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Minutes of the Board of Directors of Southwestern May 12, 1931

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MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF SOUTHWESTERN
HELD IN THE DIRECTORS'S ROOM
IN PALMER HALL
MAY 12, 1931.

The Board of Directors of Southwestern met in called session on Tuesday, May 12, 1931, at 9 a.m., in the Directors' Room, Palmer Hall.

The meeting was opened with prayer by Dr. Fred R. Graves.

The roll call showed the following members present:

ALABAMA:	J.T. Fuller	MISSISSIPPI:	S. Watkins Overton Fred R. Graves G.L. Tucker J.D. Duncan
LOUISIANA:	E.B. LeMaster W.McF. Alexander A.C. Glassell	TENNESSEE:	T.H. Tutwiler B.A. Patch James I. Vance Moore Moore

Chas. E. Diehl, ex-officio.

Excuses were presented for Drs. A.B. Curry, D.C. MacGuire, Messrs. J.V. Arnold and R.E. Craig, which were accepted.

The minutes of the last Board meeting were read and approved, after which the minutes of the Executive Committee meetings since the last Board meeting were read and approved.

Miss Erma Reese, Secretary to the President, was called in to assist in taking the minutes of the meeting.

Upon motion the hour of 12:30 was set for luncheon.

The call for this meeting was read to the Board, after which the Chairman stated that the special object of the meeting was to consider the campaign now being waged against the management. In this connection the Secretary was asked to read the pamphlet being circulated by Dr. J.P. Robertson. This paper was discussed during the reading of same, the discussion also including the status of Dr. E.D. McDougall and report by President Diehl on this subject.

It was moved that a committee of four, one from each Synod, be appointed to consider and bring in recommendations on this whole matter. This motion being put was carried unanimously, and the Chairman appointed on this committee: Dr. James I. Vance (Tennessee), Chairman; Judge J.T. Fuller (Alabama); Mr. S. Watkins Overton, (Mississippi); Dr. W.McF. Alexander (Louisiana).

The pamphlet issued by Dr. W.S. Lacy was then taken up for consideration and discussion.

Recess being had for luncheon, the meeting reconvened at 1:30 p.m.

Upon motion, Dr. Alexander was asked to lead in special prayer for the restoration of Dr. Curry and Mr. Arnold, both of whom were reported seriously ill. Dr. Graves was asked to write both of these brethren, expressing the sympathy of the Board.

At this time a petition, signed by one hundred and eighty-seven (187) students of the college, was presented, asking for reconsideration in the McDougall matter, as was also a similar petition signed by Dr. and Mrs. N.W. Sherman, Sr., and other members of their family. After due consideration of this matter, the following letter, upon motion of Dr. Graves, duly seconded, was ordered sent to both petitioners:

"Your petition with reference to Dr. E.D. McDougall has been given careful consideration. It was with reluctance that the Board in the first place reached the decision that it was wise for the relationship between Dr. McDougall and the college be severed. We appreciate your interest in the college and attachment for Dr. McDougall, but under all the circumstances the Board is of the opinion that its decision in the first case should stand".

A memorial from Central Mississippi Presbytery, protesting against the present management of Southwestern, was also read at this time, and referred to the special committee.

Recess was had at 3:30 p.m. for committee work, and the Board reconvened at 5 p.m.

Upon reconvening Dr. Vance, Chairman of the special committee, made the following report, which was unanimously adopted by a rising vote:

"The members of the Board of Directors of Southwestern are not unmindful of the injurious effect of the attacks that have been made upon Southwestern and Dr. Chas. E. Diehl, its President.

"By law and agreement of the four controlling synods, however, the administration of Southwestern is vested in its Board of Directors. The plan of union and the charter state 'that the administration of the affairs of this institution shall be supremely and solely in the hands of the Board of Directors'. This responsibility the Board will not and cannot shirk. The Directors deeply regret the attacks that have been made upon the President. We have the statements of his critics which are full of inaccuracies. After the fullest and fairest investigation, our confidence in Dr. Diehl remains unshaken, and he has the unanimous and unqualified support of the Directors. His doctrinal views are under investigation by his Presbytery. We await the decision with confidence. His record as president refutes the insinuations and distorted propaganda of his opponents.

"We call on all loyal Presbyterians and friends of the college to rally to its support and to denounce as false and untrue all statements reflecting on this institution, its management, finances and success. Everywhere Southwestern is being recognized for its leadership

in Christian education. Recently examined by an unbiased authority on college administration for a large foundation, the following letter was written by him to the Chairman of the Board, after his official visit to Southwestern in January, 1931:

" I have no special interest in Southwestern since I have no connections with the institution or any member of the faculty. I feel, however, that in the interest of fairness I am justified in calling your attention to the fact that, in my opinion, the charges of extravagance that are being brought against President Diehl are without adequate basis. I visited the institution and obtained for the Carnegie Corporation data regarding enrollment and expenditures. These data show that the per capita cost of instruction is low when consideration is given to the high-grade staff the college has. There was no evidence so far as equipment is concerned of extravagance. If one has in mind the buildings, I would say that when consideration is given to the quality of building that has been erected the expenditures are very reasonable.

" I am glad to bear this testimony because I was convinced during my visit to the institution that it was doing a fine piece of work'.

"Southwestern cannot turn backwards. It cannot permit its reputation to be ruined or impaired by statements of those who are not properly informed of the facts. The splendid record of Southwestern is the best answer to the criticism of its enemies. In all the efforts making to find fault with what has been done to place the college in its present position, no word of criticism has been uttered against the fact that Southwestern has a splendid equipment in its campus and buildings, a faculty of recognized scholarship and character, and a student body that promises much for future leadership in the church and state. The college is here, and commands and merits the esteem and confidence of the public.

"The changes that have been made from time to time in the employed personnel of the institution have not been numerous, and in every case the change has been made for the good of Southwestern.

"It is significant that our critics, waited until the college was free of indebtedness before attempting to grasp for themselves the direction of its policies. They remained silent when the loyal friends of Southwestern through work and prayer were endeavoring to pay the mortgage.

"So long as we are the chosen representatives of the four Presbyterian Synods, we propose to continue to conduct the affairs of Southwestern in a manner worthy of the highest traditions of the Presbyterian Church and the loftiest ideals of Christian education."

Upon motion, the Chairman was instructed to sign this report with the attest of the Secretary, and it was ordered that copies be given to the local press and to the Christian Observer, the Presbyterian of the South, the Presbyterian Standard, and also printed and distributed throughout the four Synods.

Upon motion, the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity was ordered conferred on June 9, 1931 upon the Rev. T.E.P. Woods, Associate Headmaster, McCallie School, Chattanooga, Tennessee, and Rev. Homer M. McLain, Superintendent of Home Missions in North Mississippi Presbytery, Oxford, Mississippi.

Upon motion, duly seconded and carried, the Board re-nominated to succeed themselves on the Board the following:


S. Watkins Overton, Mississippi
T.H. Tutwiler, Tennessee
A.B. Curry, Alabama
E.B. LeMaster, Louisiana

The Secretary was directed to notify the Stated Clerks of the respective Synods:

Upon motion, duly seconded and carried, Drs. Vance, Alexander and Diehl and Messrs. Overton and LeMaster were requested to attend the next meeting of the Synod of Mississippi.

President Diehl reported that he had just received a check for \$50.00 from Mrs. M.W. Storn, Secretary of the Southwestern Woman's Club. The Secretary was directed to write to Mrs. Storn, expressing thanks on behalf of the Board for this check.

After a prolonged discussion of the financial situation of the college, but concerning which no action was taken, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m., with prayer by Dr. Tucker.


Secretary.