

**Meeting of the Tennessee State University Board of Trustees
November 16, 2023
Tennessee State University – Hankal Hall**

MINUTES

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

University Staff Present: President Glenda Glover; Laurence Pendleton, General Counsel and Board Secretary; Vice President 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 Garza Brown, Associate General Counsel

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Cole called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m. on November 16, 2023.

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Board Chair welcomed the attendees, and Vice President 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, Andre Johnson, Bill Johnson, Richard Lewis, Pam Martin, Van Pinnock, Joseph Walker, and Shaun Wimberly. Board 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 - the approval of the Consent Agenda items, which included the September 14, 2023, Board meeting minutes; September 14, 2023, Audit Committee meeting minutes; September 14, 2023, Finance and Budget Committee meeting minutes; September 14, 2023, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee meeting minutes;

September 14, 2023 Executive Committee meeting minutes; and June 28, 2023, Housing Committee meeting minutes, as contained in the Board materials for the November 16, 2023, Board meeting. Trustee B. Johnson moved to recommend to the full Board approval of the Consent Agenda items. Trustee Martin seconded the motion, which carried by roll call vote.

B. AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT

As Audit Committee Chair, Chair Cole informed the Board that the Audit Committee met to take action on one agenda item and received reports on three 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 September 14, 2023, Audit Committee meeting minutes. The Audit Committee discussed the Audit Office's Internal Quality Assessment, reviewed and discussed completed internal and external audits, and discussed outstanding audit issues.

C. 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 three action items and received reports on eight other items. The Finance and Budget Committee voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of the September 14, 2023, Finance and Budget Committee meeting minutes, which were approved with the Consent Agenda Items, the FY 2024 Institutional Revised Budget, and the Scholarship Plan. In addition, President Glover and her team provided a report on capital planning and facilities, a Master Plan update, the Finance and Budget report, an Institutional Development report, an update on enrollment and scholarships, a Personnel Action Plan update, and a Customer Service report. A Board Housing Committee report was provided by Trustee Pinnock.

Trustee Lewis moved to approve the fiscal year 2024 Institutional Revised Budget, as contained in the Board materials for the November 16, 2023, Board meeting. Trustee McKenzie seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Trustee Lewis moved to approve the Scholarship Plan for academic year 2024-2025, as amended, and contained in the Board materials for the November 16, 2023, Board meeting. Trustee B. Johnson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

D. 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 September 14, 2023, Academic Affairs and

Student Affairs Committee meeting minutes, which were approved with the Consent Agenda Items.

The Committee further voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of a new academic program, the Master of Science in Nutrition and Wellness. Trustee Martin also reported that the Committee received reports on the University's international activities, SACSCOC and other accreditation matters, academic affairs, and student affairs.

Trustee Martin next moved to approve a new academic program, the Master of Science in Nutrition and Wellness, as contained in the Board materials for the November 16, 2023, Board meeting. Trustee B. Johnson seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously by roll call vote.

E. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Cole stated that the Executive Committee met today to discuss and vote on one action item and hear reports on three items. The Executive Committee voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of the September 14, 2023, Executive Committee meeting minutes. The Committee also heard a report on the status of Board Resolution items, had a substantive discussion and update on the Presidential search process, and received a report from Secretary Pendleton.

V. REPORT ON DR. LEVI WATKINS, JR. INSTITUTE

Chair Cole called on President Glover to present information regarding this agenda item, a report on TSU's Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. Institute. Ms. Barbara Murrell, at Dr. Glover's request, presented the information.

Ms. Murrell reported on the Meharry Medical College/Tennessee State University Medical/Dental Accelerated Pathway Program. She welcomed students from the Institute to the Board meeting, who were recognized and applauded. Chair Cole welcomed the students and expressed her admiration for the students.

The Executive Committee for the Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. Institute includes Barbara C. Murrell, Chair; Dr. Nolan McMurray, Dean of the School of Life and Physical Sciences; Dr. Sharon Peters; and Dr. John Robinson, and the staff includes Lalita Hodge, Charlesa Hopkins, and Reno Thompson. Ms. Murrell welcomed and thanked the Institute staff for their work on the program.

Ms. Murrell provided the Board with background information on Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr., a distinguished TSU graduate who became an outstanding physician as a heart surgeon. He performed the first surgery to implant an automated cardioverter defibrillator in a human patient in 1980. This surgery was a game changer in the field of cardiology. Dr. Watkins, Jr. blazed the trail for underrepresented students in medical education. He led efforts to address racial disparities and advance health equity for medically underserved communities in the United States and around the world. The Institute program uses a cohort model. The first cohort arrived in August 2021. Presently, there are 48 students enrolled in the program.

