

**Tennessee State University Board of Trustees**  
**Special Housing Committee Meeting**  
**May 9, 2023**  
**Tennessee State University – McWherter Admin. Bldg./President’s Conference Room**

**MINUTES**

**Committee Members Present:** Trustees Van Pinnock (Chair), Obie McKenzie, and Andre Johnson

**Other Board Members Present:** Trustees Deborah Cole, Shaun Wimberly, and Bill Johnson

**University Staff Present:** President Glenda Glover; Laurence Pendleton, General Counsel and Board Secretary; Ginette Brown, Associate General Counsel; Ciara Petronzio, Assistant General Counsel; Dean Frank Stevenson, Assoc. Vice President of Student Affairs; Terrence Izzard, Assoc. Vice President of Enrollment Management; Dr. Robbie Melton, Graduate School Dean and Assoc. Vice President and Dr. Arlene Nicholas-Phillips, Liaison to the Board of Trustees.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Trustee Pinnock called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. on May 9, 2023. Trustee Pinnock moved to make certain findings on the record regarding the necessity for conducting the meeting electronically without a physical quorum present due to travel issues. He noted there is important action to be conducted by the Special Housing Committee, including receiving updates on the TSU Master Plan and updates on enrollment and related housing issues. Participation without the physical presence of a quorum by the Committee meeting is necessary to address these important items. Trustee A. Johnson seconded, and the motion carried by roll call vote, with Trustees Pinnock and A. Johnson voting in favor.

**II. ROLL CALL/DECLARATION OF A QUORUM**

Board Secretary Pendleton called the roll at the Committee Chair’s request. Trustees Pinnock, A. Johnson, and McKenzie were present. Secretary Pendleton announced the presence of a quorum.

Visiting Board members and University staff were acknowledged.

**III. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 10, 2023, COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Trustee Pinnock moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of the minutes from the January 10, 2023, Special Housing Committee meeting, as contained in the May 9, 2023, Committee materials. Trustee McKenzie seconded the motion, which carried unanimously by roll call vote.

#### **IV. REPORT ON TSU MASTER PLAN/HOUSING MASTER PLAN**

Dr. Curtis Johnson provided a report on the TSU Master Plan. This is an informational discussion item only so no vote was required.

Dr. Johnson gave an overview of the University Master Plan. Work is being done to bring the Master Plan in line with current enrollment trends, including housing, parking and safety considerations. Facility needs include: Food Science, Animal Science, and Engineering facilities, a Library upgrade and annex, laboratory building, general classroom building, alumni house, and College of Education and various Athletics facilities. The new plan will look at land and property acquisition, agriculture programs, Avon Williams updates, a migration plan, Elliott Hall updates, expanded childcare facilities, athletic facilities, parking lots, and Queen Washington renovation and repurposing. Phase 1 will include a building assessment of certain buildings. Then, it will be put into the TSU Master Plan and submitted to TBR for a possible revision of the Master Plan.

Trustee Pinnock asked to review information provided by Dr. Johnson to the Board by email regarding interviews. Dr. Johnson said that appointments were going to be made throughout summer. The timeline for the Master Plan is for it to be finished this fall. It will be about 4-6 months to confirm all data and review drafts. There has been a discussion to review parts and sections of the Master Plan on a rolling basis.

President Glover explained that there is only one Master Plan for the University. There are subsets of information within the Master Plan. Dr. Glover said that a timeline can be prepared to show what is going to be done and when.

Trustee Pinnock asked about the long-term timeframe for the Master Plan. Dr. Johnson indicated that they are contemplating requesting an amendment to the existing 2016 Master Plan. This would be done on June 17, 2023. This would shorten the timeline for the housing component of the plan.

Dr. Johnson shared background information on a building assessment and who the Institution is presently working with for the overall Master Plan and Housing plan.

Trustee Pinnock asked further questions about the approval process. Dr. Johnson explained that after there is an amendment to address the housing issue, the amendment goes to TBR and THEC for approval.

Chair Cole asked whether the 1,000 new beds sought in the plan would be on-campus, which Dr. Johnson said they would.

