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Clemson trustees deny claims made in lawsuit

Former executive secretary has sued, saying he lost his job for speaking out

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Clemson University's trustees said in a federal court filing that a former executive secretary was fired for failing to work effectively with school officials and because he reor-

ganized a business division without proper approval.

The trustees, in an answer to a complaint filed by the former secretary, Chalmers Eugene Troutman III, said he was asked to resign based on his "unauthorized and unapproved reorganization" of the Internal Auditing Division.

Troutman sued the trustees and other Clemson officials, including President James F. Barker, alleging he lost his job, in part, after he spoke out about "excessive" salary increases given to some administrators.

He alleged in his suit that increases in tuition and fees at Clemson weren't justified by cuts in state appropriations, and trustees "hoarded" cash from tuition

increases to build an unrestricted \$80 million fund.

Troutman, according to the filing in U.S. District Court, improperly circumvented the trustees' policy manual by reorganizing the division and adding an executive director without the board's approval.

He also failed "to establish and maintain effective working relationships with members of the board, faculty representatives, and

members of the university administration," the trustees' filing said.

His unacceptable conduct included publicly shouting at trustee Louis Lynn during a post-graduation luncheon and shouting at the university provost and slamming his hands on a conference table during an administrative council meeting, the filing said.

Court record show trustees unanimously voted to

fire Troutman in 2007 after he refused to resign.

Troutman also alleged Clemson failed to make appropriate disclosures to the General Assembly regarding its cash positions and made "nonfactual public statements" about the need for tuition increases.

In their filing, Clemson's trustees denied "any fiscal impropriety, misutilization, nonutilization, and waste of public resources."