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University of South Carolina
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Advancement, Engagement and Communications Committee

September 11, 2020

The Advancement, Engagement and Communications Committee of the University of South Carolina Board of Trustees met at 12:30 p.m. on Friday, September 11, 2020, in the Pastides Alumni Center Ballroom and by Microsoft Teams.

Committee members present were Mr. Eugene P. “Gene” Warr, Jr., Chair; Mr. Alex English; Mr. Robin D. Roberts; Mr. Charles H. Williams; Dr. C. Dorn Smith III, Board Chair; and Thad H. Westbrook, Board Vice Chair. Members present by Microsoft Teams video conference were Ms. Molly Spearman and Mr. John C. von Lehe, Jr.

Other Board members present were Mr. C. Dan Adams; Mr. Chuck Allen; Mr. J. Egerton Burroughs; Dr. C. Edward Floyd; Mr. Richard A. Jones, Jr.; Ms. Leah B. Moody; and Ms. Rose Buyck Newton. Board members present by Microsoft Teams video conference were Mr. Toney J. Lister and Mr. Miles Loadholt.

Also present were USC Columbia Faculty Senate Chair Dr. Mark Cooper; USC Columbia Student Government President Ms. Issy Rushton; and the Board’s Strategic Advisor Mr. David Seaton.

Others in attendance were President Robert L. Caslen Jr.; Secretary J. Cantey Heath Jr.;

Vice President of Human Resources Ms. Caroline Agardy; President's Chief of Staff Mr. Mark D. Bieger; Presidential Faculty Fellow Dr. Susan Bon; Assistant Vice President Health and Wellness and Executive Director of Student Health Services Dr. Deborah Beck; President and CEO University Foundations Mr. Jason Caskey; Chief Audit Executive Ms. Pamela Dunleavy; Chancellor Palmetto College Dr. Susan Elkins; Interim Chief Development Officer Mr. William Elliott; Associate Vice President of Finance and Budget Ms. Kelly Epting; College of Arts and Sciences Dean Dr. Lacy Ford; Vice President of Information Technology and Chief Information Officer Mr. Doug Foster; Associate Vice President of Facilities Planning and University Architect Mr. Derek Gruner; Chief Executive Officer USC Alumni Association Mr. Wes Hickman; Interim Director of Academic Programs Ms. Trena Houpp; Board of Trustees Governance Consultant Dr. Cameron Howell; Dean of Greenville School of Medicine Dr. Marjorie Jenkins; Assistance to the President for System Affairs Mr. Eddie King; Executive Director Office of Economic Engagement Mr. William "Bill" Kirkland; Associate Vice President and Chief Procurement Officer Ms. Venis Manigo; Executive Communications Director Ms. Sally McKay; General Counsel and Executive Director of Compliance Programs Mr. Walter "Terry" H. Parham; Associate Dean for Operations and Accreditation Arnold School of Public Health Dr. Lee Pearson; Chief Operating Officer Mr. Jeffrey L. Perkins; Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost Mr. Dennis Pruitt; Special Assistant to the President Mr. James Smith; Assistance Vice President of Administrative Operations and Chief of Staff Mr. Joe Sobieralski; Director of Public Relations Mr. Jeff Stensland; Director of Athletics Mr. Ray Tanner; Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Dr. William F. "Bill" Tate IV; Vice President for Communications Mr. Larry Thomas; Executive

Vice President and CFO Mr. Ed Walton; and Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Mr. Julian R. Williams. Others attending by Microsoft Teams audio conference were Executive Director for Strategic Initiatives Jack Claypoole; Assistant Dean for Enrollment Management and Academic Program Development Dr. Rob Dedmon; Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, School of Law Dr. Susan Kuo; Vice President for Research Dr. Prakash Nagarkatti; Chancellor UofSC Beaufort Dr. Al Panu; and Dean of the College of Education Dr. Jon Pedersen.

OPEN SESSION

I. Call to Order

Chair Warr called the meeting to order, welcomed those in attendance, and asked everyone in the room to introduce themselves. Secretary Heath confirmed Committee member Ms. Molly Spearman and Board members Mr. Toney J. Lister and Mr. John C. von Lehe, Jr. were in attendance via Microsoft Teams video conference. Chair Warr called on Mr. Stensland to introduce members of the press in attendance. Mr. Stensland introduced Jack Bingham with the Daily Gamecock, John Whittle with The BigSpur, Andy Shain with the *Post and Courier*, and Jenna Kerzyna with WLTX. Chair Warr stated notice of the meeting had been posted and the press notified as required by the Freedom of Information Act; the agenda and supporting materials had been circulated; and a quorum was present to conduct business.

