

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY TRUSTEE  
SCREENING COMMISSION

S C R E E N I N G S

DATE: Thursday, April 4, 2019  
TIME: 9:30 a.m.  
LOCATION: 209 Gressette Building  
1101 Pendleton Street  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201  
REPORTED BY: CAROLL ANNE BOUTAHAR  
Certified Verbatim Reporter

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

CHAIRMAN SENATOR HARVEY S. PEELER, JR.

REPRESENTATIVE GARY E. CLARY

REPRESENTATIVE SYLLESTE H. DAVIS

REPRESENTATIVE WILLIAM R. WHITMIRE

SENATOR JOHN L. SCOTT

SENATOR THOMAS C. ALEXANDER

ALSO PRESENT:

MARTHA CASTO, Staff

JULIE PRICE, Staff

1                   CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: I'll call the  
2 meeting to order. This is a meeting of the College and  
3 University Trustees Screening Commission. I'd like to  
4 welcome everyone and pray that God continues to bless us  
5 all.

6                   We have one appointment today before us,  
7 Coastal Carolina University. Our candidate wants to  
8 continue to serve on the Coastal Carolina University  
9 board.

10                  Mr. Turner, if you would, come forward.

11                  MR. TURNER: Yes, sir.

12                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: For the record, give  
13 us your full name.

14                  MR. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15                  My name is William E. Turner, III.

16                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Let me swear you in.

17                  Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole  
18 truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

19                  MR. TURNER: I do.

20                  CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Would you like to  
21 make a brief statement on why you'd like to continue to  
22 serve on the board?

23                  MR. TURNER: I would. Thank you. I'll be  
24 brief.

25                  I would like to thank you this morning for

1 having me in. I would first love to thank you for your  
2 flexibility. Unfortunately, I was on a business trip in  
3 Texas last week, on the 25th, and was unable to be here.  
4 But again, thank you for your flexibility and  
5 willingness to come back and spend your time for a few  
6 minutes with me today.

7 Coastal is a passion for me. I've been  
8 involved with the University since -- as a trustee since  
9 2011, 1997 graduate, a native of Conway. So I've  
10 watched that university grow and thrive. Growing up  
11 there, I remember it as a child with just a few small  
12 buildings and a lot of parking lots with empty parking  
13 spaces; now, today, a few parking lots and no empty  
14 parking spaces. So it's just a beautiful place to be a  
15 part of. I'm honored to serve, and with your help, I'd  
16 like to continue to do that.

17 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

18 MR. TURNER: Thank you, sir.

19 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Any questions or  
20 comments?

21 SENATOR SCOTT: (Raises hand.)

22 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Senator Scott.

23 SENATOR SCOTT: First, let me thank you for  
24 your willingness to serve.

25 MR. TURNER: Thank you.

1           SENATOR SCOTT: I see you have three wonderful  
2 daughters.

3           MR. TURNER: I do.

4           SENATOR SCOTT: Any of them go to Coastal yet?

5           MR. TURNER: I have one daughter -- my oldest  
6 daughter is a sophomore, about to finish her sophomore  
7 year at Gardner-Webb University.

8           SENATOR SCOTT: Okay.

9           MR. TURNER: My middle daughter is finishing  
10 her junior year in high school, and Coastal's at the top  
11 of her list. So I'm praying and crossing my fingers  
12 that at least one of them will go to Coastal. And  
13 Coastal was at the top of the list for my oldest  
14 daughter. But the nursing program was a little bit too  
15 new at Coastal for her to go there.

16           SENATOR SCOTT: Tell us what you really like  
17 about Coastal since you've been on the board and some of  
18 the things you've been able to improve as result of you  
19 being a trustee.

20           MR. TURNER: Sure.

21           I look around the boardroom and around that  
22 table, and I look at some phenomenal professionals in  
23 the communities in which they live. The knowledge that  
24 they bring to the table is balanced.

25           From a fiscal perspective, I feel like we

1 bring a base that keeps things in check. While we look  
2 to grow, we look to grow responsibly and keep our  
3 finances in such a manner that we're doing right by the  
4 students of South Carolina.

5 (Senator Alexander entered the room.)

6 MR. TURNER: So the growth has been  
7 phenomenal, as I'm sure you are aware, but it's been  
8 managed growth, and that's been very strategic. I think  
9 if we wanted to grow at six or seven percent a year, we  
10 could certainly do that, but that wouldn't be  
11 sustainable from a fiscal perspective.

12 So I think we just simply bring balance. We  
13 have a phenomenal administration in President Dave  
14 DeCenzo and our Executive Vice President and Provost  
15 Ralph Byington.

16 SENATOR SCOTT: And all that's getting ready  
17 to change.

18 MR. TURNER: It is going to be changing.

19 SENATOR SCOTT: Tell me a little bit about  
20 where you're going with that.

21 MR. TURNER: So we've established a committee  
22 to begin working on the presidential search. That's  
23 probably going to take us through the next year to 18  
24 months.

25 I'm not on that committee, but that will be --

1 the entire board will be active in the second stage, I  
2 would say. Once they've put the committee together and  
3 started actively pursuing candidates, then the entire  
4 board will be involved.

