

BOV MEETING MINUTES - MAY 2, 2023

ATTENDEES

BOV Members

Greg Binion, William Fraser, Bob Fry, Roger Guenther, Leonard Hale, John Hallmark, Amy Hark, Pete Huddleston, Chris Johnson, Mark Keller, Shrub Kempner, John Michael, Brandon Neff, Chris Orth, Wayne Prescott, Bob Sakowitz, Todd Sullivan, Kelly Teichman, Mark Waller

BOV Members - Virtual

Dale Laine, Keith McFatrige, Phyllis Milstein, Jerry Mohn

BOV Members - Absent

Mike Cokinos, Tom Farmer, Paul Hill, Charlie Jenkins, Will Jenkins, Mark Keller, Mark Lyons, Betty Massey, John McDonald, Greg Mitchell, Frank Muller, Chaz Neeley, Victor Pierson, Terry Ray, Andy Tirpak

Galveston Campus Attendees

Ken Bailey, Donna Lang, Antonietta Quigg, Todd Sutherland, Jason Tieman, Debbie Thomas, Andrea Davis, Kathey Walker

Guests

Mike Hardy, Sid Theis, John Binion

Chairman, Bob Fry, called the May 2, 2023, Board of Visitors meeting to order. Fry welcomed everyone and introduced two prospective members in attendance: John Binion '94 and Sid Theis '74. The first order of business was the approval of minutes from the October 25, 2022 meeting. General Fraser made the motion and Bob Sakowitz made the second to accept the minutes as presented. All were in favor and the motion carried. Each member introduced themselves. Chairman Fry introduced Mr. Mike Hardy.

COL Mike Fossum welcomed everyone to campus and provided a quick brief of recent highlights including the recent successful career fair with over 100 companies participating, cutting of steel in January of The Lone Star State, the arrival of the TS Kennedy.

Mike Hardy, Associate VP for Governmental Relations from the flagship, provided a legislative briefing. He discussed the federal monies requested by the Galveston campus for ship sharing, fuel payments, SIP payments, maintenance and operations and a variety of other ship related expenses. Several years ago, we were allotted funds to upgrade the campus infrastructure and upgrade our pier for the coming NSMV. Due to increased costs, additional funding is needed. They are currently working to secure federal money from Congress to cover the remaining balances needed to complete the projects. They have an ally in Senator Cruz. The house and senate are currently far apart on issues. Galveston is seeking an exceptional item, \$3 million each of two years of the biennium, to fund the operating costs for a new Turtle Hospital. The second request is a rider to keep the money granted in the last legislative session (2021) which hasn't yet been spent due to increased costs and changing MARAD requirements. The state is sitting on a monumental surplus balance of \$33-34 billion. A&M has asked for a billion. He briefly discussed higher ed insurance and the hazelwood funding expenses. One of the hot button issues is DEI and senate bill 16, the bill to eliminate teach tenure for new hires, which impacts higher education. Existing faculty would be grandfathered.

Jonathan Whitworth called for members to break to their respective committee meetings for one hour. He asked the new members, Mark, John, and Mark, to sit in on a committee that was lightly represented. He asked the committees to report back on what has happened in the last three months in response to the plan that came out of the October meetings and to report back on the action plan developed for the coming months.

Jonathan Whitworth reconvened the general meeting of the BOV which resumed at 11:35 a.m. Committee Chairs provided a report from their respective committee meetings.

Brandon Neff spoke for **Industry Relations Committee** and discussed follow-up from various speaking engagements discussed at the previous meeting (ex. Coronado Club) and the importance for A&M Galveston to wave the flag in the community. COL Fossum has been busy and had a number of successful speaking engagements as a result of the work of committee members. Several new locations were discussed including Break Bulk, Greater Houston Partnership, Offshore Wind Conference and IMX. Members recommending these engagements are on the hook to reach out and make those connections. The next item covered was the Blue Economy Leadership Institute was begun this year with about 35 student participants at a cost of about \$8500. It places students in teams to do a study and address a problem. They hope to go up to a budget of \$12k and increase participants to 75. These are motivated students who participate. Most teams walk away with no prize money - just the experience. The ask is for sponsorships for next year's event.

The next ask is for employer testimonials from employers who have hired our students and have good things to say. They want to have the stories somewhere. Finally, there are Port calls coming up this summer and encouraged board members to reach out and connect with the staff in those areas. Leonard Hale gave kudos to Ken Bailey for their hard work putting together the Leadership Institute. The committee looks forward to it growing. Jonathan Whitworth suggested that they consider holding the event twice a year.

