

College and  
University Trustee  
Screening  
Commission

Sen. Thomas C.  
Alexander  
Sen. John L. Scott, Jr.  
Sen. Daniel B. "Danny"  
Verdin, III  
Senator Richard A.  
"Dick" Harpootlian

Staff:  
Macey Webb

Rep. William R. Whitmire,  
Chairman  
Rep. John King  
Rep. Seth Rose  
Rep. Timothy A. "Tim"  
McGinnis



429 Bltatt Building  
P.O. Box 142  
Columbia, South Carolina 29202  
Phone: (803) 734-3054  
Email: maceywebb@schouse.gov

College and University Trustee Screening Commission  
Report to the General Assembly  
January 17, 2023

The College and University Trustee Screening Commission found the following individuals qualified and nominated for the Trustee seats to which they applied. These individuals will be released to receive commitments on Wednesday, January 18, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. noon. The Joint Assembly to elect the trustees is currently set for Wednesday, February 1, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. (noon). A complete transcript of the hearings for these candidates will be printed in today's Senate and House Journals.

**The Citadel**

**CANDIDATES FOUND QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED**

- One (1) at-large seat - ~~Benjamin D. Dixon~~ - *Wadmalaw Island*  
- terms expires June 30, 2028 - *Withdrew 4/19/22*  
- Dylan W. Goff - *Columbia*  
- Kara Irvin - *North Charleston*

### **Clemson University**

#### **CANDIDATES FOUND QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED**

- Three (3) at-large seats - Patricia H. McAbee - *Greenville*  
- terms expire June 30, 2026 - John N. McCarter - *N. Myrtle Beach*  
- Sharka Marie Prokes - *Inman*  
- Joseph D. Swann - *Greenville*

### **Lander University**

#### **CANDIDATES FOUND QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED**

- At-Large - Seat 8 - Robert A. Barber, Jr. - *Charleston*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- At-Large - Seat 9 - James C. Shubert - *Simpsonville*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- At-Large - Seat 10 - Peggy Makins - *Lexington*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- At-Large - Seat 11 - Donald H. Scott - *Waterloo*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- At-Large - Seat 12 - DeWitt B. Stone, Jr. - *Clemson*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- At-Large - Seat 13 - Raymond D. Hunt, Sr. - *Chapin*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- At-Large - Seat 14 - Marcia T. Hydrick - *Seneca*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- At-Large - Seat 15 - John E. Craig, Jr. - *Lancaster*  
- term expires June 30, 2026

### **Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School**

#### **CANDIDATES FOUND QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED**

- Two (2) At-Large seats  
- terms expire June 30, 2026 - J. Blake Lindsey - *West Columbia*  
- Marilyn E. Taylor - *Columbia*

### **University of South Carolina**

**CANDIDATES FOUND QUALIFIED AND NOMINATED**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Judicial Circuit - Charles H. Williams - *Orangeburg*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Judicial Circuit - C. Dorn Smith III - *Lake City*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit - Alexander English - *Blythewood*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- 7<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit - ~~D. Benjamin Graves - *Spartanburg*~~  
- term expires June 30, 2026 - *Withdrew 4/25/22*  
- Henry L. Jolly, Jr. - *Gaffney*  
- ~~J. Patrick Anderson - *Spartanburg*~~  
- *Withdrew 5/2/22*
- 9<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit - John C. von Lehe - *Mount Pleasant*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- 11<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit - Thad H. Westbrook - *Lexington*  
- term expires June 30, 2026
- 12<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit - C. Edward Floyd - *Florence*
- 13<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit - ~~D. Hollis Felkel II - *Simpsonville*~~  
- term expires June 30, 2026 - *Withdrew 4/25/22*  
- ~~C. Brody Glenn - *Greenville*~~  
- *Withdrew 4/28/22*  
- Reid T. Sherard - *Greenville*

