



JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES

The Board of Trustees of **JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY** held its Summer Quarterly Meeting on the 5th Floor of Meehan Hall on **July 15, 2025, commencing at 9:00 a.m. CDT.**

CALL TO ORDER AND INVOCATION

Presiding Chair Jones officially called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone present. Trustee Brown opened the meeting with an invocation.

Chairman Jones acknowledged that the flags were flying at half-mast in memory of Mr. Ralph Burke. He asked everyone to remember their dear friend, mentioning his love for the university over the years and the influence he had. Chairman Jones said that Mr. Burke will be deeply missed and asked everyone to keep Ralph, his wife Joy, and their family in their thoughts and prayers.

ROLL CALL AND DECLARATION OF QUORUM

The Chairman directed Dr. Killingsworth, Secretary to the Board, to call the roll. The following members were present:

Randall E. Jones, Chairman
 Senator Vivian Davis Figures, Vice Chair
 Mr. Greg Brown
 Mr. Clarence W. Daugette, III
 Mr. Tony Ingram
 Mr. Drew Linn
 Mrs. Gale Saxon Main
 Mrs. Cheryl Bevelle-Orange
 Mr. Tony Smoke
 Mr. Loring White

The Trustees listed above constitute a quorum for conducting business. Trustees Rusty Fuller and Randy Owen, and ex officio member Governor Ivey, were absent. Others present included university faculty, staff, students, members of the public, and media representatives. Chairman Jones acknowledged Dr. Heidi Dempsey, President of the Faculty Senate, and Ms. Ayanah Scott, President of the Student Government Association (SGA). Mr. Michael Sanders, Vice Chair of the Staff Council, was also in attendance. Chairman Jones welcomed the new trustees,

Mrs. Cheryl L. Bevelle-Orange and Mr. J. Loring White, who were appointed by Governor Ivey. Mr. White attended his first meeting in April, and Mrs. Bevelle-Orange in July.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Jones noted that the draft minutes from the **April 15, 2025**, meeting had been circulated through Diligent for review and asked if there were any objections to their approval. With no objections, **the minutes were unanimously approved**. He then requested a motion to approve the minutes from the Executive Committee meeting held on **May 27, 2025**, which had also been circulated through Diligent. **The minutes were approved unanimously.**

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Trustee Figures, Vice Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, reported that the Committee convened on July 14, 2025. The meeting began with an overview of SACSCOC, general academic affairs updates, and recognitions, followed by a discussion of action items. Senator Figures made the following motions:

Action Item 1: Academic Program and Initiative Notification and Approval Matrix. All were in favor. Motion passes

Action Item 2: Approval of certificates, concentrations, minors, micro-credentials, and dual enrollment sites (grouped as a single action item). All were in favor. Motion passes.

Action Item 3: Bachelor of Science in Aviation Program

- A motion was made for the conditional implementation of the **Bachelor of Science in Aviation, with a concentration in Aviation Management**, and the **Bachelor of Science in Aviation with a concentration in Commercial Aviation**, both within the College of Business and Industry. A follow-up report and final budget are to be submitted to the Board in October. **All were in favor. Motion passes.**

It was noted that this action item required a mission review, which was completed and confirmed to be in alignment with the University's mission statement, as reflected in the executive summary.

Action Item 4: Honors Program Name Change

- A motion was made to change the name of the “**Honors Program**” to the “**Honors College**”, aligning with other institutions in the state to strengthen marketing and enhance student recognition. **All were in favor. Motion passes.**

Chairman Jones offered an opportunity for discussion and comments. The motions from the Academic Affairs Committee did not require a second.

ADVANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Trustee Main, Chair of the Advancement Committee, reported that the Committee met on July 14, 2025. Dr. Medders summarized the meeting, noting the presentation of a new AmFirst–JSU commercial featuring Coach Kelly with 15-, 25-, 30-, and 60-second spots to run statewide.

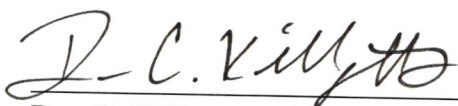
Updates were provided on the Jax State of Mind fundraising campaign, which has reached **\$24,458,432**; personnel changes, including the retirement of Mr. Tim Gardner, the appointment of Ms. Katie Edwards as Director of Marketing Services effective July 21, and Mr. Brandon Phillips' transition to Director of Digital Media; progress on the formation of the Jax State Athletic Foundation; and plans for expanded alumni and State of the University events.

Enrollment Report: Summer 2025 enrollment totaled 916 students. Fall 2025 enrollment is currently about 90 students lower than last year, but increases are expected as high schools return. Five orientation sessions remain, with approximately 50 students registered. Growth was also noted for first-time graduates. Classes begin August 20, with official census data available in September.