Mr. Pendleton explained that there is one opportunity being considered wherein a party builds and owns facilities but leases housing to students. The University could deem it to be a “preferred partner” for student housing, provided certain criteria are met. The land would be on House of God property. The House of God is also looking to do some renovations to their existing facilities. We would net about 1,500 beds through this arrangement.

Trustee McKenzie asked for clarification about whether the University is locked into requesting 1,000 beds on-campus, seeking other projects, or taking a combined approach. Dr. Johnson said that the University is locked into the request for 1,000 beds. The 1,000 beds would ultimately replace existing beds that would need to be demolished.

Mr. Pendleton said the plan is to go before the SBC in July to request a 1,000-bed residence hall.

Trustee McKenzie said that it is important to continue to seek other alternatives while working on the 1,000-bed residence hall.

President Glover explained that it would be a net 1,000-bed increase. VP Allen further explained that the plan is to never experience a net loss in beds. Beds would not be taken offline until new beds are available. The University is working on a stair-step approach to plan for bringing beds online and offline so that there is never a net loss of beds.

Dr. Johnson explained that there is a 5-year housing plan that corresponds with enrollment needs. There is a separate document that shows the housing needs for the next 5 years. Chair Cole indicated that the Board needs to have “the total picture,” and not just a summary.

The Housing Master Plan is about 6 weeks from completion. Data is being run and the team is working on submitting it to TBR. Chair Cole indicated that the Board needs to be aware of the Plan details.

Dr. Johnson said that using the TBR formula, TSU is up to a little over 9,000 beds total. The formula looks at enrollment, retention and the classification of students. There was a discussion regarding public-private partnership opportunities to meet housing needs.

VP Allen noted that there is space on campus for 1,000 beds and a plan to add beds before beds are taken offline to make sure that there is not a reduction in the number of beds available to students.

## **V. REPORT AND UPDATE ON TSU’S HOUSING PLAN**

Dean Stevenson provided an update on TSU’s Housing Plan. The University was able to reduce hotel housing needs by 3 hotels. All students were housed in the spring. It was a smooth spring semester, he reported.

Housing applications were opened up earlier this year than in prior years. As of now, 3,881 returning students have applied for housing. Housing assignments will be made in June and July 2023. There are 725 first-time freshmen. The data is being monitored closely to make sure that there are no problems with respect to housing. The school has multi-year housing agreements with Jefferson Flats and House of God, which gives the University 3,924 beds to work with for fall 2023. The University is asking for 2 hotels for fall 2023 use, which would raise the number of available beds up to 4,361 for the fall semester. The hope is that the SBC will approve the request for additional hotel beds, but they are planning conservatively just in case the request is not

approved. Dean Stevenson believes that opening up the housing application earlier is a significant help in planning.

There was a discussion regarding enrollment numbers and available beds.

VP Allen reported that TSU is on the docket for the SBC for its hotel requests. The scheduled date is May 16, 2023. The University met with the SBC executive subcommittee. The SBC was happy that TSU opened up the process and submitted its materials sooner.

Dr. Glover stated that forms have been changed to make it clearer that housing is not guaranteed. There was a discussion about the number of students who will need housing, the need to dispel misconceptions regarding housing (i.e., that enrollment does not guarantee housing), and how upcoming orientations will result in increased enrollment.

Mr. A. Johnson asked how the school determines which students get housing. Dean Stevenson explained that the numbers he reported are for first-time freshmen, not returning students. There was further discussion regarding anticipated first-time freshmen, returning students, and the need to make sure that students have what they need to “cross the line” to graduation. A. Johnson expressed a desire to make sure that both first-time freshmen and returning students have access to housing. Committee members discussed the priority of housing for students.

## **VI. REPORT ON FALL 2023 ENROLLMENT AND HOUSING**

Dean Stevenson reported that 11,467 students have been admitted to date. Of that, 2,092 new students have committed to TSU for the fall. The enrollment process is a 4-stage process. The students are ushered through the enrollment process with the Enrollment Services team. 725 students have completed a housing application. Enrollment is moving in lockstep with Housing to monitor available beds. The University’s scholarship drive started in September last year, but this year it started in March. They are moving steadily, monitoring beds, and waiting on decisions to be made before they can increase enrollment efforts. Ideally, they would like to have about 2,000 first-time freshmen this fall. The projection is that 1,000 of this number would be residential, 300 would be commuters, 150 would be online only students, and 550 adult learners (such as with the Amazon Choice programs).

