

Chicago State University  
Special Board of Trustees Meeting  
Full Board Meeting Minutes  
Academic Library – Auditorium, Room 415  
March 27, 2017  
9:05 a.m. - 2:05 p.m.

Board Members Present

Trustee Marshall Hatch, Sr., Chairman  
Trustee Horace Smith, Vice Chairman  
Trustee Kambium Buckner, Secretary  
Trustee Nicholas A. Gowen  
Trustee Tiffany R. Harper  
Trustee Paul Vallas  
Trustee Nikki Zollar  
Trustee Paris Griffin, Student Representative

Others Present

Interim President Cecil B. Lucy  
Dr. Angela Henderson, Provost and Senior Vice President  
Mr. Patrick Cage, Esq., General Counsel for Labor and Legal Affairs  
Ms. Bonnie Phillips, Office of Board of Trustees

1. Call to Order

Chairman Hatch called the meeting to order.

2. Roll Call

A quorum was verified and roll call was taken.

3. Verification of Meeting Notice

The meeting notice was posted as mandated by the Illinois Open Meetings Act.

4. Action Items

a. **Approval of Board Attorney Services Resolution.**

Trustee Nicholas Gowen presented the resolution.

**Trustee Harper moved to approve Board Attorney Services Resolution. Trustee Buckner seconded the motion. The motion passed as follows.**

**Ayes 8**

**Nays 0**

5. Other Matters

a. Public and Employee Comments

Chairman Hatch stated public comments would be limited to two minutes. Chairman Hatch asked Ms. Phillips to call those who signed up for public comment.

Dr. Bionaz stated CSU is in desperate need of a complete change in its senior leadership. Many of our senior administrators have been in their positions for 5, 6, or 7 years and the result for the university has been catastrophic. As former Illinois Senate President Emil Jones recently said, Chicago State University is on life support. Dr. Bionaz stated the declining enrollment, multiple scandals, costly legal judgments, financial shenanigans and crony hiring practices have brought CSU to its knees. He stated the current interim president has made it abundantly clear that he sees no need to change his senior administrative staff; however, the Faculty and academic support professionals at Chicago State disagree and urge you to appoint a new university leader today. Dr. Bionaz stated someone with both the ability and the authority to make the myriad changes that must occur if this school is to arrest its death spiral and the best choice for that position is Paul Vallas. He asked that Paul Vallas be placed in temporary charge of the university.

Mr. Frank Horton stated the he was a graduate of the class of 1964 and is a proud alumnus. He stated if it was not for Chicago State he would not be where he is today. Mr. Horton stated that he worked for Chicago Public Schools for 35 years as a teacher, counselor and principal retiring in 2000. He stated we started a group called Chicago State Educators and this group was formed because we saw there was a need for kids to get assistance. We have fundraisers to provide scholarships to students. Mr. Horton stated the last fundraiser was Saturday night at the Dusable Museum and it was a blast. Dr. Henderson and Mr. Lucy attended the fundraiser. He stated he gave a notice at the previous board meeting with four tickets (\$50 each) to board members. He stated that Trustee Zollar gave \$500 dollar check and Spencer Leak bought ten tickets. Mr. Horton asked the board member to give him a check for \$200 before they leave the meeting.

Dr. Robert Szyman stated that he is a southsider who grew up in Gresham and attend St. Kilian Grammar School (class of 1961), Mount Carmel High School (class of 1965) and earned a bachelors degree in 1969 from Chicago State. He earned his masters degree from CSU and PhD from University of Illinois Urbana. Dr. Szyman stated he is a tenured full professor at Chicago State. Dr. Szyman and his wife are lifelong members of the CSU Alumni Association and he serves as vice president. He stated the budget issues and the issues surrounding the race of Chicago State University President to me are red herrings. The underlined issue is leadership. Dr. Szyman shared the criteria for a candidate for president at Chicago State University. He stated I have a dream that one day I will teach at a university where the president comes in based on leadership skills and not on the color of their skin.

