MINUTES

OF THE

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE

BOARD OF REGENTS

OF

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

HELD IN

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS

June 15, 2009

(Approved September 24-25, 2009)
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CONVENE – MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2009

Chairman Morris E. Foster, convened a special meeting of the Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) at 9:03 a.m., Monday June 15, 2009, in the Board Meeting Room on the campus of Texas A&M University (TAMU), College Station, Texas. The following members of the Board were present:

Mr. Morris E. Foster, Chairman
Mr. Jim Wilson, Vice Chairman
Mr. Phil Adams
Dr. Richard A. Box
Mr. Lupe Fraga
Mr. Bill Jones (joined the meeting at 9:25 a.m.)
Mr. Jim Schwertner
Mr. Gene Stallings
Ms. Ida Clement Steen
Mr. Hunter Bollman, Student Regent

(Secretary’s Note: Mr. Bollman was appointed as Student Regent of The Texas A&M University System by Governor Rick Perry effective June 1, 2009. He replaced Mr. Anthony Cullins of Dallas.)

Chairman Foster announced that a quorum was present. He recognized and welcomed Mr. Bollman, who was attending his first meeting as Student Regent.

Chairman Foster explained why he had called this special meeting. He said our country is in the midst of economic turmoil and this is a particularly difficult time for taxpayers and families paying for college education. He said the Board’s responsibility to be good stewards of taxpayer resources was not only limited to tough economic times. He expressed his belief that it is and must be the Board’s ongoing mission. He said this requires their constant focus and attention.

Chairman Foster said that they would receive two reports, one on the financial trends of the A&M System and the other on opportunities for shared services.

Chairman Foster presented Item 1 and the Board took action as set forth below: 

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MINUTE ORDER 138-2009 (AGENDA ITEM 1)

APPROVAL OF BOARD COMMITTEES AND SPECIAL APPOINTMENTS,
BOARD OF REGENTS, THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

On motion of Regent Fraga, seconded by Regent Stallings and by a unanimous vote, the following minute order was adopted:

The standing committees, special committees and special appointments for 2009-2011, shown on the attached list as Exhibit A, are hereby approved.

REPORT ON FINANCIAL AND ACADEMIC METRIC ANALYSIS
FOR THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Ms. B. J. Crain, Associate Vice Chancellor for Budgets and Accounting, said after the discussion on tuition and fee increases presented at the May 2009 meeting, the Chairman asked her to compile and present specific information to give everyone an idea of expenditure trends specifically on the academic side of the A&M System. She said economic conditions in the near future would continue to be a concern for the A&M System as well as higher education in general. She added that we should be actively planning to address any future challenges. Ms. Crain said we know that we are going to have continued scrutiny on tuition and fee increases and are already hearing predictions on funding shortfalls in the 82nd Legislative Session. She said given the economic environment, there are possible reductions in other revenue sources available to the System.

Ms. Crain presented information on executive salary levels for A&M System offices and TAMU; and financial and academic information for system offices, TAMU and regional institutions combined. She pointed out that the information she would present spans several administrations from FY 2000-FY 2008 in most cases. Ms. Crain said information provided would include inflation adjustments. Most importantly, she said the information she presented would reflect the academic and physical growth of our campuses as well as quality improvements.

Ms. Crain presented a snapshot of FY 2003-FY 2009 executive level salaries for system offices. In FY 2003, salaries totaled $3.6 million and by 2008, they had increased 9%. The number of fulltime employees (FTEs) decreased by 22% from 23 in 2003 to 18 in 2009. This number included positions for the chancellor, vice chancellors, general counsel, chief auditor, associate vice chancellors and assistant vice chancellors. Ms. Crain said salaries for TAMU went from $4.9 million in FY 2003 to $9.6 million in FY 2009, which included an increase of 18.5 FTEs. She said this included the president, provost, vice presidents, associate vice presidents, assistant vice presidents and other similarly responsible positions.
Ms. Crain said over the years 2000-2008, the expenditure levels for system offices administration and services increased by 38%, going from $17 million to $23 million. During this time, the actual growth was in the system services category, which had to do with the enhancement of services.

