

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA  
Tifton, Georgia  
October 3 – 4, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia met on Tuesday, October 3 and Wednesday, October 4, 2023, in the Carlton Center, Second Floor, at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, 2802 Moore Highway, Tifton, Georgia, and simultaneously accessible by BOR Webcast. Board Chair Harold Reynolds called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. on October 3, 2023. Present on both days, in addition to Board Chair Reynolds, were Regents Doug Aldridge; Tom Bradbury; Richard T. Evans; W. Allen Gudenrath; Bárbara Rivera Holmes; Samuel D. Holmes; C. Thomas Hopkins, Jr.; James M. Hull; Patrick C. Jones; Jose R. Perez; Neil L. Pruitt, Jr.; T. Dallas Smith; and James K. Syfan, III. Vice Chair Erin Hames participated remotely on both days. Regent Cade Joiner was present on Tuesday, October 3, and participated remotely on Wednesday, October 4. Regent Lowery Houston May participated remotely on Tuesday, October 3, and was present on Wednesday, October 4. Regents C. Everett Kennedy, III and Sarah-Elizabeth Langford were excused on both days. Chancellor Sonny Perdue was also present on both days.

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

Brooke Patry, Student Government Association President at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**SAFETY BRIEFING**

Frank Strickland, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College Chief of Police, gave the safety briefing.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Upon a proper motion and variously seconded, the Regents present voted unanimously to approve the minutes of September 8, September 25, and September 27, 2023.

**PRESIDENTIAL PRESENTATION AND CAMPUS SPOTLIGHT: “ABAC’s 115-Year History and Mission: Engaging and Inspiring Students Through Hands-On Experiential Learning”**

President Tracy Brundage of Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (“ABAC”) led the Campus Spotlight, “ABAC’s 115-Year History and Mission: Engaging and Inspiring Students Through Hands-On Experiential Learning.” President Brundage began the presentation by sharing background on ABAC. She shared that ABAC began classes in 1908 as an area high school known as the Second District Agricultural and Mechanical School. Dr. Brundage continued by stating that for any organization 115 years of continuous service is indeed a great accomplishment. She shared that Henry Harding Tift, founder of Tifton, once said his investment in the Second District Agricultural and Mechanical School was the best investment he made. President Brundage continued by saying that in 1924, the Second District Agricultural and Mechanical School became the South Georgia Agricultural and Mechanical College and when the University System of Georgia was formed in 1931, the college joined the newly formed University System of Georgia in 1933 and became Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College. Dr. Brundage continued by saying that the College was named after Abraham Baldwin, one of two Georgia signers of the U.S.

Constitution. She continued by saying that when classes started in 1933 with ninety-nine students, the president at the time said that the College's primary focus was to educate the students back to the farm. President Brundage acknowledged that ABAC has come a long way since its start and supported her comment by saying that the institution began offering bachelor's degrees in 2008 after 75 years as a two-year college. She added that the Georgia Museum of Agriculture became a part of ABAC in 2010, and in 2018, the former Bainbridge State College consolidated with ABAC.

Next, Dr. Mark Kistler, the Dean of ABAC's School of Agriculture and Natural Resources; Dr. Matthew Anderson, the Dean of ABAC's School of Arts and Science; Dr. Yvonne Smith, ABAC's RN-BSN Program Coordinator, for ABAC's School of Nursing and Health Sciences; and Dr. Renata Elad, the Dean of ABAC's Stafford School of Business addressed the Board and gave overviews of their respective schools. Following the faculty members presentations, ABAC students Mr. Andrew Waller, Livestock Production and Agribusiness Major; Ms. Ivey Cook, Agriculture Major; Mr. Grayson Peek, Biology Major; Ms. Delaney Garcia, Writing and Communication Major; Ms. Jennifer Highsmith, Nursing Major; and Ms. Brooke Patry, Business Major, gave presentations regarding their majors and experiences as students at ABAC.

#### **UNIQUE AUXILIARY UNITS PARTNER STUDENTS WITH COMMUNITY NEEDS**

Ms. Deidra Jackson, Vice President of Finance and Operations, Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College, gave a presentation on Unique Auxiliary Units Partner Students with Community Needs. Ms. Jackson's presentation highlighted an overview of ABAC's unique auxiliary areas, such as, providing after school snacks for kids, a safe playground, train rides on Saturday morning with the family, and golf outings at the Forest Lakes Golf Course. She stated that ABAC's auxiliary services cater to a wide range of constituents in the Tifton community. She added that the Auxiliary services also includes housing, dining operations in ABAC's Georgia Grown dining room, the Stallion Shop, the Country Store, the Drugstore, the Forest Lakes Golf Course and Pro Shop, and the Georgia Museum of Agriculture. Ms. Jackson shared that all Auxiliary operations at ABAC, except for textbook sales, are operated by ABAC personnel.

#### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: FINANCE AND BUSINESS OPERATIONS**

The Committee on Finance and Business Operations met as a committee of the whole at approximately 2:08 p.m. During its meeting led by Committee Chair Neil L. Pruitt, Jr. an information item was presented to the Board.

