



## **Board of Trustees Meeting**

Arkansas State University System

Wednesday, June 5, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

By Zoom: <https://astatecall.zoom.us/j/95917237729>

### **Agenda**

**I. Call to Order**

**II. Executive Session**

**III. Presidential Search Update**

**IV. Other Business**

**V. Adjournment**



## Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

Arkansas State University System

Wednesday, June 5, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

ASU System Office

### **Attendance**

**Members Present:** Christy Clark, Steve Eddington, Robert Rudolph, Paul Rowton, Price Gardner, Gary Harpole, and Jerry Morgan

#### **I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Christy Clark at 1:00 p.m.

#### **II. Executive Session**

##### **Motion:**

Mrs. Clark asked for a motion to retire into executive session for the purpose of discussing candidates for the open position of ASU System President.

The motion was made by Jerry Morgan and seconded by Gary Harpole.  
It passed unanimously.

Mrs. Clark announced, "This body has voted to retire into executive session to discuss the open ASU System President position. We will reconvene in public to present and vote on any matter agreed upon in private."

The Board retired into executive session at 1:01 p.m.

Mrs. Clark reconvened the Board at 2:03 p.m.

#### **III. Presidential Search Update**

##### **Motion:**

A motion was made to offer the position of President of the ASU System to Dr. Brendan Kelly for an initial term of five years, beginning no later than October 1, 2024, with the start date to be mutually agreed upon by the Chair of the Board and Dr. Kelly, and with an annual base salary of \$450,000 and deferred compensation of \$75,000 annually. The offer also includes other benefits and terms contained in the contract of the previous System President, including housing at the ASU System residence.

The motion was made by Price Gardner and seconded by Robert Rudolph.  
It passed unanimously.

Mr. Gardner: Dr. Kelly currently serves as President of the University of West Georgia, located in Carrollton, Georgia. He assumed the presidency in March of 2020. Prior to that, Dr. Kelly served as Chancellor and Professor of Communications at the University of South Carolina Upstate, located in Spartanburg and Greenville, South Carolina. He held those positions from 2017-2020. During his tenure at South Carolina, Dr. Kelly additionally served as the Interim President of the University of South Carolina, and in that role, he was also Chancellor of the University of South Carolina System for approximately six months in 2019, while it underwent a transition and search for new leadership. Prior to moving to South Carolina in 2017, Dr. Kelly spent thirteen years at the University of West Florida (UWF) in Pensacola, serving in various roles including the following: professor; department chair; director of the School of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts; Vice President of University Advancement; and President of the UWF Foundation. Dr. Kelly was born in Flint, Michigan. He has undergraduate and master's degrees from Eastern Michigan University and holds a Ph.D. from Wayne State University. Dr. Kelly has a long history of significant accomplishments in each of these positions and in each role he has held in more than 25 years of leadership in higher education. Significant achievements include his responsibilities in administrative and academic leadership, community, economic development, and strategic relations; successful capital campaigns that include a \$50 million campaign at the University of West Florida; and the transition in athletics, as currently, West Georgia is moving from D2 to D1. He is very active and very much a hands-on leader. Throughout the process of the search, and in reference calls that we have made, Dr. Kelly has been described as a visionary, a talented communicator who works well with others, a genuine person who is passionate about higher education, and as someone who absolutely looks out for the best interests of the institution and its students. He cares about his colleagues and prefers to find consensus among his colleagues, but also knows how to make a hard decision and communicate his reasons for doing so. He is a relationship builder. Many have said that the System job is a perfect match for his skill set. Dr. Kelly is married to Dr. Tressa Kelly. She holds a Ph.D. in Communication from Wayne State University and master's and bachelor's degrees in Communication and Theater Arts from Eastern Michigan University. She has taught at the collegiate level for more than 20 years. They have three children. Their daughter is a college graduate, who is married and expecting their first child in January. Their oldest son is a police officer, working on his degree at the University of West Georgia. Their youngest son just graduated from high school and will be attending Georgia Tech this year. They are very excited about the opportunity for Dr. Kelly to become the next President of the ASU System. All of us look forward to the opportunity to welcome his family to Arkansas in the near future.

I would like to thank the team at Academic Search for their excellent work during our search. As we originally laid out in our January meeting, we followed that timeline, thanks to their coordination and efforts in working with the applicants and the candidates. We had over 20 formal applications submitted with an equal number or more of potential candidates who expressed an interest in the President's job. The Board was impressed with the qualifications and the diverse backgrounds and experience of those interested in the job, and that really was

reflective of the value of the reputation and strength of our System, our schools, our state, and, mostly, our people. It is clearly a very desirable job that we were able to go out and market. I am grateful for the time and efforts of my fellow Trustees in connection with this search.

Mr. Eddington: On behalf of the balance of the Board of Trustees, I want to thank Price for his commitment and leadership in this effort. It has been outstanding. This has been an extensive and very thorough process, and I think the outcome will pay dividends for the ASU System and, certainly, for the state of Arkansas.

IV. Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.


V. Adjournment

**Motion:**

Mrs. Clark asked for a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Gary Harpole and seconded by Robert Rudolph.  
It passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.



Robert G. Rudolph Jr., Secretary



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Christy Clark, Chair