Meeting of the Tennessee State University
Board of Trustees
Special Meeting
June 23, 2026
Tennessee State University – Virtual

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Trustees Dakasha Winton, Charles Traughber, Marquita Qualls, Terica Smith, Dimeta Smith Knight, Leticia Towns, and Venkataswarup Tiriveedhi.

University Staff Present: President Dwayne Tucker; Ginette Brown, Interim General Counsel and Board Secretary; April Robinson, Chief Finance Officer; Sterlin Sanders, Interim Chief Information Officer; Will Radford, Assistant Vice President for Campus Operations + Planning, Design and Construction

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Winton called the meeting to order at 8:51 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Chair Winton requested that Secretary Brown conduct the roll call. The following committee members were present: Trustees Dakasha Winton, Charles Traughber, Marquita Qualls, Terica Smith, Dimeta Smith Knight, Leticia Towns, and Venkataswarup Tiriveedhi. The members participating electronically confirmed that they could hear and speak with the Board and that they were alone in the room. Following the roll call, Secretary Brown determined that a quorum was present.

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The Board Chair called for a motion to adopt the meeting agenda as contained in the materials for the June 23, 2026, Board meeting. Trustee Smith moved to adopt the agenda, and the motion was seconded as amended to remove the consent agenda, with items previously included on the consent agenda moved to the regular agenda. The Board Chair called for a roll call vote, and the motion was unanimously approved.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair Winton introduced the next agenda item, which was committee reports.

A. Finance Committee Report and Recommendations

Trustee Towns reported that the Finance Committee met on June 23, 2026 and took action on five (5) items to advance to the Board.

1. Approval of New Policy: Use of Out-of-State Undergraduate Tuition and Fees Revenue

Trustee Towns introduced the agenda item concerning the proposed policy on the use of out-of-state undergraduate tuition and fees revenue and invited Mrs. April Robinson, Chief Financial Officer, to provide an overview of the proposed policy prior to consideration of the action by the Committee.

Mrs. Robinson explained that the proposed policy is required effective July 1, 2026, pursuant to House Bill 1833 and Senate Bill 2079, enacted May 1, 2026. She stated that the policy establishes a framework for the use of out-of-state undergraduate tuition and fees revenue for academic instruction and support, student services and success initiatives, faculty and staff compensation and benefits, financial aid and scholarships, facilities, infrastructure and technology, and strategic initiatives. The policy also provides that, as part of the annual budget and financial planning process, the University will consider how such revenues may be used to mitigate costs for in-state undergraduate students, including through financial aid and scholarships, limiting tuition and fee increases, offsetting instructional or operational costs, and investing in efficiencies or cost-saving measures.

Trustees discussed the proposed policy in comparison with policies and approaches at other Tennessee public universities, including Middle Tennessee State University, the University of Memphis, and the University of Tennessee. Mrs. Robinson explained that the proposed policy incorporates common elements from those institutions while being tailored to Tennessee State University's circumstances.

Trustees also discussed potential annual reporting on out-of-state undergraduate tuition and fees revenue, including the amount received, how the revenue is utilized, and its alignment with enrollment strategies. Trustees suggested that the use of such revenue also be routed through the Finance Committee for review to provide additional Board oversight. Trustees further clarified that the policy applies to out-of-state undergraduate tuition and fees, including international students.

Following discussion, Trustee Smith Knight moved to approve the out-of-state undergraduate tuition and fees revenue policy as recommended by the Finance Committee. Trustee Towns seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted with the following results:

- Chair Winton: Yes
- Trustee Traughber: Yes
- Trustee Smith Knight: Yes
- Trustee Qualls: Yes
- Trustee Smith: Yes
- Trustee Towns: Yes
- Trustee Tiriveedhi: Yes

The motion passed.

2. Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Tuition and Mandatory Fees Increase

Trustee Towns presented the agenda item concerning the FY 2026-27 tuition and mandatory fees increase. She reported that the Finance Committee voted 3-1 to advance the recommendation to the full Board. Trustee Towns moved to approve the recommendation, and Chair Winton seconded the motion. A roll call vote was conducted with the following results:

- Chair Winton: Yes
- Trustee Traughber: No
- Trustee Smith Knight: Yes
- Trustee Qualls: No
- Trustee Smith: Yes
- Trustee Towns: Yes
- Trustee Tiriveedhi: Yes

The motion passed.

3. Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Estimated Budget

Trustee Towns presented the Finance Committee's recommendation for approval of the FY 2025-26 estimated budget. Trustee Towns moved to approve the recommendation, and Chair Winton seconded the motion. Trustees discussed TBR requirements concerning a balanced budget and the treatment of non-recurring funding sources. A roll call vote was conducted with the following results:

- Chair Winton: Yes
- Trustee Traughber: Abstained
- Trustee Smith Knight: Yes
- Trustee Qualls: Yes
- Trustee Smith: Yes
- Trustee Towns: Yes
- Trustee Tiriveedhi: Yes

The motion passed.

4. Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Proposed Budget

Trustee Towns presented the Finance Committee's recommendation for approval of the FY 2026-27 Proposed Budget. Trustee Towns moved to approve the recommendation, and Chair Winton seconded the motion. Trustees discussed the relationship between the Proposed Budget and the 4.1% tuition and mandatory fees increase previously approved, with clarification that the proposed budget presented did not include the increase and that the final FY 2026-27 budget would incorporate it. A roll call vote was conducted with the following results:

- Chair Winton: Yes

- Trustee Traughber: Abstained
- Trustee Smith Knight: Yes
- Trustee Qualls: Abstained
- Trustee Smith: Yes
- Trustee Towns: Yes
- Trustee Tiriveedhi: Yes

The motion passed.

V. CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING REAL ESTATE TRANSACTION

Committee Chair Towns presented the Finance Committee's recommendation regarding the real estate transaction and requested approval of the delegation of authority to the President to act on the recommendations contained in the Hayat Brown presentation. Chair Winton seconded the motion.

Trustees discussed concerns regarding the timing and availability of materials, the proposed transaction involving the John C. Tune Airport property, the potential use of a competitive bidding process, and the possible impact of litigation involving the Airport Authority. A roll call vote was conducted with the following results:

- Chair Winton: Yes
- Trustee Traughber: No
- Trustee Smith Knight: Yes
- Trustee Qualls: No
- Trustee Smith: Yes
- Trustee Towns: Yes
- Trustee Tiriveedhi: No

The motion passed.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Smith moved to adjourn the meeting, and Trustee Traughber seconded the motion. Secretary Brown called the roll call vote, and the motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.