

MINUTES

OF THE

SPECIAL TOWN HALL MEETING OF THE

BOARD OF REGENTS

OF

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

HELD IN

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

MARCH 28, 2003

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CONVENE SPECIAL MEETING

A special town hall 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 2:05 p.m., on Thursday, March 28, 2003, in the Bernard C. Richardson Zone at Kyle Field, on the campus of Texas A&M University (TAMU), 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
Dr. Wendy Gramm
Mr. R.H. "Steve" Stevens
Dr. Susan Rudd Wynn

The following members of the Board were not present:

Mr. Lowry Mays
Mr. Lionel Sosa

Mr. Nye gave the following remarks:

"On behalf of The Texas A&M University System Board of Regents, it is my great privilege to welcome each of you to this very auspicious occasion, this special Regents Town Hall Meeting. Assembled in this room is a truly impressive gathering of accomplished individuals from various walks of life but bonded in each instance by one common attribute, the love of Texas A&M. We meet at a time of great challenge for our nation, our state and our university. We come together to consider the destiny of this great institution and in honor of all those who have gone before to commit to each other that we will extend the benefits, the values, the traditions and the spirit of this institution to all those who follow -- that we will extend that special spirit, 'the spirit that can ne'er be told,' to generations to come. The public launch of the *One Spirit One Vision Campaign* is an historic and momentous act. Generations to come will record this day as a turning point for this university and for all that it represents. We do not take this step alone. Countless others, beyond this place, will be moved to join us in this exemplary commitment. As we speak, American service men and women are risking their lives to enforce the just demands of a civilized society. Our prayers go out to them as they respond to this nation's call. It is up to each of us

gathered here today to respond to the call of this great university. Thanks to each of you for being here and thank you for your dedication to Texas A&M.

“Before we move to the business at hand, it is important that I acknowledge some of those present. In many respects, everyone in this room is due an introduction, but of course that is not practical or possible. I am pleased to introduce my colleagues on the Board of Regents, a truly dedicated group, in alphabetical order: Mr. Phil Adams, Ambassador Anne Armstrong, Dr. Don Avilés, Dr. Wendy Gramm, Lionel Sosa is not here this afternoon but was expected, Steve Stevens, Dr. Susan Rudd Wynn and Lowry Mays asked that I extend his apologies. I know there are a number of distinguished folks here, particularly I recognize a number of former regents. I am reluctant to begin to name them, but I did recognize Bob Allen, Don Powell and John Lindsey. If there are other former regents, if you would stand we would like to recognize you.

“We were expecting Bill Mobley, one of our former and distinguished presidents, to be with us. I do know that Dean Gage is here, and Dean we appreciate you being with us... Finally, perhaps most importantly, I call your attention to the campaign leaders listed on page 6 of the pamphlet that is in front of you. All of the chairs and vice chairs, regional and college campaign leaders, I would like for all of ya’ll to stand so that we can recognize you at this time. All of the campaign chairs, vice chairs, campus chairs, please stand up.

“It hardly seems possible that it was less than a year ago, when we persuaded Dr. Robert Gates to return to the campus to serve as our 22nd president. You simply can’t fail to be impressed with his obvious commitment, his vision and his understanding of Texas A&M. He is a man of action and his presence here has been noted positively across this country. Bob Gates is a bright, energetic, dedicated individual who understands and appreciates the values and spirit that is Texas A&M. We are most fortunate to have him lead our university at this time and to lead us in this *One Spirit One Vision Campaign*. Please help me to welcome Dr. Robert Gates...”

Dr. Robert M. Gates, President of Texas A&M University, gave the following remarks:

“Howdy! Thank you Chairman Nye, Regents, and distinguished guests, for your commitment to the future of this remarkable university. Many of you in this room played a role in charting that future with *Vision 2020*. I am honored to have been given the charge to fulfill your strategy for making this outstanding university even better. The Regents have given me two assignments today -- to present the case for the *One Spirit One Vision Campaign* and to report on campaign progress. I’m happy to say that both jobs will be more than pleasant.

“Texas A&M is a unique American institution. Aggie traditions, Aggie spirit and Aggie leadership make our graduates stand out among all others. I have no doubt that every one of you knows an Aggie who is serving right now in the armed forces. The patriotism, discipline and self sacrifice that drive those Aggies to serve are part of the blend of traditions and values that we call the Aggie spirit. The challenge facing us is to preserve our spirit and our culture

while advancing our academic standing. In that regard the university has already achieved much in recent years. In 2001, Texas A&M was admitted to the Association of American Universities, becoming one of 63 universities across the nation to belong to AAU. Student leadership opportunities here are unrivaled by any other university in the country. We are now the fifth largest university in the United States. We are tenth in attracting National Merit Scholars; there are more than 600 on campus right now. We are eleventh in total grants for research. Texas A&M has come so far because it has been blessed at critical moments in its history with courageous, visionary leaders including the creators of *Vision 2020*.