Ms. Crain said total operating costs for TAMU, minus auxiliaries, were $553 million in FY 2000 and increased to $918 million in FY 2008, which is a 66% increase or $365 million. During this same period, they had full-time student equivalent increase of 3,100 and semester credit hour (SCH) production increase by 78,000.

Chairman Foster remarked that since the state deregulated tuition in 2004, there was a substantial increase in operating costs. Ms. Crain pointed out that 2004 was also the year the faculty reinvestment program was initiated at TAMU, requiring the resources to hire 447 new faculty members.

Ms. Crain said the regional campuses have experienced a similar trend. There was a 61% or $248 million increase over the same period. She said the combined increase for regional campuses shows 9,000-full-time student equivalent increase or 22%. Ms. Crain said they were generating 250,000 more SCHs.

Ms. Crain reported that instructional costs at TAMU increased from $266 million for FY 2000 to $474 million for FY 2008; this was an increase of 78% or an accumulative increase of $200 million. During this time there were 345 additional full-time faculty equivalents added. Regent Stallings asked if she had information on increases at other state universities. Ms. Crain responded that they had not looked at that specifically for this exercise, but she suggested they would see the same kind of trends. Regent Stallings commented that he was referring to universities in Texas. Ms. Crain responded they are experiencing much of the same trends.

Ms. Crain pointed out that faculty and personnel costs for TAMU in 2008 represented 80% of their instruction costs. She said during this period the weighted average faculty salary in Texas increased by 40%. The average salary for a professor in 2000 was $74,000 and increased to $106,000 in 2008. The average salary for an associate professor was $54,000 in 2004 and increased to $74,000 in 2008. An assistant professor’s salary in 2004 was $46,000 and in 2008 increased to $65,000.

Chairman Foster said that looking at the numbers, we have increased costs from 2000 to 2008 by over $200 million and part of that included salaries for faculty and personnel. He said it looks like it’s driven more by the number of professors we have added and not the salaries. Ms. Crain responded in the affirmative and said the figure includes 345 new full-time faculty members. She reminded them that in 2004 the initiative was to add 450 new faculty members. Regent Stallings asked Ms. Crain to refresh their memories on the faculty reinvestment initiative. He asked if this was meant to reduce the professor/student ratio. Ms. Crain responded that one of the primary drivers behind the initiative was to get the student/faculty ratio lower. She said in 2000 the ratio
was 23:1 and in FY 2008, 21:1. Chairman Foster asked the ratio in 2004 when the faculty reinvestment program was started. Ms. Crain responded 22:1.

Regent Jones explained that over that same period of time the student population increased. He said on one hand we are educating more students, but on the other hand, we have not accomplished what we set out to do with the faculty reinvestment initiative. Chairman Foster agreed with Regent Jones and said that even though costs had increased by $200 million, the student population was up by 7%.

Regent Stallings said it sounded to him that there were more professors teaching fewer hours. He asked if they had any (professors) to retire. Ms. Crain responded that not all 450 had come in yet and because of some retirement and bringing in the new faculty reinvestment in, the net increase over the total period were 345 new full-time faculty equivalents. Ms. Crain said that she was unable to answer the question he had asked, but could get back with him if needed.

Chairman Foster said that Regent Stallings’ question was one they needed to answer because there had been a substantial increase since 2004. He asked have we met the objectives we put in place at that time, are we doing what we said, and is there something that needs to be changed?

Ms. Crain presented data on instruction costs for A&M System regional universities. She said there was a 64% or $100 million increase from FY 2000-FY 2008. She said full-time faculty equivalents increased by 512.

Ms. Crain explained academic and institutional support. She said these costs have increased by over $80 million or 134%. A large portion of this figure is personnel costs, 66% or $88 million in 2008. She said academic and institutional support for regional campuses increased by 77% or $64 million with 64% of the cost being for personnel.

