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University of South Carolina  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning

December 18, 2018

The University of South Carolina Board of Trustees' Ad Hoc Committee on Strategic Planning met at 1:40 p.m. on Tuesday, December 18, 2018, in the Alumni Center's C. Edward Floyd Boardroom.

Members present were: Mr. Thad H. Westbrook, Chairman; Mr. Mark W. Buyck Jr.; Mr. Robert F. Dozier Jr.; Mr. William C. Hubbard; Mr. Miles Loadholt; Ms. Leah B. Moody; Dr. C. Dorn Smith III; Mr. Mack I. Whittle Jr.; Mr. John C. von Lehe Jr., Board Chairman; and Mr. Hubert F. Mobley, Board Vice Chairman; with Mr. A.C. "Bubba" Fennell III joining by telephone. Absent was Mr. Thomas C. Cofield.

Other Trustees present were: Mr. Chuck Allen; Ms. Rose Buyck Newton; Mr. Eugene P. Warr Jr.; and Mr. Charles H. Williams.

Also present were: USC Columbia Faculty Senate Chair Marco Valtorta; USC Columbia Student Government President Taylor Wright; and the Board's Strategic Advisor David Seaton.

Others present were: President Harris Pastides; Secretary J. Cantey Heath Jr.; General Counsel Walter "Terry" H. Parham; Vice President for Student Affairs Dennis Pruitt; Chief Audit Executive Pam Doran; Chief Communications Officer Wes Hickman; Vice President for Human Resources Caroline Agardy; Assistant to the President for System Affairs Eddie King; Associate Provost for Academic Programs Tena B. Crews; Palmetto College Chancellor Susan Elkins; USC Aiken Chancellor Sandra Jordan; USC Upstate Chancellor Brendan Kelly; Equal Opportunity Programs Director Clifford Scott; Assistant Professor of History, USC Lancaster, Ernest Jenkins; University Technology Services Production Manager Matt Warthen; and Board staff members Debra Allen and Ina Wilson.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Westbrook called the meeting to order and 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. Secretary Heath confirmed those Trustees joining by telephone. Mr. Hickman confirmed no members of the news media were present.

Chairman Westbrook reminded committee members that the presentations they were about to hear were rescheduled from October. Part of the committee's role, he said, included strategic planning for the system. The two presentations on today's agenda represented the first stage of hearing from campuses outside of Columbia.

## II. USC Aiken Strategic Plan

Chairman Westbrook called on Chancellor Jordan who said USC Aiken had just completed its strategic plan, entitled, "Forward Together 2013-2018."

She said her presentation had two objectives. First, she described the planning process, which she identified as being almost as important as the implementation of the plan.

A diagram of the planning process illustrated input coming from surveys and focus-group meetings with stakeholders such as faculty and staff, students, administrators, alumni, and the community. More than 750 individuals participated in the planning process, she said. From the questions addressed, several themes surfaced and eventually the themes became goals. Objectives, action steps and ownership were added to the goals. Finally, benchmarks, achievement goals and deadlines were established.

The plan was shared repeatedly with all USC Aiken constituents, allowing for multiple feedback opportunities. After the four goals were established, seven taskforces generated the necessary action steps. The entire process was a shared experience and is being repeated as the new strategic plan, called "Leading Forward," is developed.

The strategic planning process resulted in a more concise mission statement, which evolved from two pages to three short paragraphs that describe and define USC Aiken's Carnegie classification and what distinguishes USC Aiken among the comprehensive institutions in the State of South Carolina.

Chancellor Jordan said the four goals launched with Forward Together in 2013 were to: (1) provide distinctive, high quality educational experiences; (2) enroll, retain, develop and graduate a diverse student body; (3) develop and manage resources effectively, efficiently and ethically to support the University's mission; and (4) create collaborative partnerships and innovative solutions to advance our community, region, and state.

Each goal was accompanied by objectives and action steps, and the progress tracked annually through a series of key performance indicators. Altogether there were 143 metrics used to track the strategic plan. Results were reported annually to the campus constituents as part of Chancellor Jordan's State of the University address.

