576,427 based on appropriations, estimated federal grants and contracts, and estimated fee collections.

SECTION VIII
(EXECUTIVE, LEGAL AND PUBLIC INFORMATION)

ADOPTED

JEFFERSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SALE OF REAL PROPERTY

On motion by Mr. Davis, second by Mr. McAnally, the Board authorized the President of Jefferson State Community College to pursue the sale of real property to the City of Hoover for the purpose of widening Valleydale Road with additional lanes. Fiscal consideration: The College has one appraisal for the property, revealing a fair market value of \$300,000. The City of Hoover has offered to pay the amount of \$304,300.

ALABAMA SOUTHERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE, FAULKNER STATE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND JEFFERSON DAVIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAMMATIC CONSOLIDATION OF ALABAMA
SOUTHERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE, FAULKNER STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
AND JEFFERSON DAVIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Mr. Thompson called on President Branch to speak to the agenda item. President Branch stated that as an aside in one of his community meetings he said that he believed that by this consolidation the service area of the Coastal Alabama Community College would be the largest land mass campus in the State. The process has been going on for nearly a year. Immediately after the Board took action on setting these consolidations into motion. He has had over fifty community meetings, telephone conversations, newspaper interviews and radio interviews. This process has been going on a long time. A lot of people have been a part of that process. Yesterday he had a two and a half hour lunch with the Mayor of Brewton. He had some questions that he wanted answers to. We were both pleased with the results of that meeting. He has had two community meetings in Monroeville. He has met and spoken with the Mayor of Atmore who enthusiastically supports this consolidation, wants it to move forward and has a letter of support from him. He said we have a letter of support from Mayor Day of Thomasville who enthusiastically supports this consolidation and wants it to move forward. He said I still believe, as a professional higher education administrator for over 55 years, this is what is best for this area in providing more opportunities for students to take courses, giving them more flexibility in their course scheduling, and giving the faculty more flexibility in their classes making. Often times the class will not have enough students to hold a class at one campus which causes the faculty member to not have a full load. Under this consolidation, faculty members on all the campuses will have an opportunity to complete their full load at one of the campuses. It is advantageous for the students. It is advantageous because of new programs that the two smaller schools, due to lack of funds, have not been able to implement through the years. At the close of last year's budget, Jeff Davis and Alabama Southern spent more money than they took in. He

said this is not something that just happened this year, this has been the trend for years, with declining enrollment at those two colleges. He said Faulkner State had another record enrollment for this Fall term. He said I don't really know what else we could have done; at every one of my community meetings, I have given the people there my private cell phone number and asked them to call me if they have questions. I commend the people from Monroeville who attended the ACHE meeting in Montgomery last week to express their concerns. The Alabama Commission on Higher Education (ACHE) Commissioners passed our request for approval of this consolidation 100 percent. He mentioned that Dr. Fitch, ACHE Executive Director, said that what Faulkner had done in this process should be used as a template for any further consolidations and mergers that will follow. He stated I believe we can grow these campuses. There is a process for growth. He said, "I have been successful at Troy State in growing that institution when I was Dean of Enrollment and Counseling Services, I have been successful when I was President of the former Brewer State Community College, now Beville, that institution doubled its enrollment in a short time. At Faulkner State, our enrollment has gone from 1,100 to about 5,700. President Branch recommended to the Board that it endorse our efforts and approve this consolidation today. Finally he stated that if this consolidation was delayed, it would be the Fall of 2018 when it could be fully implemented.

Mr. Thompson thanked President Branch for his leadership and for addressing the issues, especially the approval by ACHE.

On motion by Mr. Davis, second by Mr. McAnally, the Board approved the Administrative and Programmatic Consolidation of Alabama Southern Community College, Faulkner State Community College and Jefferson Davis Community College. Such approval is subject to the acceptance and approval by the Southern Association of Colleges Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) of the Substantive Change Prospectus submitted in support of consolidation. Fiscal consideration: Cost savings by redistribution of resources from duplicative administrative functions, courses and student activities.

SECTION IX **PERSONNEL**

Chancellor Baker introduced Dr. Cody Thompson, Director of Health Programs, to the Board. He said that at the end of the month, we would be able to announce a new Director of Workforce Development.