The Institute was established by the TSU Office of the President as a pathway program for medical and dental students. The program seeks to create a pipeline of young individuals from underrepresented and underserved communities from high school to college who wish to become physicians and dentists who demonstrate the compassion, knowledge, and complex medical skills of Dr. Watkins. The program recruits, selects, and supports the medical education of a cadre of students to become physicians and dentists who will train and practice in underserved communities that experience the greatest burden of health care needs, thus, making a significant difference.

Corporate sponsors include HCA, TriStar Health, Microsoft, Regions Bank, Regions Foundation, Truist Bank, Lowes and Walmart. TSU alumni continue to be strong supporters of the program with contributions and donations.

Chair Cole thanked Dr. Glover, Ms. Murrell, and the students for their hard work.

VI. REPORT ON STATUS OF BOARD RESOLUTION ITEMS

Chair Cole called on Chief Operations Officer Jason Evans to present information regarding this agenda item.

COO Evans reviewed a Board resolution matrix, as found on page 165 of the Board materials, and he detailed the status of the individual items. There are no red items (representing action not started or requiring resources or decisions) presently flagged on the matrix. The matrix noted that the Board has increased its oversight operational and fiscal practices. COO Evans discussed actions taken by the Board with respect to various items, as reported in the matrix. A detailed description of actions taken were noted in the matrix. COO Evans said that several of the items have been institutionalized.

VII. REPORT ON STATUS OF TSU LAND GRANT UNDERFUNDING MATTER

Chair Cole called on Dr. Glover to present information regarding the next item on the agenda. Dr. Glover requested, and was given, permission to combine this agenda item with the President's Report, because the two items were interrelated.

Dr. Glover invited two students to address the Board, Derrell Taylor and Chrishonda O'Quinn, who are SGA representatives. Mr. Taylor reported steps that students have taken to address TSU's land grant underfunding, including efforts to inform students and meetings they have had with the Congressional Black Caucus. They met with Senator Marsha Blackburn and media personality Don Lemon. Their goal is to work with the State of Tennessee on a resolution. They want to be innovators and at the forefront of this matter. They are working to have a conversation with the Governor. They want to make sure that elected representatives visit TSU's campus and understand that students feel like there are inadequate state resources for TSU. Ms. O'Quinn discussed a student task force that has been formed. The task force is doing education and advocacy work. Ms. O'Quinn said that they have been working hard with students to make sure that they are engaged.

Student Trustee Wimberly commended Mr. Taylor and Ms. O'Quinn for their extraordinary efforts surrounding this issue.

VP Stevenson shared that a group of TSU students went to other LGIs in the state to compare their space and experiences. A clip of a video documenting this experience was shared with the Board.

Mr. Taylor encouraged the Board to communicate this issue to their professional networks. The students plan to move forward with strategic action.

President Glover shared that she met with the Governor. It was a good meeting. Talks are underway, she shared. She encouraged students to be patient.

VIII. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Glover presented information regarding this agenda item, the President's Report. She reported that TSU's financial position remains strong. The endowment is \$100 million. Research funding reached a record of \$100 million. This year had the second highest enrolment for the first-year class. Dr. Glover discussed SACSCOC accreditation matters and the use of \$250 million in state funding.

Dr. Glover shared several items wherein TSU was in the news. She stated that TSU was featured in a national Coca-Cola (Coke Zero) commercial that can be seen during prime-time football coverage. Student leaders held press conferences and a town hall with attorney Ben Crump to address TSU's \$2.1 billion in underfunding. Billboard Magazine named TSU's Commercial Music Program one of the best music programs in the world. Dr. Melton was named a top expert in artificial intelligence, and TSU's robotic AI dog, "Blue," was featured in the Tennessean. ESPN featured the TSU Tiger's football homecoming uniforms in an on-air piece.

With respect to enrollment, Dr. Glover shared that TSU continues to work on upperclassmen retention. Housing issues are being managed. TSU is working to increase graduate enrollment. For the fall 2023, there were 1,766 first-year students enrolled. Student support has been increased, including student health and wellness efforts.

TSU's financial position remains strong. The reserve remains strong at over \$50 million.

Audits are ongoing. The June 30, 2022, audit is currently being conducted and is almost complete. TSU took substantive measures to correct a prior audit. TSU has enhanced its management team including the Vice President, Controller, and other positions. Policies were implemented to ensure that procedures are performed and reviewed monthly.

Dr. Glover reported that items raised in the Comptroller's Office Special Review report are being continually addressed and actions are reported to the Board of Trustees on a quarterly basis.

A forensic audit started in early August 2023. TSU is providing requested information to the forensic auditors. It should be completed in mid-December.

Endowment growth is trending upward and has increased.