Dr. Haki Madhubuti stated this is the first time he has been back on the university campus since he was pushed out in 2010. He was named a university distinguished professor. He stated he is here because he loves black people and this must be the major criteria that we love our people. Dr. Madhubuti stated that he served under five presidents and it seemed each of the presidents for the most part really were not capable of running a first class university and that is what we need. We need a man or a woman who not only understands this community but also understands the history of this university and has the prerequisite scholarship and management skills. He stated he feels the Negroes are back in charge, however, there is a distinction between Negroes and black people. Dr. Madhubuti stated we need a president who understands that he or she must be accountable to this community. We need a president, provost, vice president, to

provide confidence for faculty, staff, and students. There needs to be a development of strong academic programming and policy at this university. He stated that enrollment has dropped drastically. Dr. Madhubuti stated this is Gwendolyn Brooks' centennial, she served her last ten years at this university, and we need to name the CSU Library after Gwendolyn Brooks.

Ms. Kim Delaney stated that she received all three of her degrees from CSU and teaches African American Studies at the university. She stated that she has a long history at Chicago State University and thanked Dr. Madhubuti for coming out to speak even though he was so disrespected when he was here. Ms. Delaney stated she is an activist who advocates for black people. She stated this administration has to be removed and to call for a presidential search without removing this administration would be worthless. Ms. Delaney stated if you bring in a new president and keep the same administration they will not allow that person to lead.

Minister Mohammad stated he is a founder of a community-based coalition known as the New Black Leadership and he is here to make a statement on behalf of the New Black Leadership's steering committee. He stated incompetence, evil, negativity, all leave a residue and lives in the mind, practice and policies of narcissistic and sociopathic leadership. He stated formal degrees do not preclude one from having sociopathic personality. Minister Muhammad expressed concern regarding the high reduction in enrollment over the last six years and the gross financial irresponsibility in the processes and execution of hiring Dr. Calhoun and his forced resignation. He stated there must be a forensic audit of the finances and a full investigation of the connections, relationships, and policies of the practices of those in the highest offices of governance. He stated neither Bruce Rauner nor Paul Vallas are not in any way responsible for any of these institutional atrocities. It is black men and black women who are responsible who must and will be held accountable by the community for these failures. Change is necessary.

Mr. Eddie Reed stated most people know him as an activist and advocate. He stated CSU is looked at across the country as a black university and there is a community of interest and race does matter. He stated Paul Vallas has not been respectful of the community of interest. He stated Bruce Rauner needs to straighten up the State of Illinois first, then maybe we can say that he knows how to put responsible leadership at this university. Mr. Reed stated Paul Vallas does not have the credentials to provide the leadership to Chicago State University nor any other university.

Dr. Patricia Steinhaus stated she is a tenured full professor in the College of Education is speaking as a faculty member. She applauded the Board for the effort in moving forward in ensuring CSU has effective leadership. Dr. Steinhaus stated that the opinion of many indicated by a survey last week is that reinstating Dr. Calhoun as president still makes the most sense. She stated while most of us understand that interim steps maybe necessary to reaching the desired long-term outcome for the university we urge you to carefully define the parameters. Dr. Steinhaus asked the Board to make no assumptions based on media reports, second hand information about university staff and faculty. She stated it takes courage for faculty to stand before you as we have over the past month to voice our concerns. This institution has operated in a climate of retribution over the last 7 years.

Ms. Joy Hearn stated it is a privilege to stand before new board members who may be willing to listen. Ms. Hearn served the State of Illinois through the president's office. She informed the Board that Dr. Calhoun did not resign and she knew this to be a fact. Ms. Hearn stated because she knew so much information she was ushered off to a new position across campus away from the president's office and she is now a paper pusher. She reported they thought that would silence her, but she will never be silenced. Ms. Hearn stated she is here for the employees of this university who work hard to keep this institution running. She stated we are not going to continue to allow you to push us around so that you can continue to prosper. Ms. Hearn requested the board to talk to the employees noting there has to be a change. Ms. Hearn reported she sent information to the OEIG, which told her she has whistle blower protection, however, let the board handle this matter. She stated the senior VP was allowed to continually harass her and if she did it to me, who else do you think she did it to. This university is not an HBCU we are a PBI.

