

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH PUBLIC FORUMS  
MINUTES

October 11, 2012

October 27, 2012

**Summary Minutes**  
**FAMU PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH**  
**PUBLIC FORUM**  
**Efferson Manning Student Union, Grand Ballroom**  
**Thursday, October 11, 2012**

Mr. Tommy Mitchell, member of the Marketing and Communications Subcommittee, called the forum to order at 6:05 p.m.

He noted that the FAMU Board of Trustees is embarking upon another important chapter in the life of the University as we work to select the next President to lead the University. Joining us this evening from the Board of Trustees is Trustee Narayan Persaud, who is also a member of the Presidential Search Committee and the Marketing and Communications Subcommittee, and by phone Chairman Solomon Badger, and Trustee Kelvin Lawson. He also welcomed Interim President Larry Robinson.

Mr. Mitchell informed the audience that there was a sign-in sheet at the back of the room if they wanted to make comments.

Mr. Mitchell announced, "We are trying to go 'green' during this process; therefore, most of the information can be found on the Presidential Search website and we did not make many copies of the handouts."

Trustee Persaud provided the overview of the Presidential Search Process. He noted that Chairman Solomon appointed the search committee at the August 15, 2012, meeting of the FAMU Board of Trustees. Trustee Karl White serves as the chair of the committee and Trustee Spurgeon McWilliams is the vice chair. Other search committee members include:

- Trustee Narayan Persaud, President of the Faculty Senate, and the chair of the Department of Social Sciences.
- Trustee Marissa West, SGA President
- Mr. Tommy Mitchell, President of the National Alumni Association
- Trustee Marjorie Turnbull, who also serves as the liaison to the FAMU Foundation, Inc.

- Trustee Torey Alston, Member of the FAMU Board of Trustees
- Trustee Belinda Reed Shannon, Member of the FAMU Board of Trustees
- Elizabeth Webster, a member of the Board of Governors. As many of you may know, the BOG must confirm the selection of all presidents.

Trustee Persaud noted that the Chairman of the Board of Governors has asked each campus conducting searches to include a member of the Board of Governors in the search process. Further, he noted that many of the University's stakeholders are represented on this committee. No additional members will be added to the presidential search committee because the work has begun.

Similar to the operations of the Board of Trustees, the work of the search committee will occur via the committee structure. The search committee has created three (3) subcommittees. "Each subcommittee has met at least once and is well underway in meeting its respective charges." These subcommittees are:

- **Qualifications & Criteria Subcommittee**
  - Members: Belinda Shannon (chair), Marjorie Turnbull and Karl White.
  - Charged to:
    - Develop the Leadership Statement
    - Selection of the executive search firm
    - Build upon Trustee Shannon's expertise in Human Relations
- **Compensation Subcommittee**
  - Members: Elizabeth Webster (chair), Marissa West and Spurgeon McWilliams
  - Charged to:
    - Review the compensation packages of other presidents and advise the committee on nuances of presidential salary packages
    - Ensure compensation components are competitive
- **Marketing & Communications Subcommittee**
  - Members: Torey Alston (chair), Tommy Mitchell, and Narayan Persaud
  - Charged to:
    - Solicit feedback from the University's stakeholders
    - Develop a presidential search website

- Ensure the committee is transparent and overly communicative with the public

The Marketing and Communications Subcommittee convened the public forum. On October 6<sup>th</sup>, the subcommittee launched a website at [www.famu.edu/presidentialsearch](http://www.famu.edu/presidentialsearch) and he noted that it is also accessible from the FAMU home page. The website includes a survey to collect input from stakeholders that may not want to comment publicly. “Thus far we have received over 270 responses. The survey will close December 6, 2012.” Trustee Persaud noted that the staff would record comments made at the forum and ensure they become part of the record.

Mr. Mitchell thanked Trustee Persaud for his remarks and outlined the ground rules for the forum. Further, he noted that “This evening we would like to hear from the public on the four questions that are highlighted in the survey that is available online.” Those questions were:

- What traits are needed for FAMU’s next leader?
- What prior experiences are most important for FAMU’s next leader?
- What short-term and long-term plans are most important to you?
- What do you see as FAMU’s five (5) most significant challenges and opportunities in the short-term (1-5 years) on the job that a new President must address?

Mr. Mitchell informed the audience that the subcommittee will collect all the comments and submit them to the Qualifications and Criteria Subcommittee that will work on developing the Leadership Statement with the executive search firm.

### **Public Comments**

1. Asha Rizor, graduating senior (pre-professional biology student)
  - We need a leader who will be able to move us from a low producing minority school, into one that can help us transition and get better numbers in the professional schools, ie. Pharmacy, Medical, Dental, Physical Therapy.

