MEMORANDUM

TO: SFA Board of Regents
FROM: David Alders, Committee Chair
SUBJECT: Joint SFA/Nacogdoches Economic Development/Cooperation Committee
DATE: July 22, 2018

The committee met on July 9, 2018, to discuss a number of agenda items related to the committee’s charge and organizing purpose. Since the committee’s formation in 2017, it has continued a discussion of three primary items:

1. The potential for developing post-secondary education opportunities at A. L. Mangham, Jr. Regional Airport as a catalyst for both enhancing the facilities of and business opportunities for Nacogdoches’ airport and offering programs, both in the classroom and cockpit, for pilot training for SFA students.

2. The development of a frequently maintained web-based information clearinghouse that lists both internship opportunities and the names and qualifications of students who desire internships.

3. Identifying potential uses for the Story-Wright building on the downtown square for the mutual benefit of SFA and the community.

Regarding item 1, Dr. Todd Brown will continue to pursue discussions with SFA personnel to identify a departmental home for such a program and the development of curriculum that would facilitate pilot training. The committee has identified a potential local partner who already may have the necessary credentials to accommodate an expanded and more formalized pilot training program. NEDCO CEO Larissa Philpot will pursue that lead. Subsequent to our meeting, Nacogdoches Chamber CEO Wayne Mitchell initiated a dialogue with a regional commercial airport about potential partnership opportunities, and a meeting has been – or shortly will be – scheduled for such a discussion.

Regarding item 2, NEDCO CEO Philpot has discussed with Adam Peck an internship clearinghouse. Structurally, the realization of such a vision is challenging due to the decentralized, academic department-based development of internship opportunities and identification of students desiring internships. Given the immense benefit which could/should accrue students, the committee expressed the hope that SFA could break through the turf challenges to bring to fruition a centralized internship clearinghouse.

Regarding item 3, the building has been purchased by a local philanthropic foundation and a proposal has been received from an experienced theatre consultant to come to Nacogdoches for the purpose of determining the feasibility of the space for re-development into an entertainment/performance venue. While the building likely would be donated for a purpose that would provide general civic benefit, the costs of repurposing the building will be considerable.

Additionally, at the July 9 meeting, the committee identified several new discussion items, as listed below.

- How can the City more effectively recruit SFA alumni to return to Nacogdoches, whether for a retirement home or to relocate or expand their businesses?

- The need to create a web-based and frequently refreshed centralized community calendar that would list – and also be capable of distributing by email – the many civic and university events scheduled each week. Such a calendar might minimize scheduling conflicts in which major university and community events are set for the same date and also serve to boost attendance at events that otherwise might be overlooked.

- The need to schedule meetings from time to time between local businesses and the SFA procurement office to facilitate opportunities for local businesses and vendors to supply goods and services to SFA.