Board of Trustees Meeting

March 21, 2019
Roaden University Center, Room 282

MINUTES

AGENDA ITEM 1—CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees met in regular session on March 21, 2019, in Roaden University Center, Room 282. Chair Tom Jones called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

Chair Jones asked Kae Carpenter, Secretary, to call the roll. The following members were present:

- Forrest Allard
- Melissa Geist
- Trudy Harper
- Rhedona Rose
- Purna Saggurti
- Johnny Stites
- Teresa Vanhooser
- Barry Wilmore
- Tom Jones

A quorum was physically in attendance.

Tennessee Tech faculty, staff, and members of the public were also in attendance.

AGENDA ITEM 2–RECOGNITION OF STUDENTS' ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Chair Jones introduced Whitney Fountain, assistant coach for Tennessee Tech's Women's Track Team. Raven Smith, a senior from Atlanta, Georgia, introduced teammates Eshe Robinson and Khemani Roberts. Ms. Smith stated that the accomplishments of the Women's Track Team for winning the indoor and outdoor championship for the first time in Tennessee Tech's history resulted from their hard work. Ms. Smith stated that it was a blessing to win this title for Tennessee Tech and they hope to continue their success in May.

Chair Jones introduced the co-captain of Tennessee Tech's Baja SAE team, Craig Bowen. Mr. Bowen introduced Dr. Dale Wilson, faculty advisor, and co-captain Max Lamantia. Dr. Wilson stated that Tennessee Tech is one of the most decorated Baja SAE teams in the world. Mr. Lamantia stated that both he and Mr. Bowen appreciated the Baja team for its hands-on application and use of knowledge gained in class. Mr. Bowen stated that being on Tennessee Tech's Baja team opens up many opportunities for future jobs, internships, and co-ops for students and that corporate sponsorships build student connections with the professional world.

AGENDA ITEM III–APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Saggurti moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Harper seconded the motion.

After an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, the motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM IV–PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Oldham introduced Karen Lykins, Chief Communication Officer, who provided a report on Tennessee Tech's new website and demonstrated the new website features.

President Oldham stated that Tennessee Tech provides a real education for real people who want real careers. He stated that Tennessee Tech is tangible and approachable and exactly what the nation needs. He stated that Governor Lee's proposed budget showed confidence in Tennessee Tech by providing $15,000,000 of additional funding and with $4,500,000 being recurring funding, leaving $11 million for capital one-time improvements. Dr. Oldham then described the Governor's proposed budget in more detail.

President Oldham stated that Tennessee Tech cannot become complacent. He stated that he wanted to introduce the Grand Challenge for Tennessee Tech that has been led by

faculty, students, and administrators that will leverage the unique assets of Tennessee Tech. He recognized faculty members Jeff Boles, Ed Lisic, Ann Davis, Jason Beach, and Bedelia Russell.

President Oldham stated that a grand challenge is defined as an ambitious but achievable goal that leverages talents and resources to address important national or global problems that capture the public's imagination. He stated the challenge for Tennessee Tech is "Rural Reimagined." He stated that the challenge establishes "Gen R," a generation that would create and support relevant, impactful, and scalable work that could move all rural communities forward. He stated that this challenge aligned with Governor Lee's proposal for accelerating rural collaboration and innovation. He stated that Tennessee Tech was in a unique position by location and attitude to meet this challenge by harnessing science, technology, and innovation to transform rural living in a positive way. Dr. Oldham stated that the challenge can be developed and replicated to help other rural communities worldwide. He stated that of the 95 counties in Tennessee, 15 are considered distressed, and of those 15, approximately eight are located in the Upper Cumberland.

President Oldham stated that the areas of focus will be healthcare, child care, innovation and technology, small business development, career readiness, and rural history. He stated that Tennessee Tech was already assisting rural communities, but now it would be done in a more organized and cohesive way. He stated that the scope of the challenge was limitless.

President Oldham stated that other strategic planning for Tennessee Tech included diversity goals, faculty resources, and advising centers for new students. He stated that other items included interviewing for three Dean positions: one in Agriculture & Human Ecology, one in Engineering, and one in Nursing. He stated that Tennessee Tech was in the end stages of a cluster hire of faculty within the Computer Science department. He stated that construction on campus was continuing. He stated that the new Roaden University Center expansion was open, more greenspace would be added over the coming months and the project would be completed by Fall 2019. He stated that Bartoo and Kittrell Halls would re-open by Fall 2019, and the new Fitness Center would be completed around Spring 2020. He stated that the first part of the new science building would be open by Fall 2020.