- The next leader should clean house. Get rid of unqualified staff, nepotism, and those who have served their time here. Release those who are tired of teaching and serving because our students are suffering because of it.
2. Dr. Elizabeth Davenport, Faculty Member and FAMU UFF President
    - Leader in an academic institution
    - Ability to understand academics and make long term decisions
    - Role model, researcher and writer; previous leadership skills and potential
    - That's why I am going to ask this question, "Why do you only have members of the BOT on credential committee and our academic members (Persaud and West) are not serving on the credential committee? It is important to have someone in academics on the credential committee to be active in the selection of our President. If not, we will end up like we have before.
  3. Trenton Kirksey, Senior MBA Student
    - Confidence, clarity and caring
    - Leadership must understand culture
    - Rebuild the current brand and then rebrand
    - To become a world leader in student life
  4. Jim Davis, Alumni
    - Give consideration in next leader, people who come from industry. We need a good administrator, one who can gather around him/herself those in academics.
    - As we look toward our next leader, tried academic before and was lucky once, not sure if we will be that lucky again. University needs administrative leadership – not just academic leadership; need to look outside.
    - Leader should grow, thrive and help our people.
  5. Michael Jefferson, 4<sup>th</sup> Year Environmental Science Student and Vice President, SGA
    - Our next leader must be a fundraiser, team builder, task manager
    - Leader needs to be two "Vs"-- Visionary and Visible
    - Understandable, tangible and able to participate in (inaudible)

- Coordinates student services better; leads charge to make every student an alumnus or alumna that wants to give back to the university and become instant members of the alumni association
- Leader should be able to recruit dollars and scholars not just scholars but faculty; assemble/hire best team of faculty, staff, and industry leaders.
- Leader must be able to project us into the future to make us exceptional.

Although these were all the speakers that signed up for comments, Mr. Mitchell opened the floor to anyone for other comments.

Trustee West addressed Dr. Davenport's comment regarding Trustee Persaud and she not participating on the Qualifications and Criteria Subcommittee. Trustee West said:

This is a subcommittee of the Presidential Search Committee. The Board operates as a whole and there is nothing that would come to that subcommittee that we as the Presidential Search Committee would not be involved in. I trust that my opinions and experiences are being heard or will be heard with or without my serving on that subcommittee. I offer this input to alleviate your concern.

Dr. Davenport noted her concern is that academic voices would not be heard. She questioned the schedule time for this forum "was created at a time that is contrary with the university's culture; who stays around this university from 6-8:00pm?" She noted,

I applaud the young man and other older gentlemen that spoke about academics. The heart of this university is academics. If we do not become the "excellence with caring" or the excellent scholars we propose to be, then we will fail. Scholarships run this university, without you having a voice on that committee, I'm afraid scholarship will go out the window.

President Mitchell recognized Jackie Clark Hagen, Alumna, who noted the following:

- I would love to help change the course of this university, staff, and administrator. Customer Service should be second to none. Everyone needs to understand that where you sit, you are here to serve our students.
- We are the premier HBCU and while we are suffering our trials and tribulations, we need to ensure that we keep this university sterling reputation in tack or restore it. As we work toward that, we need to do it concurrently and transparently and last but not least, we need to do it honorably.

Mr. Mitchell further expressed his concern about the lack of attendance at this forum. He stated that this subcommittee was very concern about the time and this time was selected as the best time when one is not working “and students and teachers were not in class.” I am sad with the attendance and you can blame it on the subcommittee but there is no excuse.” Mr. Trenton Kirksey suggested a session during the lunch hour.

Ms. Renee Mowatt, a reporter for the FAMUan, asked how the meeting was promoted to the student body. Mrs. Sharon Saunders, FAMU Chief Communications Officer responded. The forum was publicized through “FAMU INFO” which goes to all students, the University’s Facebook, which has more than 40,000 followers, the Alumni, and all local media.

Trustee Persaud added,

I sent out the FAMU INFO to all faculties on this campus that the meeting will happen today. I would also like to note that the website is up and sometimes one wants to submit anonymous information. One can complete the survey and submit comments on the survey if you want to submit anonymous.

Mr. Michael Jefferson also added that the student body communicated with students through FAMU Info, Facebook (which had 43,448 likes), and several media notices. The only reason for lack of attendance is apathy. In terms of time, there is no perfect time. There will always be a time conflict. That’s why there is an opportunity to submit comments on line. I agree that this forum should have

been better attended and asked the media here to help us get the word out regarding our presidential website.

President Mitchell provided the closing remarks. He thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the forum and to express their expectations for the next president. "As we celebrate our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, we must acknowledge the great history of this University; but, more importantly prepare for the bright future that awaits our future faculty, staff, students and the next president of this University." He announced that the next forum will occur on Saturday, October 27, 2012, from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. at the College of Law in Orlando. "This is an open football date, so those who follow football will be able to come. Since this meeting is in Central Florida, we are hoping that the alums will come out."