Grants and Research funding has increased to \$53 million to date, halfway through the fiscal year. Dr. Glover stated that there have been changes in the Carnegie classifications. She discussed the R1 and R2 methodology. To move to an R1 designation, TSU will need to raise \$50 million in total research spending and must have 70 research doctorates. TSU had 69 doctorates, but not all qualified. The University needs more standing programs. We have about a fourth of what we need for the \$50 million in research spending.

Dr. Glover gave an overview of land grant institutions for the Board's information. She explained that there are only two land grant institutions in Tennessee, TSU and the University of Tennessee. The federal mandate for equitable funding relates to the funding of these two universities. The second Morrill Act was passed in 1890 to extend access to higher education for African American students and required the equitable division of funding.

Dr. Glover further explained that there are two different levels of underfunding that TSU faces: (1) underfunding as determined by the State Joint Land Grant Funding Study Committee, a committee of the State of Tennessee; and (2) underfunding as determined federally by a joint study by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Education.

With respect to the first underfunding finding, the time period reviewed was 1957-2021. The amount of underfunding was reported as \$544,315,367. TSU was provided \$250 million for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022. The funds were stipulated for use for campus infrastructure. TSU also received an additional \$68 million in funding for an engineering building from regular appropriations for all the Tennessee universities. The \$68 million is not part of the \$250 million. The \$250 million is being used for a variety of items, as reviewed by Dr. Glover. For the remaining \$297 million that has not been paid to TSU, TSU has set up a proposed use of for the funds, such as for a laboratory sciences commons, roofing for multiple buildings, power plant and utility upgrades, a student center, and a nutritional health and sports complex.

With respect to the second underfunding finding, the time period reviewed was a 33-year period, from 1987 to 2020. The amount underfunded was \$2,147,784,704 and has caused a severe financial gap in the last 30 years alone. Dr. Glover met with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Education. A chief economist went through the methodology with Dr. Glover. TSU was the most underfunded HBCU of those institutions reviewed. When comparing the per-student appropriation for UT students vs. TSU students, there was a difference of \$6,773 per student for the fiscal year 2020, which was \$51,576,385 in per-student underfunding for FY 2020. An underfunding restoration plan has been put together. The plan is to ask for \$285 million for year 1. Received funds would go toward program updates (R2 to R1 transition), a STEM/SMART center, scholarships and endowment funding, and building an academic sports complex, including a new football stadium.

Moving forward, TSU plans to continue to meet with the Governor and legislators. It has held meetings with stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community members. TSU is evaluating a period going back even farther than what was reviewed in the federal underfunding review. It is estimated that the underfunding from 1958 to 1986 and 2020-2023 is

over \$1 billion, which is not being pursued at this time. Dr. Glover is very hopeful about reaching a resolution on TSU's historical underfunding.

Chair Cole asked whether the \$250 million in state funding must be approved before the funds are used. Dr. Glover stated that we must work with TBR. VP Allen said that each project must go through the State Building Commission.

A discussion took place regarding this item. Chair Cole stated that she would like someone from the Board to be present in meetings with government officials on the underfunding issue. Trustee Lewis concurred. Student Trustee Wimberly asked the Board to coordinate efforts with the students, as well.

IX. APPROVAL OF BOARD RESOLUTION ON ADDRESSING TSU'S HISTORICAL LAND GRANT UNDERFUNDING

Chair Cole addressed the next item on the agenda, a Board resolution on addressing TSU's historical land grant underfunding. Secretary Pendleton referred the Board to page 184 of the Board materials for the Nov. 16, 2023, Board meeting. A discussion took place regarding the proposed resolution. Chair Cole suggested an amendment to the proposed Board resolution to change the word "for" to "between" in the last sentence of the proposed resolution.

Chair Cole moved to amend the proposed Board Resolution on Addressing TSU's Historical Land Grant Underfunding, as contained in the Board materials for the November 16, 2023, Board meeting, replacing the word "for" with the word "between" in the last sentence of the resolution. Trustee Walker seconded the motion, and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Chair Cole then moved to approve the Board Resolution, as amended, on Addressing TSU's Historical Land Grant Underfunding, as contained in the Board materials for the November 16, 2023, Board meeting. Trustee B. Johnson seconded the motion, and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

X. BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Cole provided the Board Chair Report. Chair Cole provided a report on the Presidential search. She stated that a search firm was selected to assist with the search process. Academic Search was selected for this purpose, along with assistance from Aptask Global.

The Presidential Search Committee is comprised of 5 trustees, 19 TSU stakeholders, 5 community people, 3 students, and 1 council member. There will be an additional 2-3 people appointed to the Committee.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee A. Johnson moved to adjourn, with the motion seconded by Trustee Martin. The motion carried by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 3:57 p.m.