President Oldham stated that a day of giving to Tennessee Tech was scheduled for March 27. He stated that three additional development officers were added to the Advancement staff, as well as an Associate Vice President for Advancement position. He stated that Tennessee Tech knew the importance of fundraising for the future of the campus as Tennessee Tech moved into post-campaign mode, and that sustainability would be critical.

President Oldham stated that in terms of the comprehensive campaign, a $60,000,000 goal was established five years ago as part of a seven-year campaign. He stated that Tennessee Tech had received $58,600,000 of gifts and pledges towards the $60,000,000 goal, which was well ahead of pace. He recognized Dr. Braswell for his fundraising work.

President Oldham stated that Tennessee Tech had reached out to 25 counties and 38 high schools predominantly in Middle Tennessee. He stated that Tennessee Tech had learned a lot about niches it already had and how it could play a bigger role in engaging with other communities.

He stated that there was a big push for transfer students in mid-March. He stated that he appreciated participation of the Board members in the first Board training program on budget and finance, and the next program would cover enrollment and scholarships.

President Oldham stated that Tennessee Tech should continue what it is already doing, learning from its efforts and improving, but also continue to be what the country and the students need. He stated that he is struck by the pride of alumni that reacted to the mention of Tennessee Tech in the Wall Street Journal. He stated that Tennessee Tech's students and others see the authenticity, genuineness, and earned excellence at Tennessee Tech, and Tennessee Tech should continue to possess these attributes.

Mr. Stites asked President Oldham if it was his intention to assign metrics to such outcomes or goals to know if progress was being made in regard to the grand challenge.

President Oldham stated that metrics would be developed that would collect information on who was involved and what was going on in the project. He stated that he wanted to connect with these rural communities and have advisory groups from those communities.

Mr. Stites stated that because the outcomes are not as tangible, it would be important to have metrics so Tennessee Tech had an idea whether or not progress was being made.

President Oldham stated that many of these problems are difficult, but he felt very positive about the project and believed Tennessee Tech could make a difference.

AGENDA ITEM V.A—ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS—REPORT

Chair Jones stated that there were two letters of notification, one being an M.S. in Sustainable Agriculture and one being an M.S. in Community Health & Nutrition. He stated that both letters of notification were approved for submission to THEC. He stated that letters of notification no longer were required to go to the Board for approval because of

the recent policy revision and that committee action was all that was required to send letters of notification to THEC.

Chair Jones stated that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee approved the transfer of the Communication Department from the College of Arts and Sciences to the College of Interdisciplinary Studies.

Chair Jones stated that the Society of Collegiate Journalists addressed the Committee and Board members on the proof of Tennessee citizenship requirement in Tennessee Tech's proposed rule related to access to public records. He stated that the requestors asked to address this issue at this meeting, rather than the June meeting, because students would not be on campus in June. He stated that the requestors asked the Board to consider allowing the use of university identification cards to be used instead of proof of Tennessee citizenship, such as a Tennessee driver's license. He stated that the Board would consider this comment and other comments received related to that rule at the June meeting, where that particular rule and policy would be on the Board's agenda. Chair Jones stated that he has asked Ms. Carpenter to look into the legality of using student IDs as proof of citizenship.

AGENDA ITEM V.B—ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS—CONSENT AGENDA

Chair Jones stated that there were three items on the consent agenda: TTU Policy 260 (Requirements for a Baccalaureate Degree and Graduation), TTU Policy 261 (Academic Credit from Other Institutions), and TTU Policy 263 (Academic Retention Standards).

Dr. Geist moved to approve the Academic and Student Affairs Committee's Consent Agenda. Capt. Wilmore seconded the motion.

After an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, the motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM V.C—ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS—REGULAR AGENDA

Chair Jones stated that TTU Policy 121 (Use of Tennessee Tech Property by Affiliated Users and for Free Speech Activities) and Rule were discussed in the Committee meeting. He stated that there was a recommended change to the rule regarding who approves requests from nonaffiliated users to use a space on campus for free speech. He stated that the amendment required nonaffiliated users to submit an application for use for free speech

activities and receive approval from the Dean of Students and the Vice President for Student Affairs prior to any activities.