Student Affairs Committee report provided by Jonathan Whitworth. This committee last discussed mental health issues and the impact of students losing their lives impacting many colleges including the Galveston campus. The discussion looked at what we were already doing and what we might be able to do additionally. Greg Binion shared that Shell has a program for their mariners who face many of the same issues as our students. Todd and Ken went out and participated in a successful visit with Shell about the program and will share what they learned a little later in the meeting. The other issue discussed today is food insecurity which is a very real issue on our campus. The vast majority of our students live on campus and are provided a meal plan but there are graduate students and international students who don't live on campus, who may not have a car, and are often without money left to purchase food. The Galveston Campus Food pantry had over 500 visits last year, up from 18 in the first year. Today's discussion centered on whether to go to the next step from non-perishable items to include fresh fruits and vegetables, etc. Todd Sutherland has asked Neil to look at some data regarding the food pantry to figure out how to make it better. There are lessons to be learned from the food pantry system in College Station.

Chris Johnson spoke for **Development and Fund Raising Committee**. The board is working to develop a cheat sheet of the campus needs to be used by COL Fossum as focus points when making visits. The

list is still too long. They are working to flesh it down from the current seven buckets under discussion to a short list of three topics into a 1-pager. This conversation is helping the group to understand what the needs and priorities are and what the cost is to meet the need. They hope to have a solid list to bring to the board at the next meeting. They need to know how much money is needed and what will that money get you as well as the tangible benefits. The current list includes: (1) Bill Merrell and Sam Brody's Disaster Recovery Institute operational needs, (2) Gulf Center for Sea Turtle Research (3) Dive program, (4) The Blue Economy Incubator, (5) Gulf Research Institute for Highly Migratory Species, (6) The Office of Outreach.

Jonathan Whitworth turned the floor back to Mike Hardy's legislative discussion. The question was about the \$45 million ask from last session with \$10 million on the new dock/pier as well as some outfitting of the new vessel and \$35 million for the central plant which is a need that has grown to a \$65 million dollar need. The dock project was delayed because MARAD changed the requirements within the first couple weeks after we received approval for funding. As a result, the cost increased to \$65-70 million making it cheaper to move the dock. The Maritime Academy is a federal / state partnership. Under the agreement, MARAD provides the ship, and we provide the infrastructure. However, MARAD keeps moving the goalpost with regards to requirements. As a result, construction costs are up 35-40%. We do not have the option to ask for additional funds from the state. He reminded everyone that we had an incredibly successful 2021 legislative year receiving \$75 million for the Galveston Campus. Hardy also discussed the possibility of tuition revenue bond options which are presented about every 6 sessions or 3 years for construction projects. If there was movement in the legislature toward bond options, the decision made was for the Sea Turtle Hospital will be put forward. This year, the President's budget came in 77 million under what was requested cutting everything except fuel payments. Leonard Hale asked what the expected funding stream will be for the fuel costs especially when the larger NSMV arrives – though the belief is that the newer ships will be more fuel efficient, there is a gap, and the funding would have to come from the state.

Ken Bailey, Director of Career Services, provided a briefing on mental health issues and topics on campus. Mental health of students and late night activities are a concern of those working with the youth today. Mariners, as a group, tend to want to manage their mental health issues alone and don't respond as well to interventions. Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death between 18-25 with accidents being the leading cause. It is now the 2nd leading cause of death for kids 10-14 as well. They were interested in hearing what our industry partners are doing on this issue. They met with folks at Shell about their program called 'Maritime Well-being' which addresses mental health and safety from a standpoint of maximum performance and as a health-related issue. This is not a new program and can be used by others (not just Shell). There is an app available on the App store that he highly recommends. They have hosted a number of events to encourage students to download and use the app. Ken is pleased that there will be counselors aboard the ship throughout Summer Sea Term to assist with the issues that always arise. Ken also discussed the Blue Economy Leadership Institute which is a team event supported this year by Bertling, ABS, Gulf Copper, and Shell. It is a weekend-long event which begins on Friday with an opening dinner. During the dinner, students are partnered with 5 academic partners (marine engineering, marine transportation to marine science, ocean, coastal resources or marine biology) and tasked with a complex maritime industry case scenario. This year's case scenario was authored by

Professor/Capt. Robert Baker, formerly of ExxonMobil. Every team has an environmental, logistics, transportation, and engineering representative. A special thank you to Leonard Hale and Amy Hark who served as mentors, advisors, and judges throughout the weekend.

Bob Fry invited COL Fossum to make closing remarks. Mike Fossum thanked everyone for their support and engagement. He briefly discussed the ongoing Management Report process stating that there are changes coming and he is unsure of how it's all going to work out. We hope to have it wrapped up in the next week or so as it is a distraction to everyone. Our priorities of exploration and discovery are not going to change. He reminded everyone to look at the TX Dot paper on the Pelican Island Bridge replacement which is still on track included in their BOV briefing book.

Bob Fry thanked each of the speakers and participants before adjourning to a closed BOV member only meeting.

- END OF MINUTES -