

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR THE  
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM  
SPECIAL MEETING  
July 18, 2024**

A. **Call to Order/Roll Call**

The Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System met for a Special Meeting on Thursday, July 18, 2024, at 11:08 a.m. The meeting was held in the Louisiana Purchase Room of the Claiborne Building, 1201 North Third Street, Baton Rouge. Chair Mark Romero called the meeting to order.

**PRESENT**

Mr. Drew Brown	Mr. Virgil Robinson, Jr.
Mr. Steve Davison	Mr. Mark Romero
Dr. Jo Lethermon	Ms. Kristine Russell
Dr. John Noble, Jr.	Mr. Joe Salter
Mr. Alejandro “Al” Perkins	Mr. Brad Stevens
Ms. Elizabeth Pierre	

**ABSENT**

Mr. Barry Busada	Mr. Dana Peterson
Dr. Jimmy Clarke	Ms. Julie Stokes
Ms. Lola Dunahoe	

Also present were the following: System President Rick Gallot, System staff, and Attorneys Brandon DeCuir and Linda Clark.

B. **Invocation**

Mr. Joe Salter gave an invocation.

Mr. Romero stated that there were three campus items to be considered prior to the interview of the finalist for the Northwestern State University presidency. Upon motion of Ms. Pierre, seconded by Mr. Robinson, Items C and D were unanimously approved by the Board.

C. **Grambling State University’s request for authorization to submit a Master Lease Agreement for housing overflow for the University to the State Real Estate Leasing Office and to further authorize the University to enter into and execute any necessary agreements for the lease of overflow housing, on approval by the State Real Estate Leasing Office.**

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System hereby approves Grambling State University’s request for authorization to submit a Master Lease Agreement for housing overflow for the University to the State Real Estate Leasing Office and to further authorize the University to enter into and execute any necessary agreements for the lease of overflow housing, on approval by the State Real Estate Leasing Office.*

D. **University of Louisiana at Lafayette’s request for authorization to submit a Master Lease Agreement for housing overflow for the University to the State Real Estate Leasing Office and to further authorize the University to enter into and execute any necessary agreements for the lease of overflow housing, on approval by the State Real Estate Leasing Office.**

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System hereby approves University of Louisiana at Lafayette’s request for authorization to submit a Master Lease Agreement for housing overflow for the University to the State Real Estate Leasing Office and to further authorize the University to enter into and execute any necessary agreements for the lease of overflow housing, on approval by the State Real Estate Leasing Office.*

Upon motion of Dr. Noble, seconded by Mr. Stevens, the Board unanimously approved Item E below:

E. **University of New Orleans’ request to authorize the System President to seek an update to any appraisal(s) conducted by the State Land Office for the property located at 925 Camp Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130.**

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System hereby approves University of New Orleans’ request to authorize the System President to seek an update to any appraisal(s) conducted by the State Land Office for the property located at 925 Camp Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130.*

F. **Report of Northwestern State University Presidential Search Committee**

Committee Chair Rick Gallot took the opportunity to highlight Northwestern President Marcus Jones. He praised him as an experienced leader and looked forward to his joining the System Office. President Jones was gracious and received a standing ovation.

President Gallot reported that the Search Committee had begun its work in June on Northwestern’s campus with an inaugural meeting to solicit input from the campus community. On July 8, the Committee had its next meeting in Baton Rouge to review applications and choose semifinalists for interview on campus. The three selected for interview were Dr. Jose Cantu, Justice James Genovese, and Dr. Richard Riccardi (who subsequently removed his name from consideration).

President Gallot indicated that on July 16 Dr. Cantu and Justice Genovese met on campus with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community members. Each semifinalist was interviewed by the Search Committee. After discussion, the Committee unanimously recommended Justice James Genovese as the sole finalist for interview by the full Board at a Special Meeting.