One of the plan's most significant goals was about serving more South Carolinians and providing greater access. While that goal was measured in several ways, she specifically noted the 15% growth in student enrollment during the five-year plan – which came after experiencing 12 years of no growth. Some metrics track measurements on a 10-year basis to identify incremental changes in enrollment that will reinforce the strategic plan.

Access and inclusion are at the heart of the institution's mission, she said. Since 2013, USC Aiken increased enrollment of racial minorities, first-generation students, and low-income students. She said 40% of USC Aiken's students are racial minorities, 42% are first generation students, and 24.2% are low-income while 16.2% are from families whose income is below the poverty line as defined by the federal government. "This is an important aspect of our mission to serve our region. A way that we differentiate ourselves as an institution is through bridge programs. We have two distinct bridge programs designed to improve a student's ability through focused strengthening of skills and abilities."

In providing greater access, USC Aiken also built a larger enrollment of adults by focusing on military and veteran students due to the campus' proximity to military facilities in Augusta, Georgia. In five years, she said enrollment of military and veteran students grew from 150 in 2012 to 506 in Fall 2018, comprising 14% of USC Aiken's total enrollment. The number of non-traditional aged students (age 25 and older) also increased from 10% to 23% of USC Aiken's enrollment. "As a public university, we want to be inclusive of all students and we believe we've done a good job of bringing greater focus on the needs of veteran and military students through our Veterans and Military Support Center," Chancellor Jordan said.

Among USC Aiken's accomplishments is raising the institution's profile to become more recognized and to build a stronger national reputation, which adds value to the degree a student earns. In looking at ways to strengthen national recognition, she cited hiring of outstanding, award-winning faculty and making sure they are available to challenge and advise students. Discipline accreditations also are maintained, which is a national standard of excellence. USC Aiken currently is seeking to add its engineering program to the list of accredited degree programs it offers.

During "Forward Together," she said, the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges recognized USC Aiken for Excellence in Curriculum, taking the distinction from the College of Charleston – only one school per state is awarded this recognition and to be considered, an institution must be highly engaged in undergraduate research.

USC Aiken has received numerous outside recognitions including being ranked in 2018 for the 14<sup>th</sup> time by *U.S. News and World Report* as No. 1 among comprehensive regional universities in the South. Chancellor Jordan noted there are about 550 institutions considered in this category. Important metrics in this recognition are class size, success of an institution's students, an institution's reputation among its peers, and student satisfaction with the education they receive. She added that the faculty to student ratio is 15 to 1.

Other recognitions during the past five years include being cited twice as a College of Distinction and twice as a Great College to Work For. Finally, in raising the school's profile, she said, USC Aiken had received five independent recognitions for being military friendly. Student success was another major accomplishment during the "Forward Together" strategic plan. USC Aiken helped aid student success by providing flexibility through the addition of a lag semester and increasing the number of online courses. Palmetto College helped with that effort by offering business and special education courses online. Overall, online course sections grew from 127 with 1,804 students enrolled to 402 with 5,541 students enrolled while maintaining a class size small enough to tout individualized attention, she said.

Graduating "On Your Time" also helps with cost containment, she said, noting 27% of USC Aiken students graduate with zero debt. Otherwise, the average debt was \$20,000 for students graduating during the previous year. "We're trying to keep the price low by keeping our tuition low and making sure students are progressing quickly," she said.

Another goal of the "Forward Together" strategic plan, said Chancellor Jordan who is in her seventh year at USC Aiken, was creation of efficiencies through cost cutting and cost avoidance in order to free funds for reinvesting in mission critical goals. USC Aiken's state funding as a South Carolina public university is only \$8.5 million, which means state funding has ended by the time classes begin, she said. The effort to find efficiencies yielded nearly \$2 million to reinvest in USC Aiken's institutional goals.

She noted USC Aiken is a young institution, having served the region for 57 years, so there is not a large alumni base to build on for fundraising. Regardless, USC Aiken's foundation since 2012 realized a net gain of more than \$18 million as efforts were made under the strategic plan to improve fundraising.

