

# **Stephen F. Austin State University**

## **MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS**



**Nacogdoches, Texas  
February 20, 2023  
Volume 361**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**  
**BOARD MINUTES FOR FEBRUARY 20, 2023**  
**BOARD OF REGENTS MEETING 361**

Page

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**Board Order 23-24**

Election of President .....1

**Board Order 23-25**

Resolution of Congratulations for President Steve Westbrook .....2

**Stephen F. Austin State University  
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Regents  
Nacogdoches, Texas  
February 20, 2023  
Austin Building, Room 307  
Meeting 361**

**Monday, February 20, 2023**

The meeting of the Board of Regents was called to order in open session at 11:01 a.m. by chair Karen Gantt.

**PRESENT:**

Board Members:       Mrs. Karen Gantt, Chair  
                              Mr. Tom Mason, Vice Chair  
                              Mrs. Jennifer Winston, Secretary  
                              Mr. David Alders  
                              Mr. Robert Flores  
                              Mrs. Brigettee Henderson  
                              Mrs. Judy Olson  
                              Ms. Nancy Windham  
                              Ms. Paige Vadnais, Student Regent

Regent Laura Rectenwald was unable to attend.

Interim President:     Dr. Steve Westbrook  
General Counsel:       Mr. Damon Derrick  
Chief Audit Exec.:     Mrs. Jane Ann Bridges

Other SFA administrators and staff were in attendance.

**Board Order 23-24**

Upon motion by Regent Henderson, seconded by all board members, and with all members voting aye, it was ordered that the following item be approved.

**ELECTION OF PRESIDENT**

WHEREAS, the board members considered: On January 29, 2023, the Board of Regents named Dr. Steve Westbrook as the sole finalist for the position of president at Stephen F. Austin State University and presented his background and qualifications. In accordance with state law and the *Board of Regents Rules & Regulations*, at least twenty-one (21) days has passed since the naming of Dr. Westbrook as sole finalist.

THEREFORE, the Board of Regents elected Dr. Steve Westbrook as president of Stephen F. Austin State University, effective February 20, 2023.

## **Board Order 23-25**

Upon motion by Regent Alders, seconded by all board members, with all members voting aye, it was ordered that the following item be approved.

### **RESOLUTION OF CONGRATULATIONS FOR PRESIDENT STEVE WESTBROOK**

WHEREAS In August of 1977, Steve Westbrook, a native of Kennard, Texas, and recent graduate of Kennard High School enrolled in Stephen F. Austin State University as a freshman with plans to prepare for law school and four years later earned a Bachelor of Arts in History and Political Science;

WHEREAS During his sophomore year at SFA, Westbrook joined the university's Performing Arts Committee, now known as the Student Activities Association, and developed a passion for student activities and higher education which would alter his career plans;

WHEREAS Following his graduation in 1981, Westbrook applied for two positions, one at Louisiana State University and one at SFA, accepted the better offer of the two and began his career in higher education at SFA as a Program Advisor in the office of University Center Programs within the Student Affairs Division, being subsequently promoted to Coordinator in 1985;

WHEREAS Westbrook received a Master of Education degree in Counseling from SFA in 1985 and was that same year appointed as SFA's Director of Student Activities, a position he filled with distinction until 2001, when he was selected to be the university's Director of Student Affairs;

WHEREAS Westbrook took notice of and developed a fondness for the star point guard of the SFA women's basketball team, Tyler-native Dayna Reed, who led the Ladyjacks to four Southland Conference titles, four NCAA tournament appearances, two trips to the NCAA Sweet Sixteen and a combined record of 114 wins against only 17 losses and boasts the fourth highest career three-point shooting percentage and sixth most career assists in Ladyjacks' history, eventually persuading her to consider his overtures early in 1990, leading to their engagement in August of that year, and, on July 27, 1991, their marriage which later produced two outstanding sons, Reed and Bryce;

WHEREAS Westbrook's growing reputation and outstanding leadership resulted in his promotion in 2005 to the position of Executive Director of Student Affairs, in which he directed the programming and construction of the new and expanded Baker Pattillo Student Center and the university's Student Recreation Center and supervised staff in the areas of not only SFA's Student Center and Campus Recreation, but also Housing and Residence Life, Disability Services, Health Services, Counseling and Career Services, the University Post Office, Multicultural Affairs, Student Engagement, Testing Services, the Veteran's Resource Center, Student Government, the SFA Ticket Office, Student Publications and University Printing Services;

WHEREAS Westbrook was appointed as Interim Vice President for University Affairs in 2006, filling the vacant position created by the Board's selection of Dr. Baker Pattillo to be

the university's Interim President, in which post Westbrook administered all the aforementioned offices with the addition of the university's Information Technology Services, the Department of Public Safety, including the University Police, Parking and Traffic and Emergency Management, and the offices of ADA Compliance and Title IX and, while juggling all these ongoing responsibilities, completed the requirements of and was awarded the degree of Doctor of Education from Texas A&M University-Commerce in 2010;

WHEREAS Throughout the course of his distinguished career in University Affairs and Student Affairs, Dr. Westbrook's leadership and insights on student life and campus activities were acknowledged in his numerous publications and presentations, including one at the Harvard University School of Design, by his selection as Chair of the Texas Council of Chief Student Affairs Officers and as Chair of the Board of Trustees and member of the Foundation Board of Trustees of the National Association for Campus Activities and through the many honors he garnered, including the Lifetime Achievement/Membership Award, the Founders Award and the Markley Award from the National Association for Campus Activities;

WHEREAS Dr. Westbrook not only served SFA ably and tirelessly as an administrator but also, as an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Human Services, prepared graduate students for careers in student affairs and higher education from 2013 to the present;

WHEREAS Dr. Westbrook was appointed by the SFA Board of Regents on October 30, 2018, to serve as Acting President upon the sudden illness of President Baker Pattillo, and on January 2, 2019, to serve as Interim President following the untimely passing of President Pattillo and served with great sensitivity and wisdom during that challenging time, during which he also skillfully represented SFA before the 87<sup>th</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature;

WHEREAS Following the selection of a new university President, Dr. Westbrook respectfully and modestly reassumed his former role as Vice President of University Affairs until his retirement in December 2020, at which time the Board of Regents recognized his loyalty and humble leadership by naming him Vice President of University Affairs Emeritus; and

WHEREAS In April 2022, because of his experience and unique standing in the university and community earned through a career that included service to all the university's presidents from Dr. William R. Johnson forward, the Board of Regents called upon Dr. Westbrook to interrupt his retirement to return to SFA as Interim President, and, out of loyalty to his alma mater, he agreed to lead the university as its chief executive, design the process of evaluating SFA's potential affiliation with a statewide university system, direct its transition to become part of The University of Texas System and represent SFA through the adjournment of the 88<sup>th</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Regents of Stephen F. Austin State University acknowledges the integrity, unwavering loyalty and exemplary leadership of Dr. Steven Westbrook, his lifetime of faithful service and his diligent work to present SFA students with transformative experiences and opportunities, in and out of

the classroom, to equip them to build strong workplaces, families and communities;  
and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Regents on this date, February 20, 2023, expresses its profound admiration and deep appreciation to Dr. Steven Westbrook and appoints him as the tenth President in the 100-year history of Stephen F. Austin State University.

President Westbrook provided comments to family, friends, and the SFA Community. He then proceeded to sign the University Bible as the 10<sup>th</sup> President of Stephen F. Austin State University.

The meeting of the Board of Regents adjourned by Chair Gantt at 11:26 a.m.