The External Affairs committee met at 2 p.m. on Thursday, July 18. Mark Lanier, assistant to the chancellor, provided a legislative update. Several university priorities are currently in the Budget Bill (H966) which include funding for enrollment growth, funding for completing renovations on Dobo Hall, repair and renovation funding and carryforward expanded to 5 percent for four years for renovations. However, there are several priorities not included in the bill such as funding for summer enrollment, building reserves, faculty salary increases, and for the Randall Library expansion and renovation. Without the votes in the House to override the Governor’s veto of the budget, the General Assembly will likely adjourn next week until August 27 without approving a budget.

Eddie Stuart, vice chancellor for university advancement, provided an update on year-end fundraising totals. The fiscal year 2019 ended on June 30, with a record-breaking year, with the total productivity of $23.2 million in gifts and commitments. Mr. Stuart credited the advancement team, the campus community and the board for their support of philanthropy. A total of 18,557 gifts were made and of that 88 percent of those gifts were $250 or less, which shows that all gifts no matter the size makes a difference. The division is also in the process of doing an image study in preparation for the comprehensive campaign, which will most likely launch in 2020.

Drew Scales, Associate Athletic Director for Student-Athlete Support Services, provided the committee with a presentation entitled Bringing out the B.E.A.S.T. in African American Male Student-Athletes: Black Excellence Achieving Success Together. This program is a partnership with the Chief Diversity Officer and Associate Athletic Director. The five pillars of the program include connecting the students with the institution, helping to instill financial responsibility along with providing service, scholarship, and career development opportunities. The program has had success since it started, and they are looking at ways to expand and improve.

Under new business, Trustee Smith asked the committee and the board to think about innovative ways to address staff and faculty salary compensation for talent development and competitive pay. After some discussion, Mr. Lanier told the committee this topic would make a great conversation for a future full board workshop to look at the position categories and options.

The meeting concluded at 3:10 p.m.