

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES

The Middle Tennessee State University Board of Trustees met on April 4, 2023, 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 Urielle Umutoni and shared her family's immigration story from the Democratic Republic of Congo to the United States. Cadet Umutoni came to the U.S. in 2004 and earned her citizenship in 2013. She is scheduled to graduate this upcoming August with a Bachelor of Science degree in public health and will be commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Tennessee Army National Guard. Cadet Umutoni expressed that she chose to attend MTSU based on its military connection. As a naturalized citizen, the ROTC program has provided a way for her to understand the cultural aspect of the military and the values for not just the Army, but all military branches. Chairman Smith gave Cadet Umutoni a token of appreciation and stated that she was an example of the American dream.

Recognition by the President

Dr. McPhee welcomed the following Tennessee Higher Education Commission colleagues who attended the meeting: Steven Gentile, Chief Policy Officer, Crystal Colins, Senior Director of Fiscal Policy, and Victoria Harpool, Senior Director of Policy & Effectiveness.

Roll Call

Board Secretary James Floyd called the roll. The following trustees were in attendance: J.B. Baker, Tom Boyd, Rick Cottle, Pete DeLay, Chris Karbowski, Stephen Smith, Pam Wright, and Drew Carpenter. Trustee Chris Karbowski participated in the meeting electronically. Per T.C.A. 8-44-108(c)(3), Trustee Karbowski was asked and responded in the affirmative that she could hear clearly and confirmed there was no one else in the room with her. A quorum was declared.

President Sidney A. McPhee; Mark Byrnes, University Provost; Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Yvette Clark, 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; Diane Snodgrass, Interim 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.

Approval of December 13, 2022, Meeting Minutes – Action

The first agenda item was approval of the minutes from the December 13, 2022, Board Meeting. Trustee Delay made the motion to approve the minutes from the December 13, 2022, meeting, and Trustee Boyd seconded the motion. A roll call 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 14, 2023. The Committee approved the minutes from the November 15, 2022, 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; an Applications and Admission Report; and an Athletics update. 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: Master of Arts in Organizational and Professional Communication; Master of Science in Digital Media; Master of Science in Music Business; Master of Science in Project Management; and Master of Science in Tourism and Hospitality Management - Action

Dr. Amy Aldridge Sanford, Vice Provost for Academic Programs, reported to the Committee that in accordance with University Policy 251 Approval of Academic Programs, Units, and Modifications, 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 recommended to the Board that John Floyd receive an honorary doctorate degree at the August 2023 Commencement Ceremonies.

Motion

Trustee Wright made the motion to approve the action items recommended by the Committee and Trustee Boyd seconded the motion. Trustee Boyd made an inquiry about Project Management as an undergraduate degree. Provost Byrnes responded that accreditation provisions govern the number of programs offered and his office would review this with the college. A roll call vote was taken and the motion to approve the action items carried unanimously.

Committee Report: Audit and Compliance Committee

Committee Chair Tom Boyd reported that the Audit and Compliance Committee met on March 14, 2023. The Committee approved the minutes from its November 15, 2022, meeting. The

Committee report contained no action items. Several information items were presented including report of conflict of interest disclosures in 2022; review of President’s Statement of Disclosure of Interests for 2023; 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, 2022 and the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury NCAA Agreed-Upon Procedures Applied to the Athletic Programs Statement of Revenue & Expenses for the Year Ended June 30, 2022; Tennessee Department of Transportation, Finance Office, Fiscal Monitoring Section, December 20, 2022; U.S. Small Business Administration – Financial Examination of the Tennessee Small Business Development Center, Program Year 2020; and the quarterly report – Results of Internal Audit Reports. The public meeting of the Committee adjourned, and the Committee went into executive session to discuss audits and investigations.

Committee Report: Executive and Governance Committee

Vice Chair Karbowski reported that the Executive and Governance Committee met on March 14, 2023. The Committee approved the minutes from its November 15, 2022, meeting. The Committee report contained an action item, 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.

President’s Evaluation - Information

Chairman Smith informed the Committee that he recently completed the President’s annual evaluation in accordance with Board of Trustees Policy – Selection, Evaluation and Retention of the President. As part of that process, he sent a copy of the President’s Self Evaluation Assessment to each Board member via U.S. mail. He then met with Dr. McPhee to discuss his

self-evaluation along with Board comments and suggestions, and reported that the institution has had a successful year. Chairman Smith highlighted some accomplishments including: record breaking fundraising; new corporate degree partnerships; national ranking by Princeton Review for the 4th consecutive year; and the annual audit by the State of Tennessee Comptroller's office with no findings. Chairman Smith also noted that he had provided Dr. McPhee with a written assessment of his completed performance review.

Motion

Vice Chair Karbowskiak made the motion to approve the action item recommended by the Committee and Chairman Smith seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion to approve the action item carried unanimously.

