

THE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT MONROE
MASCOT COMMITTEE MEETING
March 15, 2006

The University of Louisiana at Monroe (ULM) Mascot Committee met at 3:30 p.m., on Wednesday, March 15, 2006, in the Administrative Conference Room #622 on the 6th floor of the Library. Committee members present: Chairman George Luffey, Keith Brown, Skeet Creekmore, Joe Farr, Eveta Gambrah, Laura Harris, Richard Hood, Stuart Keyes, John Knesel, Stacy Lamb, Scott McDonald, John Rettenmayer, Dorothy Schween, Don Skelton, Bobby Staub, Joey Trappey, Elee Trichel, Rod Washington, Amy Weems, Chris Wilson, and Amanda Wing. Committee Members absent: Wayne Brumfield, Sue Edmonds, Kyle Gallman, Dave Norris, Mary Ann Newton, Don Weems, and James Wright. Others attending by invitation were: Kevin Stuart, Lindsey Wilkerson, Lillian Brown, and Mazie Williams. The media personnel attending were Jordan Blum – News-Star and Melissa Clark and Edwin Rowan of KNOE-TV.

The meeting was called to order promptly at 3:30 p.m., by Chairman Luffey. Following a review of the minutes of March 8, 2006, on a motion by Elee Trichell, second by Scott McDonald, and a vote of the committee, the minutes were approved as read. The media present was asked to please identify themselves.

Chairman Luffey advised he had called this meeting in order for the Committee to have the opportunity to interact via a teleconference with Rick Rickabaugh of Rickabaugh Graphics and Ryan Prowell and Tammy Purves with the Collegiate Licensing Company (CLC). After narrowing the mascot list down to nine (9) finalists last week, Rickabaugh Graphics and the CLC conducted a trademark search on the nine (9) names and stated they had concerns about trademark issues with several of the names on the list and suggested that the list be expanded before going public.

The consultants said several names, to include Hawks, Gators, Bruins, and Raiders, would be very difficult to establish as a new name for a mascot, as they are already a registered trademark for other teams, such as Atlanta Hawks. Placing a qualifier before them, such as “bayou”, might help; but both Rickabaugh Graphics and the CLC suggested staying away from this was best, as there could still be potential trademark issues and it could still be contested. They also suggested staying away from “Storm”, because of St. John’s Red Storm and because of the possible backlash from the recent storms (Hurricanes Katrina and Rita) that caused such devastation to Louisiana.

The Committee members had various questions and discussed mascot alternatives with the consultants and asked them the pros and cons of picking a mascot with and without a qualifier. The consultants suggested picking a nickname that is catchy, that relates to the University and to the region, and one with a “brand” that the University can identify with and build around. They said a “one-word name” mascot is easier to use and to market and that shorter is always better and more flexible. Thus, the qualifier “Bayou” would only make the mascot name longer and harder to market. Rick Rickabaugh said a great mascot name brings flavor to the school, is unique to the school and the area, and transforms into a great graphic image. As for athletics, the consultants said a mascot name should bring an image to mind and follow-up with a great costume mascot. Tammy Purves of CLC liked “Bayou Bandits” but suggested looking at additional names that are more unique to this region,

such as the “Catahoulas”. Other mascot suggestions from the consultants consisted of Copperheads, Marauders, Thunderbolts, Aviators, Vipers, Bloodhounds, Crop Dusters (Dusters), and Crocodiles.

There being no further questions from the Committee to the consultants, the teleconference ended.

Based on the consultants’ recommendations, the Committee discussed the elimination of Hawks and Storm from the list. On a motion by Don Skelton to remove Hawks and Storm from the list of nine (9) finalists to be presented to the public for polling, a second by Elee Trichel, and a vote of the Committee, Hawks and Storm were eliminated.

The Committee then discussed the process of adding additional names to the list before presenting it to the public for polling. They also discussed the reality of being able to keep the original timeline, as the list had to be revised. Joe Farr urged the Committee to stay with the original course, as there were several viable mascot names already on the list and to just begin the process of adding a few more names back to the list. A discussion on how to accomplish this ensued, and it was agreed that the Committee would review the remaining seven (7) mascot names of the nine (9) finalists (Bayou Bandits, Bayou Bruins, Bayou Gators, Bayou Hawks, Bayou Raiders, Bayou Storm, and Warhawks), then review the remaining ten (10) of the original 19 semifinalists (Aviators, Bayou Buccaneers, Bayou Thunder, Black Bears, Falcons, Gators, Gladiators, Maroon Fury, Maroon Platoon, and Red Hawks), and, finally, review the mascot suggestions given by the consultants (Copperheads, Marauders, Thunderbolts, Aviators, Vipers, Bloodhounds, Crop Dusters {Dusters}, and Crocodiles). The Committee’s revised list to be presented to the public for polling includes: Aviators, Bayou Buccaneers, Bayou Bandits, Bayou Bruins, Bayou Gators, Bayou Hawks, Bayou Raiders, Bayou Storm, Marauders, Thunder, Thunderbirds, and Warhawks. As the Committee felt these 12 mascot names were adequate, the Committee agreed to stay with the timeline originally agreed upon. The polling dates remain 8:00 a.m., on March 20, through 8:00 a.m., on March 31. Each participant in the polling process will still be allowed to go online once and indicate preference for up to three (3) of the twelve (12) mascot choices.

Dorothy Schween addressed the issue of the description to be listed by each mascot name when presented to the public for polling. After discussing this, the Committee agreed a brief description should be shown by all names to indicate to the public why the name had been selected as a potential mascot candidate.

As the Committee agreed to keep the original polling dates, the next meeting is set for Wednesday, April 5, at 3:30 p.m., in the Administrative Conference Room #622 on the 6th floor of the Library. The purpose of this meeting will be to evaluate the online polling results and to select a new mascot for the University of Louisiana at Monroe.

Kevin Stuart indicated to the Committee his concern about the potential problem of presenting polling data by categories back to the Committee. Amy Weems made a motion to receive polling data by simple numbers rather than by categories, it was seconded by John Rettenmayer, and with a vote of the Committee, it was agreed that the Committee will receive polling data by simple numbers rather than by categories.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.