II. Update on VP for Development Search

Search Committee Chair Wes Hickman stated the search for a Vice President for Development began in May 2020. He acknowledged the committee's dedication and work, particularly with having to conduct this search virtually due to the COVID Pandemic. Those

on the committee were Vice President for Human Resources Caroline Agardy, President and CEO of USC Foundations Jason Caskey, serving as Interim Provost and now as Dean of the School of Music Tayloe Harding, Associate VP for Development Operations and Services Karen Roberts, Trustee Leah Moody serving as an *ex officio* member; Special Assistant to the President for External Affairs James Smith; Director of Athletics Ray Tanner, and Executive Vice President for Administration and Finance Ed Walton. Mr. Hickman recognized the work of Senior Advisor to the President Paula Harper Bethea and Associate Dean of Diversity and Inclusion in the Darla Moore School of Business Dr. Deborah Hazard who had to withdraw from the Search Committee for personal and professional reasons.

Mr. Hickman stated the University contracted with the search firm Korn Ferry, which specializes in the higher education and non-profit arena. More than 600+ individuals were contacted as part of Korn Ferry's recruitment efforts and a comprehensive advertising campaign was launched. From that recruitment campaign conversations took place with 133 applicants and their references and the candidate pool was narrowed to 53. Those were grouped with 43 unsolicited applicants for a total candidate pool of 96, which was subsequently narrowed to 59 candidates. The Search Committee has been through three rounds of interviews with well-qualified, diverse applicants from around the country. Mr. Hickman stated he expects to announce the finalists early next week and to formalize preparations for bringing them on campus for an intense round of on campus interviews.

Chair Warr thanked Mr. Hickman for his report and stated it was received as information.

III. Government Relations Update

Chair Warr called on James Smith to provide a Government Relations update. Mr. Smith stated the fundamental purpose of the Government Relations team is to support the University's collective efforts to fulfill the vision outlined in our strategic plan for making the University of South Carolina the preeminent flagship university in the nation by completing our mission of transforming the lives of South Carolinians. The first step in accomplishing this is for the Government Relations team to know the national, state, regional, and local governing bodies, regulatory agencies, and policy makers. He stated it is not enough for the team to know these institutions and elected officials but that these institutions and elected officials need to know the University and its representatives as trusted partners in serving the citizens of South Carolina. Second, the team must communicate and share the extraordinary work being done by our University in educating the next generation of leaders, conducting world class research, and being a powerful economic engine for South Carolina. "By doing so, we are not only showing them the value of their investment but that we are being good stewards of their investment and are worthy of their continued investment," he said.

Under the President's leadership and guidance there has been a realignment of Government Relations within the Office of External Affairs. Defined responsibilities have been updated to reflect the variety of efforts that the team is supporting and communications, both formal and informal, have increased exponentially, which has been critical in maintaining the trust relationship in these extraordinary times.

Mr. Smith provided an overview of the Government Relations team and their areas of responsibility as follows:

- Steve Beckham serves as the University's Federal Liaison representing and

advocating for the University and higher education before the US Congress. He assists faculty, students, and staff with their interactions with Congress as they participate with their professional organization on visits to Washington, DC. He also assists in setting the University's project and appropriations priorities with the South Carolina Congressional Delegation. Mr. Beckham works with all units across the University and is currently engaged with the Department of Energy facilitating the advanced manufacturing development at USC Aiken and is involved in developing a Savannah Nuclear Lab proposal. He has been instrumental in the CARES Act COVID-19 Response Funding.

- Craig Parks and Derrick Meggie in their roles as Director of Public Affairs and Advocacy and Director of State Government and Community Relations, respectively, represent and advocate for the University System to the governor, legislators, and staff as well as other agencies or organizations. They provide or coordinate expert testimony to key statehouse committees, including but not limited to Senate Finance, House Ways and Means, and the two standing Education Committees of the House and Senate. Prior to coming to the University Craig Parks served as the Assistant Director of Senate Finance and served at the Board of Economic Advisors. Derrick Meggie previously worked with the General Assembly, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Labor and Licensing, and with Ways and Means.
- McGuireWoods Consulting team of Billy Bone and Amber Barnes is an experienced, respected group of advocates working on behalf of the University in

the General Assembly, Executive Branch, and State agencies.

- Rebecca Best serves as the University's Local Government Liaison representing and advocating for the University and higher education among local county and city governments, including planning and zoning boards. She provides strategic and tactical advice to University officials in support of efforts to achieve local government and agency policy goals. She also addresses the University's concerns of neighborhoods.

