



**Executive Committee Meeting**  
**April 21, 2020**  
**Meeting via teleconference and streamed live on the Board's website**

**MINUTES**

**AGENDA ITEM 1—CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees Executive Committee met on April 21, 2020, via teleconference. Chair Harper called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Chair Harper asked Kae Carpenter, Secretary, to call the roll. The following members participated by teleconference:

- Tom Jones
- Teresa Vanhooser
- Trudy Harper

Other Board members, Mason Hilliard, Sally Pardue, Purna Saggurti, and Barry Wilmore also participated by teleconference.

Participating Trustees confirmed that they could simultaneously hear and speak to the Board members, that they were the only person present in the location from which they were calling, and that they received the Board materials in advance of the meeting.

The meeting audio was streamed live on the Board's website.

**AGENDA ITEM 2—Determination of Necessity**

Chair Harper stated the following facts and circumstances necessitated a meeting by electronic means because a physical quorum was not present:

1. Pursuant to TTU Policy 005, the Executive Committee was required to approve any appointments to positions reporting to the President.

2. The President requested the appointment of Dr. Jennifer Taylor to the position of Vice President for Research.<sup>1</sup>
3. The Executive Committee needed to meet via teleconference in recognition of the need to limit personal contact during the COVID-19 pandemic and in keeping with Executive Order 23 related to the pandemic.
4. These facts and circumstances necessitated a meeting without a quorum physically present.

Tom Jones moved that the necessity existed to hold the Executive Committee meeting via teleconference without a quorum physically present. Teresa Vanhooser seconded the motion. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Ms. Carpenter called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

### **AGENDA ITEM 3—APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Mr. Jones moved to approve the March 12, 2020, meeting minutes. Ms. Vanhooser seconded the motion. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Ms. Carpenter called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

### **AGENDA ITEM 4—APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT OF VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH**

Chair Harper stated that the President requested the Executive Committee approve the appointment of Dr. Jennifer Taylor to the position of Vice President for Research.

Mr. Jones asked President Oldham to describe the process used to select Dr. Taylor for this position.

President Oldham stated this was a rigorous, national search of a large pool of candidates. He stated Provost Bruce chaired the search committee, which was comprised of faculty and staff from across the campus. He stated the search was conducted over a significant period of time and brought several candidates on campus to interview, and input was collected from the campus community about each candidate. He stated that he believed Tennessee Tech was selecting the best candidate from the pool of applicants.

Mr. Jones moved to approve the President's request to appoint Dr. Jennifer Taylor to the position of Vice President for Research. Ms. Vanhooser seconded the motion.

With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Ms. Carpenter called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

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<sup>1</sup> Meeting materials incorrectly indicated that Dr. Taylor was appointed to the position of "Vice President for Research and Economic Development." The proper title for the position is "Vice President for Research," and the minutes reflect the proper title.

Dr. Taylor stated that she wanted to thank the Tennessee Tech faculty and staff and she was looking forward to joining the community as quickly as possible.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5—APPROVAL OF TTU POLICY 008 (PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

Ms. Carpenter stated that TTU Policy 008 (Professional Development) captured the Board's current professional development practices. She stated that the policy also included a requirement that the President develop an orientation for new members of the Board.

Mr. Jones moved to approve TTU Policy 008 (Professional Development) as presented and place it on the Board's agenda. Ms. Vanhooser seconded the motion. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Ms. Carpenter called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6—APPROVAL OF TTU POLICY 135 (LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS)**

President Oldham stated that TTU Policy 135 (Legislative Proposals) restated the statutory requirements related to legislative proposals that might have a fiscal impact on higher education institutions, and that the statutory requirement required that all such proposals be submitted with the knowledge of the President, who would then advance legislative proposals through established channels to the general assembly through the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. He stated that fiscally-related proposals were being channeled through appropriate mechanisms.

Mr. Jones moved to approve TTU Policy 135 (Legislative Proposals) as presented and place it on the Board's agenda. Ms. Vanhooser seconded the motion. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Ms. Carpenter called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 7—PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Oldham stated that the Board delegated to him as President the power to act in an emergency and required him to promptly report to the Board the reason for taking any such actions. He stated that his current report was to fulfill that obligation and provide that information regarding Tennessee Tech's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

President Oldham stated that he wanted to thank the faculty, staff, and students for the way they responded during this time. He stated that Tennessee Tech was currently registering for summer and fall semesters. He stated summer enrollment was on track with last year's numbers, and fall enrollment was slightly behind, but more students were being added. He stated that the first summer term would use online instruction and all online fees for

undergraduate courses were waived to aid in removing financial barriers that might hinder students from progressing. He stated that it had not been decided whether the second summer term would be online or not.

President Oldham stated that Governor Lee announced the State of Tennessee could begin reopening business over the next few weeks, and Tennessee Tech would be considering opening parts of campus, as well, in a safe manner.

President Oldham stated that a number of faculty, staff, and students helped provide roughly 2,000 face shields for the state and local first responders and medical professionals in Putnam County.

President Oldham stated the campus was operating with about 10 percent of faculty and staff on campus. He stated there were a few dozen students still staying on campus in the residence halls and had food services and other necessities on campus. He stated that Tennessee Tech was processing housing and meal plan refunds for displaced students.

President Oldham stated that commencement had not been cancelled, only postponed. He stated there would be some commencement event possibly later in the summer. He stated a virtual event was being planned for May 9, 2020.

President Oldham stated all summer camps had been postponed, cancelled, or moved online.

President Oldham stated Tennessee Tech was recruiting students through calls and emails and providing virtual tours.

President Oldham stated Tennessee Tech would receive \$8,700,000 from the CARES Act, half of which would be distributed to students who had been directly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. He stated Tennessee Tech was researching how best to allocate that money and hoped to have that finalized soon. He stated the other half of the funds would be available to Tennessee Tech to provide financial support for the changes necessary in operational environments during the pandemic.

President Oldham stated that Governor Lee announced the "Stay at Home" executive order would expire on April 30, 2020. He stated Tennessee Tech would begin the process of returning to a state of normalcy. He stated safety precautions would be fully implemented before Tennessee Tech would open for full activity. He stated that he hoped by August or September, 2020, students could return to campus in large numbers.

Mr. Saggurti asked President Oldham to share the safety guidelines Tennessee Tech would follow and if Tennessee Tech would need to create its own policies or if state-wide policies regarding opening universities would be in place.

President Oldham stated no specific guidelines for universities were available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and there was no uniform guidance from the state. He stated Tennessee Tech was using the best information that could be gathered as guidance.

Dr. Pardue asked if there was a tentative timeline for sharing with the student body regarding how the \$8,700,000 would be allocated.

President Oldham stated Tennessee Tech was awaiting more clarification from the federal government on its expectations on how the CARES Act funds could be allocated before Tennessee Tech communicated a tentative timeline.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 8—ADJOURNMENT**

With there being no other business, Chair Harper adjourned the meeting at 10:48 a.m.

Approved,

 09.30.20  
Board Secretary

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