

**MINUTES**

**OF THE**

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE**

**BOARD OF REGENTS**

**OF**

**THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

**HELD IN**

**COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS**

**MAY 11, 2002**

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**MINUTES OF THE  
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MAY 11, 2002**

A special meeting of the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System was convened by Mr. Erle Nye, Chairman of the Board of Regents, at 7:35 a.m., on Saturday, May 11, 2002, in the Board of Regents Meeting Room, on the campus of Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas.

The following members of the Board were present:

Mr. Erle Nye, Chairman  
Dr. Dionel E. Avilés, Vice Chairman  
Mr. Phil Adams  
Ms. Anne Armstrong  
Mr. Lionel Sosa  
Mr. R.H. "Steve" Stevens  
Dr. Susan Rudd Wynn

The following members of the Board were not present:

Dr. Wendy Gramm  
Mr. L. Lowry Mays

Mr. Nye stated that the posted purpose of the special meeting was to discuss the search for the president of Texas A&M University (TAMU) and possibly take action to name the finalist for the position of president of TAMU.

Mr. Nye said the posting for this special meeting also included discussion of other personnel and real property matters to be considered in closed session as permitted by Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code. Mr. Nye said the Board would convene in closed session as provided by the following sections of the Texas Government Code: 551.071, for consultation with System attorneys on pending and proposed litigation and matters recognized as attorney/client confidential and privileged; 551.072, for discussion regarding the acquisition, lease, exchange, disposition and value of real property; 551.073, for discussion of negotiated contracts for prospective gifts or donations; 551.074, for discussion of matters involving the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline or dismissal or to hear complaints or charges against an officer or employee, including the search for the president of TAMU and possible action to name the finalist(s) for this position.

Mr. Nye said in accordance with the law, no final action, decision or vote with regard to any matter considered in the closed session would be made or taken.

Mr. Nye reconvened the meeting in open session at 8:11 a.m., stating that the Board had met in closed session from 7:40 until 8:10 a.m. He stated that during this closed session meeting, no vote or straw poll had been taken. Mr. Nye reported that the Board members had discussed matters that were provided in the notice. He said it was now appropriate for the Board to take under consideration the matter of the presidency of TAMU. Mr. Nye thanked everyone for their interest and said that he had commented during the search process many times that Aggies love their university. He said he thought the turnout at the meeting was evidence of that love.

Mr. Nye reviewed the fact that Dr. Ray Bowen, President of TAMU, had given notice of his intent to retire at the end of June, after distinguished service of roughly seven years. Mr. Nye said at that time, Mr. Howard Graves, Chancellor of The Texas A&M University System (TAMUS), appointed a 24-person search committee, composed of the various constituencies on the TAMU campus. Mr. Nye extended the Board's appreciation to both the Chancellor and the search committee for their hard work. He said the search committee had narrowed the candidates from 125 to 60, from 25 to 10, and then submitted three names to the Chancellor as finalists. Mr. Nye said that one of the three finalists had subsequently withdrawn. He said the members of the Board had interviewed five candidates in some detail and had looked at them from many aspects. Mr. Nye said that all of the candidates were capable people and that we were fortunate to have had this kind of interest in our great university.

Mr. Nye said that the Board had received quite a number of requests to speak and he wanted everyone to understand that they were under some limitations as to what could be done. He said he wanted to clarify the circumstances and said there were really no legal provisions for hearing public comments at this time. However, Mr. Nye stated, he recognized that there were several people present who represented substantial organizations associated with TAMU and TAMUS that he felt the Board needed to accommodate. Mr. Nye said they did not have the time or the legal provision to hear from everybody; but on the other hand, he was very much inclined to hear from those individuals who were representative of quite a number of Aggies and TAMU. He said he had a list of at least ten people who had requested to speak and he recognized most of the names. Mr. Nye said he wanted to take the Chairman's prerogative and recognize the President of the Association of Former Students (AFS), Ms. Glenda Mariott, and also Mr. Porter Garner, Executive Director of AFS. Mr. Nye asked that all comments be limited to three minutes.

