

**MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC FORUM OF FEBRUARY 21, 2017**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE**

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The Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College met on Tuesday, February 21, 2017 at the St. Petersburg College Douglas L. Jamerson, Jr. Midtown Center, Community Room 141, 1300 22<sup>nd</sup> Street S, St. Petersburg Florida. The following Board members were present: Chair Bill Foster, Vice Chair Nathan Stonecipher, and Deveron Gibbons. William D. Law, Jr., President, of St. Petersburg College and Secretary to the Board of Trustees, did not attend. The following Presidential Search and Screen Committee members were present: Terry Brett, Bill McCloud, Alexis Deveaux, Richard Mercadante, Janette Hunt, Jeanne Trimble, and Eric Gonzalez-Franco. Proof of public notice of this public forum is included as part of these minutes. Notices were duly posted.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC FORUM**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES, ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE**

The Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College will hold a public meeting to which all persons are invited, commencing at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 21, 2017 at the St. Petersburg College Douglas L. Jamerson, Jr. Midtown Center, Community Room 141, 1300 22<sup>nd</sup> Street S, St. Petersburg Florida. The purpose of the meeting will be to hear from the community and other interested parties in regard to the selection of the next president of St. Petersburg College. Public comments will be subject to Board policies and procedures. Individual speakers will be limited to three minutes.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in this meeting is asked to advise the agency five business days before the meeting by contacting the Board Clerk at 727-341-3241. If you are planning to attend the meeting and are hearing impaired, please contact the agency five business days before the meeting by calling 727-791-2422 (V/TTY) or 727-474-1907 (VP).

**17-030.** In accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, the following Agenda was prepared:

**AGENDA**

ST. PETERSBURG COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH PUBLIC FORM

**February 21, 2017**

DOUGLAS L JAMERSON, JR. MIDTOWN CENTER  
COMMUNITY ROOM 141  
1300 22<sup>nd</sup> STREET S  
ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

6:00 PM

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|--------------------------|--|
| I. Welcome/Introductions | Dr. Kevin Gordon<br>Provost, SPC Downtown<br>Campus and Midtown Center |
| II. Overview             | Mr. Bill Foster<br>Chair, St. Petersburg College Board of Trustees     |
| III. Public Comments     | Mr. Bill Foster  |
| IV. Adjournment          | Mr. Bill Foster  |

If any person wishes to appeal a decision made with respect to any matter considered by the Board at its meeting February 21, 2017 he or she will need a record of the proceedings. It is the obligation of such person to ensure a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, §286.0105, Florida Statutes.

Items summarized on the Agenda may not contain full information regarding the matter being considered. Further information regarding these items may be obtained by calling the Board Clerk at (727) 341-3241.

Date Advertised: February 10, 2017

Confirmation of Publication

[Notice of Meeting](#)

**17-031.** Dr. Gordon thanked the attendees for coming and welcomed them to the Midtown Center. He introduced Mr. Bill Foster, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Mr. Terry Brett, the Chairman of the Presidential Search and Selection Committee, Mr.

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Deveron Gibbons, Board Trustee and Board Member of the Search and Selection Committee, Mr. Nathan Stonecipher, Board Trustee and Member of the Search and Selection Committee, and Mr. Joseph Lang, St. Petersburg College's Board Attorney.

**17-032.** Chairman Foster explained that the people seated with him at the front of the room were not the Search and Selection Committee, but members of the St. Petersburg College Board of Trustees. He further explained that, ultimately the decision to choose the next president will come to the Board of Trustees via the Search and Selection Committee recommendations of the finalists.

Chairman Foster shared that the College has hired Dr. Jeff Hockaday as the Search Consultant to assist with the process. Dr. Hockaday helped the St. Petersburg College Board of Trustees hire Dr. Law. Chairman Foster said that Dr. Hockaday has great experience with this process and that all the information from tonight's meeting will be reported to him.

Chairman Foster said that after the audience has shared input, an advertisement will be posted in two professional journals – *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Diversity Issues in Higher Education*. The acceptance of applications will close on March 13. Dr. Hockaday, Chair Terry Brett, and Dr. Richard Mercadante, Chair of the Faculty Governance Organization will review all the applications and Dr. Hockaday will then submit the top 20 candidates to the Search and Selection Committee. The Committee will narrow it down to the top ten semifinalists. An 8-minute video from each of the 10 semi-finalists will be requested on March 22<sup>nd</sup> and due on April 5<sup>th</sup>. The Committee will narrow these ten candidates to five finalists, and those names submitted to the Board of Trustees. They will be invited for interviews and campus visits. It is hoped to have a new president named by mid-May with a start date of July 1, 2017.

Chairman Foster stressed that none of the committee members believe that the College belongs to them, but that it belongs to the community. He also explained that Mr. Gibbons was part of the selection process seven years ago and that Chairman Foster will rely on his expertise because he was part of the group that brought an incredible man to this college – Dr. Law.