**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TRUSTEE  
SCREENING COMMISSION**

**REVIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
TRUSTEE**

**CANDIDATES IN CARRY OVER STATUS**

**TRANSCRIPT OF PUBLIC HEARINGS**

Date: Tuesday, January 10, 2023  
Time: 3:39 P.M.  
Location: Blatt Building  
1101 Pendleton Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

**Committee Members Present:**

Representative William R. Whitmire, Chairman  
Senator Thomas C. Alexander, Vice-Chairman  
Senator John L. Scott, Jr.  
Senator Daniel B. "Danny" Verdin, III  
Senator Richard A. "Dick" Harpootlian  
Representative John King  
Representative Seth Rose  
Representative Timothy A. "Tim" McGinnis

**Also Present:**

Macey Webb, Staff Counsel

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is the January 10th, 2023 Screening Committee for Colleges and Universities. A this time I would like to call on my good friend, President Alexander, for a brief prayer.

PRESIDENT ALEXANDER: Let us pray. Dear Heavenly Father, we just give you thanks for the opportunity to serve you and serve the people of this great state of South Carolina. Just be with us this afternoon in the deliberations and the opportunities that you provide. Be with us throughout this new year and in this new legislative session. In Thy holy name we pray. Amen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. I'd like to introduce the Commission members. On my right, you've already met -- of course everybody knows President Alexander. Senator Scott to his right. Then

Senator Verdin. So welcome -- oh, sorry. Senator Harpootlian. How did I forget him? Don't be mad at me. Now, on my left, is -- we have Representative John R. King, who is with us in the last few sessions. And we've got two new members, Representative Tim McGinnis, from the Myrtle Beach area and Representative Seth Rose, who is from the Columbia area. And I will now challenge the Senate to tennis match sometime in the spring. Because I think we've got a real chance. For our meeting today, our Commission's goal is to take a vote to ratify the previous Commission's work that we completed last session, in 2022. We'll take a vote to approve all of the trustee candidates that our Commission screened last session and found qualified and nominated. This way, those trustees will not have to be re-screened this session and can instead go to the floor, to be voted on in a Joint Assembly. We will also take a vote on the five University of South Carolina trustee members that we have in carry-over status. We're going to vote to approve last session's screening work so I would defer to our staff member, Macey Webb.

MS. WEBB: Good afternoon. So, bear with me. We have long list of candidates that I'm going to read through that we screened and gave a favorable report to last session. So, please be patient with me as we go thorough that. So, the College and University Trustee Screening Commission found the following individuals qualified and nominated for the Trustee seats to which they applied. For the Citadel: Benjamin D. Dixon, Dylan W. Goff, Kara Irvin. For Clemson University: Patricia H. McAbee, John N. "Nicky" McCarter, Sharka Marie Prokes, Joseph D. Swann. For Lander University: Robert A. Barber, Jr., James C. Shubert, Peggy Makins, Donald H. Scott, DeWitt B. Stone, Jr., Raymond D. Hunt, Sr., Marcia T. Hydrick, John E. Craig, Jr. For Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School: J. Blake Lindsey, Marilyn E. Taylor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any comments by members of the Commission? (No replies are heard.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hearing none, do I hear a motion to adopt.

SENATOR VERDIN: Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, sir. VOTE:

SENATOR VERDIN: I would move adoption of the Commission's report from the previous committee meeting.

PRESIDENT ALEXANDER: Second.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. All those in favor, please signify by raising your right hand. (Hands are raised.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: And it's unanimous, eight to zero. Okay. Thank you. All right. Next, we'll take up the five University of South Carolina

Trustee candidates in carry-over status. But first, before we vote on them, I would like to let Senator Harpootlian make some remarks.

