

**Tennessee State University Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting – September 14, 2023  
Tennessee State University – Hankal Hall**

**MINUTES**

**Board Members Present:** Trustees Deborah Cole, Pam Martin, Dr. Bill Johnson, Shaun Wimberly, Jr., Dr. Joseph Walker, and Van Pinnock, Richard Lewis, Steve Corbeil, Obie McKenzie (by phone), Andre Johnson (by phone)

**University Staff Present:** President Glenda Glover; Laurence Pendleton, General Counsel and Board Secretary; Dean Frank Stevenson, Assoc. Vice President of Student Affairs; Dr. Robbie Melton, Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs; Douglas Allen, Vice President of Business and Finance; Jason Evans, Chief Operating Officer; Dr. Curtis Johnson, Vice President of Administration; Dr. Arlene Nicholas-Phillips, Liaison to the Board of Trustees; Ginette Brown, Associate General Counsel; Renèe Forbes-Williams, Director of Internal Audit; Quincy Quick, Associate VP and Chief Research Officer; Ciera Walker, Customer Relations Program Manager; Cynthia Howell, Assistant VP for Risk and Financial Compliance; Mikki Allen, Director of Athletics; Kelli Sharpe, Assistant VP of Public Relations and Communications

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Cole called the meeting to order at 2:04 p.m. on September 14, 2023.

**II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Board Chair welcomed the attendees, and Dean Frank Stevenson gave the invocation. Chair Cole recognized Cabinet members and deans in attendance.

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

Board Secretary Pendleton called the roll at the Committee Chair's request. The following Trustees were present during roll call: Deborah Cole, Pam Martin, Dr. Bill Johnson, Shaun Wimberly, Jr., Dr. Joseph Walker, Van Pinnock, Richard Lewis, Steve Corbeil, Obie McKenzie (by phone), and Andre Johnson (by phone). Secretary Pendleton announced the presence of a quorum.

Chair Cole asked the committee members to state now if any of the committee members cannot hear or speak with each other. No committee members answered in the affirmative. Chair Cole also asked the committee members to indicate if someone is present with them from the location in which they are calling. No committee members indicated there was anyone present.

#### **IV. ACTION ITEMS**

##### **a. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

Chair Cole introduced the first agenda item, which was the approval of the Consent Agenda items, which included the June 15, 2023, Board meeting minutes; June 15, 2023, Audit Committee meeting minutes; June 15, 2023, Finance and Budget Committee meeting minutes; June 15, 2023, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee meeting minutes; June 15, 2023 Executive Committee meeting minutes; and May 9, 2023, Housing Committee meeting minutes, as contained in the Board materials for the June 15, 2023, Board meeting. Trustee B. Johnson moved to recommend to the full Board approval of the Consent Agenda item. Trustee Martin seconded the motion, which carried by roll call vote.

##### **b. APPROVAL OF TSU BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2024 CALENDAR YEAR MEETING SCHEDULE**

Chair Cole announced the next action item on the agenda, the approval of the 2024 TSU Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar dates as contained in the Board materials of the September 14, 2023, Board meeting.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Chair Cole moved to approve the 2024 TSU Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar. Trustee Martin seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously by roll call vote.

##### **c. APPROVAL OF REVISION TO BOARD BYLAWS**

Chair Cole announced the next action item on the agenda, the approval of an amendment to the Board bylaws, as reflected in Article 7.7 (A) and (F) and contained in the Board materials of the September 14, 2023, Board meeting. Chair Cole moved to approve the amendment. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call vote.

##### **d. AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

As Audit Committee Chair, Chair Cole informed the Board that the Audit Committee met to take action on two agenda items and received reports on two other items before going into Executive Session to discuss items deemed confidential under state law. The Audit Committee voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of the June 15, 2023, Audit Committee meeting minutes. The Audit Committee reviewed and discussed completed internal audits and outstanding audit issues. The Audit Committee also voted to recommend approval of the Modified Fiscal year 2023-2024 Audit Plan, as contained in the Board materials for the Board's September 15, 2023, meeting, which was presented by new Internal Audit Director Dr. Forbes-Williams upon her review of the previously approved audit plan.

Trustee Pinnock then moved to approve the Modified Fiscal year 2023-2024 Audit Plan, as contained in the Board materials for the Board's September 15, 2023, meeting. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Dr. Forbes-Williams was acknowledged and thanked for her work.

**e. FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair Cole introduced the next item on the agenda, the Finance and Budget Committee Report.