“With *Vision 2020*, we have set a course toward the top tier of public universities. We pursue this goal not for bragging rights, but because following the course set by General Earl Rudder 40 years ago, we know that focusing on excellence in all aspects of the university will enable us to better serve our students, our faculty, the State of Texas and our country. As a leading university in America, we will address the real challenges facing our state, the nation and the world. And, we do face challenges -- first, a global economy powered by discovery, knowledge and expertise, an economy that demands a highly skilled workforce; second, geo-political climate that daily focuses all of us on homeland security and has placed hundreds of thousands of American troops in harms way, half a world away; and third, too many examples in too many parts of American life of a lack of integrity, a lack of character that erodes the trust that is the foundation of democracy in a market economy. Texas A&M has answers to these issues and achieving top university status will give us a greater voice in shaping our world.

“*Vision 2020* outlines a clear course of action, but there are obstacles...money comes to mind. Education is a people intensive and costly business. Right now our state is providing about a third of our budget. The State of Texas must keep pace with other economic and technological powerhouse states, above all by supporting its’ flagship universities. Continued state support is vital to achieving our goals and to maintaining our identity as a public university, a land-grant university established by the people of Texas to teach, to research and to serve.

“Meanwhile, we must do our part. *One Spirit One Vision* will advance excellence in areas that state support can’t touch. The message to our state leaders and to the citizens of Texas must be loud and clear. Texas A&M is a state and national treasure and Texas Aggies will do whatever it takes to ensure its future.

“*One Spirit One Vision* is the first campaign in support of *Vision 2020*. Our priorities focus on three *Vision 2020* imperatives: elevating our faculty, improving undergraduate and graduate education and strengthening diversity and globalization. We are encouraging campaign donors to support these areas and many are responding. Page 2 of your agenda, shows the number of faculty positions, graduate fellowships and undergraduate scholarships already funded during the campaign. You will see another important number on page 2, that is the campaign total. It is my pleasure to announce and tell you that as of March 1, 2003, *One Spirit One Vision* donors have given and pledged a total of \$511,536,109 to Texas A&M.

“The Texas A&M family owes you and all Aggies a huge debt of gratitude. This is an amazing number. But our ultimate goal is not dollars; it is changed lives. The impact this campaign has on Texas A&M students and faculty is only the beginning. From there your influence will travel through the years and across the miles to times and people we will never see. Our projections indicate that if giving remains strong, we can reach \$1 billion by the time this campaign ends. More importantly, our college deans tell us that a billion dollars is what we need to make progress toward *Vision 2020*.

“I therefore have submitted, through Chancellor Graves, a resolution for the Board of Regents to consider adopting. You will see a draft of the resolution on page 3 of your materials. With the Regents endorsement, Texas A&M today will publicly launch *One Spirit One Vision*, a university-wide campaign to raise \$1 billion. It is a challenge. But now, more than ever, the world needs this institution and our unique brand of leadership. Aggies have been leaders in America for more than 125 years. It is time now for the university itself to lead in America. Thank you.”

Mr. Nye thanked Dr. Gates for his thoughts and leadership. He thanked everyone in attendance for helping to get the campaign off to such an impressive start. He said that’s not bad to be half-way to the goal when you start the game. Mr. Nye said we are in a period of some economic challenge, but Aggies have always been up to the challenge. He said this is an institution that exemplifies duty, honor and country and we will in fact do our duty -- energetically and enthusiastically. He said that he believes that we will more than meet our goals.

Mr. Nye presented Item 1, a resolution to endorse the public launch of the *One Spirit One Vision Campaign*. Mr. Stevens moved for the adoption of the resolution and Dr. Gramm seconded the motion.

(Secretary’s Note: Prior to the vote on the resolution, Dr. Gates and Mr. Bob Harvey’77, Campaign Vice Chair, held a question-and-answer period.)

Ms. Armstrong gave the following remarks:

“When I first became a regent, I thought I had two big disadvantages. One was that I was the most senior regent in years and the least senior regent in terms of association and close bonds with A&M. Well, as it turned out, those were great advantages. I think when you are a freshman at A&M and go through the four years, or stay and go through six or eight years, or come back, or go through a few reunions, it almost sneaks up on you how unique and great this place is. But, when you are like me, and you come here and you suddenly discover A&M, it astounded me. It so impressed me in a way that I don’t think I could not have fully appreciated were I young, and at my age it was a great gift. It was an inspiration.

