

**Tennessee State University Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting – March 11, 2021  
Tennessee State University – Electronic**

**MINUTES**

**Board Members Present:** Trustees Deborah Cole, Obie McKenzie, Richard Lewis, Andre Johnson, Pam Martin, Ali Sekmen, Steve Corbeil; Joseph Walker III, Van Pinnock, and Tiara Thomas.

**University Staff Present:** President Glenda Glover; Laurence Pendleton, General Counsel and Board Secretary; Dr. Michael Harris, Interim Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Curtis Johnson, Chief of Staff; Dean Frank Stevenson, Assoc. Vice President of Student Affairs; Dr. Frances Williams, Assoc. Vice President of Research & Sponsored Programs; Terrence Izzard, Assoc. Vice President of Enrollment Management; Dr. Robbie Melton, Dean of Graduate School and Dr. Arlene Nicholas-Phillips, Liaison to BOT.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Walker called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 2:00 p.m., CST on March 11, 2021. Chair Walker moved to make certain findings on the record regarding the necessity for conducting the meeting electronically without a physical quorum present due to the coronavirus pandemic. The Board is scheduled to take up important and timely matters. Participation by electronic means is necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying guidance from the Center for Disease Control (“CDC”) and the State of Tennessee to limit face-to-face contact whenever possible. Electronic participation for the Board meeting is necessary for the safety of Board members, staff, and guests. Trustee Corbeil seconded and the motion carried by a roll call vote.

**II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Board Chair welcomed the attendees and gave the invocation. Chair Walker took a moment to formally introduce and welcome the newest Board Member, Trustee Van Pinnock, Chief Administrative Officer at duGard Communications.

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

Chair Walker asked the Board Secretary, Laurence Pendleton, to call the roll. The following Trustees were present during roll call: Trustee Deborah Cole, Obie McKenzie, Richard Lewis, Andre Johnson, Pam Martin, Ali Sekmen, Tiara Thomas, Steve Corbeil, Van Pinnock, and Joseph Walker III. Board Secretary Pendleton announced the presence of a quorum.

Chair Walker 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 Walker 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 NOVEMBER 19, 2020, BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Chair Walker introduced the first action item – the approval of the minutes of the November 19, 2020 board meeting. Chair Walker moved to approve the board meeting minutes and Trustee Martin seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

### **B. AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Trustee Cole informed the board that the audit committee met to take action on one item and received reports on three other items. The Audit Committee voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of the November 19, 2020, Audit Committee meeting minutes. Trustee Cole added that the Audit Committee reviewed and discussed completed internal and external audits, outstanding audit issues and the University's risk assessment process.

#### **I. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 19, 2020, AUDIT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Trustee Cole moved to approve the minutes of November 19, 2020, audit committee meeting, as contained in the board materials for the March 11, 2021, board meeting. Trustee Martin seconded the motion, which carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Trustee Cole concluded the Audit Committee report.

Chair Walker thanked the Audit Committee for their work.

### **C. FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE REPORT**

Trustee Lewis stated that the Finance and Budget Committee met this morning to take action on one item and received reports on five other items. The Finance and Budget Committee voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of the November 19, 2020, Finance and Budget Committee meeting minutes. In addition, the Finance and Budget Committee heard reports from President Glover and her team on the CARES Act funding related to COVID-19, the General Assembly's Land Grant Committee proceedings, and the FY 21 Institutional Revised Budget. The committee also heard reports on the enrollment, marketing and recruitment plan, and on institutional advancement.

#### **I. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 19, 2020, FINANCE AND BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Trustee Lewis moved to approve the November 19, 2020, Finance and Budget Committee meeting minutes, as contained in the board materials for the March 11, 2021, board meeting. Trustee Corbeil seconded the motion, which carried unanimously by roll call vote. Trustee Lewis concluded the Finance and Budget report.

Chair Walker thanked the Finance and Budget Committee members for their work.

## **D. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Trustee Martin reported that the academic affairs and student affairs committee met to consider and vote on four agenda items and to receive reports on four other agenda items.

Trustee Martin stated that the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of the November 19, 2020, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee meeting minutes; approval of the termination of the design concentration in the Bachelor of Science in Family Consumer Science program, approval of the termination of School Psychology concentration in the Ph.D. in Psychology program, and approval of a new academic program – the M.S. in Data Science.

Trustee Martin added that the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee also received reports on COVID-19 Coronavirus Pandemic Academic and Student Issues, SACSCOC accreditation review matters, academic affairs, and student affairs.

