

BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

A special meeting of the Board of Regents was held in Oklahoma City in the office of Frank Buttram, Chairman, on Saturday, January 16, 1931, at 9 a. m.

Regent Buttram, Chairman of the Board presided; others present: John Rogers, John Carlock, Lowther, Moss.

The minutes of the meetings of November 10 and November 27, were approved as read.

President Bizzell presented the following recommendations:

Appointments

Forrest Edward Clements, Associate Professor of Anthropology, to date from February 5, 1931 to June 9, 1931, at the rate of \$3,200.00 per year (\$1,600.00 for second semester)

Mildred Dolezal, Instructor in Mathematics, to date from February 5, 1931 to June 9, 1931, at the rate of \$1,800.00 per year (\$900.00 for second semester)

Dorothy Willows Tate, Secretary in the Department of Business Education, Extension Division, to date from December 8, 1930 to July 1, 1931, at the rate of \$83.33 per month

Ernest Freeman Hiser, Medical Artist, School of Medicine in Oklahoma City, to date from November 16, 1930 to July 1, 1931, at an annual salary of \$1,800.00

Adjustments

That the salary of Dovie Thornton, Stenographer in the Financial Clerk's Office, be fixed at the rate of \$125.00 per month, to date from December 1, 1930 to July 1, 1931.

That the salary of Pearl Foval, Secretary to the Administrative Officer, University Hospital in Oklahoma City, be fixed at the rate of \$150.00 per month, to date from January 1, 1931 to July 1, 1931.

Resignations

George Emil Raynor, Associate Professor of Mathematics, February 3, 1931  
Elsie Jeanette McFarland, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, February 3, 1931

Georgiana McClain, Secretary in the Department of Business Education, Extension Division, December 6, 1930.

I desire to report the death of Miss Mary Anne Hughes, Assistant Financial Clerk, on November 15, 1930.

President Bizzell read the following letter from Dr. Wann Langston, Administrative Officer of University Hospitals and School of Medicine, in defense of charges that had been made against him in connection with his administration in the University Hospital:

January 15, 1931.

President W. B. Bizzell,  
Norman, Oklahoma.

Dear Dr. Bizzell:

This is a statement of facts, an admission of indiscretions, but not a confession of guilt.

From all I hear it appears that there is a conspiracy to have me dismissed, and even to ruin my career. This conspiracy is headed by a disloyal employee and other disgruntled employees and some who have been dismissed for cause. I understand that an investigating committee will be formed this week, and that testimony is already in the hands of the Governor.

Following are some of the charges: That I have supplied myself with milk from the dairy, that I have had my family laundry done, that I have had eggs and chickens from the poultry ranch, that turkeys have been furnished me on Thanksgiving and Christmas, and that I have had meat from the Hospital, all of which charges are technically true. From the day I took over the management of the Hospital I have had these little considerations at the hands of the employees here, and without my having asked in the beginning. I was given to understand that this was the custom and I accepted it as a matter of course. I was also told that I should get groceries from the store-room. This I have never done.

Other charges will be that I used hospital material and labor in landscaping my home. This is also true, but I have paid all that I have received. On December 12, 1929, I gave Mr. Parker a check for \$150.00 with instructions that it was to apply on hospital labor on my lawn, and at the fountain in the court at the Children's Hospital. This was not done. It was put in the trust fund without my knowledge, and was checked against for personal expenses (all legitimate), without my knowledge or consent. Unfortunately, Mr. Parker's mentality is now such that he does not remember the details of my instructions. When I looked up this account two days ago I was astounded and terribly disturbed; and yesterday I wrote across the face of the account the actual facts, and paid the Hospital the \$150.00. In addition I have employed the men to do work on the lawn at their time off duty. I have always done this. I have always offered to pay. Sometimes they would accept, and frequently they would not. I have some fifty dollars in cancelled checks for such labor. The man frequently would not have pay for such services, because I have done many professional services for many of the employees, including the leader of this movement, and have never charged them.

As to material used at my home, the only thing I know of is an item of about 350 discarded brick. I thought until just recently that I paid for these. I have several cancelled checks from Acme Brick Co., but when I investigated the other day, none of these were for brick. I then asked the landscape man and he told me they were old brick he took from here. I have reimbursed the hospital amply for these.

Another charge is that trees have been removed from the grounds here to my house. This is true. It was represented to me that these trees must be sacrificed, and the boys wanted to move them to my place. Mr. Baker secured permission from Mr. Coppock to do this.

I have always urged these men not to use hospital material or time without turning in an account of it at the office; that they should not do anything that would bring criticism on them or me. I fear they have been overzealous at times, but I must assume the responsibility.

The only other thing that they may charge me with, so far as I can think, lies in the fact that when I was placed in charge of the institution I was furnished a house at Hospital expense, with the incidentals, gas, light, water and telephone. When I moved into my own house, I gave up the rented house, which was costing the institution sixty dollars a month, but retained the incidentals, gas, water, light, and telephone. The books will show this. I believe I was entitled to this service.

Now, President Bizzell, I fear I have caused you, Doctor Long, and the institution for which we have all labored hard, grave embarasemtn. I realize that the facts I have set forth are hard to explain. But they are true. I have been guilty of no crime that I was conscious of. All the things that I have enumerated would have caused no trouble had I remained in the house furnished by the Hospital.

So far as the Hospital books are concerned, you need have no worry. Everything is right, unless it be some technical errors. I do not fear a careful audit.

In view of the facts set forth above, I am entitled to dismissal, suspension pending an investigation, or resignation. I hereby tender my resignation if it will make it less embarassing for you, subject to your will.

My only regret is that I fear to lose the confidence of such wonderful friends as yourself and family, Dr. Long, and my many professional friends here and elsewhere.

Sincerely,

(Signed) Wann Langston

P. S. Another charge that I have heard hinted at is that I bought furniture, etc., and paid for it out of Hospital funds. An audit will reveal that this is utterly false. I have purchased many things from wholesale dealers, but I have always paid for them.


W. L."

The matter was discussed briefly following which Dr. LeRoy Long, Dean of the School of Medicine, appeared before the Board to discuss the matter concerning Dr. Langston. Dr. Langston was called by telephone and asked to appear before the Board for further discussion of the matter. Dr. Langston reviewed some of the charges that had been reported to him as being made. He stated that the only items that were not considered as customary practice for the Superintendent of University Hospitals, were the transplanting of trees to the lawn of his home, and the use of discarded brick on a dog house. Dr. Langston offered to submit his resignation if the Board felt that this action would simplify matters for the Board and prevent embarrassment or harm to the University Hospital. Doctors Long and Langston were excused and the matter was further discussed.

It was the sense of the Board that action on the resignation of Dr. Langston be postponed and that a committee consisting of Regents Carlock and Looney was appointed to confer with Governor Murray, concerning Dr. Langston's case. This committee was given power to act for the Board.

There was a discussion of the budget as filed with the Budget Officer and President Bizzell stated that he would keep the members of the Board informed in matters affecting the University in the Legislature.

On motion adjourned.

  
Emil R. Kraetli, Secretary.