

MINUTES
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR THE
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM
SPECIAL MEETING
February 22, 2024

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

The Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System met for a Special Meeting on Thursday, February 22, 2024 at 1:03 p.m. The meeting was held in the Louisiana Purchase Room of the Claiborne Building, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge. Chair Jimmy Clarke called the meeting to order.

PRESENT

Mr. Barry Busada	Mr. Virgil Robinson
Dr. Jimmy Clarke	Mr. Mark Romero
Mr. Steve Davison	Ms. Kristine Russell
Ms. Lola Dunahoe	Mr. Joe Salter
Ms. Jo Lethermon	Mr. Brad Stevens
Dr. John Noble, Jr.	Ms. Julie Stokes
Mr. Dana Peterson	Ms. Bailey Willis
Ms. Elizabeth Pierre	

ABSENT

Mr. Alejandro “Al” Perkins

Also present were the following: System President Jim Henderson, System staff, and Attorneys Brandon DeCuir and Corey Pierce.

B. **Invocation**

Mr. Joe Salter opened the meeting with an invocation.

C. **Report of Grambling State University Presidential Search Committee**

President Rick Gallot (non-voting chair) said that the Search Committee held its first meeting on November 17 on the Grambling campus to receive feedback from the campus community concerning desired characteristics of a new president. January 22 was the next meeting in Baton Rouge with a purpose of reviewing applications and selecting semifinalists for interview. At that meeting the Committee decided to invite six candidates to the campus: Dr. Gregory Ford, Dr. Martin Lemelle, Dr. Markey Pierre, Mr. Edwin Smith, Dr. Roderick Smothers, and Dr. Monica Williams. Interviews of these six individuals were conducted and the Committee chose three finalists, Dr. Gregory Ford, Dr. Martin Lemelle, and Dr. Monica Williams, to recommend to the Board.

Committee Chair Gallot expressed his thanks to Committee members: Dr. Jimmy Clarke, Ms. Elizabeth Pierre, Mr. Barry Busada, Mr. Steve Davison, Ms. Lola Dunahoe, Mr. Al Perkins, Mr. Virgil Robinson, Ms. Bailey Willis, Mr. David Aubrey, Mr. Alvin Bradley, Mr. James Bradford, Mr. Wilbert Ellis, Ms. Alexa Johnson, Dr. Fredrick Pinkney, Dr. Gary Poe, Dr. Tammy Richardson, and Mr. Rodney Welch. Further, he stated his appreciation to Grambling State University for their hospitality in hosting the candidates, committee members, and staff during the on-campus interviews.

D. **Overview of Interview Procedures**

There were no public comments. Dr. Clarke explained the interview process. He said that each finalist will be introduced, given an opportunity to present an opening statement, and then interviewed by the Board. After each interview, the Board will meet with the finalist in Executive Session. At the conclusion of the Executive Session with the third finalist, the Board will remain in Executive Session to continue discussions. At the conclusion of the last Executive Session, the Board will return to Open Session for discussion and a vote.

E. **Candidate Interviews**

Dr. Monica Williams

Dr. Monica Williams was introduced to the Board, and she introduced Mr. Ronnie Robinson. Dr. Williams made an opening statement. After several questions from Board members, upon motion of Ms. Dunahoe, seconded by Mr. Salter, at 1:37 p.m., the Board voted to adjourn to Executive Session.

The following affirmative vote was taken: Mr. Busada, Dr. Clarke, Mr. Davison, Ms. Dunahoe, Ms. Lethermon, Dr. Noble, Mr. Peterson, Ms. Pierre, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Romero, Ms. Russell, Mr. Salter, Mr. Stevens, Ms. Stokes, and Ms. Willis. None was in opposition.

At 2:06 p.m., upon motion of Dr. Noble, seconded by Ms. Pierre, the members reconvened in Open Session.

Dr. Martin Lemelle

Dr. Martin Lemelle was introduced to the Board, and he made his opening statement. After questions from Board members, upon motion of Mr. Busada and seconded by Dr. Noble, the Board adjourned to Executive Session at 2:25 p.m.

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

At 3:05 p.m., upon motion of Ms. Dunahoe, seconded by Ms. Willis, the Board reconvened in Open Session.

Dr. Gregory Ford

Dr. Gregory Ford was introduced to the Board and he introduced his wife, Dr. Misty Reed-Ford. He made his opening statement. After questions from Board members, upon motion of Dr. Noble and seconded by Ms. Lethermon, the Board adjourned to Executive Session at 3:25 p.m.

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

At 4:25 p.m., upon motion of Ms. Dunahoe, seconded by Ms. Pierre, the Board reconvened in Open Session.

F. Deliberations

After returning from Executive Session, Dr. Clarke asked for comments from the Board. Upon motion of Mr. Robinson, seconded by Mr. Davison, the following recommendation was made:

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System hereby recommends that Dr. Martin Lemelle being appointed as President of Grambling State University and hereby authorizes UL System President Rick Gallot and Board Chair Jimmy Clarke to negotiate the terms of appointment and execute an offer of employment on behalf of the Board.*

A roll call vote was taken. The following affirmative roll call vote was recorded: Mr. Busada, Dr. Clarke, Mr. Davison, Ms. Dunahoe, Ms. Lethermon, Mr. Peterson, Ms. Pierre, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Romero, Ms. Russell, Mr. Salter, Mr. Stevens, Ms. Stokes, and Ms. Willis. The resolution passed.

G. Introduction of President of Grambling State University

Dr. Lemelle was escorted back into the auditorium and received a standing ovation. He thanked the Board for selecting him as the next President of Grambling State University. Dr. Lemelle said he has high expectations for the future and would work to strengthen the university.

H. Other Business

There was no other business to come before the Board.

I. Adjournment

Dr. Clarke thanked President Gallot, Dr. Calais, staff, members of the Committee, and the Board for their work. Ms. Willis commended the audience for exhibiting their love and support for the University by being in attendance in strong numbers. Mr. Busada also complimented the Grambling community for the hospitality that the Search Committee had been shown while on campus.

There being no further business, upon motion of Mr. Romero and a second by Mr. Busada, at 4:30 p.m., the Board voted to adjourn.