Trustee Marissa West thanked all the students who showed up tonight to provide input.

There being no further comments, the forum adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Patricia Woodard*  
Patricia Woodard  
Administrative Assistant





**Summary Minutes**  
**FAMU PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH**  
**PUBLIC FORUM**  
**FAMU College of Law, Moot Courtroom**  
**Saturday, October 27, 2012**  
**10:00 a.m. - noon**

Trustee Torey Alston, Chair of the Marketing and Communications Subcommittee, called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m.

He noted that the FAMU Board of Trustees is embarking upon another important chapter in the life of the University as it works to select the next President. He introduced others present to include Trustee Karl White, chair of the Presidential Search Committee, Trustee Narayan Persaud, and by phone Trustee Cleve Warren; Mr. Tommy Mitchell, President of the National Alumni Association. Both Trustee Persaud and Mr. Mitchell are members of the Presidential Search Committee and the Marketing and Communications Subcommittee. Trustee Alston chairs the subcommittee and presided over the forum.

Trustee Alston thanked Dean Leroy Pernell and the staff at the College of Law for providing the space and assisting in the preparations for the public forum. He outlined the sign-in process to recognize speakers as well as the fact that the University was trying to go "green" during this process; therefore, most of this information can be found on the Presidential Search website.

Next, Trustee Narayan Persaud provided the overview of the Presidential Search Process. He noted that Chairman Solomon Badger appointed the search committee at the August 15, 2012, meeting of the FAMU Board of Trustees, Trustee Karl White serves as the chair of the committee and Trustee Spurgeon McWilliams is the vice chair. Other search Committee members include:

- Trustee Narayan Persaud, President of the Faculty Senate, and the chair of the Department of Social Sciences.
- Trustee Marissa West, Student Government Association President
- Mr. Tommy Mitchell President of the National Alumni Association
- Trustee Marjorie Turnbull, who also serves as the liaison to the FAMU Foundation, Inc.

- Trustee Torey Alston, Member of the FAMU Board of Trustees
- Trustee Belinda Reed Shannon, Member of the FAMU Board of Trustees
- Elizabeth Webster, a member of the Board of Governors.

As you can see many of the University's stakeholders are represented on this committee. No additional members will be added to the presidential search committee because the work has begun.

Similar to the operations of the Board of Trustees, the work of the search committee will occur via the committee structure. The search committee has created three (3) subcommittees. Each subcommittee has met at least once and is well underway in meeting its respective charges. These subcommittees are:

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    - Solicit feedback from the University's stakeholders
    - Develop a presidential search website
    - Ensure the committee is transparent and overly communicative with the public

The Marketing and Communications Subcommittee convened the public forum. It launched a website on October 6<sup>th</sup>, which can be accessed at [www.famu.edu/presidentialsearch](http://www.famu.edu/presidentialsearch) or from the FAMU home page. He informed the audience about the leadership survey that can be taken online; if stakeholders do not want to make public comments, then they can go to the website and submit their responses on-line. More than 600 responses have been received to date. The survey will close on December 6<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Alston informed the audience of the time limits. Further, he noted the four questions that are highlighted in the survey that is available online. Those questions were:

- What traits are needed for FAMU's next leader?
- What prior experiences are most important for FAMU's next leader?
- What short-term and long-term plans are most important to you?
- What do you see as FAMU's five (5) most significant challenges and opportunities in the short-term (1-5 years) on the job that a new President must address?

The staff will collect all comments and submit them to the Qualifications and Criteria Subcommittee. The subcommittee will develop the Leadership Statement with the Executive Search Firm. The Qualifications and Criteria Subcommittee will recommend an executive search firm to the Presidential Search Committee next week.

The chair recognized speakers for public comment:

### **Public Comments**

1. Milton Corley, Alumni
  - a. Someone with ties to FAMU who is BOLD, not intimidated, speak out i.e. Dental School; fight for profile admits
2. Doris Hicks, Alumae, Second Vice President of the National Alumni Association
  - a. Fundraising, ensure that all schools are able to raise funds in their discipline

- b. Ability to bring all communities together
  - c. Visible
  - d. Respect all stakeholders; feel everyone is important
3. Dr. Elizabeth Davenport, Faculty Member and FAMU chapter President of the United Faculty of Florida President (UFF)
- a. Strong leadership skills, researcher, fundraiser, open to all segments of the populations at FAMU
  - b. Faculty included in FAMU decision making
4. Aleisha Hodo, Law Student and Vice President of the Student Bar Association
- a. Need someone who is BOLD and open to student opinions
  - b. Must have a post graduate education
  - c. Should be visible at the Law School
  - d. Improve retention at Law School and increase population

Trustee Persaud asked her to talk about student involvement in the Presidential Search at the Law School. She responded that as the vice president of the Student Bar Association, she is not sure how involved students have been in the process to this point, but as of today, more have begun to gather more information and express interest in the presidential search.

