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## Troutman amends Clemson suit

### Ex-board secretary no longer suing trustees personally

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COLUMBIA — A former Clemson University board executive secretary has amended his lawsuit against school officials to remove claims against them as individuals.

Instead, Eugene Troutman is suing the trustees and other officials in their official capacity, according to the new complaint.

The amended suit also removes a conspiracy charge.

"The significance is the trustees no longer have a liability in their individual capacity," said Drew Rhodes, one of the lawyers defending the trustees in the lawsuit. "This is now a case essentially against the board and the trustees in their official capacities. We think that's appropriate."

Joel Collins, who represents Troutman, said the lawsuit was amended to prevent the issue from being fought at the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which Clemson's lawyers had threatened to do.

"We're talking about years of appeals if we had all those appeals," he said.

Collins said his client wants to get to the facts and merits of his case and doesn't want to be delayed by other issues.

Clemson spokeswoman Cathy Sams issued a statement on behalf of the university describing the amended complaint as a victory for the school.

"The filing of the second amended complaint by Mr. Troutman is another win for Clemson University," the statement reads.

"He previously aban-

doned his whistleblower claim and a defamation claim against the university general counsel. These claims were abandoned or withdrawn because -- as we have said from the beginning -- they were without merit. We look forward to proving that the remaining claims also are without merit."

The decision to change the complaint rendered several motions by the school moot, including opposition to a request for documents and information by Troutman's lawyers.

The lawsuit by Troutman, who also was assistant to Clemson's president, alleges he lost his job, in part, after he spoke out about "excessive" salary increases given to some university administrators.

Troutman also alleged in his suit that increases in tu-

ition and fees at Clemson weren't justified by cuts in state appropriations, and that trustees "hoarded" cash from tuition increases to build an unrestricted \$80 million fund.

The trustees and school officials have denied any wrongdoing. They said in court filings Troutman improperly circumvented the trustees' policy manual by reorganizing the Internal Auditing Division and that he failed to establish and maintain effective working relationships with members of the board, faculty representatives and administration.

In March, U.S. Senior District Judge Matthew Perry denied a motion filed by Clemson trustees and officials to dismiss Troutman's suit.

He has recently filed an order in the case, setting March 15 as the earliest trial date.