

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA  
PRESIDENT SEARCH COMMITTEE**

**May 6, 2021  
3:00 p.m.**

A meeting of the University of South Alabama's President Search Committee was duly convened by Ms. Alexis Atkins, Chair, on Thursday, May 6, 2021, at 3:01 p.m. in the Chief Calvin W. McGhee Grand Ballroom of the MacQueen Alumni Center.

Members: Alexis Atkins, Zeke Aull, Owen Bailey, Robbie Baker, Madeleine Boudreaux, Chandra Brown Stewart, Mike Chang, Sam Dean, Andi Kent, Kim Lawkis, Alexandria Lee, Tia Nickens, Lenus Perkins, Beth Shepard, Jimmy Shumock, Alvin Williams and Jim Yance.

Member Absent: Todd McDonald.

Others: John Cleary, Tom Corcoran, Krisha Creal, Kristin Dukes, Monica Ezell, Bill Funk, Ron Graham, Ron Jenkins, Charlie Guest, Mike Haskins and Margie Tuckson.

The meeting came to order and the attendance roll was called. Ms. Atkins welcomed everyone and asked those not involved in the March 31, 2021, meeting to introduce themselves. She introduced Mr. Bill Funk, President of R. William Funk and Associates (RWF), the firm selected to assist the President Search Committee (PSC) through the search process; gave a brief overview of the goals for the meeting; and called for consideration of the March 31 meeting minutes. On motion by Mr. Bailey, seconded by Dr. Williams, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Ms. Atkins called on Mr. Shumock to discuss the PSC charge. Mr. Shumock advised that the Board of Trustees recently adopted a charge requiring the committee to thoroughly review each candidate's credentials; select and interview semifinalists; and select a slate of three to five candidates to recommend to the Board as finalists. He summarized information from the Presidential Search Guidelines pertaining to actions that are required to be completed by the PSC and by the Board of Trustees, and discussed the progress of both bodies thus far in the process.

Mr. Shumock invited Mr. Funk to address the committee. Mr. Funk said he was pleased for the opportunity to work with South Alabama again. He introduced RWF Chief of Staff Ms. Krisha Creal; directed attention to an overview of RWF; and stated the firm's role would be to aid the committee in developing a generous pool of top candidates and to share best practices. He encouraged PSC members to be proactive in the early stage of the search by asking colleagues to recommend candidates. He discussed president searches underway nationwide. He stressed the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of candidate information until finalists are announced. He reviewed the groundwork to-date and discussed what the committee could expect in terms of the search schedule and strategy. He and Ms. Creal shared particulars concerning the position ad and leadership statement. Mr. Funk provided details on the RWF "Client Center," a password-protected, encrypted web portal through which the PSC would be able to access candidate documents.

Mr. Shumock recommended that the committee move forward with placing the ad as presented. He stated the ad was concise and straightforward as Mr. Funk suggested; reflective of the committee's collective feedback; and met the criteria of the Board. Ms. Shepard commented that

the completion of a terminal degree was indicative of one's commitment to academic rigor and said excluding this as a qualification in the ad would be problematic for the faculty. While in agreement that a doctoral degree was a significant qualification that the committee should consider when evaluating candidates, Mr. Shumock and others concurred that including this qualification in the ad would limit the applicant pool and that the better approach would be to place the ad in its present form and address the preferred doctoral degree qualification in the leadership statement. Following the discussion and with the consensus of the committee, Mr. Shumock asked Mr. Funk to proceed with ad placement.

Ms. Atkins called upon Ms. Dukes to review legal considerations pertinent to the search. Concerning confidentiality, Ms. Dukes reminded the committee that the University was subject to open records regulations and shared recommendations for information management. With regard to the PSC code of ethics, she reminded everyone that the PSC chair was the designated spokesperson for the committee and that inquiries should be forward to Ms. Atkins for a response.

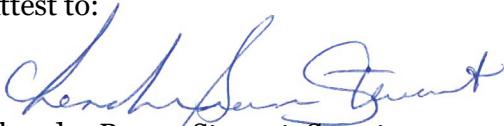
Ms. Atkins and Mr. Shumock spoke about plans to solicit feedback from University stakeholders. With reference to insights gained from the 2013 search process, as well to South's position as a primary driver for the area, Mr. Shumock emphasized the importance of working with the various constituent and community groups to gauge impressions and ascertain the aspects others feel are important for the committee to consider during search deliberations. He said meetings to gain input would take place soon.

Ms. Atkins called on Mr. Haskins, who gave an overview on the strategy for updating the public and University community on search progress. Mr. Haskins reviewed the media coverage of President Waldrop's retirement announcement and said follow-up inquiries about the search process were handled via press releases and campus-wide messages. He anticipated that interest in the search process would decrease until the finalists are publicized. He asked the committee to refer any media inquiries to him and said he would work with Ms. Atkins and Mr. Shumock to respond. He suggested that search updates be provided to students, faculty and staff on a monthly basis and led a tour of the president search website being developed. Ms. Lawkis asked Mr. Haskins to include the alumni in the internal communications plan.

Ms. Atkins summarized the proceedings and announced that the next PSC meeting would take place on May 24 at 9:00 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

Attest to:

  
Chandra Brown Stewart, Secretary

Respectfully submitted:

  
Katherine Alexis Atkins, Chair