Trustee Lewis of the Finance and Budget Committee stated that the Committee met to act on one action item and received reports on eight other items. The Finance and Budget Committee voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of the June 15, 2023, Finance and Budget Committee meeting minutes, which were approved with the Consent Agenda Items. In addition, President Glover and her team provided reports on the University budget update, construction and facilities update, Master Plan update, the Finance and Budget Report, a report on enrollment and scholarships, a personnel update, a customer service report, and a report by the Board Special Housing Committee.

**f. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair Cole introduced the next item on the agenda, the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee Report. Trustee Martin reported that the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee met to consider and vote on two agenda items and to receive reports on four other agenda items.

On behalf of the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee, Trustee Martin moved to recommend to the full Board the approval of the June 15, 2023, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee meeting minutes, which were approved with the Consent Agenda Items. The Committee further approved a restructuring of the academic programs in the College of Agricultural Sciences to house its academic programs in five departments. Trustee Martin noted that the Committee also received reports on SACSCOC and other accreditation matters; academic affairs; Research and Sponsored Programs; and on student affairs and housing.

Trustee Martin next moved to approve an academic program modification to the College of Agriculture, as contained in the Board materials for the September 14, 2023, Board meeting. Trustee B. Johnson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call vote.

**g. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair Cole stated that the Executive Committee met today to discuss and vote on four action items and hear reports on three items. The Executive Committee voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of the June 15, 2023, Executive Committee meeting minutes.

The Executive Committee voted to approve a modification to the President's Annual Performance Review for FY 2023, in light of the President's announcement of her retirement effective July 1, 2024. The Executive Committee further voted to approve delegation of authority to the Board Chair to execute the Presidential Transition Agreement and Amendment No. 2 to Employment Agreement with President Glover, and to grant authority to the Committee related to the

Presidential search process. The Executive Committee also heard a report on Board Resolution Items, the Board's education session with the Association of Governing Board, and a report from Secretary Pendleton.

Chair Cole moved to approve a modification to the President's Annual Performance Review Process, as approved by the Executive Committee and contained in the September 14, 2023, Board materials. Trustee Martin seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Chair Cole moved to approve a delegation of authority to the Board Chair to execute a Presidential Transition Agreement and Amendment to Employment Agreement, as approved by the Executive Committee and contained in the Board material for the September 14, 2023, meeting. Trustee Lewis seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Chair Cole then moved to approve the granting of authority related to the Presidential search process, as approved by the Executive Committee, and contained in the Board materials for the Board's September 14, 2023, meeting. Chair Cole noted that any candidate selected will be interviewed and presented to and subject to a vote of the entire Board. The Executive Committee and Trustee Corbeil will serve on the Presidential Search Committee. Chair Cole will choose others to serve on the committee, including students, faculty, and members of the community. A search firm will be hired. A job description will be created and posted. Trustee B. Johnson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call vote.

## **V. REPORT ON TSU AND UT LAND GRANT AGRICULTURAL AND RESEARCH COLLABORATIONS**

Chair Cole called on President Glover to present information regarding this agenda item, a report on TSU and UT Land Grant Agricultural and Research collaborations. Dr. Chandra Reddy, at Dr. Glover's request, presented the information.

Dr. Reddy reported that the land grant university system is unique in that it is charged with serving the public. TSU does this by research, in-person, and online events. TSU and UT are land grant institutions. He reported that 84% of Tennessee land is agriculture and forestry land. Because TSU and UT have a common goals, we are trying to collaborate and partner on a variety of options, including research and academic side.

Dr. Reddy further discussed the UT-TSU Extension System. TSU was informed that it received another \$5 million and \$35 million grants from the U.S. Forestry Service. Of TSU's grant funding, \$48 million relates to Agriculture. The University must partner with others to increase funding. In addition to UT, TSU has relationships with Vanderbilt University, Dr. Reddy stated.

## **VI. REPORT ON TSU'S COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

Chair Cole presented the next item on the agenda, a report on the TSU Communications Plan. The Chair recognized President Glover to provide information regarding this agenda item, who in turn asked Kelli Sharpe to present the information.

Ms. Sharpe reviewed a timeline of proposed events for university communications. Ms. Sharpe is communicating with alumni and others. The TSU Connector, a newsletter, will be sent to stakeholders this fall.

A discussion took place regarding crisis communications. Ms. Sharpe discussed the Crisis Committee and how that committee will work with the Communications team.

## **VII. REPORT ON TSU ATHLETICS AND OTHER EVENTS**

Chair Cole called on President Glover to present information regarding this agenda item. President Glover asked Dr. Mikki Allen to report on this item.

