

**Staff Advisory Committee**  
PCR/Virtual Meeting  
January 27, 2022

**Members Present:** Margo Dirkson, Shana Eads, Kathy Faulkner, Amy Foster, James Goad, Carrie Harris, Michelle Holm, Corinne Johnson, Bethany Jones, Andrea Kruszka, Charlene McClain, Kim Meredith, Michael Sliger, Angie Wells

**Members Absent:** Angie Denson, Joni Gilmore, Susan Henry, Sarah Starkey

**Others Present:** President Oldham, Lee Wray, Kevin Vedder, Donna Schrock

**Summary:**

Approved Agenda

Approved October 28, 2021 minutes

Discussed Staff Retreat Planning

Comments by the President

**Proceedings:**

Chair Andrea Kruszka called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m. Bethany Jones motioned to approve the agenda for January 27, 2022. Carrie Harris seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Angie Wells motioned to approve the October 28, 2021 minutes. Harris seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Kruszka shared the plans that had been discussed at the December 9<sup>th</sup> planning meeting for the summer Staff Retreat. The retreat would be planned for the end of July or early August and would look at Stonecipher Lecture Hall, Roaden University Center or Jere Whitson for the location. The list of possible topics was read. Kruszka asked for suggestions and/or if anyone would like to join the planning committee to please email her or Donna Schrock.

Kruszka asked if anyone knew of dates that would not be good? James Goad replied the whole month of August would not be good for most of campus and Facilities in particular. Amy Foster commented that SOAR would be at the end of July. Kruszka said the retreat date would be narrowed down at the following planning meeting which would be within the next two weeks. The next planning date would be determined and shared with the whole committee.

President Oldham greeted everyone and commented that we had dealt with COVID for the last two years. The counts were up slightly but the severity of the cases was down. Oldham asked

the committee's perspective if the campus was managing ok? Charlene McClain assured the President that the students were glad to be back in the classroom, others agreed.

President Oldham reflected on the first Fall the students were back on campus, many administrators taught a class. The students he talked with did not like the virtual lectures. Tennessee Tech was able to teach in a way the students preferred, with options, and worked through the pandemic. The President asked if there were anything that needed to come to his attention to please let him know. Kruszka mentioned Eagle Works held their first meeting in person and hoped to do the competition in person this year. Kruszka said they had looked at ways to adjust if a student needed to quarantine.

The President commented that Tennessee Tech's future was based on increased student enrollment. The entire Admissions Recruiting effort had been drastically restructured. Applications for Admissions and Housing were way up. Being student focused was an intrinsic characteristic of the campus as a whole. It was not just the job of the Admissions Department.

The President stated the goal was that every student who visits Tennessee Tech walks away feeling good about the campus and for every student that does enroll, from start to finish, that their experience is second to none. Oldham asked if you felt that with the staff you interact with, there was a growing sense of engagement with students?

McClain commented that students talk with her all the time and she felt they were doing very well. Kruszka suggested we get buttons to wear that said "We are here to help". Jones commented that in the Business Office they had parents who called and shared stories of struggle and parents appreciated that staff took care of the kids like their own.

President Oldham asked that staff continue to use a kind word, smile, or check on someone, "it can have a big impact on others". That was the purpose of the Wings Up Way, it states what is important to us as an institution.

The President stated that the Peachtree project had been delayed until April or May. The Pit parking lot will be closed at that time. The Henderson parking lot, currently off Peachtree, will be accessed off 10<sup>th</sup> street. The project would take about 18 months to complete. The Pit parking lot would eventually be connected with Henderson parking lot. The ground had moved for the new Engineering building and the cupola was ready to be put up on Derryberry Hall.

President Oldham commented that we would hear on Monday from the Governor at his State of the State Address on the proposed State for Higher Ed funding for this next year. We believe it will be favorable. There was a lot of one-time money for capital projects. In May the Tennessee Higher Education Commission will determine caps on tuition increases. There was a likelihood of a slight increase due to inflation.

Tennessee Tech had asked departments how they would handle a 2-3 percent budget reduction. It may not happen but would give departments a chance to think through what they would do if necessary. The revenue budget had gone up over the past five-ten years. Our costs had also gone up and the resources are stretched. Oldham was confident the state will come through with

another salary increase this year and Tennessee Tech will have to match the increase. Tennessee Tech was in a good position as we continue to try and increase enrollment.

Other such matters: Chair Kruszka questioned the need to keep the committee binder and records that dated back to 1993. Schrock said yes, they were historical records and could be archived. Schrock will supply Kruszka with a new binder.

Bethany Jones motioned to adjourn. Amy Foster seconded. Adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

Documents on file:

Agenda January 27, 2021  
Minutes, October 28, 2021  
Staff Retreat Planning Notes, December 9, 2021

Next Meeting: March 24, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

Donna Schrock, recorder