

Provost Lyman Implies CFO Morgan was Relieved of Duty

HATTIESBURG – USM provost Robert Lyman was questioned by the USM faculty senate on 7-May-2010 about the recent “[resignation](#)” of Joe Morgan from the position of USM chief financial officer. Lyman’s response implied that Morgan did not resign, but was instead relieved of CFO duties, though Lyman did state that he did not believe that Morgan was involved in the USM Research Foundation/Pinion Properties [scandal](#). According to Lyman:

“I can tell you this, [the ‘resignation’] came as a surprise to me. I can’t say I know for a fact, but I am absolutely confident that it has nothing to do with the [USM] Research Foundation [situation]. I think it probably reflects other factors. . . You know we all serve at the pleasure of the president. I think that’s what’s involved here. I think that the unfortunate timing may have suggested a relationship between the Research Foundation. I absolutely don’t believe that is true.”

The highlighted portion speaks volumes – Lyman senses that Saunders relieved Morgan of his upper-level duties to the institution. Though the comments about the USMRF may have alleviated some [concerns](#), sources say that the faculty senate must have been shocked to hear Lyman describe the situation as highlighted above.

In other news, the senators’ tone made it clear that the atmosphere on campus is deteriorating rapidly. Most senators seemed troubled by (1) the APG-led process of cutting about \$11 million from USM’s 2011 budget, and (2) UPC-led process to cut \$15 million or more from USM’s 2012 budget. There were numerous questions, many accusatory and suspicious of the motives of those involved. Some senators asked about future lawsuits over the [ongoing](#) efforts to [terminate](#) up to 100 faculty. Senators even expressed concern about the CoB’s recent move to hire Michael Dugan, an accountant at the University of Alabama, to direct its MPA program. The CoB’s Donna Davis tried to protect the Lance Nail administration of the CoB by offering a response to the Dugan issue, though it did not appear that faculty senators were satisfied by her comments.