One of the most important aspects of being a comprehensive institution representing and supporting the region, she said, is the building of partnerships. Through partnerships working with industry and business leaders, 11 degree programs were developed to address workforce needs of the region. Since 2012, more than 70 regional partnerships were created to help with USC Aiken's educational agenda. Specifically, she cited the Scholar's Academy, a partnership with the Aiken County School District

that will provide high school students two years of a college education while they complete their high school degree – all paid for by the school district. When fully deployed, the program will host 200 high school students, 50 in each grade level. USC Aiken also is the designated site for the Savannah River National Lab to build a branch lab, the Advanced Manufacturing Collaborative, making USC Aiken the only comprehensive university campus in the United States to house a national lab.

Of the strategic plan's 143 metrics, 141 were attained, she said, concluding her remarks with the four goals established for the new, five-year strategic plan, "Leading Forward."

Responding to questions, she said credit hours taught followed the same increase as illustrated by the student enrollment graph. Credit hours have grown over time, with the "On Your Time" program resulting in students taking more hours each semester. Graduation rate for full-time freshmen is 46%, she answered, noting the national average for comprehensives was 41%. Chancellor Jordan further clarified that minority enrollment is primarily African American and mixed race on the Aiken campus, with the Asian population at about 1% and the Latino population at about 21%.

Chairman Westbrook thanked Chancellor Jordan for her report and said it was received as information.

### III. USC Upstate Strategic Plan

Chairman Westbrook called on Chancellor Kelly to present USC Upstate's new 2018-2023 strategic plan "Up Together," noting Trustee Toney Lister was disappointed to have missed the presentation and had asked that his thanks be conveyed to Chancellor Kelly and his staff for their hard work in developing the plan and for inviting him to participate in the process.

Chancellor Kelly said USC Upstate was at the beginning of a strategic plan. Last year, he said, 500 people participated in the stakeholder-based planning process.

Being new to South Carolina, he said "the planning process was designed to identify where we were. We learned that we had a lot of people who believed in this University and every single one of them believed in the region and the promise of the region and matching this University up to the opportunities in the region. That is purely what this plan is focused on."

He described three strategic priorities that guide USC Upstate, none of which are new – "they go right along with what a regional comprehensive university is supposed to do," he said.

The Upstate of South Carolina is one of the fastest growing regions in the United States with one comprehensive university serving most of the area and an R-1 in Clemson, which doesn't serve the same mission. "Those things are relevant because it is important for us to build the capacity of this university; to

build out academic programs that match up to industry; to build out a way of doing business that makes students matriculate through the university more quickly and efficiently.”

The first strategic priority focused fully on building USC Upstate’s academic enterprise by providing rigorous, career relevant and accessible education. Each one of the objectives helps strengthen that strategic priority. Citing the objective of increasing undergraduate and graduate enrollment, he noted, “this goes along with ensuring we’re serving the region well, but it also follows the call of the state legislature to try to make us a ‘private’ university as often as possible. We need to make certain we’re growing so we can build that capacity.”

Aligning Upstate’s academic programs with regional industry is critical, he said, offering as examples the Advanced Manufacturing Management Program that USC Upstate brought online at BMW, Upstate’s undergraduate concentration in supply chain management, and its master’s degree in business analytics, which is the only one in the state.

The second strategic priority he said was to focus on enhancing the quality of life in the Upstate of South Carolina. “We can’t do that solely, but we have to be a major partner in that,” he said, adding the population of Spartanburg County was shifting toward the campus. “The way we will thoughtfully be a partner in growing Spartanburg County and the region is critical. Also, housing in Greenville County is moving toward Spartanburg. Within five miles of the USC Upstate campus there are 1,000 housing starts. You can imagine that by the end of this strategic plan in 2023 we will be living in a very different environment than we do now.”

Chancellor Kelly also noted the importance of faculty engaging in relevant public scholarship, as well as expanding opportunities for K-12 students to engage with the institution. He said:

The third priority is for USC Upstate to be the university of choice for faculty and staff, students and the community. It is important for us to be the best asset that we can be for that region because 80% of the alumni for USC Upstate still live and work in South Carolina and most of those are in the Upstate. Industry depends on us. Our communities depend on us. Making certain that we enhance our operation and are a higher performing university is critical. That is where the key to this strategic plan lies. We have to increase visibility in the region to make certain we are known as an asset to those we serve. We have to make certain we’re cultivating a campus environment that is collaborative; one that avoids turmoil and conflict and embraces the opportunity for all of us to build something together. Certainly, we have to increase philanthropic support and maximize the training of our employees so we can be a place that builds leaders, whether they are students who have graduated from the university or employees whose careers we

have helped nurture. All of which goes to our last objective of dedicating ourselves to quality control and continuous improvement.