Mr. Smith emphasized the importance of communication with integrity and transparency. He reviewed the newly-created Communications Plan, which includes a President's Communication Release Protocol, a Key Leader Engagement Plan, Congressional Communications, General Assembly Communications, Social Media, Events, Coordination with the Alumni Association CAN Network, and the Gamecock Caucus.

Mr. Smith then reviewed the Government Relations team's priorities and efforts in responding to financial, logistical, and communications challenges and advancing the University during the COVID-19 pandemic. The team worked with the Commission on Higher Education to build consensus around spending state allocated COVID relief dollars on higher education. Engagement with the Governor's Accelerate SC, and the Senate's Re-Open SC, was continued in the Senate and House ad hoc committees, and Senate Finance ultimately funded it. As a result of those efforts, \$47 million of those state relief dollars will go directly toward offsetting critical COVID costs the University has incurred. The team worked with Mr. Ed Walton and was able to secure appropriations provisos related to base budget, suspension of mandated pension cost increases, and Spending and HR Flex programs,

which created critical savings going into the next fiscal year. The Governor's support has been essential, particularly as it relates to the COVID response. His Executive Orders governing how bars and restaurants operate have helped with off campus student conduct. Partnering with local government and the Mayor in the enforcement of local ordinances, Executive Orders, and additional ordinances, to include a house party prohibition ordinance has had a positive impact in keeping our campus community and off campus communities safe. Mr. Smith stated it has truly been a partnership between the Government Relations team and all levels of government to address critical needs over the past four to six months.

Chair Warr thanked Mr. Smith for his report and stated it was received as information.

IV. Communications and Public Affairs Update

Chair Warr called on Vice President of Communications Mr. Larry Thomas for a communications update.

Mr. Thomas stated his focus was on briefing the Committee on COVID-19 communications, marketing of the University's online programs throughout the system, and the President's Strategic Plan. His team partnered with Student Government President Issy Rushton on the "I Pledge Columbia" campaign that included activities reminding everyone to wear masks. There have been 17 Presidential Town Hall's to date, which are followed by a press event designed to get information out on the activities of the University's medical team, testing team, and overall campus team related to COVID-19. There are weekly COVID-19 updates for parents, faculty, and staff that provide additional information on the University's engagement activities to keep everyone safe. In addition, a dedicated COVID-19 website has been created and linked to the University's website to serve as a resource. There have been

creative activities around the “I Pledge Columbia” campaign designed to capitalize on the partnership between the University and local community. Modified “Spurs Up, Mask Up” signs reminding everyone to wear masks on campus have been displayed on walkways that stretch over various streets around campus. Standardized COVID-19 social distancing and handwashing guidelines have been displayed in classrooms and other facilities across the University. In general, the Communications Team is aligned with housing, student health services, student life, and student government to continue to communicate the importance of COVID-19 safety. In addition, the Communications Team has shared with other universities, particularly in the southeastern conference, the communications strategies that have worked well.

Mr. Thomas provided an overview of the South Carolina Online Awareness Campaign that ran from July 15 to August 22, 2020 to build awareness of South Carolina Online and drive traffic to SouthCarolina.edu. The general populace was segmented into three distinct populations: 1) minorities in the state; 2) military in the state; and 3) those who started college but did not complete their degree program. Platforms used were social media, Facebook, and Instagram; Facebook advertising was the most effective. The campaign brought awareness to just over 10 million individuals, which drove just under 40,000 site visits, and close to 1,000 individuals who specifically requested information about the online programs. The South Carolina Online Awareness Campaign will be relaunched in November.

Mr. Thomas referenced a booklet written, designed, and produced by the Communications Team based on the strategic plan as part of a comprehensive marketing effort of For South Carolina: A Path to Excellence. The marketing effort included an Op-

Ed penned by the President that was carried in many newspapers throughout the state, as well as a web presence that enhanced communication around the publication. His team partnered with the Government Relations team to send information to elected officials across the state to ensure they were aware of efforts to market and promote the University.

Mr. Thomas stated the State of the University was postponed until September 30 and that the Board would receive a report thereafter. The President will speak on For South Carolina: A Path Forward and on the status of the University. He noted the Communications team will market the State of the University to the various media outlets and that an Op-Ed is planned for statewide newspapers.

Chair Warr thanked Mr. Thomas for his report and stated it was received as information.

V. Other Matters

There being no other matters to come before the Committee, Chair Smith declared the meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Cantey Heath, Jr.
Secretary