

The Greenville News

GreenvilleOnline.com

SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 2007 ■ FINAL EDITION



Greenville,
South Carolina

Clemson trustees fire board secretary

Troutman fires back: 'I am not the problem'

By Anna Simon

CLEMSON BUREAU
asimon@greenvillenews.com

CLEMSON — Clemson's Board of Trustees on Friday unanimously fired its executive secretary, Gene Troutman, who

fired back saying he did nothing wrong and called for more accountability in internal auditing.

Board Chairman Bill Hendrix told the board that attempts to resolve the issue without formal action or embarrassment were "met with threats and unfounded

claims" about Clemson business practices.

In a grievance submitted to the university Monday, Troutman wrote that he was terminated "because I established and filled the position of executive director fiscal control/policy compliance in the Department of Internal Audit designed to investi-

gate, document, disclose and correct de facto concealment of public funds, the misrepresentation of facts, and the abuse of authority."

Hendrix responded to Troutman's comments saying that Clemson "has nothing to hide" and the allegations contain "nothing that is of substance."

"I am not the problem," Trout-

man, of Greenville and a 1974 Clemson graduate who worked in a variety of posts at Fluor Corp., said in an interview with *The Greenville News* after the teleconference that he didn't attend. "The need for full and open accountability should not be labeled a threat. We tried to

See **CLEMSON** on page **6A**

CLEMSON

FROM PAGE 1A

prevail upon them to recognize the need for full disclosure."

Trustee Bill Amick, in presenting the motion to terminate Troutman, said Troutman "failed to establish and maintain an effective working relationship" with the board and the

university president.

Amick said Troutman circumvented board policy when he announced a reorganization of the internal audit department without approval of the board's executive audit committee.

The board has "lost confidence" in Troutman, Amick said.

The board meeting was held in open session Friday, follow-

ing three closed sessions on the matter in the past three weeks.

The board named Clemson's general counsel, Clay Steadman, interim executive secretary pending a search for a permanent replacement.

Troutman, who was hired as executive secretary to the board in April 2005, said he told Hendrix early on that the internal audit "needed to be strengthened and reorganized."

The reorganization was in the works for more than a year and followed proper channels, Troutman said.

Troutman, who graduated from Clemson, said he also had "an excellent relationship" with the board, but not with Clemson University President Jim Barker, "simply because we never had any interface. I believe Jim did not want oversight by internal audit. Jim prevailed upon the board to assure that he wouldn't have that oversight."

Barker never indicated "that he didn't want oversight from internal audit. He is a strong supporter of proper governance and proper financial controls," Hendrix said.

Troutman was terminated because "he violated the rules and the bylaws in creating and announcing this position without giving notice or receiving approval from the board of trustees to do so," Hendrix said.

Troutman's "management and work style and the unauthorized expansion and change in the internal audit department without proper approvals" led to loss of confidence," Hendrix said.

Staffing needs, budget requirements or changes in the scope of the services or responsibilities of the internal audit department require approval of the trustees' Executive and Audit Committee, Steadman and Hendrix said.

Troutman disagreed, and said he had the authority to handle administrative matters as an officer on the administrative council.