

MINUTES
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR THE
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM
SPECIAL MEETING
October 25, 2023

A. **Call to Order/Roll Call**

The Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System met for a Special Meeting on Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at 6:04 p.m. The meeting was held in the Louisiana Purchase Room of the Claiborne Building, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge. Chair Elizabeth Pierre called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

Mr. Barry Busada	Mr. Dana Peterson*
Dr. Jimmy Clarke	Ms. Elizabeth Pierre
Dr. John Condos	Mr. Virgil Robinson, Jr.
Mr. Steve Davison	Mr. Mark Romero*
Ms. Lola Dunahoe	Mr. Brad Stevens
Ms. Jo Lethermon	Ms. Bailey Willis
Mr. Alejandro “Al” Perkins	

**Arrived after roll call*

ABSENT

Ms. Kristine Russell
Ms. Joe Salter
Ms. Julie Stokes

Also present were the following: System President Jim Henderson, System staff, and Attorneys Brandon DeCuir and Corey Pierce. Grambling State University President Rick Gallot, Nicholls State University President Jay Clune, and Northwestern State University President Marcus Jones were present as well.

As background, Ms. Pierre stated that Dr. Guice had announced his retirement effective December 31, and she thanked him for his many years of exemplary service to Louisiana Tech University, the community of Ruston, and the State of Louisiana. Upon Dr. Guice’s announcement, System President James Henderson indicated that he was interested in the presidency. As the Board Rules do not address a scenario in which a System President could apply for a position as a UL System institution president, Ms. Pierre had called a Special Meeting for October 9. At that meeting it was decided to hold a public forum and allow for Dr. Henderson to interview for the presidency.

B. **Invocation**

Ms. Lola Dunahoe gave an invocation.

C. **Public Forum**

Chair Pierre asked that Dr. Henderson provide an opening statement and then the audience would have the opportunity to pose questions for Dr. Henderson. The formal interview would follow the forum.

Dr. Henderson introduced his wife Tonia. He indicated that since the October 9 meeting, he had gone to Ruston and made himself available to be questioned by students, community, and faculty at a public forum that lasted about an hour and a half. He stated that his son is a sophomore at Louisiana Tech University and he has a longstanding family connection and history with the University. Dr. Henderson indicated that as President, among other things, he would like to advance the System's Core Competencies, promote economic growth for the region, and enhance the Reginald F. Lewis Scholarship program.

Chair Pierre asked for public comment, and the only request to speak was from Dr. Jay Clune, President of Nicholls State University, on behalf of the UL System Presidents. He said that he had reached out to his colleagues and they asked that he voice their respect for Dr. Henderson's leadership and their full support for his candidacy.

There were no additional public comments.

Comments from Board members included Mr. Davison regarding aspirational goals for Louisiana Tech, collaborative research, and Carnegie R1 status. Dr. Clarke was interested in collaboration along the I-10 Corridor and research.

D. **Recess**

Chair Pierre indicated that there was no need for a recess because of the timing of the first portion of the agenda.

E. **Call to Order/Roll Call**

At 6:26 p.m., the following roll call was recorded:

PRESENT

Mr. Barry Busada	Mr. Dana Peterson
Dr. Jimmy Clarke	Ms. Elizabeth Pierre
Dr. John Condos	Mr. Virgil Robinson, Jr.
Mr. Steve Davison	Mr. Mark Romero
Ms. Lola Dunahoe	Mr. Brad Stevens
Ms. Jo Lethermon	Ms. Bailey Willis
Mr. Alejandro "Al" Perkins	

ABSENT

Ms. Kristine Russell
Ms. Joe Salter
Ms. Julie Stokes

F. **Public Interview – Dr. James B. Henderson**

Chair Pierre reiterated her comments from the beginning of the meeting concerning the Board Rules and Dr. Henderson’s interest in interviewing for the Louisiana Tech University presidency.

Dr. Henderson made an opening statement and stated that Louisiana Tech University is of utmost importance to him and his family. In addition, he said that it will be his ambition to further elevate the Region. He responded to questions from Board members.

G. **Discussion and deliberations regarding Louisiana Tech University President appointment, and/or related actions**

Ms. Pierre stated that this item would require that the Board meet in Executive Session.

Upon motion of Mr. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Busada, at 6:34 p.m., the Board voted by roll call vote to enter Executive Session: Mr. Busada, Dr. Clarke, Dr. Condos, Mr. Davison, Ms. Dunahoe, Ms. Lethermon, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Peterson, Ms. Pierre, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Romero, Mr. Stevens, and Ms. Willis. None was in opposition.

At 7:11 p.m., upon motion of Ms. Dunahoe, seconded by Mr. Peterson, the members voted to reconvene in Open Session.

Chair Pierre asked whether any Board member had a motion to offer. Upon motion of Mr. Davison, seconded by Ms. Willis, the resolution was made to appoint Dr. James Henderson as President of Louisiana Tech University. The following roll call vote was noted: Mr. Busada, Dr. Clarke, Dr. Condos, Mr. Davison, Ms. Dunahoe, Ms. Lethermon, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Peterson, Ms. Pierre, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Romero, Mr. Stevens, and Ms. Willis. None was in opposition.

Dr. Henderson thanked the Board for the honor and opportunity to serve as President of Louisiana Tech University.

Ms. Pierre commended him for his leadership of the System. She said that his credentials in addition to his connection to the University will serve him well as president.

Upon motion of Mr. Stevens, seconded by Ms. Dunahoe, the Board unanimously voted to authorize Board Chair Elizabeth Pierre and two designees of the Board to negotiate the terms of Dr. Henderson’s appointment and execute an offer of employment on behalf of the Board.

H. **Discussion and deliberations regarding the University of Louisiana System President, appointment, and/or related actions.**

Ms. Pierre stated that, with the appointment of Dr. Henderson as Louisiana Tech University president, a vacancy is created at the System level. To discuss this situation, it would be necessary to meet in Executive Session.

Upon motion of Ms. Dunahoe, seconded by Mr. Robinson, at 7:18 p.m., the Board voted to convene in Executive Session. The following roll call vote was recorded: Mr. Busada, Dr. Clarke, Dr. Condos, Mr. Davison, Ms. Dunahoe, Ms. Lethermon, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Peterson, Ms. Pierre, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Romero, Mr. Stevens, and Ms. Willis. None was in opposition.

At 8:16 p.m., upon motion of Mr. Perkins, seconded by Dr. Condos, the Board reconvened in Open Session. Chair Pierre inquired whether there was a motion in conjunction with Item H. University of Louisiana System President appointment.

Upon motion of Mr. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Busada, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Richard J. "Rick" Gallot, Jr. as President and CEO of the University of Louisiana System and that the Board Chair be authorized to negotiate terms of his employment.

The following affirmative roll call vote was recorded: Mr. Busada, Dr. Clarke, Dr. Condos, Mr. Davison, Ms. Dunahoe, Ms. Lethermon, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Peterson, Ms. Pierre, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Romero, Mr. Stevens, and Ms. Willis. None was in opposition.

President Gallot thanked the Board for selecting him as System President and said he is grateful for the opportunity and the responsibility to serve the System. He individually thanked Dr. Henderson for his strong support and guidance over the years.

Ms. Pierre congratulated President Gallot for his past seven years as President at Grambling. She said that his successful service at the institution as well as his experience in government make him an excellent choice to lead the University of Louisiana System at this time.

Mr. Perkins also commended him and said that President Gallot was inheriting a high-performing Board, which can continue to advance the System under his leadership.

I. **Adjournment**

There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Peterson, seconded by Mr. Stevens, at 8:22 p.m., the Board voted to adjourn.