There was a discussion on projections and historical data for enrollment. Dean Stevenson stated that the total of students that are projected to be granted enrollment (not housing) is 9,200 maximum. VP Allen noted that students must have their applications in to manage housing, which is a separate issue from enrollment. A. Johnson noted the need to manage housing and enrollment separately, but in coordination, such that the University can educate as many students as possible, irrespective of housing. Secretary Pendleton asked whether a waitlist has been opened yet. One has not been opened yet.

Dean Stevenson stated that last year, the students who went to the media were all on the waitlist. He wants to make sure that it is very clear to students that housing is not guaranteed, even for students on the waitlist. This was communicated via letter to students last year, but his office is doing more work to over-communicate this and change the mindset of students. The plans being

put in place are very intentional in terms of managing enrollment and housing. His office is not surprised by any numbers to date. It is in-line with what they projected. Last year was an abnormal year. A. Johnson asked that enrollment and data information be shared with the Committee so that they are updated.

VP Allen noted that a number of students had to be turned down last year because of a lack of housing. The school is managing the number of beds available.

Mr. Pinnock requested that a communications plan be presented to the Board to discuss how the school will communicate housing availability, what will be said, when it will be said, and to and by whom the information will be communicated.

Dr. Glover said that the University works on managing housing on a daily basis – night and day.

## **VII. REPORT ON SBC, TSSBA AND THEC ACTIVITIES**

VP Allen reiterated that they have met with the SBC subcommittee and are on the SBC's agenda for the approval of 2 hotels. They are looking to be on the TBR agenda in July for the new residence hall.

## **VIII. HOUSING COMMITTEE MEMBER REPORTS**

Mr. Pinnock asked Trustees McKenzie and A. Johnson to provide any reports. Mr. McKenzie provided a report on discussions regarding potential on and off campus housing opportunities. One such opportunity could lead to a \$4 million yield for scholarships from a lease proposal.

A. Johnson continues to talk to several property owners. He is trying to convince them to explore partnerships to help TSU with housing that could be mutually beneficial. There are some smaller unit projects with options for 8-20 student spaces that he's been having conversations about. He wants to have additional conversations before bringing them to the Housing Committee to see whether the projects are suitable for the University's needs.

## **IX. REPORT ON POSITION SEARCHES AFFECTING HOUSING AND FACILITIES**

Mr. Pinnock requested a report on the University's searches for open positions. VP Allen provided the report. He informed the Committee that an Assistant Vice President for Customer Relations (Jessica Powell), Assistant Vice President for Compliance and Risk Management (Cynthia Howell), Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Management, and Assistant Vice President Housing and Residential Life have each been hired and/or offers have been extended. Chief Operating Officer interviews have taken place. The University has hired an Assistant Vice President of Facilities Design and Construction, Will Radford. He is a TSU graduate with a degree in Instructional Engineering. He has experience with P3 agreements. The Director of Internal Audits position is under consideration.

Secretary Pendleton reviewed the recruiting and hiring efforts for the Chief Operating Officer position. Zoom-based interviews were conducted for six people. Four people are going to be invited to on-campus interviews. The four candidates will be interviewed by Board members and members of the administration. President Glover will make the final hiring decision with input from those who meet with the candidates.

B. Johnson requested CVs for the four advancing candidates for the Chief Operating Officer positions.

## **X. DISCUSSION OF ACTION ITEMS MOVING FORWARD**

Mr. Pinnock reviewed items to be done moving forward, as follows: provide job descriptions to the Board, provide the Master Plan (the Housing component) to the Board, develop a clear bed assignment process, create a communications plan to advise the Board of the plan with respect to housing, provide regular updates on enrollment numbers to the Board, and provide CVs and application letters for the four candidates advancing in the COO hiring process.

There was a discussion regarding how to provide enrollment and housing data to the Board.

## **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Pinnock asked if there was any additional business. Seeing none, he moved to adjourn the meeting, and the motion carried by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 3:02 p.m.