SENATOR HARPOOTLIAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As everyone knows, I have been deeply involved examining the Board of Trustees. I had legislation last year that just didn't quite make it on the last day, of the legislation structure of the board. And let me say, sort of the good news/bad news. I have since then met with the new chairman of the board, Thad Westbrook. I'm impressed with his efforts to make sure the Board acts like a board. I've met with the new president. I'm impressed with his understanding that it's his job to talk to department heads, that board members talk to him, and not to department heads directly. I'm also impressed with their follow-through on a couple of issues that they got back to me on. So, not that you have to make me happy, but what does concern me is that, in my opinion, some members of this board -- I see Charles Williams out here. I have no problem with him whatsoever. I think he is a good board member. I know that he objected to the process by which they pick the President Caslen. I know he objected to the borrowing of general fund money -- or to use to buy off -- or pay off the contract for football coach, twelve million dollars. And I think he's been a good steward of the State's money and has acted in a responsible fashion. By contrast, I've spent since that last vote, looking -- serving FOIs on the University of South Carolina for emails and texts between the board members and department heads. I've done some additional searching in terms of residences. And as to the former chairman, Dorn Smith, I've determined a couple of things. He routinely bypassed the president of the University and talked to department heads, specifically on numerous occasions, the head of the athletic department, without going through the president, about matters that he had no business discussing. Secondly, I have huge questions about where he lives. His wife's residence is in Florence County. He claims to live in Lake City, in a different county, to qualify to be on the board. I've got to tell you -- and I'm going to vote no on him today. And if I'm able to, I'll vote no on him when he comes to the floor of the Joint Assembly. The last thing I'd say, one of the board members has been on that board since 1998. Another one of the board members has been on there not that long but thirty years. And I seriously hope that this legislation has been introduced by Senator Hembry that we come up with some restructuring, term limits, something, to insure that the board is the board and not twenty-something different presidents that communicate with department heads as to what they want, not what the majority of board wants. This is a problem that has plagued USC. Again, we have somebody here, Charles Williams, who has not done that. So it's not

every board member. But a number of them have done this. So, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to express why I'm going to vote no on Dorn Smith today. And while I would do so again, I'm sure he's got the votes to get to the floor. And I will do so again, when it comes to the floor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Senator. Are there any other members of the Commission that would like to make remarks at this time. If not, we will proceed to the University of South Carolina candidates. First, we're going to take up the candidates that were found qualified last fall. And I will refer to Macey for that.

MR. WEBB: Yeah, so just for clarification of the record, I'm now going to read the University of South Carolina candidates that the Commission found as qualified and nominated last session and then we will move on to the other five USC candidates that we have in carry over status. So please bear with me as I read the names of the five University of South Carolina candidates that our Commission found qualified and nominated in 2022, and then we will take the vote on them. For the University of South Carolina: Alexander English, D. Benjamin Graves, Henry L. Jolly, Jr., J. Patrick Anderson, D. Hollis Felkel, C. Brody Glenn, and Reid T. Sherard. All received a favorable report from our Commission last session and were found qualified and nominated. VOTE:

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do I have a motion?

SENATOR SCOTT: I'd make a motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And a second. All those in favor signify by raising your right hand. (Hands are raised.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: And it's unanimous. All right. On the other five, we're going to vote on each candidate individually, of course. And I will need a motion by a sitting member to insert the name of the candidate. And we will either vote to qualify or we will not vote qualified or if you don't want to, you don't have to vote at all. Senator Harpootlian. VOTE:

SENATOR HARPOOTLIAN: Mr. Chairman, I would move to find Charles Williams qualified and nominated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a motion to find Charles Williams qualified and nominated.

SENATOR SCOTT: And a second.

MR. CHAIRMAN: And a second. All those in favor, signify by raising your right hand. (Hands are raised.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's unanimous, eight/zero. All right, next.

PRESIDENT ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman, I would move that on the Third Judicial Circuit, that C. Dorn Smith, III be found qualified and nominated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is there a second?

SENATOR VERDIN: Second.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favor of C. Dorn Smith, please raise your right hand. (Hands are raised.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those opposed? (A hand is raised.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: One? Okay. Seven to one. Thank you, Mr. President. All right.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: The Ninth Judicial Circuit, John C. von Lehe in Mt. Pleasant, to find him qualified and nominated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second?