Dr. Debra Lynch stated she is a tenured faculty member in the college of education and a CSU Alum who is the first in her family of immigrants to receive a graduate degree. She stated I have seen this great and promising university turn into a ghost town due to the lack of leadership. I am here to add my voice to the chorus that says the status quo must go and urge this board to take action immediately because we are beyond crisis and we are desperately in need of decisive leadership and bold actions. Dr. Lynch stated she was on the previous presidential search committee and we listened to every constituency group on this campus and found one acceptable to every group. Perhaps because of that outpour of support that candidate was hamstringing in weeks by our own board of trustees. She stated the faculty union has taken votes and overwhelmingly supports bringing back Dr. Calhoun. There needs to be a sense of urgency to counter the current narrative of CSU in collapse and leaving the status quo in place is unacceptable.

Betty Milsap stated while reading the crusaders newspaper she was inspired to come and speak. It said that Governor Bruce Rauner would not give Chicago State any money unless they accepted the man he selected and she was outraged. We have outstanding black men and women who possess all the skills of adequate leadership. She stated there is the pain of employees, frustration of teachers, the feel of the community, but we are going to leave those things behind and move to the mark of the higher calling. Ms. Milsap stated she want our children to be under the leadership of a competent person regardless of race, creed or color. However, I am outraged when you tell me and African American man or woman cannot lead a university. We can work to make this a college of distinction.

Dr. Beverly, Associate Professor of Political Science... George Santayana said "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.". He stated four years ago, when the university was on a precipice to moving forward and we missed it and what you hear and heard is from us not taking the action necessary at the time. Dr. Beverly stated the ship is listing sadly and cannot continue to be crewed by the people that got it in this position. Extraordinary times calls for extraordinary measures. Those measures though have to be targeted and they have to be time limited. He stated the faculty would like to renew the request that Dr. Calhoun is reinstated and this occurs as quickly as possible. I would say to you trustees, you have hard choices here and not everybody is going to like them. Thank you for your service.

Chairman Hatch thanked everyone for the contributions and stated the comment section is normally after executive session; however, it was the will of the Board to hear from the constituent groups before we deliberated.

6. Recess into Executive Session pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act.

**Trustee Zollar moved to recess into Executive Session. Trustee Gowen seconded the motion. The motion passed as follows:**

**Ayes: 8**

**Nays: 0**

7. Reconvene into Open Session

Chairman Hatch stated that there was action taken in executive session that required action in open session.

The Board will immediately launch a national search for the president of Chicago State University. Trustee Harper and Trustee Gowen will co-chair the presidential search committee. The full committee will be announced with the search firm that will be retained to assist with the search. As early as the April 7, 2017 board meeting. The board wants to move in the direction aligning the interim role with the job description and requirements of a permanent president. The board will immediately seek a new interim president on an expedited basis. The new interim president will be announced at the April 7, 2017 board meeting. Upon appointment of the new interim president, Mr. Cecil Lucy will be reassigned to the interim CFO position and of course, we thank him deeply for his service to Chicago State University.

President Lucy stated it has been a pleasure to serve the students of Chicago State University.

Chairman Hatch stated the board has also created the temporary chief administrative officer role to be filled on an expedited basis. The job description and goals of this role are forthcoming and the new temporary chief administrative officer will be announced at the April 7, 2017 board meeting.

Trustee Gowen stated the Chicago State Board of Trustees at the suggestion of Governor Rauner, consider Paul Vallas to be its interim president. Despite media reports this decision was not preordained nor was it mandated by the governor. We certainly considered the governor concerns as well as those raised by the faculty, student, staff and the community. This body acted independently, deliberately and professionally to come to a decision. The decision is ours and ours alone as we are the ones who bare the fiduciary responsibility for insuring the long lasting success of this institution. Every person on this board strives to ensure the university grows beyond current problems and strives. We have no intention on allowing this university to fail or to authorize its closure. We fully understand and appreciate the importance of the school as an institution of higher learning, and economic driver and the cultural significance that it has for the state, the city the black community, and all the thousands of students and alumni who call CSU home. We take this responsibility seriously. Mr. Vallas made a presentation to the board and was questioned thoroughly by board members. Mr. Vallas then recused himself from all deliberations. To be clear, Mr. Vallas was not privy to any of our discussions. I want to address the potential conflicted interest that exists as a result of Mr. Vallas being a board member who had access to significant operational university