Ms. Crain said state appropriations for TAMU in FY 2000 were $236 million and $300 million in FY 2008. In FY 2004, TAMU started getting $20 million per year in general revenue for the faculty reinvestment program. She said Texas A&M was taking reductions in other areas while they were receiving faculty reinvestment funds.

Vice Chairman Wilson asked if this represented only formula funding. Ms. Crain responded that this included everything, tuition revenue bonds (TRBs) and special items. Chairman Foster asked how long TAMU received the $20 million the state gave for the faculty reinvestment program. Mr. Terry Pankratz, Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer, responded that TAMU stopped receiving funds during the last legislative session.

Ms. Crain said that state appropriations for regional campuses increased by 55% or $133 million. The regional campuses had an extra level of support in TRBs, which accounted for some of the spike. She explained that inflation during this period was 26% and they had student growth of 23%. Ms. Crain said in regards to tuition and fees, which
included undergraduate, graduate, professional and the vet school for TAMU, they were $183 million in FY 2000 and increased to $368 million in FY 2008. This represents a $184 million increase over this period. Vice Chairman Wilson asked if this included the fees that students voted on. Ms. Crain responded in the affirmative. Regent Jones asked if this included out-of-state and international fees. Ms. Crain responded in the affirmative. Ms. Crain said tuition and fees for regional campuses was similar: $162 million or 129% increase between FY 2000-FY 2008. Regional campuses had a 22% increase in the student population.

Ms. Crain discussed the average tuition and mandatory fees, excluding course fees, for an undergraduate student taking 15 SCHs for FY 2000 to FY 2009. If broken down by year, this amounts to a range of $114/semester increase to $260/semester. Regent Adams said it looked as if designated tuition tripled over the last 10 years. Ms. Crain cautioned that statutory tuition did not go up; however, in 2006 statutory tuition was capped at $50. Prior to that time, it increased $2 per year. She said the state has started looking at average tuition and mandatory fees, which gives the full picture of what it would cost students.

Chairman Foster said the fundamental question is if you put a group of parents and young adults that are trying to get into this university together, what we would say to them in terms of the justification for doubling or tripling tuition. He asked if we have been good stewards of taxpayer money or money from parents. In addition, there are people out there that want to attend TAMU and have the qualifications, but cannot afford it.

Regent Schwertner agreed and said that the taxpayers do not care what it is called -- it is still writing a check. He said we could give them all these fancy terms, but parents have had enough, especially in rural America. He said he represents the agriculture area and several parents have called him saying they want their children to attend this fine institution but cannot afford it anymore. Regent Schwertner said that faculty, administrators, regents and students must work together.

Ms. Crain continued and said that operating costs at TAMU have increased 66% and 61% for regional campuses. Instructional costs at TAMU increased 78% and 64% for regional campuses. Academic and institutional support increased $80 million at TAMU and $64 million for regional campuses.

Ms. Crain concluded her report and said that moving forward we need to maintain an awareness of the economic conditions, remain attentive to cost savings and best practice opportunities and continue to meet the needs of our students, customers and the state of Texas. A copy of Ms. Crain’s report is on file in the Office of the Board of Regents.

**REPORT ON SHARED SERVICES OPPORTUNITIES**

Dr. Frank Ashley, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, reported that in an effort to improve efficiency across the A&M System, he was asked to provide a plan of
reviewing operational areas in which we could potentially share additional services and resources. In the first phase, he said they would look at system offices and TAMU. In the second phase, they would look at other system members, which would include agencies, regional institutions and the Health Science Center (HSC).

Dr. Ashley said in looking at shared services they were guided by Imperative 4.2 of the A&M System Strategic Plan, Imperative 2 of the System Offices Strategic Plan and Imperative 10 of TAMU’s *Vision 2020*. Dr. Ashley said *Vision 2020* Imperative 10 (*Demand Enlightened Governance and Leadership*) includes the statement “clear, cooperative relationships between the university and the system must be the norm.”

