CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Jonathan N. Pinson began the meeting by welcoming Dr. Gail Joyner-Fleming to the Board of Trustees. The meeting was called to order at 9:33 A.M. The agenda was posted and the public notice was read. The agenda (Attachment 1) and supporting material (Attachment 2) were previously circulated to the members, media and interested persons. The roll was called and the following persons were present:

Members Present:  Chairman Jonathan N. Pinson, Vice Chairman John H. Corbitt, Secretary Robert M. Nance, Trustees Mrs. Linda Edwards-Duncan, Dr. Jackie R. Epps, Dr. Gail Joyner-Fleming, Ms. Patricia B. Lott, Mr. Matthew T. Richardson, Dr. Walter L. Tobin, Mr. Maurice G. Washington and Mr. Lancelot D. Wright. These Trustees participated via phone.

Ex-Officios/Administrators: Ex-Officios: Dr. M. Evelyn Fields (via phone), Mr. Nathaniel Howard (via phone) and Mrs. Kay Snider (via phone)/ Administrators: President George E. Cooper, Chief of Staff and General Counsel Ed Givens, Executive Director to the Board Ms. Joyce Green (via phone), Vice President for Institutional Advancement Mr. Anthony Holloman, Athletics Director Mrs. Charlene Johnson, Director of University Relations and Marketing Mrs. Erica Taylor, Executive Assistant to the President Mrs. Shondra Abraham, Administrative Assistant to the Board Ms. Eartha Mosley and Administrative Coordinator Mrs. Chrystel Rogers, as recorder.

Media: The Times and Democrat Reporter Dale Linder-Altman.

OPEN SESSION:

Trustee Washington moved, seconded by Trustee Edwards-Duncan, to adopt the agenda as presented. There were no questions. Vote: unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Chair Pinson asked if everyone received a copy of President Cooper’s November 2, 2010, recommendation letter to name the football field in honor of Coach Willie E. Jeffries. No one indicated they had not. He called for questions regarding the recommendation. He asked if President Cooper or Mrs. Charlene Johnson had any comments they wanted to make. President Cooper noted that the pertinent information was outlined in the letter; however, a recent tribute to Coach Jeffries was not included. He advised that Coach Jeffries would be inducted into the Black College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta, Georgia, on February 19, 2011.
Trustee Washington reminded that at the last board meeting Mr. Holloman noted the possibility of $250,000 for naming rights of the football field. He asked if that was still a possibility to bring in some revenue to offset some of the budget shortfalls. President Cooper advised that it was part of the proposal; but there was also a motion passed allowing the Board to decide whether naming rights could be awarded without funds. President Cooper believes this recognition will allow SC State to engage a broader audience. Naming right funds will allow the stadium to be maintained. SC State would not transfer those funds into the University’s operating budget.

Trustee Washington asked what funds are used now to maintain the stadium. President Cooper responded there are two sources: E&G funds and funds raised for support of Athletics. Trustee Washington pointed out that E&G is a direct appropriation and any use of those funds impact the University’s bottom line. While the E&G budget for Athletics is approximately $10 million, the University request that Athletics only bring back 23% of that. The Board needs to be responsible in terms of dealing with this process for several reasons: there are still students without academic books; there are students who cannot afford to come back for the spring semester; the Board has not received a full understanding of where the University is budget wise, where the University is with meeting fund raising goals for the year, what the offsets may be and will there be a furlough. There are numerous issues that require the Board to be very judicial and responsible in terms of how the Board deals with these kinds of situations going forward. He asked if the Committee made the recommendation to the President and the President in turn is now making it to the Board. He also asked if President Cooper and members of the Committee were willing to commit to raise the $250,000 in keeping with President Cooper’s statement that this may open up broader opportunities to raise funds. If the President and Committee commit to raise $250,000 separate and apart from the current commitment of approximately $200,000, this will create a win-win for Coach Jeffries, SC State students and for the University.