Capt. Wilmore moved to approve Policy 121 and Rule as amended. Mr. Saggurti seconded the motion.

After an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, the motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM VI.A—AUDIT & BUSINESS COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS—REPORT: CREDIT CARD PROCESSING FEES, NON-MANDATORY ON-LINE FEE FOR CONSIDERATION AT JUNE COMMITTEE MEETING, AND NOTICE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Ms. Vanhooser stated that Committee discussed the cost associated with the credit card processing fees, that Tennessee Tech would be charging those fees back to the students, and would be providing students multiple options to pay without using a credit card.

Ms. Vanhooser stated the Committee discussed a non-mandatory online fee for consideration at the June meeting.

Ms. Vanhooser stated a Notice of Responsibility was formally presented to the Committee in compliance with the Tennessee Code Annotated Section 4-35-105(3).

AGENDA ITEM VI.B.1—AUDIT & BUSINESS COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS—REGULAR AGENDA—DENNIS TRUST

Ms. Vanhooser stated that Tennessee Tech was designated as a beneficiary of the Dennis Estate to establish an annual scholarship fund to be known as the BJ and Cleo Nash Dennis Scholarship Fund.

Ms. Vanhooser moved that the Board approve the establishment of the quasi-endowment and to invest the funds through the foundation's common fund. Mr. Saggurti seconded the motion.

After an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, the motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM VI.B.2 – AUDIT & BUSINESS COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS – REGULAR AGENDA – 2019-20 NON-MANDATORY FEES

Ms. Vanhooser moved that the Board approve the recommended 2019-20 Housing Fees and Nursing DNP Graduate Fees non-mandatory fees. Mr. Saggurti seconded the motion.

After an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, the motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM VI.B.3 – AUDIT & BUSINESS COMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS – REGULAR AGENDA – POLICY 122 AND RULE

Ms. Vanhooser moved that the Board approve Policy 122 (Rental of Tennessee Tech Property) and Rule. Mr. Stites seconded the motion.

After an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, the motion carried unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM VII – OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Jones stated that he wished to address two additional items. He stated the first item was a related to Dr. Brandon Johnson's earlier enrollment presentation in the Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting. Chair Jones stated the Board requested additional information from Dr. Johnson and that Dr. Johnson was now prepared to present that information.

Dr. Johnson stated that in response to a request for more specific admissions numbers for Fall 2019, he was providing a dashboard of where Tennessee Tech currently stood with regard to new student recruitment.

Ms. Harper asked Dr. Johnson to explain the difference between "Total Apps" and "Apps Completed." Dr. Johnson stated that "Total Apps" included individuals that had submitted online applications and "Apps Completed" included individuals that had completed the application process.

Chair Jones asked what the percentage represented in the "Admitted" section. Dr. Johnson stated the percentage was the final conversion rates, or the percent of admitted students who actually enrolled over the past four years. Chair Jones stated the conversions were declining as demonstrated in the data.

Dr. Geist asked if the decline in enrollment was due to the Tennessee Promise, which was enacted in 2015.

Dr. Johnson stated this was one of the major influences. He stated University of Tennessee, Knoxville, expanded its freshman class. He stated that certain variances in the market impacted Tennessee Tech. He stated that with each experience, Tennessee Tech would try to adjust.

Dr. Geist asked if University of Tennessee, Knoxville, changed its standards when it expanded its freshman class. Dr. Johnson stated it did not change its standards; it accepted more students.

Dr. Johnson stated the dashboard demonstrated the college level, major level, and concentration level to determine if specific categories were trending favorably. He stated this information allowed Tennessee Tech to make adjustments and to continue to drive enrollment. He stated this data was updated three to four times per day to provide accurate information.

Mr. Stites asked if the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, would be considered a major competitor to Tennessee Tech. Dr. Johnson stated while Tennessee Tech definitely "crossed apps" with University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee Tech was a very different institution from University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and that students might not recognize that difference when they started the application process. He stated that once students understand what Tennessee Tech is as an institution versus what University of Tennessee, Knoxville is, Tennessee Tech would "cross apps" with more top academic students.