5. Charles R Lewis, President, Orlando Alumni Chapter
- a) Strong leadership, make positive change to move us forward (staff and students)
  - b) Bring new programs
  - c) Student outreach
  - d) Retention
  - e) Someone who will be with us more than 3-5 years
  - f) Don't have to be a Rattler
  - g) Business side and academia split (50/50)
  - h) Put the right people in place to move the university forward
  - i) Well versed in all areas
  - j) Fundraising, recruitment, sponsorship, facility, housing
6. Lundy Langston, Faculty Member at FAMU College of Law
- a) Stability

- b) The Board need to have a discussion about who we are today; once that happens there should be an expectation by each college and school, which should draft a mission statement; then we can have a real discussion about who we are and what we need in a leader.
  - c) Need Academic/Business sense
  - d) Fundraiser
7. George Watson, Alumni
- a) Strong leadership style
  - b) Strong ties to students
  - c) Important to get scholarships and seek scholars
  - d) Expect change and accept change
  - e) Tenure or experience being a president
  - f) Knowledge of how to make a strong university
  - g) Should be black and have some knowledge of the university
8. Steven Person, Alumni
- a) Need to develop leadership from within
  - b) FAMU is our family and we need to take care of the family
9. Phyllis Smith, Faculty at the College of Law & an Alumnae
- a) Visionary
  - b) Fiscal responsibility
  - c) Understand the world we are in
  - d) Need someone from academia
  - e) Preference to be a Rattler; if not someone who has been in an HBCU environment
10. Keith Lewis, Alumni
- a) Accountability (students, alumni, professors) and to maintain quality education for our students
  - b) Understand partnership with academia and corporate partners
11. Leroy Lloyd, Alumni
- a) Ensure that president's contract does not create irrevocable damage and that it does not allow him/ her to return to the University after their departure.

Although these were all the speakers that signed up for comment, Chair Alston opened the floor for other comments.

Trustee Karl White thanked everyone for coming and being involved in the process and for sharing their thoughts. He noted that FAMU is a \$432 million dollar business sending students into the business world. He noted that:

Our next leader must be effective in the areas of NEED as opposed to being strong and right. He or she must be respectful and surround him or herself with the right people. The Board will do everything possible to get the RIGHT and EFFECTIVE president.

President Tommy Mitchell also thanked everyone for coming and gave special thanks to the NAA Chapter Presidents and Officers for their participation. He stressed the importance for alumni to participate in this process and asked this question which hasn't been addressed by any alumni. "What do you expect the next president's relationship to be with the alumni?" The following alumni officers responded:

- Doris Hicks – very important because we have alumni around the country that can help us connect with corporations and other business partners to hire our graduates; recruit students, support the university with scholarships, etc. The next president should identify immediately who the alumni officials are in the various cities so they can connect him or her with those supporters.
- Chuck Lewis - Recognize the power of numbers among the alumni; bring them together as a whole; embrace them and do not put the National Alumni Association on a back burner.

Trustee Narayan Persaud echoed the thanks of his colleagues. He further stated that the search process is as open as possible. All the information gathered through the forums will be shared with the Presidential Search Committee. "We all must work together as a group to ensure that the process works. I have seen a lot of presidents come and go; but, our loyalties are with the institution.

President Mitchell stated that we must show our love and dedication for FAMU. The alumni thought about strategic planning, who we are, what our mission continue to be; our mission of HBCU's has not changed and profile admits need our help. The next president should be concerned about HBCU's mission; must show up and "let the state know what we are about; others should not set our course."

Chair Alston provided the closing remarks. Over 600 participants have signed up and completed the online survey. He asked those who have not done so to do so by December 6, 2012. He thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the forum and to express their expectations about leadership qualities in the next president. “As we celebrate our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, we must acknowledge the outstanding history of this University; but, more importantly prepare for the bright future that awaits our faculty, staff, students and the next president of this University. Your input will provide valuable information as the presidential search committee continues its work.”

He announced that the presidential search committee will meet on Wednesday, October 31 from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. in the Grand Ballroom of the Student Union on the Main Campus in Tallahassee. It is an open meeting and the public is welcomed to attend.

There being no further comments, the forum adjourned at 11:22am.

Respectfully Submitted,  
**Patricia Woodard**  
Patricia Woodard  
Administrative Assistant