Dr. Ashley said when they look at the concept of shared services -- typically, shared services have involved the integration, consolidation, or provisioning of administrative and/or so-called “back-office” support functions. He said it was very important that everyone understands that they are not referring to anything that goes on in the classroom or laboratories. Dr. Ashley explained that they are referring to consolidating services and sharing expertise to maximize operational efficiencies without incurring additional costs and in some cases reducing costs.

Dr. Ashley said one of the benefits of shared services is the opportunity to reduce costs. Other benefits include not having multiple employees in overlapping jobs, economics of scale, being able to utilize individuals with expertise in certain areas and especially sharing best practices. He said the flagship has many opportunities to share in this area.

Dr. Ashley said when you look at shared resources system-wide, we already use a shared management concept with the positions of vice chancellor and dean of engineering, vice chancellor and dean of agriculture, vice chancellor for health affairs, vice president and associate vice chancellor for information technology and also the research foundation. He said that shared management has proven to be a successful model infusing the expertise, efficiency and resources for the entities that report to these individuals.

Dr. Ashley stated that administrative information technology systems, economic development and technology commercialization, general counsel, governmental relations at the state level, internal audit, real estate and treasury services are several areas where we currently share services but there is room for improvement. He said that the following areas provide opportunities for shared services between the System and university: business services, facilities planning construction and physical, governmental relations (federal), human resources, information technology, marketing and communications, training, risk management, and research administration.

Student Regent Bollman asked if the information presented represented shared service opportunities between the entire system or just between TAMU and the System. Dr. Ashley responded that phase 1 would be between the System and TAMU, phase 2 would include the other system components.
Dr. Ashley said recommended next steps would be to establish an overarching organizational structure for shared services opportunities and organize tactical planning teams in candidate areas to include selecting team leader, leader select members, charge given to the team and weekly updates received from team leaders. Additional steps would include receiving feedback and recommendation from teams, recommendations forwarded to the Chancellor and Board by September 2009 and implementation and deployment.

Chairman Foster asked whether university presidents and other CEOs would participate and make recommendations. He said that he assumed that they would want every stakeholder to have the opportunity to comment.

Regent Fraga said one of the areas he had been concerned about was information technology, so he was glad it was included.

Regent Adams suggested they visit with Dr. Dan Burk, former chancellor of the University of Texas System, who initiated a similar process.

Regent Stallings asked if Dr. Ashley saw a lot of duplication in his research. Dr. Ashley responded that what would need to happen was once the teams were formed they would research this information. He also said that he thought there were opportunities where we could share resources that we already have.

Regent Jones said regarding research grants, we currently have a centralized area. Dr. Ashley responded that this area had not been fully implemented.

**RECESS TO EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Chairman Foster announced that the Board would recess to executive session. He said they would consider the following matters as permitted by Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code: Section 71 and Section 74.

He said in accordance with the law, no final action, decision, or vote with regard to any matter considered in the executive session will be made or taken. He asked the following members of the administration to stay for executive session: Chancellor McKinney, Mr. Andrew Strong (General Counsel), and Ms. Vickie Spillers (Executive Secretary to the Board).

*(Secretary’s Note: The Board met in executive session from 10:03 a.m. until 12:38 p.m.)*

**RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION**

Chairman Foster announced that the Board met in executive session from 10:03 a.m. until 12:38 p.m. and considered and conferred with the Chancellor and the System attorney on personnel and legal matters.
Chairman Foster said there were several items before the Board for consideration and possible action. He said the first item involved possible action by the Board in response to the financial trend data that was presented earlier and recommendations regarding pursuing shared services opportunities.