#### **INFORMATION ITEM**

1. The Committee heard an information item on the Fiscal Year 2023 Financial Update, specifically on the FY 2023 Budgetary Compliance Report (BCR).

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, and upon motion properly made by Regent James M. Hull and seconded by Regent T. Dallas Smith, the Regents who were present voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at approximately 2:23 p.m.

#### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

The Committee on Academic Affairs met as a committee of the whole at approximately 2:23 p.m.

During its meeting led by Committee Vice Chair Samuel Holmes, upon motions properly made and seconded, the Board members present approved the following items:

### **ACTION ITEM**

1. Upon a motion by Regent Jose Perez and seconded by Regent Doug Aldridge, the Committee approved an establishment of a Ph.D., in Regenerative Biosciences at the University of Georgia

### **CONSENT ITEMS**

1. The Committee approved the establishment of the Annie and Zac Stanton Distinguished Professorship in Canine Welfare Law at the University of Georgia
2. The Committee approved several named faculty positions at the University of Georgia

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at approximately: 2:26 p.m.

### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: REAL ESTATE AND FACILITIES**

The Committee on Real Estate and Facilities met as a committee of the whole at approximately 2:26 p.m. During its meeting led by Committee Chair T. Dallas Smith an information item was presented to the Board and upon motions properly made and seconded, the Board members present unanimously approved the approval item.

### **INFORMATION ITEM**

1. Sandra Lynn Neuse, Vice Chancellor of Real Estate and Facilities, provided the Committee with an informational update on the capital project evaluation framework and the status of capital projects under design and construction across the University System of Georgia.

### **APPROVAL ITEM**

2. Upon a motion by Regent C. Thomas Hopkins, Jr., and seconded by Regent Jose R. Perez, the Committee approved the ranking of the design professional and construction management firms for project number J-415, Building #1013 (Poultry Science Complex) Renovation Phase I for the University of Georgia. The ranked design professional firms were:
  - 1) Flad Architects, Inc. (Atlanta)
  - 2) PRAXIS3, LLC (Atlanta)
  - 3) Walker Architects, Inc. (Atlanta)

The ranked construction management firms were:

- 1) Mathias Corporation (Lawrenceville)
- 2) DPR Construction (Atlanta)
- 3) Leapley Construction Group of Atlanta, LLC (Atlanta)

### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, and upon motion properly made by Regent James K. Syfan, III and seconded by Regent Samuel D. Holmes, the Regents who were present voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at approximately 2:49 p.m.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Board Chair Reynolds called for an executive session at approximately 3:00 p.m. to discuss personnel matters. With a motion properly made and variously seconded, the Regents present voted unanimously to go into executive session. The executive session of the Committee on Organization and Law took place within the full Board executive session. An affidavit regarding this executive session is on file with the Office of the Secretary to the Board.

### **RECESS**

On Tuesday, October 3, 2023, upon a motion properly made by Regent James K. Syfan, III and seconded by Regent Jose R. Perez the Board recessed for the day at approximately 3:37 p.m.

### **RECONVENE**

On Wednesday, October 4, 2023, Board Chair Harold Reynolds called the meeting back into session at 9:01 a.m. and announced that no action was taken during the executive session.

### **INVOCATION AND PLEDGE**

Brooke Patry, Student Government Association President at the Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **SAFETY BRIEFING**

Frank Strickland, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College Chief of Police, gave the safety briefing.

### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: PERSONNEL AND BENEFITS**

The Committee on Personal and Benefits met as a committee of the whole at approximately 9:05 a.m. During its meeting led by Committee Chair Richard T. Evans, two information items and one approval item were presented to the Board and upon motions properly made and seconded, the Board members present unanimously approved the approval item.

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

1. Total Rewards Update
2. ABAC Human Resources Spotlight – Student Employment and Minors on Campus Programs

## **APPROVAL ITEM**

1. Upon a motion made by Regent Neil L. Pruitt, Jr. and seconded by Regent Jose R. Perez, the Committee approved the Proposed Revisions to the Board of Regents' Policies 6.10.1, 8.2.7, and 8.2.14 to align with changes in state and federal law.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:44 a.m.

## **CORE CURRICULUM**

Dr. Ashwani Monga, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer, presented an approval item, Core Curriculum. The presentation included the current Board of Regents' Policy 3.3.1 Core Curriculum, the rationale for revising the policy, and proposed revisions. Dr. Monga continued with an explanation of the benefits that the students will gain from the proposed revisions to the policy, such as adding meaning instead of A-E check boxes, USG-wide academic and career relevance that faculty can convey to students and employers, and helping students progress faster toward degrees.

Upon a motion made by Regent Bárbara Rivera Holmes and seconded by Regent Richard T. Evans, the Board unanimously approved the Proposed Amendments to the Board of Regents' Policy 3.3.1 Core Curriculum with full implementation by Fall 2024.