Ms. Mariott said she was a member of the class of '79, and was speaking on behalf of the AFS Board of Directors. She said that as volunteers committed to higher education and in support of TAMU, their board well understood and appreciated the important role the Board of Regents has on behalf of TAMUS. She said that for 123 years, the AFS has cultivated the "Spirit of Aggieland" as a fundamental part of their mission to promote the interest and welfare of TAMU. She said that presently the Association proudly represented 260,000 members who have permanently vested in Texas A&M's past and who proudly support the future. Ms. Mariott commented that former students hold Texas A&M to an uncompromising standard of excellence. She said Aggie principles of pride, integrity, commitment and dedication are expectations

applied to fellow former students, current students, and indeed, anyone or anything associated with TAMU. Ms. Mariott said that it was the obligation and privilege of the AFS to promote these values in all matters affecting TAMU and in doing so, represent Texas A&M's most enduring stakeholders. She said that Texas A&M deserves the very best leadership at all levels, and commented that its 22<sup>nd</sup> president will face considerable challenges and will require bold leadership and strong character to be successful. Most importantly, she said, the president must hold TAMU and Texas Aggies in the highest esteem. Ms. Mariott stated that the AFS Board of Directors believed that U.S. Senator Phil Gramm best fulfilled the unique needs of Texas A&M and that he would lead with vision forged in passion while upholding a commitment to the university's rich traditions and proud heritage. She then stated that the board of directors of the AFS was unanimous in its official endorsement of Senator Phil Gramm as the next president of TAMU and respectfully submitted that recommendation to Board of Regents for the appropriate consideration.

Mr. Nye thanked Ms. Mariott for all she did for the Association and commented that he had seen her the evening before at commencement shaking every graduate's hand.

Mr. Nye said that Ms. Carri Baker Wells, President of the Executive Committee of the 12<sup>th</sup> Man Foundation, and Mr. Miles Marks, its Executive Director and CEO, were present. Ms. Wells addressed the Board, saying that the 12<sup>th</sup> Man Foundation represented 25,000 Aggie families and that last year their donations had enabled the Foundation to contribute over \$11 million to TAMU. She said they had pledged \$110 million to the university's capital campaign. Ms. Wells applauded the fact that there were two outstanding candidates at the table. She said the Board had involved many constituencies in the process and had allowed the process to take the time needed to make the right decision. Ms. Wells said a month ago they had interviewed the three publicly-named candidates when they came to campus and had also interviewed by phone one of the other candidates that the Board was considering. She said that at the request of Dr. John Junkins, Distinguished Professor of Aerospace Engineering at TAMU and Chair of the Presidential Search Committee, the Foundation had given its written recommendations to him. In their report, Ms. Wells said, they stated that of the three publicly-named candidates, Dr. Robert M. Gates was the best candidate, and that they believe that today. She said if he was selected, the Foundation would be proud to support him. However, Ms. Wells stated, they also believe that Dr. Phil Gramm had higher qualifications to serve in the office of president of TAMU. She commented that she did not see this as a "Gramm vs. Gates" issue, but rather as an issue of "Senator Gramm vs. the rest of the world" and because he was such a unique and independent person, he would bring certain qualities to the office of president. Ms. Wells said that Phil Gramm was a nationally recognized, influential leader in the nation. She said he had earned stature in the U.S. Senate and had helped lead Congress in many important public policy issues. She stated that Senator Gramm knows the landscape of TAMU and understands the big picture. She felt that he could walk into the office of the president tomorrow with a plan to help us become a top-ten public university before the year 2020. Ms. Wells said his academic experience and his

understanding and appreciation of diversity, combined with his time in public service, had uniquely prepared him to lead us in realizing these goals.

Ms. Wells said that aside from private donations, one of the most critical elements of TAMU's future is its ability to be successful in the legislative process and we must have a strong and strategic plan when we go to Austin and Washington. She stated that Phil Gramm understands the politics affecting public institutions and as a former U.S. Senator would bring a persona of influence as well as vast experience of what it takes to be successful in the legislative process. She said as Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, no one could argue that Phil Gramm was not one of the most prolific fundraisers in the country, someone who can help us realize the \$1 billion fundraising goal for Texas A&M and its excellence. Ms. Wells pointed out that when the University of Oklahoma and Texas Tech University put a former senator leading their university, both of those universities realized significant advances in their academic and athletic programs and set records in fundraising. Ms. Wells stated that Phil Gramm's credentials, including his credentials in the academic arena, being the youngest full professor in A&M history...

*(Secretary's note: At this point, Mr. Nye told Ms. Wells that she was out of time and should conclude her remarks.)*

In concluding her remarks, Ms. Wells urged the Board to consider naming two finalists and allowing Phil Gramm the opportunity to come to campus. She stated that the Foundation would support whatever decision the Board made and would be supportive of the Board and the next president of Texas A&M.