data prior to becoming a candidate for either interim president or chief administrative officer. This body is certainly disappointed in that set of facts and considered it in our deliberations. We are also disappointed in how this issue played out in the media over the last two weeks with Mr. Vallas as well as others members playing a significant role. However, these issues where not significant enough for us to not consider Mr. Vallas for one of two roles that the chairman just discussed. However, Mr. Vallas will have to resign from his position on the board of trustees before being considered for a position as an employee with the university. The term emergency manager has been used in the media as regards to what this university needs. We are not looking for an emergency manager. Chicago State University is not a failed municipality. We are an institution of higher learning, that has borne the brunt of 40 years of underfunding, inadequate resources, over reliance on state funds, being used as a political football, gross mismanagement and a host of other problems that date back long before the current budgetary problems and long before the 6-year reign of the prior administration. Following the discussions and resolutions, the human resources committee will address questions that the media or the public at large may have.

### **Action Items**

**a. Approval of the Establishment of the Temporary Position of Chief Administrative Officer Resolution.**

Ms. Phillips read the resolution.

**Trustee Smith moved to approve the Establishment of the Temporary Position of Chief Administrative Officer Resolution. Trustee Gowen seconded the motion. The motion passed as follows.**

**Ayes 7**

**Nays 0**

**Abstain 1 (Trustee Vallas)**

Trustee Gowen stated for the record Trustee Vallas needs to abstain from the vote of all these resolutions.

**b. Approval of the Search and Selection of a New Interim President for Appointment Resolution.**

Ms. Phillips read the resolution.

**Trustee Buckner moved to approve the Search and Selection of a New Interim President for Appointment Resolution. Trustee Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed as follows.**

**Ayes 7**

**Nays 0**

**Abstain 1 (Trustee Vallas)**

**c. Approval of Authority to Enter Contract for Professional Services Resolution.**

Ms. Phillips read the resolution.

**Trustee Buckner moved to approve the Approval of Authority to Enter Contract for Professional Services Resolution. Trustee Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed as follows.**

**Ayes 7**

**Nays 0**  
**Abstain 1 (Trustee Vallas)**

**d. Election of 2017 Board Officer - Secretary**

Chairman Hatch called for the nomination for the office of Secretary of the Board.

**Trustee Zollar moved to nominate Kambium Buckner for Secretary of the Board of Trustees. Trustee Gowen seconded the motion. The motion passed as follows:**

**Ayes: 7**  
**Nays 0**  
**Abstain 1 (Trustee Buckner)**

Chairman Hatch asked if there are any additional nominations. Hearing none the nomination of Secretary of the Board is now closed. Roll call was held to close the nomination.

**Roll call for the election of Kambium Buckner for Secretary of the Board of Trustees.**

**Ayes: 7**  
**Nays 0**  
**Abstain 1 (Trustee Buckner)**

Trustee Kambium Buckner elected Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

Trustee Harper stated we will entertain questions you would like to ask us about what you just heard. Please keep them brief, no statements.

Questioner 1: Is the Chief Administrator Officer a permanent position and do you know the length of appointment?

Trustee Harper: It is a temporary position and we do not know the length, as we said the requirements for the role as well as the goals will be forthcoming. We expect to announce on April 7, 2017, along with the presidential search committee information.

Trustee Harper stated are there other questions we can answer at this time. We are trying to be transparent in this process, as that transparency has been an issue. So if there are questions that you have please ask them.

Questioner 2: Will there be an advisory committee consisting of university constituents and who have you spoken to for staff representation? I would just ask that you consider the civil service employee council, as they are the voice for staff on this campus.

Trustee Harper states absolutely. Trustee Buckner stated we have spoken already to some folks about faculty representation, student representation, and community representation as well. Trustee Harper states, and staff representation as well. Trustee Harper states, if you would like to talk to one of us afterward we will take recommendations.

Questioner 3: Are you taking names for the interim president or is this a process that you are doing on your own.

Trustee Harper stated, you can submit information to the board of trustees through [trustees@csu.edu](mailto:trustees@csu.edu).

Trustee Harper asked if there were any more questions.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.