### **I. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 19, 2020, ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

On behalf of the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee, Trustee Martin moved to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2020, Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee meeting, as contained in the Board materials for the March 11, 2021, Board meeting. Trustee Cole seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

### **II. APPROVAL OF THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM MODIFICATION – THE TERMINATION OF THE DESIGN CONCENTRATION IN THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN FAMILY CONSUMER SCIENCE PROGRAM**

On behalf of the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee, Trustee Martin moved to approve the academic program modification – the termination of the design concentration in the Bachelor of Science in Family Consumer Science program as contained in the Board materials for the March 11, 2021, Board meeting. Trustee Cole seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

### **III. APPROVAL OF THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM MODIFICATION – THE TERMINATION OF THE SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY CONCENTRATION IN THE PH.D. IN PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM.**

On behalf of the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee, Trustee Martin moved to approve the academic program modification – the termination of the School Psychology concentration in the Ph.D. in Psychology program as contained in the Board materials for the March 11, 2021, Board meeting, Trustee Corbeil seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

### **IV. APPROVAL OF THE NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM – THE M.S. IN DATA SCIENCE.**

On behalf of the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee, Trustee Martin moved to approve a new academic program – the M.S. in Data Science, as contained in the Board materials for the March

11, 2021, Board meeting. Trustee Sekmen seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Trustee Martin concluded the Academic and Student Affairs report.

Chair Walker thanked Trustee Martin and the Academic Affairs and Student Affairs Committee for their work.

## **E. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Chair Walker stated that the Executive Committee met today to discuss and vote on specified committee agenda items. The Committee voted to recommend to the full Board the approval of the November 19, 2020, Executive Committee meeting minutes, as contained in the Board materials for the March 11, 2021 Board meeting.

Chair Walker also stated that the Executive Committee heard an update from Vice Chair Cole on the President's Annual Performance Review, and a report from Secretary Pendleton.

### **I. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 19, 2020, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Chair Walker moved to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2020, Executive Committee meeting, as contained in the Board materials for the March 11, 2021, Board meeting. Trustee Martin seconded the motion and it was approved by roll call vote.

Chair Walker concluded the Executive Committee report.

## **V. REPORT ON TSU'S RESEARCH FUNDING**

Chair Walker called on President Glover to present information regarding this agenda item. the update on COVID-19 issues affecting the TSU community. President Glover asked Dr. Frances Williams to report on this item.

Dr. Frances Williams presented on several areas of research funding including giving a research update, overview of highlights, mention of past awards for last five years, current status of funding and current activities in the unit.

She stressed that the number of grantsmanship activities had increased among faculty and staff, which demonstrates the university's level of competitiveness and focus. She reminded the Board that TSU's Carnegie Classification as an R2 Doctoral University was a direct reflection of this increased activity. Dr. Williams highlighted several faculty members who recently received significant grant awards: Dr. Karla Adesso – USDA; Dr. Swastik Brahma – NSF; Dr. Jerri Haynes – Department of Education; and Drs. Margaret Whalen & Venkataswarup Tiriveedhi – NIH. Some of these researchers are leading national teams in their research, and forging paths of significant impact. Dr. Williams also shared that within this consortium lies many other TSU faculty that are involved in these awards.

Over the past five years through 2020, TSU had averaged approximately \$50 million in awards per year, last year we were awarded \$55 million. This can be attributed to the focus of our faculty. Dr.

Williams proudly shared that our YTD awards have already exceeded that of last year with \$60 million already received representing 119 grants.

Dr. Williams indicated that the source of our funding was represented as follows: 30% - State; 2% - other sources; while a very small percent (0.2%) of funding comes from private sources (corporate), the vast majority (68%) was federally funded. Some of our top funding agencies are USDA, USDHHS, NSF and Department of Education.

The unit continues to conduct our Research symposium and Writing retreats. We have several proposals pending and will continue to increase our activity.

Chair Walker thanked President Glover and her team for the update.

## **VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Chair Walker recognized President Glover to present the President's Report, including an update on COVID-19.

President Glover provided reports on various items contained in the board materials for the March 11, 2021, Board Meeting and her President's report power-point slides. She provided reports on: COVID-19 update including the fact that we will be following the same procedures in the Spring 2021 that we followed in Fall 2020, and that the health and safety protocols will remain in place; and audit update and SACSCOC update including the upcoming On-Site visit by the Accreditation Committee scheduled for March 22-25, 2021.

She also provided updates on enrollment and recruitment, explaining some factors that impacted the Fall 2020 enrollment; Dual Enrollment; CARES Act Funding for higher education institutions and for HBCUs; Grants awarded and Research funded. President Glover announced the establishment of the Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr. Institute and the historic partnership with Meharry Medical College. This collaboration creates a pipeline for early entry into medical school. Students applying must have a minimum GPA 3.5 and ACT 28. She also shared her excitement about the \$70 billion pledged to HBCUs by the Biden-Harris administration. Several additional partnerships were highlighted including the Sony Music Group and the Southern Company.

President Glover thanked everyone and the Board.

## **VII. BOARD CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Walker thanked President Glover for her leadership. Chair Walker thanked Provost Harris and all others. He expressed his gratitude for the 'heavy lifting' that goes on behind the scenes to make everything work at TSU. He confirmed that we are moving in the correct direction.

On behalf of the Board, Chair Walker thanked everyone for supporting the students particularly during this time of the pandemic and of social unrest. He thanked the corporations and alumni who have been partnering with TSU towards the advancement of our students.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Walker moved to adjourn which was seconded by Trustee Cole. The motioned carried by roll call vote. The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m. CST.