Mr. Nye thanked Ms. Wells for her comments and stated that it was a red-letter day for TAMU when the two principal institutions that support the university were headed by females. He said TAMU had come a long way and, for his part, it was all for the best.

Mr. Nye asked the Board if they could still accommodate a few other speakers and listed the following individuals as wanting the opportunity to address the Board: Jack Long, speaker of the student senate; Ed Watson, of *Ag Times.com*; Jim Coker, a long-time, strong Aggie; and a current student.

Dr. Avilés commented that the Board did not have time to accommodate all of the speakers and just one more person should be allowed to address the Board.

Mr. Adams stated that he thought the Board should run as long as it could. He said some of the regents had an obligation to go to commencement at Reed Arena, but this was a public board and a public institution and he felt they should accommodate who they could as much as time allowed.

Ms. Armstrong asked what time they wanted to set to have the last speaker.

Mr. Nye said he needed to leave by 8:40 a.m. and that leaving five minutes for the action, he felt the Board had 10 to 12 minutes. He asked those present in the meeting room if there were any others who wanted to address the Board other than Jim Coker, Ed Watson, Jack Long, Matthew Maddox and David Rushing. Two other gentlemen indicated they would like to speak. Mr. Nye asked the individuals to just indicate which candidate they preferred. Mr. Jim Coker said that the Rockwall County A&M Club voted on May 2 and supported Phil Gramm unanimously. Mr. Ed Watson stated that their polls of the internet community polled around 76 to 28 and then 71 to 28 on a separate poll, in favor of Senator Gramm. Mr. Jack Long, speaker of the student senate, addressed the Board, saying the day before had been his last day as a student of Texas A&M, and that at the time of this meeting he had been a former student for 23 hours. He stated that he was for Senator Gramm. Mr. Matthew Maddox, a current student, stated he was for Senator Gramm. Another person in the audience stated that he was for Senator Gramm.

Mr. Nye thanked everyone present for their interest and said that the last nine months of the search process had shown that Aggies care about and love their university and that was sometimes both comforting and challenging. He said they were at the point where it was time to consider the matter. He stated that he felt the Board of Regents had been diligent about letting the process run and had received innumerable communications -- written, by phone, by e-mail and some in person. He said he felt that everyone had arrived at their own conclusion based upon their own preference and he respected everybody's judgment. Mr. Nye said it was now in order to hear any motions on this matter.

Dr. Avilés made a motion that Dr. Robert Gates be named as the only finalist for the presidency of Texas A&M University. He stated that Dr. Gates was eminently qualified by virtue of his experience to guide and advance Texas A&M University in its quest to become one of the top ten public institutions in the United States in concert with the goals and aspirations of Vision 2020. Dr. Avilés said that Dr. Gates brought a wealth of experience to the position of president and, in addition, his vast experience in dealing with federal and state agencies was one of his greatest assets. Dr. Avilés said he has an excellent record of consensus building and his most recent experience as interim dean of the George Bush School of Government and Public Service provided him with insight into TAMU and many of its traditions. Mr. Sosa seconded the motion.

Mr. Nye asked if there was further discussion. Mr. Adams stated that he thought the Board was missing a "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity to name Phil Gramm as president of Texas A&M. Mr. Nye asked if there was any further discussion. There was none. He then asked for a vote by a show of hands and asked all those in favor of the motion to raise their hands. The Board took action as set forth below:

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**MINUTE ORDER 69-2002**

**NAMING OF  
ROBERT M. GATES  
AS THE FINALIST FOR THE POSITION OF  
PRESIDENT OF TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

On motion of Dr. Avilés, seconded by Mr. Sosa, and by a show of hands of those in support of Dr. Robert M. Gates as the finalist for the position of President of Texas A&M University (being Dr. Avilés, Ms. Armstrong, Mr. Sosa, Mr. Stevens and Dr. Wynn), Dr. Gates was named as the finalist for the position of President of Texas A&M University.

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Mr. Nye stated that the chair recognized five votes and, accordingly, the resolution was passed and Dr. Robert Gates was designated as a finalist for the position of President of Texas A&M.

Mr. Nye said that all extended their best wishes to Dr. Gates and that, in accordance with state law, the Board would wait 21 days before a meeting would be scheduled to confirm Dr. Gates' election. Mr. Nye extended his appreciation to the Chancellor, the search committee and to all of the Regents for their diligence in this matter.

There being no further business, Mr. Nye adjourned the meeting at 8:30 a.m., the same day.

Vickie Burt Spillers  
Executive Secretary to the Board of Regents  
The Texas A&M University System

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