Regent Box recommended the adoption of the overarching organizational structure and technical plan. The Board took action as set forth below:

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**MINUTE ORDER 139-2009 (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

**APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS ON SHARED SERVICES INITIATIVES, THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

On motion of Regent Box, seconded by Regent Jones and by a unanimous vote, the following minute order was adopted:

The Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System hereby directs the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs to take all actions necessary to institute a shared services plan, including the creation of an overarching organization structure and tactical planning teams. The Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs shall report back to the Board by September 2009 on the implementation of the plan.

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Chairman Foster said that in executive session the Board considered several items pertaining to Texas A&M. The first item was the Board’s authorization of the execution of a transition agreement by the Chancellor on behalf of the System with Dr. Elsa Murano. He said this agreement accepted Dr. Murano’s resignation as President of Texas A&M University and set forth the terms of her transition plan. The agreement had been recommended by the Chancellor and the General Counsel of the System.

The Board took action as set forth below:

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MINUTE ORDER 140-2009 (AGENDA ITEM 3)

AUTHORIZATION FOR THE CHANCELLOR TO EXECUTE A TRANSITION AGREEMENT WITH DR. ELSA A. MURANO, THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

On motion of Regent Wilson, seconded by Regent Jones and by a unanimous vote, the following minute order was adopted:

Authority is hereby granted, upon review for legal form and sufficiency by the Office of General Counsel, to the Chancellor to execute a transition agreement with Dr. Elsa A. Murano.

Mr. Foster said the next item before the Board was the awarding of the title of President Emerita to Dr. Murano. Mr. Jones moved approval of this item. He said that Dr. Murano had served TAMU well, taking over during a difficult time. He said he was Chairman at the time and was involved with the selection of Dr. Murano for this position. He stated that when we go through a time of storm, he always looks for an opportunity, and that opportunity is for us to be better at what we do. Regent Jones said this charge is not only to members of the Board but hopefully to students, faculty and the administration. The Board took action as set forth below:

MINUTE ORDER 141-2009 (AGENDA ITEM 4)

GRANTING OF THE TITLE OF PRESIDENT EMERITA TO DR. ELSA A. MURANO, THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

On motion of Regent Jones, seconded by Regent Schwertner and by a unanimous vote, the following minute order was adopted:

Upon her resignation as President of Texas A&M University, the Board of Regents hereby confirms the recommendation of the Chancellor, and confers the title of President Emerita upon Dr. Elsa A. Murano, and grants all rights and privileges of this title.

Chairman Foster said the next item before the Board was the approval of development leave for Dr. Murano for a period of one year starting on June 16, 2009, to June 15, 2010. He said this leave would be granted in accordance with System policy and Sections 51.101-108 and 51.948 of the Texas Education Code.
The Board took action as set forth below:


MINUTE ORDER 142-2009 (AGENDA ITEM 5)

GRANTING OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT LEAVE FOR
DR. ELSA A. MURANO,
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

On motion of Regent Schwertner, seconded by Regent Steen and by a unanimous vote, the following minute order was adopted:

The Board of Regents of The Texas A&M University System, in accordance with System Policy 31.03, System Regulation 12.99.01 and Sections 51.101-108, 51.948 of the Texas Education Code, authorizes faculty development leave to Dr. Elsa A. Murano, for the period of June 16, 2009-June 15, 2010, at her full regular salary.


Chairman Foster said the next item was consideration of the appointment of an interim president for TAMU, effective immediately. He opened the floor for recommendations. Regent Fraga recommended the appointment of Dr. Bowen Loftin as Interim President of Texas A&M University. The Board took action as set forth below:


MINUTE ORDER 143-2009 (AGENDA ITEM 5)

APPOINTMENT OF
DR. R. BOWEN LOFTIN AS INTERIM PRESIDENT
OF TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY,
THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

On motion of Regent Fraga, seconded by Regent Wilson and by a unanimous vote, the following minute order was adopted:

Upon the recommendation of the Chancellor, the Board of Regents hereby appoints Dr. R. Bowen Loftin, Interim President of Texas A&M University, effective June 15, 2009, at the initial salary of $375,000.


