

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES

The Middle Tennessee State University Board of Trustees met on December 8, 2021, 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 Army Sergeant Mark McGavock Lowe. After attending Vanderbilt for two years, he joined the U.S. Army. From 2015-2020 he served in an elite infantry division, 82nd Airborne Division, as a fire support Sergeant with deployment and combat in Afghanistan. He has now transferred his college credits to MTSU, where he is majoring in data science and currently has a 4.0 GPA. Mr. Lowe spoke of the support he has received from the Daniels Center and the University's veteran community. He also shared that his main motivation for pursuing military service occurred when Gen. Huber spoke at his high school. Lastly, he expressed that veteran support and the new data science degree were the two main factors for him choosing MTSU.

Recognition of Coach Jimmy Borendame

Chairman Smith recognized Coach Jimmy Borendame who has spent 11 years as MTSU's Men's Tennis Coach. Borendame, a Wheaton, Illinois native, has led his team to Sun Belt Conference championships in 2011 and 2012 and most recently followed up with a pair of Conference USA titles in 2019 and 2021. Before arriving in Murfreesboro, Borendame coached men's tennis at Drake University, Virginia Tech, West Virginia, and William and Mary. He is a graduate of Butler University where he played tennis. Chairman Smith acknowledged Coach Borendame for his

recent recognition as C-USA Men's Tennis Coach of the Year, the third consecutive year he has received this honor.

Coach Borendame expressed his appreciation for the Board's leadership and support of the athletics program and students.

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; Bruce Petryshak, 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 timely requests were made by Dr. Jewel Winn and Rev. Harold Yokley to address the Board. Both individuals were granted the opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes with Board Secretary Floyd responsible for keeping track of time.

Dr. Winn congratulated MTSU, her alma mater, for its success and accomplishments over the years. She then shared concerns about the decline in black student enrollment and faculty numbers. Dr. Winn next outlined her fears about four-year graduation rates for both African American males and females and the need for an ethnically and culturally diverse faculty.

Rev. Yokley, an MTSU alumnus and pastor of Murfreesboro's New Life Christian Church, spoke of serving on a commission and a board around 40 years ago with President Ingram and Dr. Floyd to address diversity and inclusion. He stated that he is concerned MTSU is at the same place now as it was 40 years ago with questions on how to improve minority enrollment and tenured faculty representation. He challenged the MTSU community to engage in honest conversations to build bridges for the success of minority and low-income students.

Dr. McPhee thanked both speakers for sharing their concerns and assured them that the mission of the University is to work towards the academic success of all of our students with the ultimate goal to graduate them. He stated that information packets will be given to both speakers highlighting diversity-related programs and initiatives at MTSU. He welcomed them to have a conversation with him to voice their concerns and to discuss the efforts and resources that MTSU has put into diversity acknowledging that there is room for improvement.

Dr. McPhee expressed that it is important to possess a complete and accurate picture of the University's performance in these areas. He is confident that a comprehensive depiction reveals that MTSU has made and continues to make significant efforts in helping every student be successful in graduating, including our students of color and those who are economically disadvantaged. Dr. McPhee then detailed that MTSU is second only to Tennessee State University, a historically black institution, in the total number of black graduates produced by Tennessee public universities.

Comments by Trustee Freeman

Chairman Smith stated that Trustee Freeman had requested to give comments. Trustee Freeman spoke of the honor of serving on this Board and his appreciation for the black alumni present at the meeting. He then stated it has been difficult to serve on the Board as the only African American as he believes that the Board does not care about people of color or poor white people. Trustee Freeman also expressed that he feels that he has been silenced when addressing diversity issues on campus and subjected to micro-aggressions. He then outlined the Freeman Fellows program and other initiatives that he is pursuing with the goal to have

students feel more attached to the University and to obtain a 100% graduation rate for program participants. He noted that he will pay for 50 students to attend the MTSU Scholars Academy and that his foundation will partner with organizations to provide mentoring and internship opportunities. In addition, he stated that his goal is to be one of the largest MTSU donors. Finally, Trustee Freeman contended that racism is present at MTSU and encouraged the Board and Dr. McPhee to take up the opportunity to address it.

Approval of September 14, 2021, Meeting Minutes – Action

Chairman Smith made the motion to approve the minutes from the September 14, 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 November 9, 2021. The Committee approved the minutes from the August 24, 2021, meeting. The Committee report contained action items, unanimously approved by the Committee, and informational items for the Board’s consideration. Several information items were also presented including performance metrics, enrollment, and athletics. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

New Academic Degree Program: Master of Science in Data Science – 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.

Expedited Tenure – Action

Professor Amy Aldridge Sanford has been reviewed for tenure by her department chair, department and college committee, and dean according to MTSU Policy 204 Tenure and the

respective college and department policies. The President and University Provost recommended that tenure be granted effective February 1, 2022.

Policy Revision: Policy 301 Admissions – Action

The proposed revisions update the policy to align with the revised Tennessee Code Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 1.

Motion

Vice Chair Karbowskiak made the motion to approve the action items recommended by the Committee and Trustee DeLay 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 November 9, 2021. The Committee approved the minutes from its August 24, 2021 meeting. The Committee report contained no action items. Several information items were presented including the results of an external review and a quarterly report on internal audit reports. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

Committee Report: Executive and Governance Committee

Vice Chair Karbowskiak reported that the Executive and Governance Committee met on November 9, 2021. The Committee approved the minutes from its August 24, 2021 meeting. The Committee report contained an action item, unanimously approved by the Committee, and an informational item to be considered by the Board. Materials outlining the action items were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

President's Compensation – Action

Vice Chair Karbowski reported that Finance Chair Jacobs presented a recommendation to the Committee concerning the president's compensation, which was based on the evaluation of the president reported on at the May 2021 Executive and Governance Committee. The recommendation included a 2.7% increase in the president's base salary, as well as a \$25,000 one-time bonus. The salary increase would be retroactive to July 1, 2021 as was previously implemented for campus employees. The committee approved this recommendation unanimously.