SECTION X **(CHANCELLOR'S REPORT)**

We were involved in a re-compete for a federal grant which supports ATN. We were just notified that we prevailed and won the grant again. Over the next five years, we will receive approximately \$9,000,000 to help the ATN program. It is something we had in the past and we are excited that we have it again.

Another item that most of you have received some information about is news about ITT Technical Institute closing. That organization had instructional programs in the Bessemer, Madison, and Mobile areas. They ended up closing overnight and left a lot of students stranded. We had presidents from our schools, even before it was over that evening, busy about the business of how we could help those students that were left stranded. We have been contacting those students to find a way to give them guidance to get their records and gain some credits that they have been working and paying for. Our presidents and their staff have jumped to that. We are doing everything we can to help those students. I think there may be some other folks around in the for-profit business that may be a little nervous now. We are making sure that we do everything we can to help the public and the people and students who have been spending money to get all the benefit they should have.

Another item, some year or so ago, we started the process of stressing that all of our skills training programs be industry certified. It is something we have to do. We have made a little progress but not enough progress. We actually have four colleges that all of their programs are certified and that is not enough. We have got to have every college's programs certified so that when a student completes the program, we know that it is a valid program and the certification will follow. I am sending you a summary and it is a thick document. I want you to know what is going on in our programs and the efforts that are being made to move those programs from where they are to a program that meets standards.

Mr. Thompson thanked Mr. Baker for his efforts and the efforts of the System Office staff and the presidents. He said that they were thankful for all the presidents and for their great leadership across this state.

Mr. Blake McAnally asked to add one thing for the Board to consider: Memberships for Board Trustees and System staff. We haven't really done this in times past. There are several organizations out there, like the American Association of Community Colleges Trustees. It allows us to have an opportunity to have peers that we as a one-year old organization we are still learning. We could learn a lot from members who have been at this for many years. These organizations offer us a door into these types of learning opportunities. I ask Mr. Baker to provide us with some opportunities and let the Board consider them and whatever we as a Board to engage or approve those opportunities, I would be interested in doing so. Mr. Baker said he would be happy to do so. He said it is an important issue. Many times you will find people are already dealing with issues that we have to deal with. It is a good thing when we don't have to rebuild a program. Mr. Baker said we would be more than happy to provide you with that information and we will support your move in that direction. Mr. McAnally said that the Trustees had an interview with SACSCOC because of the substantive change. Part of the people on that interview were presidents and trustees from other states. It became clear to me that I would love to spend time with those people and talk with them.

President Branch asked if he could introduce members of his staff from Faulkner State who had worked on the consolidation. President Branch introduced Sara Godwin – Director of Public Relations and Marketing, Jessica Davis – head of Finance, Dr. Brenda Kennedy – Vice President and SACS Liaison, Patty Hughston – Dean of Workforce Development and Technology, and Linda Caldwell – Director of Housing and Special Events.

Mr. Thompson thanked President Branch and his staff for all of their hard work.

Mr. Thompson asked if there were any more discussion on associations. Mr. Baker said that he has had communication from some of the associations and that they are willing to put together training sessions, like a workshop environment. Mr. Thompson asked if there were other associations like ACCT. Mr. McAnally said there were several.

Mr. Baker asked for a point of personal privilege which was granted by Mr. Thompson. This past month has been an interesting experience. I want you to know presidents, in particular, have gone out of their way to help me understand what I need to be doing. Some have been very open in their suggestions. I appreciate that because it is my job, as I see it, to do everything I can to help improve the Community College System. The staff here has been very supportive and the Board has been understanding. I appreciate the time you been willing to spend to me in talking about what we need to do. Mr. Thompson said the he appreciated Mr. Baker's willingness to get out and communicate with the Board. He said, "We appreciate the great communication from the staff as well with the Board and your assistance. I know that frank input can be very beneficial at times. As a Board member, I welcome that from any of the staff and presidents."

SECTION XI
(DATE AND LOCATION OF NEXT MEETING)

The next Board meeting will be held in Montgomery at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 12, 2016, in the Board Room of the Alabama Community College System building in Montgomery, Alabama. A work session will follow at 1:00 p.m. in the Presidents Conference Room.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Mr. Davis, second by Mrs. Brown, the Board meeting was adjourned at 10:51 a.m.

Vice President

Acting Chancellor