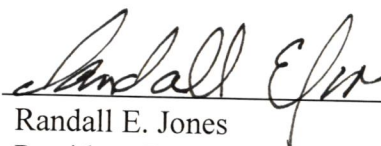
Resolutions for Board Approval: Thirteen endowed and annual scholarships/programs were presented as one action item. **Trustee Main made a motion to approve the following resolutions. All were in favor. Motion passes.**

- Mike and Jana Mundy Forensics Post-Graduate Endowed Scholarship
- Bill and Mary McGinnis Annual Scholarship
- Jerry Stearns Memorial Endowed Scholarship
- Richmond G. Jones and Patricia Jones Endowed Scholarship
- Hunter L. Watts Nursing Excellence Annual Scholarship
- Jamie (Red) Etheridge and Donna Etheridge Endowed Scholarship
- Mr. and Mrs. H.L. McCullars Endowed Scholarship
- Gregory Haynes Endowed Pride Scholarship
- Gregory Haynes Endowed Legacy Scholarship
- Joan Hill Endowed Memorial Scholarship
- Frank Brown International Foundation for Music and Songwriters Festival Jamey Johnson Honorary Annual Scholarship
- Jonathan Andrew Smith Endowed Scholarship
- David and Grace Whitaker Endowed Tower Scholarship

Adopted on the 15th day of July 2025.



Don C. Killingsworth, Jr., Ed.D.
President



Randall E. Jones
President *Pro Tempore* of the
Jacksonville State University Board of Trustees and
Chairman of the Executive Committee

Chairman Jones offered an opportunity for discussion and comments. The motion from the Advancement Committee did not require a second.

The full resolutions are on file in the President's Office.

ATHLETIC COMMITTEE

Trustee Ingram, Chair of the Athletic Committee, reported that the committee met on July 14, 2025. Mr. Seitz presented the Athletic Department's annual report, highlighting accomplishments from the second year in Conference USA. He provided a sport-by-sport update of the department and introduced Mr. Corey Smith as the new head Coach for Women's Soccer. **There were no action items.**

AUDIT, RISK, AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE

Trustee Brown, Chair of the Audit, Risk, and Compliance Committee reported that the committee met prior to the Board meeting on July 15, 2025. The committee had **one action item: Trustee Brown called for a motion to authorize Dr. Harmon to negotiate with the incumbent CPA firm for services to perform the university's external audit, and to return to the committee with recommendations for approval. All were in favor. Motion passes.**

Chairman Jones offered an opportunity for discussion and comments. The motion from the Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee did not require a second.

BUILDING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Trustee Smoke, Chair of the Building and Finance Committee, reported that the Committee met on July 14, 2025, and has several action items requiring Board approval: **Trustee Smoke moved for the Board's approval, and the following action items were unanimously adopted, separately and collectively.**

Action Item 1: Motion for Adoption of FY2025 Tuition and Fees (Dual Enrollment)

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has the authority to approve tuition and fees,

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees recognizes the increasingly important role that revenue from tuition and fees plays in ensuring educational excellence and innovation, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees is committed to maintaining access to and affordability of its high quality programs.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Board of Trustees approves the FY25 Dual Enrollment tuition as presented.

Action Item 2: Approval of Military Payment Plan: The committee recommends Board approval to adjust the military payment plan deadline by one month to align with veterans' benefit distribution schedules.

Action Item 3: Approval of First Day 2.0 (Rebranded as "Jax Books"). This program will reduce the cost of textbooks for students to \$23 per credit hour.

Action Item 4: Approval of Endowment Investment Policy: The Board of Trustees reviewed and approved the establishment of an Endowment Investment Policy to ensure proper oversight and management of approximately \$2M in endowed funds donated directly to the

university. Pine Bend Wealth Management assisted in developing the policy and will manage the investments at 1.05% per annum. (*Trustee Clarence W. Daugette, III, abstained from voting*).

Action Item 5: Approval of a parameter resolution to work with STIFEL on potential bond refunding opportunities. A parameter resolution authorizing the President and Senior Vice President to work with STIFEL on potential bond refunding opportunities, enabling timely action when rates provide the greatest savings.

Action Item 6: Acceptance of the 403b Investment Monitoring Update: Jacksonville State University's 403(b) Retirement Plan allows employees to make voluntary, tax-deferred contributions with investment options monitored by the 403(b) Committee. To comply with Secure 2.0 requirements beginning January 2026, the Committee recommended adding a new 403(b) ROTH option for catch-up contributions by high-income earners.

Action Item 7: Approval for the Lost Pizza Facility Lease: Authorization for the President to negotiate a lease with Strategic Development, LLC for property located at **208 Mountain Street** to operate a Lost Pizza Company restaurant. The building will be renovated in accordance with university-approved plans, and the University will receive a monthly lease payment of \$1,200. The lease will take effect upon the Board's approval.

Chairman Jones offered an opportunity for discussion and comments. The motion from the Building and Finance Committee did not require a second.

THE BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS

(The records of the Board Committee meetings are in the respective committee meeting minutes, which are on file in the Office of the President.)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Killingsworth began by recognizing the loss of longtime staff member Mr. Burke, noting his many years of service to the University and his family's continued presence in the JSU community.