Dr. Allen thanked the several people who attended TSU's game at Notre Dame. He said it was an opportunity to showcase what our HBCU is all about. There were about 5-6 million viewers on one station, which was a great marketing opportunity for TSU.

Dr. Allen highlighted two upcoming games: the John A. Merritt Classic, which would be a festival-like event, and the Mississippi Vally State game, which will be played next year. The University is calling on other HBCUs for future games.

Dr. Allen said that he would like to make Athletics part of every student's experience. He wants to continue to drive attendance.

Dr. Allen reported on the launch of a new hockey initiative with the Nashville Predators. Hockey will be club sport at TSU and will be a conduit to diversify the game of hockey.

Grant Winrow, this year's Homecoming Chair, then provided a homecoming update. The theme for this year is: Through resilience and perseverance we are one.

## **VIII. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Chair Cole called on President Glover to present information regarding this agenda item, the President's Report.

Prior to President Glover's report, Chair Cole noted that the Board asked President Glover to report, at each Board meeting, on the progress of addressing the Board Resolution items. She underscored the need to make the Board and the public aware of progress on the Resolution. Chair Cole asked COO Jason Evans to report on the Resolution Items. COO Evans reported on each of the items. He noted Resolution item one was in progress, as the Board continued its enhanced oversight efforts. He also noted that on item 2 the Board has worked to enhance its committees.

On item 3 item, CCO Evans that the practice of working with the AGB to strengthen its effectiveness is ongoing. On item 4, providing an annual scholarship plan, COO noted this item is implemented and ongoing. On item 5, housing and enrollment application data, COO noted that the information had been presented to the Board and noted the Board's request for more information on the enrollment data. On item 6, enrollment classification data, COO Evans noted

continuation of that practice. On item 7 – the presentation of a personnel action plan – COO indicated that plan is ongoing and more information had been presented to the Board. On item 8, the hiring of specified personnel, COO Evans noted the hiring of personnel in key positions including the COO and construction management positions. Chair Cole noted earlier discussion on customer service.

COO Evans noted item 9, presentation and approval for specified budget changes exceeding 10%. He noted that item is in practice. Regarding Item 10, adding two new residence halls to the University’s inventory, COO Evans noted the previous discussion by Will Radford on the plan. On item 11, report on student related communications, COO Evans noted that effort is ongoing. On item 12, COO also indicated that practice is ongoing. Chair Cole emphasized that the Board takes the Resolution and the progress seriously.

President Glover provided reports on various items contained in the Board materials for the June 15, 2023, Board Meeting and her President’s report PowerPoint slides. President Glover announced that the endowment is over \$100 million. Research funding is over \$100 million, which is a record high. TSU has had a successful SACSCOC reaffirmation. TSU has had its second highest enrollment for a first-year class. The University has an R2 Carnegie Research Classification and has charted a path to an R1 designation. The University has \$250 million in development.

Dr. Glover reviewed TSU’s housing situation. TSU is no longer in a housing crisis. She reported that TSU has 4,370 beds available. Two hotels were approved by the SBC for fall 2023. The University has put additional security measures in place for students at hotels, working with MNPD. The University has revamped its Housing department to better serve students.

Dr. Glover reported that the Office of the Comptroller conducted a performance audit and issued a report, which they are working through.

Academic Performance Incentive Pay of \$367,000 will be awarded to 179 faculty members.

Dr. Glover noted some facilities and maintenance upgrades and repairs.

For points of Tiger Pride, Dr. Glover reported that TSU is an HBCU forensics and debate champion. SACSCOC commended TSU for its SMART Center. TSU has established a partnership with the Tennessee Titans. TSU is exploring opportunities related to major league baseball in Nashville. TSU has established an ice hockey club team. Apple has named TSU a National Technology Innovation Center.

Dr. Glover thanked corporate sponsors and individual donors to the University. She stated that she will be working every day until she retires and thanks everyone for their support.

## **IX. BOARD CHAIR’S REPORT**

Chair Cole also commended President Glover as a prolific fundraiser, and that TSU is recognized across Nashville and Tennessee, in D.C., and internationally due to the tremendous leadership of Dr. Glenda Glover.

COO Evans reported the progress on the Board Resolution

Chair Cole further thanked all committee chairs and members, faculty, staff, deans, and Board of Trustee members for their hard work.

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Walker moved to adjourn, with the motion seconded by Trustee Corbeil. The motion carried by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m.