## **ACADEMIC INNOVATION & THE GEORGIA FILM ACADEMY**

Dr. Art Recesso, Vice Chancellor for Academic Innovation, and Mr. Scott Votaw, Executive Director for Georgia Film Academy, gave presentations regarding Academic Innovation and the Georgia Film Academy. Dr. Recesso began his presentation by discussing that the Academic Innovation unit is a new unit created by the Chancellor a year ago. He continued by saying that its primary role is to function as the workforce development unit of the University System. Dr. Recesso explained that the focus of the unit is to bridge the gap between talent demand and talent development. He added that this focus is based on an analysis of labor data, partnering with employers to understand the demand, and collaborating with USG's institutions to build new degree programs that meet high demand career areas.

Next, Mr. Votaw gave a presentation regarding the Georgia Film Academy. He discussed the function of the Georgia Film Academy (GFA), referencing it as a "three system alliance." Mr. Votaw continued by saying that the GFA is housed at the Board of Regents, under the governance of Chancellor Perdue. He went on to say that GFA represents all the public colleges, universities, and technical colleges of Georgia. Additionally, Mr. Votaw shared that GFA has worked with the Georgia Department of Education to develop curriculum for high schools and middle schools. He explained that GFA has now created curriculum and programming that goes from middle school through the universities that aligns directly with industry standards that prepares students for real workforce opportunities. Mr. Votaw continued by saying that GFA has three main sectors which are as follows: creating micro certifications for students to take to their home institutions that count toward two-year and four-year degree programs; training students in film and television production, which includes, crafts on a film set, lighting, set construction, and rigging; and

postproduction. Mr. Votaw expressed that these certifications are meaningful because the industry will hire based on that certification.

### **CHANCELLOR'S REPORT**

Chancellor Sonny Perdue gave his monthly report. He began by thanking President Brundage and the ABAC team for their hospitality. Chancellor Perdue also complimented President Brundage by saying that USG is lucky to have her and thanked her for her excellent leadership of a historic place of education. He continued by saying that what started more than one hundred years ago as the Second District Agricultural and Mechanical School is now a college with four distinct schools that produce the best agricultural experts and the best next business leaders, thinkers, and nurses. Chancellor Purdue also announced that that this fall almost 69% of ABAC students are pursuing four-year degrees.

Chancellor Perdue continued his report by sharing that ABAC ranked the number nineteen top public school among regional colleges in the South according to U.S. News and World Report and that its agriculture education program is not only the best in Georgia, but the largest program of its kind east of the Mississippi River. He went on to give reports regarding other institutions within the USG as rated by U.S. News and World Report as follows: Georgia State University ranked number two in the nation for Best Undergraduate Teaching; Georgia College and State University ranked in the top ten for "Most Innovative Schools" in the nation; Fort Valley State University ranked number one for public Historically Black College and University (HBCU) in Georgia for the sixth consecutive year and achieved the highest ranking in the state for social mobility among public regional universities; Dalton State College ranked number one in the nation for student experience, and ranked fifteenth for Best Undergraduate Teaching among 124 regional colleges in the South; The University of North Georgia among Georgia universities on US News' regional lists, ranked number one on the list of Best Colleges for Veterans and number one for Least Debt, which measures schools whose students graduated carrying the lightest debt loads and ranked number three on the Best Value Colleges list. In addition, the website Best Universities recently ranked Georgia Highlands College as having the third most affordable online bachelor's degree in criminal justice in the country; and Kennesaw State University's Coles College of Business is ranked twelfth among Executive MBA programs in the world by CEO Magazine. Chancellor Perdue continued by saying Georgia is one of only four states to have two institutions, the Georgia Institute of Technology and the University of Georgia, ranked among the top twenty best public universities in the nation according to US News & World Report. Additionally, Georgia Tech ranked as number thirty-six in the world according to Times Higher Education.

Chancellor Perdue went on to report that based on preliminary data, all USG's institutional sectors are up in enrollment. Comprehensive institutions are up the most in terms of numbers by close to 3,000 students, and state colleges are up the most in terms of percentage, with a 4.9% increase. He continued by saying that dual enrollment is up by approximately 3,000 students and there were increases in enrollment in all USG's institutions except for one. Chancellor Perdue also shared that USG has welcomed about 2,000 beginning freshmen this fall which is an increase of 3.8%, undergraduate enrollment is up by nearly 5,000 and graduate enrollment is up over 4,000.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There was no unfinished business to come before the Board.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Upon a motion made by Regent Neil L. Pruitt, Jr. and seconded by Regent Lowery Houston May, the Board unanimously approved the proposed Board meeting dates for 2024.

Upon a motion made by Regent Tom Bradbury and seconded by Regent Lowery Houston May, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Dr. John Fuchko as the next president of Dalton State College effective October 5, 2023.

**PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

Secretary to the Board Christopher McGraw announced that there were no timely petitions or communications for the Board to consider and that the next Board of Regents meeting will be held on November 14, 2023, at the Board's offices in Atlanta.

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, and upon a motion properly made by Regent Richard T. Evans and seconded by Regent Bárbara Rivera Holmes, the meeting adjourned at 11:10 a.m.



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Harold Reynolds  
Chairman, Board of Regents  
University System of Georgia



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Christopher A. McGraw  
Secretary, Board of Regents  
University System of Georgia