Mr. Stonecipher said he was glad to be at the meeting and are also sad to see Dr. Law move to the next phase of his life - a happy retirement. He said that the input from the attendees is critical. He told the audience that this is the second of two community forums. One was held on February 16<sup>th</sup> in the north county at Tarpon Springs and tonight's forum represents south county. He thanked the attendees for their continued support of St. Petersburg College.

Mr. Gibbons asked Mr. Terry Brett to stand and explained that Mr. Brett is a former chair of the Board of Trustees and the Chair of the Presidential Search and Screen Committee. Mr. Gibbons also introduced Dr. Richard Mercadante, a faculty member and Chair of the Faculty Governance Organization, who is also on the Presidential Search and Screen Committee.

Mr. Gibbons introduced Dr. Tom Furlong, Policy Consultant who also served as St. Petersburg College's Interim President just before Dr. Law's arrival. He also introduced Mr. Joseph Lang, St. Petersburg College's Attorney to the Board of Trustees. Mr. Lang is also a St. Petersburg College Trustee Chairman Emeritus. Mr. Gibbons said that the Search and Selection Committee is vital to this process. He stressed that the College is the community's college and is filling the gaps and needs of the community.

**17-033.** Public Comments

Chairman Foster then opened the floor to public comments. He explained that each speaker would have three minutes and asked each person who wished to speak to state their name and affiliation to the College.

Mr. Mike Nash is a Technology Support Supervisor with the College and has been associated with St. Petersburg College for over a decade as a student and staff member. He made three points: He said he wanted the new president to allow instructors to be instructors. He asked that the College look at content to be sure it's the right content and to let the faculty have more control.

Mr. Nash also said that the president needs to know that the College competes nationally for online students and that it may be able to improve online content.

Finally, Mr. Nash said the new president should be willing to take a good look at who SPC students really are. He said that many have children in Pinellas County schools and often the calendars don't sync up.

Mr. Jeff Thomas is an SPC student. He told the Board that he represents student veterans. He said that he believes that there are over 4500 veterans attending St. Petersburg College. He shared that veterans typically prefer face-to-face classes. Veterans meet weekly at the St. Petersburg Gibbs campus. He said that many veterans have a lot of challenges such as PTSD and disabilities from the war. He said that people are getting out of the military every month and that the GI bills pays for everything. He said the College needs a person who understands the challenges of veterans.

Nikki Capehart is associated with Women on the Way, is a St. Petersburg native and is the Director of Urban Affairs for the City of St. Petersburg. She said she wants to keep diversity at the top of mind at the College.

Veatrice Ferrell is the Program Manager at The Deuces Live. She considers St. Petersburg College a great partner and expressed hope that it continues to be a great partner to the community.

Rene Flowers is a Pinellas County School Board member and has provided cultural sensitivity training for College administrators. She stated that she wants the College to continue the positive relationship with Pinellas County schools. She also wants to continue to have SPC students serve as interns and residents. She stated that she certainly

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wants to continue dual enrollment. She expressed the hope that someone from Pinellas County schools has that same opportunity. She explained that she had the pleasure of having Dr. Law as president when she was a student at Tallahassee Community College.

Gypsy Gallardo is the CEO of the 2020 Plan and publisher of Power Broker magazine. Her daughter is enrolled at SPC. She said that Dr. Law was one of the finest people she has ever known and he created a sense of trust of who he is and for breaking innovative ground in the community and providing African Americans opportunities. She said she wanted a president with integrity and character. She said she echoes Ms. Capehart's affirmation of the need for diversity. Ms. Gallardo said she is in favor of someone internally being selected because things have gone so well at St. Petersburg College. She also said she wants someone who is part of that culture.

Tammye Moore said her daughter was the first ROTC graduate from SPC and is now a Captain in the US Army. Ms. Moore said she wanted someone who is a leader when no one is looking, and who can think global, regional and local. She said the person should have integrity and be very professional. She said that just because they have tenure, don't move out their talent. Ms. Moore said that she knew she should not "name drop," but that she would say Tonjua Williams.

Glenn Wilder received his AA and Baccalaureate at SPC. He explained that he had many difficulties getting into the College and pursuing his nursing degree. He said he could not enter the Nursing program because of past felonies. He switched majors, but was put on academic probation. He said he would like to see St. Petersburg College be friendlier to the felons who are trying to get on in life. He said he has 250 clients in this area who are trying to help themselves. He said college was hard enough and recommends selecting a president who understands these challenges.

Rev. Ellis Hodge is the pastor at the Word of Life Fellowship Church and a 20-year Air Force veteran. He was also a student at SPC in 1978. He said that he hoped the person that comes forward does not cancel out everything that is working so well at the College.

Carla Bristol, is the owner of the 909 Art Gallery in St. Petersburg. She said she just wanted to be at the forum to listen as a community partner.

### **17-034. Adjournment**

Chairman Foster thanked the attendees for coming and explained that the Committee will get detailed minutes of what was said tonight. He explained that the community will have various points to interact with the candidates, especially the top five.

He thanked Dr. Gordon and extended an invitation for people to go upstairs to see the artwork throughout the building.

Chair Foster adjourned the Public Forum at 6:31 p.m. with no further speakers to be heard.