REPRESENTATIVE MCGINNIS: Second.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those in favor, signify by raising your right hand. (Hands are raised.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's eight/zero. Thank you, Senator Scott. All right, next. We have Thad Westbrook.

SENATOR SCOTT: Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, sir.

SENATOR SCOTT: For the 11th Judicial Circuit I would like to nominate Thad H. Westbrook, from Lexington, qualified and nominated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Second?

REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: Second.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All of those in favor signify by raising your right hand. And it's eight/zero. All right last is Dr. C. Edward Floyd. Do I have someone making that nomination. Mr. President?

PRESIDENT ALEXANDER: Mr. Chairman, I would move that for the Twelfth Judicial Circuit that Dr. C. Edward Floyd be found qualified and nominated.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There's a second. All those in favor signify by raising your right hand. (Hands are raised.)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Unanimous. I'm sorry, seven and one no.

MS. WEBB: To clarify, on the record and for the court reporter, for the Twelfth Judicial Circuit, C. Edward Floyd, by a vote of seven to one, with Representative John King voting no.

SENATOR HARPOOTLIAN: And I'd like to change my vote to no.

MS. WEBB: Okay. All right. By a vote of six to two, for the clarification of the record, with Representative King and Senator Harpootlian voting no on Dr. Floyd.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Our Commission will set a date and time for the Joint Assembly. We're going to try to hold a Joint Assembly on February 1st, 2023, along with the judges. That should be a nice long day. The hope is that we can vote on all the candidates as well trustee



candidates in the Joint Assembly. Does anyone have anything else to say? That it? I'm sorry, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT ALEXANDER: Before you do, I just want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the work of all of the Commission members to get us to this point. I thank everyone for their service and their time and energy from that standpoint.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. President. I have to say, this has been the most difficult year we've had as far screening out candidates and I've been on here a long time. So, hopefully we can get the votes with a yay or nay with the General Assembly and we'll see where it goes from there. And also, Macey, do you have any timetable when we will - - I guess it depends on court decisions, on the ....

MS. WEBB: Yeah, so as far as where the Commission will proceed from here, I'll be working in close contact with Chairman Whitmire, President Alexander's office and Speaker Smith's office to determine where we will go from here. The next step from here will be getting all of these trustees that did receive a favorable report today, getting them included in the Joint Assembly for February 1st. That's going to be the goal so they can be elected on the floor in that Joint Assembly. And then from there we still have, I believe, eight at-large 2022 candidates that still need to be screened from 2022 as well several other 2022 congressional district seats, which we have not officially decided on the congressional districts. But the next goal will be to get the eight at-large 2022 candidates screened, at the very least.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Senator Scott.

SENATOR SCOTT: I know this process took a little longer than folk would like. But I think what's most important in all of that is to understand that this Committee will be doing checks and balances. Those days of rubber stamping and cutting through this process are long passed and gone. And I think that because of that time frame, folk have had to re-gather their behavior and their management practices back at the board. Although it may have one particular board that had had a lot of conversation, trust me, other boards have gone back and taken a look at their behavior and some of what's going on in these boards of trustees. Managing these boards, managing schools is big business. We want to make sure we're putting on boards of trustees who understand their responsibility and the separation between management and policy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Representative Rose.

REPRESENTATIVE ROSE: Just briefly. I just want to say that I, too, favor and I supported the bill to restructure the USC board. I went to undergrad at USC. I also went to law school. I live very close to the campus and so obviously some of the things that have transpired have

been very troubling. But I also recognize that there are a lot of good things that happen as well. But I think the way the board is made up, I think the size of the board, the lack of diversity on the board, are all things that trouble me. And that is also why I supported the bill that Senator Harpootlian referenced that unfortunately died in the Senate and I hope that there will be a push to have that come forward again. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other members? First off, let me thank all of you, both Senators and Representatives for your hard work on this. And Macey, you did yeoman's work. Thank you for volunteering for this job. And I wish both the House and the Senate have very productive years this year. With that, we're adjourned.

(There being nothing further, the proceeding concluded at 3:56 p.m.)