President Gallot expressed appreciation to the Northwestern family for the hospitality while on campus. Lastly, he thanked all who had given their time and talent to serve on the Search Committee:

***Board Members***

Mr. Drew Brown  
Mr. Barry Busada  
Ms. Lola Dunahoe

Dr. John Noble, Jr.  
Mr. Al Perkins  
Ms. Elizabeth Pierre  
Mr. Mark Romero  
Mr. Joe Salter

***Constituent Members***

The Honorable Judge Cade Cole  
Ms. Angelique Freel  
Mr. Doug Ireland  
Ms. Gail Jones  
Representative Jeremy LaCombe  
Mr. Tommy McClelland  
Ms. Leah Sherman Middlebrook  
Mr. Robert Salim  
Dr. Frank Serio  
Mr. Terrell “TJ” Woodard

G. **Overview of Interview Procedures**

Board Chair Romero asked if there were any comments from the public. Dr. Erica Calais indicated that there was one request: Ms. Leah Sherman Middlebrook, President of the NSU Alumni Association.

Ms. Middlebrook read a Resolution dated July 17, 2024 from the NSU Alumni Association. The Resolution stated that the Board of Directors of the NSU Alumni Association had met and unanimously voted in favor of the Resolution to endorse The Honorable James Genovese, J.D. as President of Northwestern State University.

There were no additional public comments.

Mr. Romero said that Justice Genovese will provide an opening statement, with the Board subsequently posing questions to the candidate. He stated that the Board will enter Executive Session to further dialogue with him after questioning.

H. **Candidate Interview**

Mr. Romero welcomed Justice Genovese and asked Board members to introduce themselves. Justice Genovese introduced his wife, Martha Janes Genovese, to the Board and made an opening statement.

Questions were posed regarding morale, student success, academic excellence, key issues for the next President, and his vision for the University.

I. **Deliberations**

At 11:42 a.m., upon motion of Mr. Stevens, seconded by Dr. Lethermon, the Board unanimously voted to meet with Justice Genovese in Executive Session. The following roll call vote was recorded:

Yeas: Mr. Drew Brown, Mr. Steve Davison, Dr. Jo Lethermon, Dr. John Noble, Jr., Mr. Al Perkins, Ms. Elizabeth Pierre, Mr. Virgil Robinson, Mr. Mark Romero, Ms. Kristine Russell, Mr. Joe Salter, Mr. Brad Stevens

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Barry Busada, Dr. Jimmy Clarke, Ms. Lola Dunahoe, Mr. Dana Peterson, Ms. Julie Stokes

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Upon motion of Ms. Pierre, seconded by Mr. Davison, at 12:24 p.m., the Board unanimously voted to reconvene in Open Session.

J. **Introduction of President of Northwestern State University**

Mr. Romero asked if there were any comments from Board members. Mr. Joe Salter made the following motion:

*“I move that we appoint James Genovese as President of Northwestern State University and authorize University of Louisiana System President Rick Gallot and Board Chair Mark Romero to negotiate the terms of appointment and execute an offer of employment on behalf of the Board.”*

Dr. John Noble, Jr. seconded the motion. The following roll call vote was recorded:

Yeas: Mr. Steve Davison, Dr. Jo Lethermon, Dr. John Noble, Jr., Mr. Al Perkins, Ms. Elizabeth Pierre, Mr. Virgil Robinson, Mr. Mark Romero, Ms. Kristine Russell, Mr. Joe Salter, Mr. Brad Stevens

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Drew Brown, Mr. Barry Busada, Dr. Jimmy Clarke, Ms. Lola Dunahoe, Mr. Dana Peterson, Ms. Julie Stokes

The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Sandra Green escorted Justice and Mrs. Genovese into the auditorium to a standing ovation. Mr. Romero congratulated him for being selected and stated that the System and the Board looked forward to working with him as he begins his tenure.

President Genovese said that he was overwhelmed and that he looked forward to the challenge. He said that it was an honor to serve Northwestern State University.

K. **Other Business**

Chair Romero thanked President Gallot, Dr. Erica Calais and Dr. Jeannine O'Rourke, System staff, members of the Committee, and the Board for their diligence in the successful search.

L. **Adjournment**

Upon motion of Ms. Pierre, seconded by Dr. John Noble, Jr., the Board voted to adjourn at 12:29 p.m.