CHAIRMAN’S REMARKS

Chairman Foster said he wanted to make a few comments before adjourning. He said he wanted to dispel some miscommunications starting with the speculation regarding
the possibility of combining the positions of Chancellor of the A&M System and the President of Texas A&M. He said that each of these positions requires the unmitigated attention of a dedicated leader – one who must care to the attention of one of the largest public universities in the country and the other who must care to the attention of one of the largest university systems in the country. Chairman Foster said the combination of these two positions would be difficult at the least and possibly detrimental to the System’s institutions. He said it is not the direction that this Board, in his view, cares to pursue. Chairman Foster said in this same vein, he wanted it to be clear that the Board supports each of the 12 imperatives in *Vision 2020*, which was the culmination of thousands of hours of work by more than 250 people committed to the advancement of Texas A&M. In Imperative 10, *Vision 2020* speaks to the concept of shared governance, which states that the university must make decisions through a “process characterized by openness and appropriate faculty and staff participation.” He added that the students need to be included in these decisions. Chairman Foster stated that Texas A&M is not the Board’s university, nor the System’s, administration’s, the faculty’s or the student’s university. It is OUR university, all of us collectively as a family. He said while there is a clear chain of command from the Board to the System to the university, we should adhere to the principles on shared governance set forth in *Vision 2020* whenever and wherever possible.

Chairman Foster said today the Board accepted the resignation of Dr. Murano as President of Texas A&M, and have agreed to a plan for her transition back into the faculty in the College for Agriculture and Life Sciences. He said they were pleased that her skills and talents would continue to serve the university and the students in the years to come.

Chairman Foster said that Dr. Loftin would lead the university ably until the Board completed its search for a new president. He said his goal was for this process to be completed within six months.

Chairman Foster commented on financial trends and shared services initiative. He said he would like to step back and take a 30,000-foot view of the financial trends that we are seeing within the System. He said every member on this Board has expressed concern regarding the escalating trends at Texas A&M, as well as our other institutions. He said at Texas A&M, if you took what students paid for 15-credit hours in the year 2000 – which was roughly $1,600 and adjusted that figure for inflation, they would be paying $1,944. The actual price tag is $3,922 – more than twice the inflation-adjusted number. Instruction costs have risen by $155 million since 2004, but the student/faculty ratio has not changed. Total operating costs have gone up $279 million since 2004. Chairman Foster said that Texas A&M is a world-class institution, and clearly, there is a price for excellence. However, there is also an obligation to find cost-savings so families are not hit year after year with skyrocketing increases in tuition and fees. He said the action taken by the Board on shared services is only the beginning. The concept of shared services is about reducing expenses outside the classroom. “The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.” He said this saying is directly on point when it comes to shared services. Chairman Foster said it makes no sense to have the same services being
provided in two locations that are 10 minutes apart. Shared services are an exercise that capitalizes on administrative efficiencies and best practices. It is something that every leading institution in the world does today to reduce costs and keep a competitive edge.

Chairman Foster said the first step of this initiative was to focus on shared services between the system office and the flagship university because of the advantages of proximity. However, they would also evaluate whether efficiencies exist across the System. He said that while they were directing the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs to lead this effort, they expect that the leadership within the system office and university will place this initiative as a top priority and work together toward a comprehensive report to the Board at the September Board meeting.

Chairman Foster said as Vision 2020 states, “Clear, cooperative relationships between the university and the system should be the norm.” Our vision is to provide a world-class education and enhance Texas A&M’s reputation as a leader that sets new boundaries for all Tier One universities. We want efficiencies and institutional best practices put to work at one university or agency to permeate the entire system. Chairman Foster concluded his remarks by saying that we have our work cut out for us – but we owe it to the students, their families and taxpayers to get this right.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Foster announced that they would adjourn the meeting and that he would make himself available for questions from the media, immediately following the meeting. He asked for a motion to adjourn. On motion of Regent Jones, seconded by Regent Fraga and by a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

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

VBS:jb