Chair Pinson indicated that Coach Jeffries has been a strong fundraiser for SC State for several years and continues to help raise funds. Coach Jeffries now works in a stronger capacity in the Athletics’ department getting lots of strong corporate supporters. This gesture being recommended will make a broader impact to some of the key supporters of Coach Jeffries and to the Athletics’ program. Chair Pinson indicated that he was not sure if SC State captured what Coach Jeffries has raised but he has been a strong supporter for years and the $250,000 was just a gesture to say that SC State might be able to raise that. There was no guarantee that SC State had anyone looking at the football field with that price tag. A list was distributed years ago for naming certain buildings and other campus facilities. In this economic climate, corporate naming support is down because corporations are being more selective. Everyone knows the competitive environment SC State is in. The challenge of raising funds is not just in Athletics; it is in every sector of the University. He believes the $250,000 is minute to the overall broader picture that the University has to develop an aggressive plan focusing on the University’s overall picture. This will reflect the legacy in the work that Coach Jeffries has done for SC State, the students and the number of NFL players that he coached and put into the NFL. It sends a message of SC State’s gratitude for his hard work and continued work. Coach Jeffries continues to be a strong messenger speaking at numerous engagements across the state. He has a strong reputation and folks appreciate what he does. The impact will be much greater than the $250,000 price tag if SC State honors him in the way he deserves. Trustee
Washington agreed with Chairman Pinson’s comments but stated that is a separate issue from the Board’s fiduciary responsibility to SC State. He was talking about it from a budgetary perspective. The University has a Naming Rights Policy where the Board has approved a monetary value on naming rights. Trustee Washington asked if it would be a prudent idea. He thinks it is a great idea. The environment is tough on SC State’s budget and the students as well. When the Board foregoes approved policy, should the Board attach or hold some kind of accountability to the Administration to measure? If the University brings such a measure to the Board, the Administration should at least bring a plan of action to raise the value that we have attached to each of our facilities.

Trustee Nance pointed out that naming the field today does not stop the Administration from continuing their goals of finding a sponsor for that field. If the Administration finds a sponsor, it can easily be “the ABC Wickett Company Willie E. Jeffries Field”. The Administration will not only continue to find a sponsor for the naming of the field but for the rest of the buildings listed. He concurred that the University needs to continue to find money to offset the tough times that SC State is in and he feels that naming this field after Coach Jeffries makes it easier to identify a $250,000 sponsor. Trustee Washington commented that the two should then be tied together.

Trustee Tobin made a couple points. First, there is no one more deserving of this than Willie Jeffries so he concurs with this but is concerned about how SC State did it. Second, rather than doing this in a couple days, there ought to be opportunity to vet the process regardless of how good the idea is. He thinks this is something being rushed but it is a good rush. There should be great opportunity for the Board to have complete face-to-face dialogue and there have been plenty of opportunities to do that. Third, we have just described somebody that has the greatest profile of anybody at or associated with the University right now and we talk about fundraising. SC State has one of the best fundraisers of anybody associated with the University. Everywhere Coach Jeffries goes, somebody knows him. He cannot go thru an airport in Charlotte, Columbia or Atlanta without someone recognizing him. Trustee Tobin indicated that Chairman Pinson just described his contact upstate and nationally. Recently, Coach Jeffries was invited to be the Master of Ceremonies for a Bobby Cremins affair in Charleston. Taking all those things in consideration, he cannot think of anyone better than Coach Jeffries to raise funds for SC State so the question is, is he on the payroll? Trustee Tobin does not think the University can ask someone to do fundraising without compensating them so is SC State compensating him, if so, at what level and should that be a part of this conversation as well? President Cooper advised that there is no compensation at this time for Coach Jeffries. Trustee Tobin thinks that if the Board makes a decision today people would know and there would be a tremendous response. He is amazed that it took almost two years to get Coach Jeffries named Coach Emeritus and in three days, we named the field after him. If the University could find a salary for Coach Jeffries, he thinks Coach Jeffries could quadruple ten times the amount of money if we could find a salary for him and charged him with facilitating the fundraising project. Trustee Tobin would like for the Board to say yes that the University is going to name the field for Coach Jeffries and then come back and say that the University will find compensation for Coach Jeffries to go forward and do that kind of fundraising. Trustee Nance indicated to the Chairman that he concurred with the comments and agreed that it is unfair for Coach Jeffries to raise funds without any compensation; however, he reminded that before any further discussion on this subject
matter, which is getting close to a personnel issue, Trustees should be careful how they handle that part of the discussion.

Trustee Lott commented that she thinks very highly of Coach Jeffries. This is a great opportunity but it should have been thought out a little more because she knows there are a lot of his former players that would have been more than happy to make the contribution towards this naming. There still may be an opportunity to get funds that we are not taking advantage of and she thinks that is always very important to remember that. She suggested sitting down one more time and really think about naming rights and what all is going to be involved.

Trustee Epps agrees with this naming opportunity for Coach Jeffries 100%. This is a big deal and because it is a big deal, he thinks the Board would have discussed this back in September. This is big and he supports it but the process is the only thing that he is concerned about right now.