Committee Report: Finance and Personnel Committee

Trustee Delay first acknowledged and expressed appreciation for Joey Jacobs, former committee chair and a devoted alumnus, for all he did for the university. He reported that the Finance and Personnel Committee met on March 14, 2023. The Committee approved the minutes from its November 15, 2022, meeting. The Committee report contained one action item, 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; and an update on Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) federal stimulus funding. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

Permanent Appointment of Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer – Action

Dr. McPhee recommended the appointment of Ms. Yvette Clark as Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer. Ms. Clark has been serving as the Interim Vice President and CIO for the past year. Dr. McPhee discussed the exceptional job she

has done in the role as interim, and with her many years of experience in this area as well as her breadth of knowledge, recommended her for the permanent role at the requested salary.

Motion

Trustee Delay made the motion to approve the action item recommended by the Committee and Trustee Cottle seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion to approve the action items carried unanimously.

Report of the President

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

Enrollment

Dr. McPhee provided an update on the University's fall 2023 recruitment and enrollment projections. As of April 1, the University's freshman applications are up by 1552 students, a 13.4% increase. Admitted freshmen are up by 397 students, a 4.8% increase. Our transfer applications are up by 82 students, which is a 4.9% increase. Dr. McPhee expressed that the transfer numbers are particularly gratifying given the issues that community colleges are experiencing with enrollment decline. He applauded staff for their efforts in this area. He also shared that our admitted transfer students are up approximately 2%. Overall, applications are up 1764, a 12.5% increase, and admits are up 431, which is a 4.5% increase.

College of Media and Entertainment

Dr. McPhee next advised that during the past month, the Provost and him met with all the college deans and department chairs to have conversations and receive updates regarding initiatives to enhance recruitment, retention, and graduation of students in their respective areas. There were some excellent presentations by the college deans, department chairs, and

other colleagues. He decided to defer and give his time to one of the colleges whose update was innovative and creative, and would give the Board a sense of the extra efforts that faculty, departments, and deans are making to attract the best and brightest to MTSU. Dr. McPhee then invited the College of Media and Entertainment to share its presentation with the Board.

Beverly Keel, Dean of the College of Media and Entertainment (CME), spoke about the college's innovative efforts to increase the yield. She observed that the best way to recruit students is to have the best programs, which the college has. However, one cannot simply rely on its status as the best. The college must toot its own horn to let everybody know what it is doing through traditional and social media in order to form a connection with admitted students. Dean Keel advised that we have new commercial that our students and faculty created. This is an example of teaching CME students the skills that are readily transferable to companies across America.

Dean Keel presented Associate Professor Allie Sultan, Assistant Chair and Coordinator of Filmmaking, who works with the new concentration in video and film production. Professor Sultan explained that her students were integral to the production of the commercial – behind and in front of the camera. She introduced the students and then unveiled the commercial.

Dean Keel noted that the commercial exemplifies that we train students to work in every aspect of the music business, in all genres, and as the theme song said, We Do It All. She then presented Bess Rogers, an Assistant Professor, who teaches songwriting for film, tv, and gaming. Professor Rogers introduced the student songwriters, performer, and producer for We Do It All.

Dean Keel then shared the college's recruitment philosophy and practices. This includes casting a wide recruitment net to reach as many potential students as possible. She stated that nothing can sell us better than we sell ourselves. Also, the college goes where the prospective students are, whether it is their cell phones, their high schools, or even their hometowns. In addition, we offer scholarships when possible as well as enhanced recruiting at community colleges.

Admitted students not only receive a letter from her and their department chair along with a handwritten note from a current student, but also a bag of CME-branded items. New students

also have opportunities to come to campus including student mixers and curated Customs sessions with Chairs. Dean Keel even offers lunch invitations to all incoming students.

Dean Keel provided a brief review of CME facilities, which are top of the line. She followed up with examples of personal engagement that CME faculty. Next, John Merchant, Chair, Department of Recording Industry, Marie Barnas, Chair, Department of Media Arts, and Dr. Katie Foss, Director of the School of Journalism and Strategic Media, all spoke about the scope of their respective academic programs and opportunities offered students.

Dr. McPhee commended CME leadership, department chairs, faculty, and the outstanding students for what they do to make MTSU a great university.

Commencement

Dr. McPhee advised the Board that nearly 2,600 students will graduate during four commencement ceremonies on Friday, May 5, and Saturday, May 6. Commencement speakers include: Bill Jones, MTSU alumnus and successful career in banking, financial planning, and insurance; Nic Dugger – MTSU alumnus and very accomplished in television production; Matt Crews – MTSU alumnus and student-athlete with a successful career in sports marketing, event management and entertainment fields as well as founder of the Big Machine Music City Grand Prix; and the Board's own Pam Wright an MTSU alumnus, great supporter, and incredible businesswoman.

Conclusion

In closing, Chairman Smith expressed his appreciation for the opportunity to serve as chair and applauded the work of the university. He followed with an inquiry about the university's emergency action plans to which Dr. McPhee responded that we are doing everything possible to manage the risk associated with being an open campus. Dr. McPhee asked Vice President Alan Thomas to give the Board a safety and security update. Vice President Thomas advised the Board that we hired Police Chief Kaup last year and he has enacted several initiatives. We have also hired an emergency management operations manager. In addition, active shooter training is available all across campus at various times of the day. Safety efforts include the continual

assessment of our buildings for improvements. We strategically utilize cameras, lights, display readers, and call boxes around campus.

Adjournment

Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 1:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



James Floyd,

Board Secretary