5 SENATOR SCOTT: What are you looking for in a  
6 good president?

7 MR. TURNER: That's a great question. Number  
8 one, someone that's willing to want to be there, I would  
9 say, ten years, I think, with the direction that Coastal  
10 is going, someone that's going to have a vested interest  
11 in sticking around for a little while and helping us  
12 achieve the growth that we want to achieve and continue  
13 the academic standard that we've set forth and want to  
14 maintain.

15 SENATOR SCOTT: I know the  
16 in-state/out-of-state balance has been a real issue for  
17 Coastal. You do a lot of out-of-state recruiting. Tell  
18 me how you balance that. You all have made several  
19 requests back and forth to the higher ed subcommittee  
20 for additional funding, although you get local funding  
21 as well, and there's a real push to educate South  
22 Carolina children. So tell me how you create some  
23 balance with that.

24 And that's my last question.

25 MR. TURNER: So, first and foremost, when we

1 look at our in-state to out-of-state ratio, it's fairly  
2 even, within about one percent, depending on what  
3 statistics you look at. Some show us at 49 percent  
4 in-state, 49 percent out-of-state, with two percent  
5 international. Other statistics have that off balance  
6 by one or two percent.

7 But first and foremost, we have a policy in  
8 place to admit any South Carolina student that meets our  
9 minimum requirements, period. We understand that that's  
10 not necessarily the case in some of the other  
11 institutions in the state, but those minimum  
12 requirements, once met, that student is admitted.

13 Now, whether they choose to go to Coastal is  
14 another story. You know, we're in a unique situation  
15 where we're competing with some phenomenal institutions  
16 in Clemson, South Carolina, Furman, Winthrop, a long  
17 list. So there's a lot of good education in this state  
18 for our students to choose from, and fortunately, we get  
19 a good many of those. But, again, we do not turn away  
20 any South Carolina student that meets our requirements.

21 Having said that, we do rely heavily on that  
22 out-of-state tuition. And if you look at the imbalance,  
23 if you will, between our in-state versus out-of-state  
24 tuition, it's considerable.

25 But we look at the numbers, and we're one of



1 the lower funded universities in the state in terms of  
2 state appropriations. And with the new legislation  
3 that's being introduced, that may change, with this new  
4 bill that's in place now and going through committee.  
5 The money following the student, I think, would be a  
6 phenomenal asset to all the universities.

7 SENATOR SCOTT: But your out-of-state numbers  
8 may create a problem for you with that legislation --

9 MR. TURNER: I think --

10 SENATOR SCOTT: -- especially when incentives  
11 go to schools who are educating in-state students.

12 MR. TURNER: This is true. I would love to  
13 say, News at eleven, because there's a lot more to come  
14 from that. And I've seen the proposed numbers one time,  
15 and they looked beneficial to Coastal.

16 But I think if -- you know, there's another  
17 unique scenario where we're seeing more and more  
18 students applying to other universities that are not  
19 being accepted, and we're looking at ways to recruit  
20 those students where Coastal was not their first choice,  
21 but we would be a wonderful second choice in the event  
22 they didn't get into Clemson, University of South  
23 Carolina, Winthrop, et cetera. I think from an economic  
24 standpoint we make good sense for those students that  
25 don't have that option.

1 SENATOR SCOTT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Thank you.

3 Anyone else?

4 What's the desire of the committee?

5 SENATOR SCOTT: Favorable report.

6 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Motion is favorable.

7 SENATOR ALEXANDER: Second.

8 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Seconded.

9 Any further discussion?

10 Hearing none, we'll take it to a vote. All in  
11 favor of a favorable report, raise your right hand.

12 (Members raise hands.)

13 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Unanimous.

14 Thank you for your willingness to continue to  
15 serve.

16 MR. TURNER: Thank you very much for having me  
17 today.

18 CHAIRMAN SENATOR PEELER: Meeting adjourned.

19 (The meeting was concluded at approximately  
20 9:42 a.m.)

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1 CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER  
2

3 I, Caroll Anne Boutahar, Certified  
4 Verbatim Reporter and Notary Public for the State of  
5 South Carolina at Large, do hereby certify:

6 That the foregoing committee meeting  
7 was taken before me on the date and at the time and  
8 location stated on page 1 of this transcript; that the  
9 candidates were duly sworn to testify to the truth, the  
10 whole truth, and nothing but the truth by the Chairman;  
11 that the testimony of the candidates and all comments  
12 made at the time of the screenings were recorded by me  
13 and were thereafter transcribed; that the foregoing  
14 committee meeting as typed is a true, accurate and  
15 complete record of the committee meeting to the best of  
16 my ability.

17 I further certify that I am neither  
18 related to nor counsel for any party to the cause  
19 pending or interested in the events thereof.

20 Witness my hand, I have hereunto  
21 affixed my official seal this 6th day of April, 2019,  
22 at Columbia, Richland County, South Carolina.

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Caroll Anne Boutahar  
Certified Verbatim Reporter  
Notary Public  
State of South Carolina at Large  
My Commission expires:  
December 13, 2021

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PAGE

CANDIDATE FOR COASTAL CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

At-Large - Seat 11 - Expires 2023

WILLIAM E. TURNER, III

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Certificate of Reporter

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