



Board of Trustees Meeting
September 29, 2020
Roaden University Center, Room 282

MINUTES

AGENDA ITEM 1 – CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees met on September 29, 2020, in Roaden University Center, Room 282. Chair Harper called the meeting to order at 1:41 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
- Barry Wilmore

A quorum was present at the meeting.

Trustees Fred Lowery and Purna Saggurti participated remotely. They confirmed they could simultaneously hear and speak to the Board members, they received the Board materials in advance of the meeting, and they were the only persons present in the location from which they were calling.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

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Chair Harper recognized Deb Combs, Assistant to the Board Secretary, upon her retirement from Tennessee Tech. She served Tech for 32 years in various roles and most especially during the inaugural year and subsequent years for the Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees. Chair Harper presented a special plaque to her and Ms. Combs shared a statement.

Chair Harper recognized outgoing Trustee Purna Saggurti for serving as a member of the inaugural Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees from 2017-2020. Chair Harper presented a special plaque to Mr. Saggurti and he shared a statement. President Oldham also shared his sentiments.

Chair Harper introduced incoming Trustee Thomas Lynn. Mr. Lynn is a long-time resident of Cookeville and a Tennessee Tech alumnus. The duration of his term is through 2026.

Chair Harper announced that Governor Lee reappointed Trustees Fred Lowery and Barry Wilmore to the Board. The duration of their renewed terms is through 2026.

Chair Harper expressed a special thank you to those on campus who helped students, faculty, and staff transition from being on campus to being online during the spring semester at the beginning of the pandemic. Chair Harper named all the departments and organizations at length who made it possible.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT AND FACULTY EXCELLENCE

Student Trustee Daniel Hines spoke to the Board about Brantley Marie Medical Devices. He and Tech alumna Libby Baldwin cofounded this company as undergraduates of Tech. They were awarded first place in the 2020 Eagle Works innovation competition, and second place in the 2020 Tennessee State Student Entrepreneurship Launch Tennessee 36|86 competition for their innovation of a redesigned, suction-enabled stylet that is used during the intubation of a patient.

Student Annalicia Larsen spoke to the Board about Working Women Design Company. She created this company to provide functional and trendy pants for women in agriculture. She won the 2020 Rural Reimagined Award at Tech and represented the University at the 2020 Tennessee State Student Entrepreneurship Launch Tennessee 36|86 competition. Associate Professor Dr. Dennis Fennwald from the School of Agriculture also joined the presentation.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – APPROVAL OF MINUTES



Tom Jones moved to approve the minutes from June 23, 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.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – BOARD APPOINTMENT OF AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBER

Chair Harper stated that with the departure of Mr. Saggurti from the Board, a vacancy in the Audit and Business Committee must be filled.

Mr. Stites moved to approve Thomas Lynn to serve on the Audit Committee. Mr. Lowery 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 – RULEMAKING HEARING

Chair Harper called to order a Rulemaking hearing at 2:17 p.m. for Tennessee Technological University Rules 0240-09-01 (Student Conduct) and 0240-09-08 (Title IX Compliance). She asked that all parties interested in making comments during the hearing use the sign-in sheet and indicate which rule they wish to address. She disclosed the hearing was being recorded and Tech will use the video as the record of the hearing. She added that red-lined versions of the rules were available.

AGENDA ITEM 6.A – TENNESSEE TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY RULE 0240-09-01 STUDENT CONDUCT

Dr. Katherine Williams, Dean of Students, provided a rule summary for Rule 0240-09-01 (Student Conduct). The summary was as follows: On May 6, 2020, the U.S. Department of Education published its final regulations related to Title IX sex discrimination and sexual harassment procedures. These new regulations, which went into effect on August 14, 2020, made substantial changes to the procedures and processes used by institutions to address sexual harassment. This new federal regulation necessitated further revisions to the Student Conduct Rule. The Student Conduct Rule was revised to remove references to sexual harassment or sexual misconduct that fall within the scope of Title IX. Title IX matters are addressed by a separate rule. The Board approved an emergency Student Conduct rule at its June 23, 2020, meeting in order to meet the August 14, 2020, federal implementation deadline. This rule was the same as that emergency rule except for a few subsequent minor revisions, which addressed concerns that were raised about another university's rule with similar language. These changes were highlighted in a separate document in the Diligent book under the tab name "Subsequent Minor Revisions."

Chair Harper afforded interested parties with an opportunity to present facts, views, or arguments relative to this rule. Tech received no written comments on the rule. No interested parties presented themselves.