2021 Self-Evaluation Results, Action for Improvement - Information

Motion

Trustee Delay made the motion to approve the action item recommended by the Committee and Trustee Wright seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and upon hearing nay, Chairman Smith initiated a roll call vote where the motion to approve the action item carried by a vote of 8 to 1 (Trustee Freeman).

Committee Report: Finance and Personnel Committee

Trustee Jacobs reported that the Finance and Personnel Committee met on November 9, 2021. The Committee approved the minutes from its August 24, 2021 meeting. The Committee report contained an action item, unanimously approved by the Committee, and informational items to be considered by the Board. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

2021-2022 October Revised Budget - Action

Trustee Jacobs stated that Vice President Alan Thomas presented changes since the July (Original) Budget which included adjustments to tuition and fee revenue to include the remaining tuition increase previously approved by the Board; adjusted expenditure budgets to

reflect year-end balances as of June 30, 2021; and adjustments to auxiliary and restricted budgets based on information obtained since the July budget submission, including funding received under the American Rescue Plan (ARP).

The committee unanimously approved the revised budget as presented.

Salary Data Update – Information

THEC 2022-23 Capital Outlay/Maintenance Recommendations - Information

THEC 2022-23 Operating Recommendations - Information

Philanthropy Report - Information

Motion

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

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 Activity and Projections

Dr. McPhee advised that the December 1 application and admit numbers are exceptionally high and promising this year. MTSU received more freshman applications than it ever has, 9,019 applications which is 58.9% over last year. This represents more freshmen applications than we have ever come including our peak enrollment year of 2011. Of these applicants, we have admitted a record total of 6,064 new freshman for 2022, which is a 21.6% increase from 2019. As anticipated, our transfer application admits are down by 10% due to significant decline in community college enrollment numbers. We have 52% of all our student population as transfer

students, so when community colleges lose enrollment, it impacts MTSU. Dr. McPhee thanked Dr. Sells for leading the recruiting and admissions teams in an extraordinary job.

Dr. Emily House, Guest Speaker via Zoom – Executive Director THEC, Black Male Success Initiative Report.

Dr. House presented an overview of THEC's Black Male Success Initiative report. First, Dr. House introduced and thanked Dr. Julie Roberts, for the work she had done with the task force comprised of community members, community college representatives, university representatives, and others committed to this discussion which included Trustee Freeman. She advised that the task force met four times in 2021 and focused a great deal on the arch of the discrepancies that exist between black male students and other students on campus. Dr. House outlined that she planned to speak on the margins of enrollment, persistence, and graduation.

The first margin, enrollment, includes strategies such as the summer bridge program being reinstated and targeting subpopulations to ensure success. The second margin, persistence, includes retention-oriented programs, mentorships, and completion grants targeted to certain subgroups. The third margin, graduation, is dependent on first two margins. Student can't graduate if they don't persist, they can't persist if they don't enroll. Dr. House spoke about current programmatic efforts and relationships with partnering organizations that can assist in addressing this issue. She concluded her remarks and welcomed any questions.

Dr. House affirmed that Dr. McPhee was very supportive of this effort at the onset. She stated that there is an appetite for conversation on the topic and, more importantly, execution on the related work. Trustee Freeman stated he attended every task force meeting and that we need to add more resources to ensure that African American males graduate. Dr. House noted that higher education needs to continually evaluate and assess the role financial aid plays in matriculation for all students regardless of their race or ethnicity.

Fairness, Justice, and Equity Center (FJE)

Dr. McPhee advised that one of the strategic moves recommended by the State Collaborative on Reform Education (SCORE) and the consulting team, Education First 2019-2020, to advance the work of the MTSU College of Education was the creation of a center to discuss recruitment and support for diverse teacher candidates. As a result, the MTSU College of Education began the work to create the Fairness, Justice, and Equity Center (FJE). Dr. McPhee introduced Dr. Rick Vanosdall (Dean, College of Education), Dr. Michelle Stevens (Professor, Director of FJE), Dr. Deatrice Swett, Executive Director of the Teacher Fellowship, and Dr. Patrick Washington, Man-Up to discuss this effort.

Dr. Stevens informed the Board the FJE will offer educational opportunities, support, and advocacy for community partners. It will also partner with Memphis-based Man Up Teacher Fellowship, a nonprofit working to provide students in high-poverty areas access to high-quality male teachers that is led by Dr. Washington. Dr. Washington generally discussed the need for male minority representation in the classroom and shared a Real Men Teach video.

Chairman Smith and Dr. McPhee spoke further about their meeting with Senator Bill Frist and potential partnership opportunities with SCORE.

Retirement of Vice President

Dr. McPhee announced that Bruce Petryshak, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer (CIO), is retiring in January 2022. Vice President Petryshak has served MTSU since August 2010 and has been recognized as one of the top CIOs in the country. Dr. McPhee acknowledged the incredible work he has done and wished him well.

Holiday Open House

Dr. McPhee invited the Board to his Holiday Open House on December 9. He wished everyone a healthy and happy holiday season and looks forward to exciting and productive new year.

Non-Public Executive Session

Chairman Smith called for a non-public executive session.

2:43 pm

Adjournment

Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 3:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "James Floyd". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "F" and "L".

James Floyd,

Board Secretary