USC Upstate's strategic plan is very natural for a regional comprehensive university, he said. But it also is one that can change the institution if the strategic plan is actualized in a way that will affect every element of the institution. The strategic plan must be made operational, which is done by moving its elements into a scorecard. This was achieved through the assistance of a consultant to create a plan and evaluation program that would inform the way the university operates for years to come, he said.

Each priority and its objectives are measured with a goal and that goal is tracked. As an example, he said increasing enrollment is on the scorecard, which breaks down to increasing undergraduate enrollment, increasing graduate enrollment and increasing online enrollment. When you take that into the Johnson College of Business, it is applied to increasing graduate enrollment in the master's degree in business analytics and increasing undergraduate enrollment in certain programs. A professor in the Johnson College of Business sees a unified goal to increase enrollment, but it becomes his/her responsibility because that professor is the one directly in touch with the students. How can a faculty member accomplish this goal? Chancellor Kelly answered retention is as important as recruiting new students.

"We want to make sure everybody at every single level of the university is tied into all of the goals of the institution, but at a level that makes sense for them." Thus, he said, the university scorecard cascades into divisional scorecards, college scorecards, and so on to every level of the institution. Chancellor Kelly described a quarterly process of evaluating scorecards and annual blueprint actions related to the strategic plan. This process involves the entire campus and is designed to ensure receipt of analysis, feedback and transparency of the process for everyone.

"The hope is that every quarter, we can see where we are doing well, understand our weaknesses, and focus all of our efforts on simply getting better. Rather than figuring out how we are going to dig ourselves out of a hole, we start to see the dip in the road before we run into it," he concluded.

In response to a question as to turnover due to the accountability of the metrics in USC Upstate's process, Chancellor Kelly said there had been some retirements. "But that is ok. We want people to work for the institution who want to be there and want to be involved in what we have to do next. What we have to do next is navigate a very complex marketplace in higher education," he said, noting, the process has created a new slate of faculty and staff who are excited to be part of this type of system.

Responding to questions about growth, SAT scores and where USC Upstate will be in five years, Chancellor Kelly offered information on two primary areas where overall enrollment and retention have been affected.

When he first arrived at USC Upstate and preceding the strategic plan, Chancellor Kelly established three basic pillars: growth, visibility and enhanced resources. Going after the growth opportunity, he said two areas were identified as being where USC Upstate could perform at a higher level. First, was growing first-time college freshmen. Even though this area is limited statewide, there was capacity in the Upstate and this resulted in increasing first-time college freshmen from 750 to 1,015 this past fall.

The second area, he said, is the transfer population of which 22% go to USC Columbia. The second top receiver of transfer students is Clemson at 12.4% and the third receiver of transfer students is USC Upstate at 11.8%, with the next highest being the College of Charleston at 5%. Thus, focus was placed on increasing the number of transfer students – an available population that would allow growth. In the fall of 2016, there were 5,821 students; 22 months later, Upstate has 6,175. Enrollment is being tracked, he said, especially in connection with the addition of new programs designed for existing audiences located with area industry.

Chancellor Kelly went on to note Upstate's increase in applications from 6,000 to 10,000 and an increase in the SAT score of about 100 points, including six valedictorians in the freshman class. The retention rate for first-time, full-time freshmen is 68%. This is 4% below the national average. In response to whether athletics was included in strategic planning, he said yes and used retention to illustrate its importance. He also addressed President Pastides question as to whether Division 1 was working for Upstate. "We've been there in name only, now we must put in place a strategy that will make us good. Division 1 is working, but it is mid-major Division 1 athletics, not the SEC level, and we have the opportunity to be successful."

Chairman Westbrook thanked Chancellor Kelly for his report and said it was received as information.

Chairman Westbrook said the committee would invite other campuses in soon to report on their strategic planning efforts.

#### IV. Adjournment

With no other matters to come before the committee, Chairman Westbrook declared the meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: J. Cantey Heath, Jr., Secretary