



Board of Trustees Meeting
December 1, 2020
Roaden University Center, Room 282

MINUTES

AGENDA ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees met on December 1, 2020, in Roaden University Center, Room 282. Chair Harper called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

Chair Harper asked Lee Wray, Secretary, to call the roll. The following members were present:

- Trudy Harper
- Daniel Hines
- Tom Jones
- Thomas Lynn
- Sally Pardue
- Rhedona Rose
- Johnny Stites
- Teresa Vanhooser

A quorum was present at the meeting.

Trustee Barry Wilmore was absent due to training for the Boeing CST-100 Starliner. Trustee Fred Lowery participated remotely. He confirmed he could simultaneously hear and speak to the Board members, he received the Board materials in advance of the meeting, and he was the only person present in the location from which he was calling.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENTS

Students with varied experiences at Tennessee Tech were guests of the Board. They shared about being a first-time freshman during a pandemic, transferring to Tennessee Tech, majoring in a field where their gender is underrepresented, and conquering college as a non-traditional student with a disability. The students who joined were Julianne Cox (computer science), Diante

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Foote (secondary education transfer student), Darius Eury (civil engineering), Chuck Mullins (Ph.D. candidate in exceptional learning), and John Land (freshman in computer engineering).

AGENDA ITEM 3 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Tom Jones moved to approve the minutes from September 29, 2020. Ms. Vanhooser seconded the motion. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

Tom Jones moved to approve the minutes from October 20, 2020. Mr. Stites seconded the motion. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – PRESIDENT’S REPORT

President Oldham commended the students who joined the Board on this date to share. He added the students of Tennessee Tech are not only academically stellar, they have good values and great futures ahead. President Oldham expressed his appreciation to faculty, staff, and students who continue to outperform expectations. In recognition of faculty and staff an extra day at Thanksgiving was offered. President Oldham also mentioned a \$500.00 one-time bonus to be potentially distributed to permanent employees in December pending Board approval.

President Oldham recognized Trudy Harper on being named the 2020 Trustee of Distinction from the Tennessee Hospital Association. He also recognized Trustee Barry Wilmore as he trains to command the Boeing CST-100 Starliner.

President Oldham announced a major gift from Ashraf Islam. Mr. Islam is a 1969 graduate of Tennessee Tech and he made a gift of \$3,000,000.00 toward the construction and maintenance of the new engineering building. This places Tennessee Tech over the \$8,000,000.00 goal required to be raised. President Oldham extended his appreciation to Dr. Kevin Braswell and University Advancement. The engineering building has been listed as THEC’s number one recommended capital project this year. The design phase is being completed and the ground breaking will take place in 2021, with a completion in the fall of 2023.

Design choices have been submitted for the new Innovation Residence Hall that will be located on the west end of Sherlock Park. This building should also open in the fall of 2023.

The Tennessee Comptroller’s office completed performance reports for each of the six locally-governed universities. Citations were made regarding reports from Tennessee Tech; however, these reporting issues were corrected by the University. President Oldham and Chair Harper went before the Joint Government Operations Committee in the legislature on November 18 for a sunset meeting and review of the performance report. Tennessee Tech received a four-year renewal on the sunset.

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President Oldham has been hosting a show on local station WCTE that features faculty from Tennessee Tech.

The cohort of black students at Tennessee Tech in the fall of 2019 received an eighty-one percent retention rate. This is a twenty-percentage point increase over prior years. The Racial Equality Task Force is developing a team of champions where each unit on campus will have a diversity champion who guides them with improving diversity on campus.

President Oldham stated student recruitment is a challenge in the current environment. Tennessee Tech held multiple Preview Days and has hosted tours and recruitment days in academic areas. An event for minority students was also hosted. Marketing efforts include billboards, commercials, social media, and partnering with Gannett marketing solutions company.

Dewayne Wright, Executive Director of Strategic Planning, presented a data dashboard to the Board. The intent of the dashboard was to provide a high-altitude view of the University that includes 180 data points. The information was collected from the Research office, University Advancement, Athletics, and the Business office, and will continue to be updated. The metrics are key to identifying how Tennessee Tech can better recognize data and measure success.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – CONSENT AGENDA

Revisions to two policies were on the consent agenda. The Board voted on the revision to TTU Policy 537 (Naming Buildings, Facilities, and Organizational Units) and removed the revision to TTU Policy 260 (Requirements for Baccalaureate Degree and Graduation) from the agenda and placed it under the Academic and Student Affairs Committee report for further discussion.

Johnny Stites moved to approve the revisions to TTU Policy 537 (Naming Buildings, Facilities, and Organizational Units). Ms. Vanhooser seconded the motion. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Harper introduced the new General Counsel for Tennessee Tech, Troy Perdue.

Chair Harper summarized findings from the Board's self-evaluation that included the followings goals 1) a retreat next year to discuss long-term strategic items, 2) an observation of best practices from fellow locally governed institutions and peer Boards with a longer history of governance and improved onboarding processes, 3) a review of information from groups who report to the President to identify how success is measured in each area, 4) the establishment of a tutorial on governing versus management, and 5) an adjustment to the calendar for future Board meetings to align with University calendar.

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AGENDA ITEM 7 – ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Rose shared that during the committee meeting the following were presented and were included here as informational items 1) challenges from the pandemic and feedback collected from students and faculty, 2) new academic programs, and 3) counseling center update on mental health service.

Trustee Harper stated a request was made for TTU Policy 260 (Requirements for Baccalaureate Degree and Graduation) to be removed from the consent agenda and added to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee report for further discussion.

Ms. Rose moved to approve the revisions to TTU Policy 260 (Requirements for Baccalaureate Degree and Graduation).

Additional discussion was made regarding an amendment to the policy in section 2.3 to provide an exception of the American history requirements for students who are earning their second baccalaureate degree in nursing. Mr. Stites stated it was a mistake to remove the requirement if the student had not studied it while earning their first baccalaureate degree. Provost Bruce indicated the accelerated baccalaureate of nursing was designed for students who already hold a degree and require a focus on two years of nursing courses. She also shared that the exception was reviewed by the School of Nursing, the Academic Council, and University Assembly prior to its presentation to the Board.

No second to the motion was required. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – AUDIT AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Stites shared that during the committee meeting the following were presented and were included here as informational items 1) composite financial index, 2) report of audit activity, and 3) approval of 2021 audit plan.

Mr. Stites moved to approve a one-time bonus for permanent employees of Tennessee Tech during fiscal year 2021. No second to the motion was required. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Stites moved to approve the 2020-21 October revised budget and organizational chart. No second to the motion was required. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Stites moved to approve the Tuition Transparency Act Report. No second to the motion was required. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Stites moved to approve the amendments for fiscal year 2020-21 and fiscal year 2021-22 disclosed capital projects list to include roof replacements for Crawford Hall, Housing at the Craft Center, and an additional chiller for the Innovation Residence Hall. No second to the motion was required. With an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION ON FACULTY COMPENSATION

Dr. Jeannette Wolak, President-Elect for Faculty Senate presented a resolution passed by Faculty Senate on October 26, 2020. The resolution resolves to advise the President and the Board of Trustees to place highest priority on funding faculty raises associated with promotion from a pool of funds independent of annual legislative allocations and prioritize cost of living adjustments and general increase raises each year. The Senate supports a compensation model developed in collaboration with and including substantive input from faculty at all points of decision-making and aligned with Tennessee Tech’s strategic plan, values, and resources. This was an informational item and no action was required.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Approved,


Lee Wray, Board Secretary