

# FLORIDA **A&M** UNIVERSITY

## Board of Trustees

### Governance Committee Minutes June 11, 2026

#### CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Committee Vice Chair Natlie Figgers called the Governance Committee (“Committee”) meeting to order. Trustees Figgers, Gainey, and White were present, establishing a quorum. Trustee Washington was absent, and Committee Chair Shah was excused.

#### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no corrections to the February 12, 2026, meeting minutes that were posted on the Board’s website and provided in the meeting material. Trustee White moved with approval of the minutes and Trustee Gainey seconded. The motion carried.

#### 2027-2028 LEGISLATIVE BUDGET REQUEST

Vice President Michelle Robinson, Provost Allyson Watson, and Senior Vice President Donald Palm presented the 2027–2028 Legislative Budget Request. VP Robinson explained that the proposal reflects a survey-based process initiated with the executive leadership team and cascaded throughout their respective units. Responses were reviewed and prioritized by Provost Watson and Dr. Palm, then reviewed by President Johnson.

VP Robinson reviewed a number of lessons learned from this year’s appropriations process, which helped to inform items contained in the proposed legislative budget request for fiscal year 2027-2028.

She emphasized that despite the upcoming election cycle and anticipated leadership changes, two guiding frameworks remain constant: the State University System’s **2030 Strategic Plan** and Florida A&M University’s institutional priorities. The budget request aligns with both and reflects the University’s best assessment of current opportunities.

Provost Watson began with the recurring request of \$6.5 million for agricultural research, cooperative extension, and workforce development. The investment would support hiring 10 research faculty in high-priority areas, provide startup packages for laboratory development and equipment, and strengthen field research and competitive grant activity.

She then outlined the Research Acceleration and Carnegie R1 Classification Initiative, requesting \$10 million in non-recurring funds to elevate the University’s national research profile. Funding would support strategic faculty hiring, doctoral fellowships and assistantships, research infrastructure and core facilities, AI and data science initiatives, grant development capacity, and technology transfer—directly aligning with the SUS 2030 Strategic Plan.

Next, she presented the Center for Legal Impact and Technology request for \$25 million in non-recurring funding. Leveraging the FAMU College of Law, the initiative aims to drive business creation, technology commercialization, and workforce development while preparing future attorneys, judges, entrepreneurs, and innovators who will contribute to Florida's economic competitiveness.

She concluded with the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering request for \$13.6 million in recurring funds to support anticipated cluster hires in engineering and data infrastructure. The investment will help close Florida's engineering talent gap, strengthen research partnerships, and support continued growth. FAMU's engineering enrollment has increased by 30%, and Ph.D. production has doubled in the past year, making it a major contributor to the University's R1 trajectory.

Dr. Palm presented the FAMU Cardiometabolic Health Disorders Institute, describing it as a high-return investment that addresses hypertension, cardiovascular disease, stroke, obesity, diabetes, chronic kidney disease, and related conditions that drive billions in avoidable healthcare costs. The statewide institute will train pharmacists, nurses, allied health professionals, public health practitioners, and community health workers while expanding outreach in rural and high-need communities.

Through mobile outreach, telehealth, community screenings, workforce certificates, clinical training, and rural partnerships, the initiative aims to reduce costly emergency care, improve population health, and strengthen Florida's healthcare workforce pipeline.

Over five years, projected outcomes include:

- Training 10,000 students
- Preparing 500 healthcare professionals annually
- Reaching 50,000 residents
- Completing 15,000 screenings
- Establishing partnerships in 20+ counties
- Generating \$15–20 million in external research funding
- Producing \$50+ million in economic activity over 10 years

VP Robinson concluded by stating that the initiatives collectively advance Florida's workforce, economy, agricultural competitiveness, healthcare infrastructure, and long-term prosperity while elevating FAMU's impact within the State University System. The total request—\$51.5 million for FAMU and \$13.6 million for the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering—provides a strategic roadmap aligned with university priorities and adaptable to a challenging political and fiscal environment.

Chair Gibbons thanked President Johnson, VP Robinson, Provost Watson, and their teams for their work. He acknowledged the difficulty of this year's SUS budget cycle due to statewide funding reductions but noted that FAMU performed well. He encouraged the University community to disregard external speculation about the budget process.

Chair Gibbons shared that he has been in communication with President Johnson and plans to approach next year's budget cycle differently by more clearly demonstrating how state funds support University outcomes. He emphasized the importance of tracking investments and highlighting gains across departments and colleges. He also noted FAMU's continued improvement across performance-based funding metrics.

Trustee Gainey moved approval of the 2027–2028 Legislative Budget Request, and Trustee Figgers

seconded. Because a quorum was not reached, the Committee recommended removing the item from the consent agenda and bringing it before the full Board for an individual vote.

## **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATES**

Vice President Robinson reported on the University's funding in the 2026–27 General Appropriations Act. During the recent special session, the Legislature approved a state budget totaling approximately \$114.5 billion. Although the budget has passed the Legislature, it has not yet been transmitted to the Governor. Once received, the Governor will have 15 days to act and retains full line-item veto authority. VP Robinson noted that the overall size of the state budget declined from approximately \$117.4 billion last year to \$114.5 billion this year.

She highlighted that a large portion of FAMU's budget success is the \$91 million appropriation for Building C at the FAMU-FSU College of Engineering—the single largest named project funded in this year's State University System fixed capital outlay budget. The University also secured approximately \$13.75 million in operational enhancement funds and directed program support. This includes \$10 million in operational enhancement funding—\$7 million non-recurring and \$3 million recurring. Additional allocations include \$750,000 for the launch of the University's Civic Engagement Institute, \$1 million for the College of Agriculture and Food Sciences, and \$2 million to support shared FAMU-FSU College of Engineering research initiatives.

She noted that when examining the operational enhancement allocation on a per-student basis and comparing it to other SUS institutions, the data indicates that the Legislature invested in FAMU at a comparatively high level relative to enrollment.

In closing, VP Robinson expressed appreciation to the Speaker of the House, the Senate President, and the full legislative leadership team, along with Senators Rouson and Davis and Representatives Franklin and Tant, for their support throughout the session. She also thanked the Board of Trustees, the Student Government Association, the National Alumni Association, and the many faculty and staff who consistently engaged and advocated on behalf of the University.

## **TIMELINES: PRESIDENT'S GOAL SETTING AND EVALUATION AND BOARD'S SELF-EVALUATION**

Committee Vice Chair Figgers concluded the meeting with a review of the annual performance evaluation process for the President, outlining the timeline and requirements for goal setting, evaluation, and bonus consideration.

She also reminded members that the Board of Trustees Governance Committee charter requires the Board to conduct an annual self-assessment. In addition, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges' Principle of Accreditation 4.2(g) mandates that governing boards regularly evaluate their responsibilities and performance. Accordingly, she noted that the timeline for the Board's self-evaluation was included in the committee materials and that staff will provide reminders as the relevant dates approach.

## **ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, Committee Vice Chair Figgers adjourned the meeting.