“I had had spent a lot of time in Washington and abroad and I had traveled around a lot and I thought I knew this old world pretty well; but, I didn’t. This is the most unique university and certainly one of the most unique of any kind of institutions there is. I had never seen anything like it. The values

here aren't matched at any other location I know of. Working with the regents and the A&M family has made for the happiest service of my life -- they are wonderful, kind, upright people.

"Now, I feel that this campaign, *One Spirit One Vision*, has given us the chance to repair the few weaknesses that I have learned about too. I think this can lift us to that top tier that we are aspiring to academically. It will give us the academic excellence that President Gates has outlined and I think it will give us the accessibility, the diversity, that we must have. I remember well, even though I was not tied to A&M then, when Earl Rudder, I know the reports of that and the dire predictions of when the women were taken into A&M. Well, I can't imagine A&M ever getting to greatness without the women that already play leadership roles here in every way.

"There are some aspects of this university that we will fight to the end to preserve and not change one iota. To me, that's what gives it its uniqueness now. And, when it is added to the academic excellence that this campaign can bring, it will make us, not maybe just in the top 20, maybe in the very top. And, you know better than I what these qualities are -- Aggie spirit, integrity, the "can do" spirit, the friendships that last a lifetime and are permanent bonds, the loyalty, the patriotism. To me, Aggie values exemplify all that is very best in America and never are those qualities more appreciated than at a time of testing for our country that started eight days ago.

"So, today we have everything it takes, except your effort and help that you are going to give, and some have already given magnificently to make it to our goal. I would say that we have wonderful leadership for our campaign as I have learned it; a chancellor and regents who want to be your partners in this effort, an excellent plan to point the way and a new president, who I think is ushering in, under his leadership, in substance, probably it has the chance of being the brightest era our university has every known. And, those of you who have seen him talk to people outside our Aggie family, I have seen him a couple of times, big audiences, some with Aggies some without... In both occasions, he got the longest standing ovations I ever heard in either of those organizations. He will be the best advocate this university has ever had in enlarging our family and helping us meet this goal. So, I urge you today, to vote overwhelmingly for the resolution and tomorrow to set out to prove that not only are the Aggies the most enthusiastic family there is, but that we are the most persuasive with others and the most generous ourselves. Thank you."

(Secretary's Note: Mr. Nye suspended the rules and asked everyone present to participate in the vote on the adoption of the resolution.)

Action was taken as set forth below:

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**MINUTE ORDER 82-2003 (AGENDA ITEM 01)**

**ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE  
THE PUBLIC LAUNCH OF THE \$1 BILLION  
*ONE SPIRIT ONE VISION CAMPAIGN*,  
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY**

On motion of Mr. Stevens, seconded by Dr. Gramm and by a unanimous vote of all present, the following minute order was approved:

Whereas, Texas A&M University has obtained Regent approval of its Vision 2020 strategic plan, which calls for Texas A&M University to “mount two successful capital campaigns that increase private endowment from \$700 million to \$3 billion” by 2020; and

Whereas, generous donors have already committed more than \$490 million to Texas A&M University from the campaign’s beginning on January 1, 2000, through February 28, 2003; and

Whereas, having Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System adopt a resolution supporting the public launch of *One Spirit One Vision* would lend unparalleled credibility to the campaign; and

Whereas, the *One Spirit One Vision Campaign* will ensure that Texas A&M University sustains its tradition of spirit and leadership, creates a culture of excellence and rises to the top tier of public universities; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that we, the members of the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System, meeting on this 28th day of March, endorse the public launch of the \$1 billion *One Spirit One Vision Campaign*, a pivotal university-wide effort to advance Texas A&M into the top tier of public universities.

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Mr. Nye concluded with the following remarks:

“My friends, we are embarked upon an exciting, visionary, landmark journey which will perpetuate the spirit of this great and unique university for many generations to come. It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words and we want to capture this moment with a panoramic photograph of this gathering. *(photo taken)*

“Thank all of you for participating in that. I think you will enjoy having an opportunity to see this recorded for posterity. On this special occasion, the words of one of my heroes come to my mind. During the depths of the ‘Battle of

Britain,' when that small island nation stood against almost the full might of the axis powers, then Prime Minister Winston Churchill charged the British people as follows: he said 'Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves such that if the British Empire shall last for a thousand years they will say this was their finest hour.' So it is that I would charge all of us that we conduct ourselves during this campaign, that generations to come will say that 'this was our finest hour, we should do no less.'"

Mr. Nye thanked everyone for their attendance. He said a reception and dinner would be held at Reed Arena, the same evening, to celebrate the launch of the campaign.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Nye adjourned the meeting at 3:10 p.m., Friday, March 28, 2003.

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

VBS:jb