He thanked the Cabinet and staff for their efforts in organizing the recent Board orientation, the first since 2012. The session provided trustees with valuable insight into university operations and leadership.

Carnegie Classification Update

President Killingsworth announced that Jacksonville State University has been reclassified under the newly revised 2025 Carnegie Classifications. JSU is now designated as a Professions-Focused Undergraduate, Graduate, and Doctorate – Medium Institution, one of only 135 nationwide (about 3% of institutions). JSU has also been named an Opportunity College and University, a classification given to 16% of institutions nationally, confirming the university's

dedication to access and student success, as well as its positive influence on post-graduation earnings.

Pathways to Progress Initiative

President Killingsworth announced that Jacksonville State University (JSU) was selected as one of two four-year institutions to participate in ACHE's new **Pathways to Progress Initiative**. This program provides funding to recruit students in our service area who hold associate degrees, with the goal of increasing the number of baccalaureate degree recipients in counties such as Calhoun and Pike, which have a high number of associate degree holders but relatively fewer bachelor's degree holders.

The state allocated **\$250,000** to JSU for this initiative. Dr. Purcell, Executive Director of ACHE, has visited the campus and is supportive of JSU's efforts, with plans to provide funding for related initiatives. This is a new program, and further updates will be shared as the initiative develops.

\$2.4 Million Grant to Address Rural Mental Health Workforce Shortages

Dr. Dominique May Walker and Mrs. Keisha Goggins received a **\$2.4 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)** to support a new program preparing Master of Social Work (MSW) students to serve in high-need rural communities in Alabama. The initiative will support **48 students over four years**, providing scholarships and stipends of up to **\$25,000 per student** for graduate tuition and living expenses.

The program includes **trauma-informed coursework, hands-on learning, and participation in a rural behavioral health network**. Through the **Center for Best Practices in Rural Behavioral Health**, it also provides training and support for over **1,600 professionals at no cost**. The initiative addresses Alabama's mental health workforce shortage, where **66 of 67 counties lack sufficient mental health professionals**, aiming to strengthen the rural workforce, reduce financial barriers for students, and expand access to trauma-informed care.

Annual Freedom of Speech Report

In accordance with Section 16-68-5 of the Code of Alabama, the President submitted Jacksonville State University's Annual Freedom of Speech Report, covering the period from August 1, 2024, to July 31, 2025. **President Killingsworth called for a motion to adopt the Annual Report on Freedom of Speech. The motion was seconded, and all were in favor. Motion passes.**

The report concluded with recognition of the faculty and staff whose efforts advance the University's mission and impact the lives of students and communities across Alabama.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:50 a.m., Chairman Jones made a motion to enter into an Executive Session for approximately 45 minutes to discuss the general reputation and character of certain individuals and 2) to discuss with the University counsel legal ramifications and options on certain matters as outlined in Alabama Code 36-25A-7(a)(3). A written opinion from counsel was secured for the University that such an exception applies to the planned discussion. **The motion was seconded by Trustee Ingram and approved unanimously.**

The Chairman called for a Roll Call vote. President Killingsworth called for a roll of voting to approve the executive session. The following people voted:

Mr. Randall E. Jones, Chairman	Yes
Senator Vivian Davis Figures, Vice Chair	Yes
Mr. Greg Brown	Yes
Mr. Clarence W. Daugeette, III	Yes
Mr. Tony Ingram	Yes
Mr. Drew Linn	Yes
Mrs. Gale Saxon Main	Yes
Mrs. Cheryl Bevelle-Orange	Yes
Mr. Tony Smoke	Yes
Mr. Loring White	Yes

Chairman Jones reported a unanimous vote for the Executive Session and stated that the Board members would return for a public vote on any items that required action.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ADJOURNED

The executive session adjourned at 11:05 am with no other business to discuss.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Upon returning from the executive session, President Killingsworth called for a roll call. Present: Mr. Randall E. Jones, Senator Vivian Davis Figures, Mr. Greg Brown, Mr. Clarence W. Daugeette, III, Mr. Tony Ingram, Mr. Drew Linn, Mrs. Gale Saxon Main, Mrs. Cheryl Bevelle-Orange, Mr. Tony Smoke, and Mr. Loring White.

Chairman Jones reported that the Board had two action items from the executive session to approve.

Action Item 1: Trustee Daugeette made a motion to authorize the president to negotiate the purchase price of the property that is available within the city of Jacksonville. **All were in favor. Motion passes.**

Action Item 2: Trustee Bevelle-Orange made a motion to suspend the rule I order to adopt the by-laws as presented. **All were in favor. Motion passes.**

The Board of Trustees had no further business. By consent, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 pm. The next meeting will be held on **October 20-21, 2025, at the Little River Canyon Center in Fort Payne, Alabama.**



Don C. Killingsworth, Jr., Ed.D.
President



Randall E. Jones
President Pro Tempore of the
Jacksonville State University Board of Trustees and
Chairman of the Executive Committee

Catherine H. Chappell
Recording Secretary