

MINUTES  
PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING  
*C.B. Pennington Jr. Conference Center  
Pennington Biomedical Research Center  
6400 Perkins Rd., Baton Rouge, LA 70808  
Thursday, October 22, 2020 | Time: 1:30 p.m. CST*

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. James Williams, Chair, called to order the Presidential Search Committee Meeting of Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College at C.B. Pennington Jr. Conference Center in Baton Rouge on October 22, 2020.

Present

Mr. Verge Ausberry  
Ms. Hannah Barrios  
Mr. E.R. "Chip" Campbell  
Mr. Clarence Cazalot  
Mr. Larry Clark  
Ms. Gabriela González  
Mr. Lester Johnson  
Ms. Valencia Jones  
Ms. Jessica Jones  
Mr. Luke Laborde  
Ms. Mary Leach Werner  
Ms. Lori Martin  
Mr. Roland Mitchell  
Ms. Tara Smith  
Mr. Rémy Starns  
Mr. James Williams

Absent

Mr. Glenn Armentor  
Mr. Steve Nelson  
Ms. Christel Slaughter  
Ms. Takeyra Wagner

Mr. Steve Nelson and Mses. Slaughter and Wagner participated through remote means, and verification of their participation to the administrator immediately after roll call.

Also participating in the meeting were the following: Mr. Robert Dampf, Chair of the Board of Supervisors; Mr. Winston DeCuir, general counsel for LSU; University officers; and, administrators of the campuses; faculty representatives; interested citizens and representatives of the news media.

II. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

The invocation was offered by Ms. Lori Martin. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mr. Rémy Starns.

III. Public Comment

There were no individuals registered for public comment.

Mr. Dampf and Dr. John Kirwan, executive director of Pennington Biomedical Research Center, offered welcoming remarks to the Committee.

IV. Orientation

Mr. DeCuir briefed the Committee on practices and protocols related to their participation as a member, including: public records and public meeting laws; defining an applicant; Family Educational Rights and Privacy Acts (FERPA); Fair Credit Act; and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

V. University Leadership Structure

Mr. Williams opened the floor to discussion on the leadership structure of the university, but not before stating what the committee should be examining. The decision at hand was not only should LSU return to a separate structure of a system president and a main campus chancellor, but if there are any changes to the university structure under the president before announcing the position.

Mr. Clark stated that his fellow colleagues would agree that having one individual assume both roles is possible as long as the right individual is selected for the position.

Ms. Werner stated the committee should look at the resources available and the resources it would take to maintain the current structure or a different structure.

Mr. Ausberry stated from the efforts of the government realm, there has historically been confusion with the positions of power – chancellor and president –regarding decision making. As far as legislative efforts are concerned, it would be a mistake to split the positions.

Mr. Laborde stated based on the current organizational structure, it would be overwhelming for one individual as it related to the number of direct reports. In reference to Mr. Laborde’s comment, Mr. Cazalot suggested the right individual should have the flexibility to build out the structure as they see fit. Mr. Williams noted that the bylaws state the Board of Supervisors is in charge of organizing the structure.

Dr. González stated LSU needs to define the job responsibilities prior to searching for the best candidate(s) for the job.

Mr. Starns stated the search committee can make a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors regarding the structure. He added the best person should be selected, then determine if that individual should assume one role or not.

Dr. Mitchell shared that LSU should recognize the current budget environment, and a structure that allows the university to fiscally responsible is critically important. He added the current structure is working well for the system during a difficult time.

No one offered comments stating the structure should include a separate position for a chancellor.

Mr. Williams stated he would entertain a motion to recommend a unified position be proposed to the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Jones made a motion to recommend the position of President Chancellor remain unified. The motion was seconded by Ms. Werner and the Committee unanimously approved the motion by roll call vote.

Mr. Williams suggested that a few committee members review the organization structure. Mr. Williams asked Mr. Laborde to lead the effort in researching organizational structures. The other volunteers were: Mr. Starns, Mr. Armentor and Mr. Clark.

VI. President's Job Description

It was disclosed that aside from the brief mention in the Board of Supervisors' bylaws, there was no detailed description accessible which outlined the duties and responsibilities of the president. Mr. Williams proposed several committee members work together to formulate a job description for the position. Dr. González volunteered to lead that effort. Other members who also volunteered to assist include: Mr. Casalot, Ms. Smith and Dr. Mitchell.

VII. Engagement of Consultant/Search Firm

There was a recommendation by the chair to hire a search firm, and the committee unanimously agreed. Mr. Williams proposed that several committee members research and recommend a search firm. Ms. Werner volunteered to lead that effort and other members who volunteered included: Mr. Ausberry, Ms. Valencia Jones and Ms. Jessica Jones.

At this time, Ms. Werner recommended Mr. Armentor replace her on the organizational structure subcommittee.

Mr. Williams asked Mr. Ausberry to lead the effort to secure university buy-in, from key constituencies (i.e. legislature, faculty, alumni, and financial supporter). Other member who volunteered to assist in this effort are: Ms. Barrios, Dr. Martin, and Dr. Johnson.

VIII. Timeline

The floor was opened to discussion on the proposed timeline of the search. The Committee agreed to an interest process through the end of the year, and begin accepting applications in January.

Dr. González suggested the committee should reassess their progress by the end of the year.

Mr. Williams indicated a meeting schedule and other preliminary plans will be released soon.

IX. Budget

The chairman tabled budget discussion until the search firm subcommittee reports on the preferred firm and cost.

X. Adjournment

Upon motion by Ms. Valencia Jones, and seconded by Dr. González, the meeting was adjourned.