Chair Pinson indicated that with the University having the event for Coach Jeffries on Saturday, the University wanted to present this at that time so that is the only reason why the vote is needed this week to make that official at the ceremony Saturday after the game. Also, he agreed with the discussion. There will be talk at the next board meeting on a broader fundraising scale. The opportunities are there. Looking at SC State being #1 again in the Washington Monthly, 14th among HBCUs and then SC State’s honor of getting the Nuclear Engineering program, he has engaged in talks with SCANA on a high level on doing something big. SC State must raise its profile and charge the University to get that message out. SC State has to do a better job and put some money on the ground to really raise the level. Before we go out, folks have to know first what SC State is accomplishing or what is going to be the accomplishment of my company writing a million dollar check to put on the name of a building? Well you are putting it at a university that is ranked among Washington Monthly which is the basic sector of our population in South Carolina. SC State has to get that message out there first so the University has some ground work to do and really put some structure behind it and he encouraged everyone to be thinking about that. It is not out there and it should be a full page ad in every major newspaper in this state. That is talking about reaching a population of three to four million people that folks can really see SC State’s accomplishments. Currently, the University is only putting it out in email or our own publication. We are speaking to a base that supports SC State but that base may not have the financial capability to write a $5 million check so we have to expand that base to say here is another population sector that we are not speaking to. SC State has to craft our message a lot better and get it out there so folks will feel compelled to write checks.

Chair Pinson concurred with Trustee Lott that there are a lot of football players that can write checks but statistics indicate that 80% of NFL players end up broke. Trustee Lott indicated that when she made the comment she was thinking about when Coach Jeffries retired, she thinks there was a group of his former players that got together and gave him a car. She was just saying that maybe if the University had asked maybe the University would have gotten something out of this. Trustee Nance advised without going into details that there was a little bit more to that than just what Trustee Lott stated. Chairman Pinson indicated that urgency wise, the University wanted to do this Saturday. If it were something else, he would have pushed it back to make sure the Board had time. The
University thought it was a great gesture and wanted to go ahead and present it to the Board. He does not think there will be a situation where there will be pop-ups again or often to say we want to name something. It was not a rush; the University was just compelled to get it done.

Trustee Wright pointed out that it is important what everyone is saying and that sometimes you have to do things that are important at the time. Trustee Edwards-Duncan concurred with all of the conversations and added that Coach Jeffries is an icon and he is an icon that is SC State’s own. She thinks this will open up tremendous opportunities for SC State that we cannot contain ourselves. She believes they spoke about a percentage of the fundraising effort be used as salary but that is something to be looked at down the road. She is in full support of going forward with this process. Dr. Joyner-Fleming suggested making this a win-win situation for both in naming the field for Coach Jeffries and kicking off a fundraiser at the event on Saturday. SC State might be able to bring in $250,000 from pledges from the people in attendance at the function on Saturday. Chair Pinson acknowledged that a great point and referred it back to the University to see if there is a way to incorporate giving to the Athletics’ Department at Saturday’s event. Trustee Corbitt indicated that it is a good idea and everyone is on the same page. There ought to be a strategy to raise the funds. He thinks that is a win-win situation. He agreed with the naming but then the University’s administration should provide a plan to raise the money. Trustee Washington indicated that the Board would look responsible as a governing body. No one is in disagreement but there is an accountability measure here and we do have an opportunity for $250,000 which is not a lot of money. If the administration is bringing this type of proposal today or in the future, they have to bring measures that would somehow recoup potential loss revenues to the University. Chair Pinson indicated that the Board would pick up on that comment at the Board Committee meeting on November 18th and also on Trustee Tobin’s comment about the salary piece.

Trustee Corbitt moved, seconded by Trustee Edwards-Duncan, to name the football field for Coach Jeffries and look forward to a financial plan/strategy from the Administration to help underwrite the cost (how they will raise the funds). There were no questions. Vote: unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Chairman Pinson thanked everyone who participated on the phone call and called for a motion to adjourn, Trustee Edwards-Duncan so moved.

Before the meeting was adjourned, Trustee Washington requested a copy of the management letter associated with the Comprehensive Annual Audit Report so the Board could follow the report smoothly. Trustee Tobin also requested that the Board be sent a hard copy of the report. Ms. Joyce Greene advised that the auditors usually provide hard copies to the Trustees but she would follow up with Mr. Smalls.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Pinson declared the meeting adjourned at 10:06 A.M.

All referenced attachments are made a permanent part of these minutes.
Attachments:
1 – Agenda
2 – Supporting Material (President Cooper’s November 2, 2010 recommendation letter to SC State’s Board of Trustees)