

**Special Board Meeting Minutes
October 10, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

Deveron Gibbons, Chair

Chair Gibbons called the meeting to order. Trustees Brown, Bryant, Crossman, Dopson-Rodriguez, Figgers, Gainey, Gibbons, Harper, Perry, Reed, Vazquez, and White were present. Trustee Washington was absent. A quorum was established.

No individuals signed up for public comment.

The purpose of the special meeting was to discuss the proposed partnership between Tallahassee Memorial Hospital (TMH) and Florida State University (FSU). Executive Vice President Donald Palm presented FAMU's Health Care Strategy and Partnership Framework, emphasizing the University's role within Florida's academic health ecosystem. He outlined five key components of the framework: guiding principles, governance, community and workforce commitments, safeguards, and integration.

Dr. Palm reviewed the longstanding collaboration between FSU and TMH and reaffirmed FAMU's commitment to expanding access, driving innovation, and strengthening workforce readiness. He stressed the importance of FAMU's active participation in decision-making processes, student engagement, research initiatives, and clinical service agreements. He concluded by highlighting the partnership's potential to elevate FAMU's regional leadership in health, education, and workforce development.

President Johnson and Vice Chair White acknowledged FSU's history of collaboration, particularly in engineering, but raised concerns about preserving FAMU's historical identity and ensuring programmatic independence within shared facilities.

The Board discussed ongoing negotiations with FSU regarding healthcare programs and facilities in Tallahassee. A draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is expected on Wednesday and will require negotiation prior to the next city council meeting. Vice Chair White noted a lapse in discussions since February and emphasized the need for FAMU's direct involvement to safeguard its interests and promote quality healthcare for the community.

Chair Gibbons reiterated the importance of FAMU's inclusion in the FSU-TMH academic health center partnership, citing the University's legacy in healthcare education and its commitment to collaborative engagement. The Board identified three guiding principles for partnership negotiations:

- **Representation:** A formal voice in governance.
- **Reciprocity:** Defined benefits for FAMU students and programs.

- **Respect:** Recognition of the University's board authority and institutional independence.

The Board also emphasized the need for accountability and measurable outcomes, envisioning joint programs that expand healthcare access and enhance student training opportunities.

Trustees underscored the importance of maintaining institutional independence and proposed a review of historical commitments made during the closure of the original hospital. The Board agreed to gather historical documentation to inform negotiations, with Attorney McKnight already compiling relevant materials. Trustees supported this effort, noting that understanding past promises would strengthen current advocacy.

Following discussion, Vice Chair White moved that the Board Chair and President Johnson formally request a 30-day extension from the city commission to allow time for finalizing the FAMU-FSU MOU. Trustee Brown seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. Chair Gibbons affirmed the need for a formal agreement before proceeding and committed to keeping the Board informed throughout the negotiation process.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.