

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES

The Middle Tennessee State University Board of Trustees met on April 5, 2022, in the Miller Education Center Meeting Room at Middle Tennessee State University.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Board Chair Steve Smith called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Keith Huber led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introduction of Student Veteran

Gen. Huber introduced ROTC Cadet Charity Savage who played basketball here at MTSU under Coach Insell. After finishing her undergraduate degree in biochemistry, she decided to pursue a career in the military. She is currently engaged in MTSU's ROTC while pursuing her Master of Science degree in Professional Science in biotechnology. Next month, she will graduate and be commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Chemical Corp. Cadet Savage expressed her appreciation for the basketball and academic opportunities that MTSU has provided her. She also shared that the determining factors for her to pursue a military career included the chance to lead and to pay back others for the support she has received.

Recognition of 2021-22 Blue Raiders Basketball Teams

Chairman Smith recognized the remarkable success of our men's and women's basketball post-season accomplishments. Coach Rick Insell and Coach Nick McDevitt spoke, thanking the Board and University for their support.

Roll Call

Board Secretary James Floyd called the roll. The following trustees were in attendance: J.B. Baker, Tom Boyd, Rick Cottle, Pete DeLay, Darrell Freeman, Joey Jacobs, Gabriela Jaimes, Chris Karbowskiak, Stephen Smith, and Pam Wright. A quorum was declared.

President Sidney A. McPhee; Mark Byrnes, University Provost; Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Yvette Clark, Interim Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Deb Sells, Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for Enrollment and Academic Services; Alan Thomas, Vice President for Business and Finance; Andrew Oppmann, Vice President for Marketing and Communications; Brenda Burkhart, Chief Audit Executive; James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary; and Kim Edgar, Executive Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, were also in attendance.

Requests to Address the Board

Chairman Smith noted that five timely requests were made and that four of the individuals were present - Braxton Coleman, Marvel Bandy, Terika Singh Dean, and Paul Martin. All requestors were granted the opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes with Board Secretary Floyd responsible for keeping track of time.

Braxton Coleman, a Senior at MTSU, spoke on the status of black MTSU. Mr. Coleman applauded the University's efforts at recruiting and admitting black students but expressed concerns about the retention and graduation of black students. He also described what he considered the University's silencing of opposition voices.

Terika Singh Dean, an MTSU alumna and parent of a graduating high school senior, shared her concerns about the black student graduation rate and MTSU's culture. She also spoke about her experience at MTSU and what her family is evaluating as her son considers colleges.

Marvel Bandy, an MTSU alumnus and business owner, expressed his affinity for MTSU and spoke about his concerns regarding declines in overall enrollment and the 4-year and 6-year graduation rates for African American students. He also questioned the University's enrollment management practices and faculty diversity numbers post Geier.

Paul Martin, an MTSU alumnus and supporter, expressed his passion and dedication to MTSU. He commended the University's growth and accomplishments while sharing how the enhancement of MTSU's academic reputation and the improved quality of its students has occurred under Dr. McPhee's leadership. He further recognized that Dr. and Mrs. McPhee are passionate about helping students and that MTSU has a highly effective administrative team from his accreditation perspective.

Approval of December 8, 2021, Meeting Minutes – Action

Trustee Boyd read a December 22, 2021, cover email and memorandum by Dr. Louis M. Kyriakouides, Director of the Albert Gore Research Center and Professor of History, to give context to the October 3, 1962, Reese Smith Jr. letter to Senator Albert Gore, Sr., referenced earlier by Mr. Braxton Coleman and previously by Dr. Jewel Winn at the December 8, 2021, Board meeting. Collectively, the email and memorandum outline misrepresentations by Dr. Winn regarding Reese Smith Jr.'s use of a racial epithet and his status as a segregationist. Further, Dr. Kyriakouides's correspondence gave additional clarification, correction, and context to the Smith letter.

Trustee Boyd made the motion to approve the minutes from the December 8, 2021, meeting, and Trustee DeLay seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Committee Report: Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics

Committee Chair Pam Wright reported that the Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee met on March 15, 2022. The Committee approved the minutes from the November

9, 2021, meeting. The Committee report contained action items, unanimously approved by the Committee, and informational items for the Board's consideration. Information items presented included the Annual Report of Academic Program Actions; Fraternity and Sorority Life update; update on the Athletics Build Blue Project; and presentation by members of the Faculty Senate. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and are contained in the Board notebooks.

New Academic Degree Programs: Bachelor of Science in Public Writing and Rhetoric and Master of Science in Supply Chain Management – Action

Provost Byrnes reported to the Committee that in accordance with University Policy 251 Approval of Academic Programs, Units, and Modifications, states all academic actions that require review and approval by THEC must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Honorary Degrees – Action

University Policy 316 Awarding Honorary Degrees states that the President must recommend nominees for honorary degrees to the Board of Trustees for approval. President McPhee recommends to the Board of Trustees Bill Haslam, former governor of Tennessee, and Philip Edward 'Brave' Davis, Prime Minister of the Bahamas, to receive honorary doctorate degrees at the May Commencement ceremonies.

