MINUTES
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS FOR THE
UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA SYSTEM
SPECIAL MEETING
May 19, 2026

A. Call to Order/Roll Call

The Board of Supervisors for the University of Louisiana System met for a Special Meeting on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 10:03 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.

Members Present

Mr. Barry Busada
Mr. Steve Davison
Mr. Lee Jackson, Jr.
Dr. Jo Lethermon
Ms. Maria Nechaeva
Mr. Alejandro "Al" Perkins*
Mr. Dana Peterson*
Ms. Elizabeth Pierre
Mr. Mark Romero
Ms. Kristine Russell*
Mr. Robert Salim
Mr. Brad Stevens
Ms. Julie Stokes*

*arrived after roll call

Members Absent

Mr. Ronald Hogan
Mr. Keith Myers
Dr. John Noble, Jr.

Also present were the following: System President Rick Gallot, System staff, and Legal Counsel Brandon DeCuir.

B. Invocation/Pledge of Allegiance

President Rick Gallot gave the invocation, and Ms. Maria Nechaeva led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Report of McNeese State University Presidential Search Committee

President Rick Gallot reported that a search committee had been appointed on March 10, 2026, to conduct the search for McNeese State University's next president. The Committee held its initial meeting on the McNeese campus on March 26, 2026, to begin preliminary work for the search process.

President Gallot stated that input had been gathered from the campus community regarding desired qualities for the next president. On May 7, 2026, the Committee met in Baton Rouge to review applications and select semifinalists for campus interviews.

Following discussion, the Committee had unanimously selected three semifinalists: Dr. Dee Dee Anderson, Dr. Wayne Brumfield, and Mr. Mike Reese. The candidates participated in campus visits on May 12-13, 2026, during which they met with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community leaders and participated in campus and community tours. After interviews and deliberations, the Committee had unanimously recommended two finalists for consideration by the Board: Dr. Dee Dee Anderson and Mr. Mike Reese.

President Gallot expressed appreciation to the Committee members, campus representatives, and community stakeholders who participated in the search process. Those who served are:

Voting Members
Ms. Maria Nechaeva
Dr. John Noble, Jr.
Mr. Dana Peterson
Mr. Mark Romero
Ms. Kristine Russell
Mr. Robert Salim
Dr. Joanna Thompson, Faculty Senate President

Non-Voting Members
System President Rick Gallot
Dr. Neil Aspinwall
Ms. Mary Jo Bayles
Judge Charlotte Bushnell
Judge James Cain, Jr.
Dr. John Condos
Mr. Kevin Guidry
Honorable Chuck Kleckley
Mr. Jay Kumar
Ms. Lianne Montelibano
Mr. Ryan Navarre
Mr. Ronnie Petree

Mr. Jason Rashall
Mr. Gray Stream
Mr. Todd Townsley
Dr. David Wallace

President Gallot also voiced particular appreciation to Interim President Dr. Kedrick Nicholas for his leadership and service to McNeese State University.

Board Chair Mark Romero asked for comments from the public. Dr. Erica Calais indicated the following for public comment: Dr. Jimmy Trahan, Dr. John Condos, and Dr. Joanna Thompson.

Dr. Jimmy Trahan, a faculty member at McNeese State University, addressed the Board regarding Louisiana's evolving higher education landscape. In addition, he emphasized the importance of advocacy, institutional leadership, and shared governance in supporting faculty, staff, and students.

Dr. John Condos, former UL System Board member and McNeese State University alumnus, stated his support for Mr. Mike Reese, citing the importance of maintaining the University's positive trajectory and community engagement.

Dr. Joanna Thompson, representing the McNeese State University Faculty Senate, spoke regarding the importance of shared governance, communication, and long-term institutional stability.

Mr. Romero thanked those who commented.

D. Overview of Interview Procedures

Chair Romero reviewed the format for the day's proceedings. He stated that each finalist would provide an opening statement and respond to questions from Board members in open session. Following each public interview, the Board would enter Executive Session for further discussion with the candidate.

