

12/4/20 Administrative Council Meeting Minutes

Participated in Zoom meeting: Dr. Brian Anderson, Angie Atkins, Alonzo Bouldin, Dr. Marty Brock, Dr. David Brooking, Ashley Chisolm, Karen Clay, Mark Ellard, Rodney Godfrey, Jessica Harpole, Dr. Marty Hatton, Erinn Holloway, Melinda Lowe, Carla Lowery, Penny Mansell, Iika McCarter, Dr. Tammie McCoy, Nora Miller, Jennifer Moore, Andrew Money maker, Nicole Patrick, Anika Perkins, Amanda Clay Powers, Laura Quinn, Dr. Barry Smith, Ginger Smith, Susan Sobley, Andrea Stevens, Dr. Scott Tollison, Jason Trufant, Chief Randy Vibrock, Dr. Deb Wells, Dr. Kim Whitehead, and Ken Widner

President Nora Miller called the meeting to order.

Minutes -

Following a motion by Dr. Tammie McCoy and a second by Dr. Deb Wells, the minutes from the November 2020 meeting were approved.

University Update –

President Miller thanked Carla Lowery, Rodney Godfrey, Aaron Brooks and the ITS staff who worked many extra hours in response to the ransomware attack the week of Thanksgiving. She also thanked all who patiently waited for the restoration of their services and for the support given to ITS. Ms. Lowery reported that when the ransomware attack happened on November 24 Rodney Godfrey immediately shut down internet service to the campus and instructed all users to not log on to their computers. She said it affected some shared drives, which have been recovered. It also affected individual computers that had been left on overnight. She said ITS is putting in new hard drives in all affected computers and are keeping all of the old hard drives in hopes that they later receive the key to fix the encrypted files. ITS started with Welty Hall and then moved to other critical units. Ms. Lowery said it would be a while before ITS could assess every computer and replace hard drives where necessary. She noted that the university is working with authorities and with a cyber security company. She also said more protocols would be established such as requiring all users to change their passwords to more difficult passwords and to encourage users to use unique passwords and multifactor authentication for personal passwords. Ms. Lowery encouraged the campus to be patient and to not bother ITS staff unless it is absolutely necessary. Mark Ellard mentioned that some data can be retrieved through email, and Amanda Clay Powers said Drop Box has been helpful in recovering backup files she synched there. President Miller added that the university has cyber security insurance, and IHL is helping the university work through the process since The W is not the first Mississippi institution to experience a cyber attack. She also said computers are available in McDevitt for those who do not have an office desktop available.

President Miller noted that COVID numbers this week across the country, in Mississippi and in Lowndes County have been alarming. She reminded the group that the State Department of Health recommended that Mississippians only participate in work, school or other absolutely essential activities, and avoid gatherings such as social events,

sporting events, in-person church services, and weddings and funerals unless they involve only close family (preferably outdoors). She said she knows this is especially hard to take as we are closing on nine months of dealing with the coronavirus, and we all are wanting to have a “normal” holiday season. She asked the Administrative Council members to look out for their health and the health of their families and co-workers. President Miller added that the university will continue to watch the daily reports on case counts and hospitalizations. Any decision to close physical offices will be based on public health recommendations and network availability.

President Miller said a virtual Spring Convocation is planned for early January. Noting that the 2021 Legislative Session will start in January, she said Senator Chuck Younger brought the university one of the new Mississippi state flags which will likely be flown just below the United States flag at the front entrance of campus. In order for the new Mississippi flag to be official, she said the flag will have to be voted on by the Legislature, and it is expected that will happen on one of the first days of the session.

President Miller thanked the Administrative Council members for what they did to see the university through the fall semester. She also thanked them for their participation in the Unity Project, Staff Council’s Thanksgiving Food Drive, and the Salvation Army’s Toy Drive. She encouraged them to bring in toys for that drive if they haven’t already done so.

Faculty Senate Update –

Ashley Chisolm reported that there is \$5,176 left in Fund A and \$1,620 left in Fund B for faculty development funds.

Staff Council Update –

Alonzo Bouldin also encouraged the Administrative Council members to give toys to the annual Salvation Army toy drive which will conclude December 11 at 5 p.m.

SGA Update –

No report.

Other Reports –

Karen Clay mentioned that no nominations have been received for the University Initiative Impact Award so that deadline has been extended to December 16.

Dr. McCoy said a nurse practitioner is available in the Campus Health Center and COVID rapid tests are available for free. She also noted that the CDC has revised its guidelines for people who may have been exposed to the coronavirus from 14 days to 10 days with no symptoms or seven days with a negative test.

Policies –

Following a motion by Dr. Tammie McCoy and a second by Dr. Marty Brock, the Administrative Council voted to accept PS 3533 (Teacher Education Council) into the review process.

Following a motion by Dr. David Brooking and a second by Carla Lowery, the Administrative Council voted to recommend President Miller approve New Policy (Diversity Equity Inclusion Council) as amended.

Following a motion by Dr. Marty Brock and a second by Dr. Marty Hatton, the Administrative Council voted to add the Diversity Equity Inclusion Council to the Transmittal Sheet for Policy Statements as a policy review body.