Motion

Vice Chair Karbowski made the motion to approve the action items recommended by the Committee and Trustee Baker seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion to approve the action items carried unanimously.

Committee Report: Audit and Compliance Committee

Committee Chair Pete DeLay reported that the Audit and Compliance Committee met on March 15, 2022. The Committee approved the minutes from its November 9, 2021, meeting. The Committee report contained no action items. Several information items were presented

including report of conflict of interest disclosures in 2021; review of President's Statement of Disclosure of Interests for 2022; report on compliance with public records policy; results of external reviews including the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury Financial and Compliance Audit Report for the year ended June 30, 2021 and the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury NCAA Agreed-upon Procedures Applied to the Athletic Programs Statement of Revenue and Expenses for the Year Ended June 30, 2021; and the quarterly report – Results of Internal Audit Reports. There were no audit findings or reportable issues with the audit reports. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and are contained in the Board notebooks.

Committee Report: Executive and Governance Committee

Vice Chair Karbowski reported that the Executive and Governance Committee met on March 15, 2022. The Committee approved the minutes from its November 9, 2021, meeting. The Committee report contained action items, unanimously approved by the Committee, to be considered by the Board. Materials outlining the action items were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and are contained in the Board notebooks.

Institutional Mission Statement and Mission Profile – Action

Associate Provost Mary Hoffschwelle presented revisions to the Institutional Mission Statement and Mission Profile.

Extension of President's Contract – Action

Finance Chair Jacobs presented recommendations concerning the president's contract including a three-year extension to December 10, 2026, maintaining all terms and conditions of the current contract; and one revision to the contract where the president will be automatically included in any general salary increase for University employees without specific Board approval. This increase in base salary would occur at the same time as it does for all other University employees.

Motion

Vice Chair Karbowskiak made the motion to approve the action items recommended by the Committee and Trustee DeLay seconded the motion.

Trustee Freeman raised for discussion the deletion of word “minority” and the use of word “underrepresented” in the proposed Institutional Mission Profile. Vice Chair Karbowskiak stated that her reading is that the University’s goal is to be more inclusive of all underrepresented populations including minorities.

After discussion, Trustee Karbowskiak moved to amend the Institutional Mission Profile, to include the phrase “including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and financial status” after “underrepresented students,” which Trustee DeLay seconded.

After clarification that the Amendment would need to be addressed first and then the approval of the action items and noting Trustee Freeman’s objection to the bundling of the action items, the motion and its second were withdrawn respectively by Vice Chair Karbowskiak and Trustee DeLay.

Motion to Separate Action Items for Vote

Vice Chair Karbowskiak made the motion to separate the two action items for independent votes and Trustee Wright seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion to separate the action items for consideration carried unanimously.

Motion to Approve Institutional Mission Statement and Mission Profile

Vice Chair Karbowskiak made the motion to approve the Institutional Mission Statement and Mission Profile and Trustee DeLay seconded the motion.

Dr. McPhee advised that there are SACSCOC and THEC considerations with the proposed revision to the Institutional Mission Profile. Mary Hoffschwelle, Associate Provost for Strategic

Planning and Partnerships, shared that the University committee members responsible for the proposed revisions felt that the current designation was not inclusive enough to address all University community members who might need to not only be welcomed, but afforded support from the University. Vice Chair Karbowiak inquired about the impact of her proposed revision. Christy Sigler, Assistant to the President for Institutional Equity and Compliance, reiterated Dr. Hoffschwelle's statements and advised that we cannot ask individuals certain questions such as what their sexual orientation is.

After further Trustee discussion, a voice vote was taken and the motion to approve the Institutional Mission Statement and Mission Profile action item was approved.

Motion to Approve Extension of President's Contract

Vice Chair Karbowiak made the motion to approve the extension of the President's contract and Trustee Baker seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion to approve this action item was approved.

Committee Report: Finance and Personnel Committee

Trustee Jacobs reported that the Finance and Personnel Committee met on March 15, 2022. The Committee approved the minutes from its November 9, 2021, meeting. The Committee report contained action items, unanimously approved by the Committee, and informational items to be considered by the Board. Information items included: update on the Governor's Budget and Legislative Budget Hearings; update on federal stimulus funding; a presentation by members of the Faculty Senate. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

Permanent Appointment of Assistant to the President for Community Engagement and Inclusion – Action

Following a national search, Dr. McPhee recommended the appointment of Dr. Monica Smith as Assistant to the President for Community Engagement and Inclusion.

Revision to Policy 611 Financial Performance Review – Action

Vice President Alan Thomas presented a revision to Policy 611 Financial Performance Review. The revision provides that the Composite Financial Index (CFI) will no longer be submitted to the Board as an annual information item. Instead, individual ratios and overall CFI score will be compared with other LGIs, provided to external agencies requiring submission such as the Department of Education, and used to assess whether any revisions to the budget need to be made. The Committee revised the policy to state individual metrics requiring revisions to the budget also be presented with the budget recommendations.