E. Candidate Interviews*

Mr. Romero said that the first interview would be with Dr. Dee Dee Anderson. After her opening statement, the Board would pose questions to her and then enter into Executive Session to further dialogue with her.

1. Candidate Interview – Dr. Dee Dee Anderson

Chair Romero welcomed Dr. Anderson and asked Board members to introduce themselves. After her opening statement, Board members questioned her regarding

institutional growth, academic competitiveness, workforce development, and strategic opportunities for McNeese State University.

Upon motion of Mr. Busada, seconded by Mr. Davison, at 10:44 a.m., the Board convened in Executive Session to discuss personnel matters associated with the McNeese State University presidential search. The following roll call vote was recorded:

Yeas: Mr. Busada, Mr. Davison, Mr. Jackson, Dr. Lethermon, Ms. Nechaeva, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Peterson, Ms. Pierre, Mr. Romero, Ms. Russell, Mr. Salim, Mr. Stevens, Ms. Stokes

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Hogan, Mr. Myers, Dr. Noble

Upon motion of Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Salim, the Board reconvened in open session at 11:21 a.m. No motions were made and no votes were taken during Executive Session.

2. Candidate Interview – Mr. Mike Reese

Chair Mark Romero welcomed Mr. Mike Reese and asked the Board members to introduce themselves. During his opening statement, Mr. Reese introduced his wife, Morgan, and their two children, as well as a close family friend.

Board members questioned Mr. Reese regarding workforce development, academic innovation, crisis management, shared governance, community partnerships, enrollment growth, and strategic planning.

At 11:41 a.m., upon motion of Mr. Salim, seconded by Mr. Stevens, the Board convened in Executive Session to discuss personnel matters associated with the McNeese State University presidential search. The following roll call vote was recorded:

Yeas: Mr. Busada, Mr. Davison, Mr. Jackson, Dr. Lethermon, Ms. Nechaeva, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Peterson, Ms. Pierre, Mr. Romero, Ms. Russell, Mr. Salim, Mr. Stevens, Ms. Stokes

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Hogan, Mr. Myers, Dr. Noble

On motion of Ms. Russell, seconded by Mr. Davison, the Board reconvened in open session at 12:45 p.m. Mr. Romero stated that no motions had been made nor votes taken during Executive Session.

F. Deliberations*

After the Executive Session with Mr. Mike Reese, the Board had remained in Executive Session to discuss both finalists.

G. Introduction of President of McNeese State University

When the Board returned, Chair Mark Romero asked if there were any comments from Board members.

Mr. Perkins made the following motion:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, *that the Board appoint Mr. Mike Reese as President of McNeese State University effective July 1, 2026, and authorize UL 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.*

The motion was seconded by Ms. Nechaeva. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously. The following vote was recorded:

Yeas: Mr. Busada, Mr. Davison, Mr. Jackson, Dr. Lethermon, Ms. Nechaeva, Mr. Perkins, Mr. Peterson, Ms. Pierre, Mr. Romero, Ms. Russell, Mr. Stevens, Mr. Salim

Nays: None

Absent: Mr. Hogan, Mr. Myers, Dr. Noble, Ms. Stokes

Chair Mark Romero congratulated President-elect Mike Reese and thanked the Board members, staff, search committee members, and community participants for their work throughout the search process.

President-elect Reese addressed the Board and expressed appreciation for the Board's confidence and stated that he and his family looked forward to serving McNeese State University and the University of Louisiana System.

H. Other Business

Chair Romero recognized Ms. Maria Nechaeva, Student Board Member, for her service on the Board during the past year, noting that the meeting marked her final meeting. He

thanked her for her commitment and contributions representing students throughout the System and congratulated her for being appointed to the Louisiana Board of Regents for the upcoming year.

I. Adjournment

Mr. Romero reminded them that the next Regular Board meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 25, 2026, at the Claiborne Building in Baton Rouge.

There being no further business, on motion of Mr. Brad Stevens, the meeting was adjourned at 12:53 p.m.