Mr. Stites asked Dr. Johnson to identify the top five metrics that made Tennessee Tech more appealing to students than the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Dr. Johnson stated the message presented by Tennessee Tech is career readiness, being the number one public university in Tennessee, ROI career preparation, and Cookeville as a location. He stated Tennessee Tech's message was very sound on those topics and communicated effectively what students could expect from Tennessee Tech.

Mr. Stites asked if Dr. Johnson and his staff were consistent on that messaging. Dr. Johnson stated his staff did an incredible job in explaining to prospective students what Tennessee Tech has to offer and adjusting the messaging based on what the student wants out of Tennessee Tech.

Dr. Geist asked if surveys are sent out to students who did not choose to go to Tennessee Tech. Dr. Johnson stated there was data on the outside perception of Tennessee Tech and

why students do not choose Tennessee Tech. He stated Tennessee Tech could do a better job asking why students did or did not choose Tennessee Tech.

Mr. Saggurti asked if the freshmen enrolled was 1,823 students. Dr. Johnson stated the number enrolled was 1,890 students, including the summer term enrollment numbers.

Mr. Saggurti asked Dr. Johnson if the freshman number was increasing every year. Dr. Johnson answered that it was.

Dr. Johnson stated that he wanted to show the Board this data to show there is a lot of information available for use by administrators and specific colleges. He stated the major trend was an increase in applications. He stated that from an effort standpoint, the 4,922 apps completed shows that Tennessee Tech was doing a good job because not every student would submit an ACT score and GPA, but Tennessee Tech was continually pursuing that.

Ms. Harper asked if Tennessee Tech focused more on the 4.0 GPAs and 36 ACT scores over lower scores when pursuing the high schools to submit this data, and how Tennessee Tech was plugged into the high schools to know which students to recruit. Dr. Johnson stated that knowing which students to pursue came from having connections and strong relationships with high schools. He stated that when students apply, Tennessee Tech does not know what their scores are, and students are treated fairly.

Ms. Harper asked Dr. Johnson how large his staff is. Dr. Johnson answered there was a Director of Admissions, two Assistant Directors, five recruiters, and a variety of processers to collect data.

Mr. Stites asked if this was sufficient staff. Dr. Johnson answered that they have discussed the competitive advantage in recruiting students. He stated that perhaps there could be a different model, instead of more recruiters there should be more supporting staff to ensure faculty is helping with drawing students to Tennessee Tech. He stated there are enough recruiters to convert applications, but there could be improvement from a relationship standpoint.

Mr. Stites stated he was asking out of concern because in 2019 the data showed 6150 students submitted applications, and of that number, 1500 were lost. He stated that this was a large drop from previous years.

Dr. Johnson stated that there is about a 40% yield rate because students apply to more than one school. Chair Jones stated that it may have to do with students having a first preference to begin with. Ms. Harper stated there would be an information session on this

topic, and in that session she would like to learn about the scholarship money, and ensure that the scholarship dollars are being used as wisely as possible and pricing Tennessee Tech correctly to enable Tennessee Tech to attract the higher end students. Dr. Geist stated President Oldham emphasized matching faculty or students with the areas of need.

Chair Jones stated this was a marketing problem similar to what a business would have. He stated Tennessee Tech was trying to recruit customers; it was not just about metrics and statistics, but about the marketing message reaching the students.

Mr. Saggurti stated it would be beneficial to know if all public universities have similar statistics. Ms. Harper stated she was not sure whether the conversion percentages were as important as bias toward the higher end students. Mr. Saggurti stated that a bias toward the diversity side of students was a factor as well.

Mr. Stites stated getting more students would ultimately solve many problems because Tennessee Tech was a tuition-based university. Dr. Johnson stated his staff was in constant communication with Marketing about timing. He stated the goal was to convert applicants into enrolled students. He stated his staff was working on getting the timing of the recruitment efforts supported by the marketing efforts and this was refined every year.

Dr. Johnson presented transfer student statistics and trends between community colleges. He stated the information was as specific as possible so it could be monitored and followed.