Capital Disclosures for FY 21-22 – Action

A new disclosure was added for the Phillips Bookstore Improvements project.

Motion

Trustee Jacobs made the motion to approve the action items recommended by the Committee and Trustee Freeman seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion to approve the action items carried unanimously.

Dr. Monica Smith Introduction

Dr. Monica Smith, the University's initial Assistant to the President for Community Engagement and Inclusion, introduced herself and shared that she comes to use with over three decades of experience in this area. She shared one of Dr. Martin Luther King's Jr.'s quotes, which is a guiding principle for her – "All life is interrelated. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied together in a single garment of destiny. What affects one directly, affects all indirectly."

Report of the President

Dr. McPhee thanked the Board for the opportunity to give updates on matters at the University since the last meeting.

Enrollment

First, in providing an update on the University's fall 2022 enrollment projections, Dr. McPhee shared some historic factual enrollment data as background and context. He advised that it is important to note that the overall number of Tennessee public high school graduates enrolling in an LGI or a UT university has dropped from 15,402 in 2012 to 14,091 in 2020—a reduction of 8.5%. During that same time, the number of Tennessee public high school graduates choosing any of the LGIs dropped by 12.5%. In addition, Tennessee enrolled the first class of TN Promise students receiving free community college tuition in fall of 2015. Since that time, all four-year institutions are recruiting against the offer of two years of community college at no cost for tuition. In addition, the COVID pandemic of 2019-2022 negatively affected student enrollments across Tennessee higher education institutions. Community colleges were especially hard hit – in most cases a double-digit decline despite the advantage of free tuition that is offered under the TN Promise. Regardless, MTSU has held its place as the number one destination of new transfer students in the state of Tennessee for well more than ten years. In 2011, the MTSU market share of all new transfer students enrolling at any public university in the state was 22.97%; in fall of 2020 that market share was holding strong at 22.20%. UTK currently falls second in market share of new transfer students at 17.47%. In the fall of 2019, MTSU posted a 14% increase in our freshmen class, and has shown increases in the number of new freshmen in three of the past five years. Every year in the last decade, MTSU has continued to hold its ranking as second only to UTK in the number of new freshmen enrolled, among all LGI and UT schools even with the declining enrollment statewide and nationwide. In summary, MTSU continues to experience steady increases in the average high school GPA and average ACT score of the entering freshman class. In 2014, the average ACT of the entering freshman class was

22.12. In 2021, it was an ACT of 22.87. In 2014, the average high school GPA of the entering freshman class was 3.42. In 2021, it is a GPA of 3.59. With this background, Dr. McPhee then gave a brief update on applications and admissions for the fall 2022 semester. The University's new freshman numbers continue to be strong. Our transfer numbers continue to reflect the enormous decline in enrollment experienced by the community colleges over the past two years. Overall, as of April 1, the University has admitted a total of 9,638 new undergraduates for fall 2022. This is an increase of 18% over last year on April 1. This is also an increase of 7% over the April 1, 2020, numbers. Dr. McPhee then thanked Dr. Deb Sells for her leadership and her team for its dedication and level of performance.

R2 Presentation

Dr. McPhee next advised that the University recently earned the designation as an R2 university. This is a milestone event for MTSU, as transformational as its evolution from a Normal School to a College, then to a University. He then introduced Dr. David Butler, Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the Graduate School who spoke about the significance of R2 designation and why it is so important to our students, faculty, and administration.

Grammys

Dr. McPhee also shared that MTSU was well represented at the 64th annual Grammy Awards with nine alumni nominated in categories ranging from country to pop to Latin music to bluegrass to gospel. He noted that on the Saturday prior to the awards show, many of the University's music business friends and alumni gathered for a celebration honoring alumna Maria Elisa Ayerbe, one of the music industry's top female producers and engineers, recognizing her work on Mis Amores, nominated for best Latin pop album.

Commencement

Dr. McPhee advised the Board that nearly 2,500 students will graduate during three commencement ceremonies on Saturday, May 7. Commencement speakers include The Honorable Philip Edward Davis, Prime Minister of The Bahamas, Vice Chair Karbowiak, and Professor Tim Graeff, the 2021 Career Achievement recipient. Also, during the morning

ceremony, Prime Minister Davis and former Tennessee Governor Bill Haslam will receive honorary doctorate degrees.

Conclusion

Lastly, Dr. McPhee expressed that we have a beautiful campus with dedicated faculty and staff and incredible students. Dr. McPhee also emphasized that the University should be proud of its work. In fact, other institutions have noticed and are inquiring about how MTSU conducts its affairs. Finally, he noted that the University of Tennessee Chattanooga recently finished a study that pointed to MTSU as the model in attracting and retaining underrepresented groups.

In closing, Chairman Smith thanked staff and faculty for their efforts.

Adjournment

Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 2:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James Floyd". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James Floyd,

Board Secretary