Ms. Vanhooser moved to approve Rule 0240-09-01 (Student Conduct) as presented with subsequent minor revisions. Mr. Jones 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.B – TENNESSEE TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY RULE 0240-09-08 TITLE IX COMPLIANCE

Greg Holt, Compliance Officer, provide a rule summary for Rule 0240-09-08 (Title IX Compliance). The summary was as follows: On May 6, 2020, the U.S. Department of Education published its final regulations related to Title IX sex discrimination and sexual harassment procedures. These new regulations made substantial changes to the procedures and processes used by institutions to address sexual harassment. Tech's Title IX Compliance rule tracks the federal regulations requirements closely. The Board approved an emergency Title IX Compliance rule at its June 23, 2020, meeting in order to meet the August 14, 2020, federal implementation deadline. This rule was the same as that emergency rule and became the permanent rule.

Chair Harper afforded interested parties with an opportunity to present facts, views, or arguments relative to this rule. Tech received no written comments on the rule. No interested parties presented themselves.

Mr. Stites moved to approve Rule 0240-09-08 (Title IX Compliance) as presented with subsequent minor revisions. 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 7 – PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Oldham recognized Purna Saggurti, Deb Combs, Fred Lowery and Barry Wilmore for their service and shared his appreciation.

President Oldham provided an update on the status of Tech during the pandemic. He stated that Tech is in a strong position. He thanked faculty, staff, and students for their efforts on the magnitude of behind-the-scenes items necessary to operate during the pandemic. Campus surveys from students and faculty show general satisfaction for the efforts, but he added the momentum must continue.

President Oldham stated the overall graduation rate has improved. The national standard is six years. A rate of four years would benefit the student by reducing their debt and getting them into the workforce sooner. President Oldham shared statistics to support this statement.

President Oldham stated enrollment numbers are strong this year. There was a twenty percent increase in graduate school enrollment. Thirty-two doctorate students graduated in August. Tech also surpassed \$20 million in externally funded research – even in the midst of Covid-19. A recent study indicated the gross domestic product (“GDP”) impact on the State of Tennessee by Tech is \$1.57 billion. The impact on the Upper Cumberland region is \$764.69 million. President Oldham also shared new information regarding college rankings from Money magazine and U.S. News.

President Oldham stated he has created a Racial Diversity Task Force that will work to create more diversity and a culture of acceptance. The Task Force has already conducted several meetings.

Ms. Vanhooser asked about the welfare of students impacted by Covid-19 and asked who was handling their basic emotional needs. President Oldham responded that it takes many people such as those from Student Affairs, Health Services, Dining Services, counseling, food pantry, and residence hall staff. To his knowledge there have been no student hospitalizations.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – CERTIFICATION OF PRESIDENT’S RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO ATHLETICS

Pursuant to Ohio Valley Conference (“OVC”) requirements, Chair Harper attested that the President is responsible for the administration of the athletics program, he has the support of the Board in operating a program of integrity, and he may vote on behalf of the institution on NCAA and OVC matters. Chair Harper also included this certification in the board materials for the Trustees.

AGENDA ITEM 9 – CONSENT AGENDA: 9.A – TTU POLICY 511.1 (FEES, CHARGES, REFUNDS, AND ADJUSTMENTS), 9.B – TTU POLICY 511.2 (STUDENT FEE ADJUSTMENTS, REFUNDS, AND APPEALS), 9.C – TTU POLICY 144 (TITLE IX POLICY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES), 9.D – TENURE RECOMMENDATION

Mr. Jones moved to approve consent items TTU Policies 511.1 (Fees, Charges, Refunds, and Adjustments), 511.2 (Student Fee Adjustments, Refunds, and Appeals), 144 (Title IX Policy and Grievance Procedures) and Tenure Recommendation. 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 10 – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Harper provided a report on behalf of the Executive Committee that included four summary items as follows: approval of temporary part-time continuation of employment of University Counsel, the status of the President's evaluation, the consideration of need for a comprehensive review of the President, and the Board's self-evaluation, questionnaire, and schedule.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT

Ms. Rose provided a report on behalf of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee. During the committee meeting, updates regarding the response to Covid-19 were provided by Enrollment Management and Career Placement, Academic Affairs, Athletics, Student Affairs, University Advancement, and Research.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – AUDIT AND BUSINESS COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Stites provided a report on behalf of the Audit and Business Committee that included four summary items as follows: a financial update, employee performance evaluation analysis, and an engineering building design presentation. Mr. Jones complimented the university on a job well done with the budget and encouraged the President to reward faculty.

AGENDA ITEM 13 – ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2021 BOARD REGULAR MEETING DATES

Chair Harper reminded everyone of the next regular meeting date of December 1, 2020. The meeting dates for 2021 are as follows: March 11, June 24, September 23, and December 2.

AGENDA ITEM 14 – OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

AGENDA ITEM 15 – ADJOURNMENT

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:18 p.m.



Approved,

Lee Wray 12.01.20
Lee Wray, Board Secretary

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