Chair Jones stated that he noticed a decline in transfer students between 2017 and 2018. President Oldham stated that with the Tennessee Promise, many universities expected a decline in freshmen. He stated that there was an expectation that after those students completed a two-year degree at a community college, those students would transfer to a four-year institution. He stated this expectation had not been realized. He stated studies showed that some students dropped college at that point due to careers or life issues. He stated transfer student numbers vary over the years and there was no trend in statistics with transfer students.

Ms. Harper asked if transfer students were staying for the full two years. President Oldham stated that Tennessee Promise students were successful at the two-year level. He stated they were graduating sooner than two years and at a higher percentage, but there was no significant trend of those students coming to four-year colleges.

Chair Jones stated the next item related to Tennessee Tech email accounts. He stated that there are 65,000 inactive email accounts, which was a security and liability problem for Tennessee Tech. He stated that Tennessee Tech should not continue to maintain email

accounts for students, faculty, or staff no longer affiliated with Tennessee Tech. He stated that the number of email accounts was also an extra expense for the additional security required to maintain them.

Mr. Stites moved to direct the Information Technology office to take all appropriate steps to secure Tennessee Tech's network, including removing email addresses of former employees and/or students who are no longer affiliated with Tennessee Tech. Mr. Saggurti seconded the motion.

Dr. Geist asked if there were 65,000 additional email addresses that were not affiliated with Tennessee Tech. Yvette Clark, Executive Director of Information Technology Services, stated there were 65,000 total email accounts, which included approximately 10,000 email addresses for current students and approximately 1,200 email addresses for full-time and temporary employees. Ms. Clark stated that the remaining email addresses were for former students and faculty. Ms. Clark stated that to purchase an advanced threat protection for email addresses alone would cost $20,000, which covers only employees because the student accounts were included for free. She stated that to pay per account usage, the cost would be $765,000 to cover former students, faculty, or staff that have left Tennessee Tech.

Dr. Troy Smith, Faculty Senate President, stated that it was not entirely accurate to say retired faculty were no longer affiliated with Tennessee Tech. He stated that many retired faculty continue to do research, publish, and represent Tennessee Tech in the community. He stated that when these retired faculty publish, Tennessee Tech would be considered the institutional affiliation. He stated that several of the retired faculty in the history department, for example, were still very active within their fields.

Chair Jones asked if there was a way to differentiate between retired faculty and retired faculty who are still active in their fields. Dr. Smith stated that he was not sure if there was a way to make this distinction, but that perhaps there should be and it might be worthwhile to take the time to determine this distinction.

Capt. Wilmore stated that there should be a process to reach out to individuals to see if they were still affiliated with Tennessee Tech and to allow them to continue to use their Tennessee Tech email addresses if they were still affiliated.

Mr. Stites stated that there should be a clear understanding of what the word "affiliated" meant to avoid confusion. Chair Jones stated that the motion directed the Information Technology department to make that determination and inform the Board. Mr. Stites stated that if the Information Technology office could make that distinction, he would support the motion.

Chair Jones clarified that it would be the Information Technology office's responsibility to define what it meant to be affiliated or nonaffiliated. He stated this could be discussed at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Saggurti asked if Chair Jones was asking the Information Technology department to share its approach with the Board before it implemented changes. He stated he would like the Information Technology department to present its guidelines at the next board meeting before it began implementation.

Mr. Stites amended his motion to direct the Information Technology office to take all appropriate steps to secure Tennessee Tech's network, including removing email addresses of former employees and/or students who are no longer affiliated with Tennessee Tech and for the definition of "affiliation" to be approved by the Executive Committee. Mr. Saggurti seconded the motion.
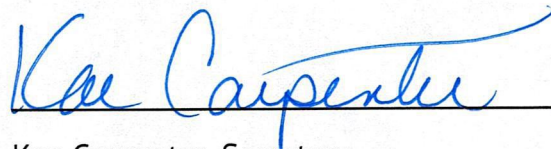
After an opportunity for further discussion and there being none, the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Jones asked if Dr. Smith could introduce the new Faculty Representative and new Senate President-Elect. Dr. Smith stated that the new Faculty Representative on the Board of Trustees would be Dr. Sally Pardue and the President-Elect would be Dr. Sandi Smith-Andrews.

AGENDA ITEM X – ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Approved,

Kae Carpenter, Secretary