

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

April 26, 2019  
Johnson City, Tennessee

The quarterly meeting of the East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees was held at 1 p.m. on Friday, April 26, in the Millennium Center on ETSU's main campus in Johnson City, Tennessee. The meeting was also livestreamed for those who could not be in attendance.

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Scott Niswonger called the meeting to order.

In his opening remarks, Chair Niswonger welcomed everyone to the tenth meeting of the ETSU Board of Trustees and listed several achievements in recent months, including a partnership with Virginia Tech to help central Appalachian communities become more proactive in battling the opioid crisis. He commended Dr. Rob Pack for his work and said this partnership is one block in ETSU's emerging research portfolio. Chair Niswonger thanked faculty and staff for their efforts over the spring semester to ensure students realize their dream of graduating and said more than 2,000 students will walk across the stage at upcoming commencement ceremonies. He also stated that ETSU recently launched its first capital campaign in more than a decade.

**II. Roll Call**

Secretary David Linville called the roll, and the following trustees were in attendance:

Fred Alsop  
Janet Ayers  
Steven DeCarlo  
David Golden  
Dorothy Grisham  
Keyana Miller  
Scott Niswonger  
Jim Powell  
Ron Ramsey

**III. Approval of the Minutes of February, Meeting**

Trustee Grisham made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 22, 2019, Board of Trustees meeting which was seconded by Trustee Ayers and unanimously approved.

**IV. Report from the Finance and Administration Committee**

Committee Chair DeCarlo outlined a series of action and discussion items:

- A. The committee approved a 2% tuition increase for Quillen College of Medicine and Gatton College of Pharmacy. The increase is based on a cost study, he noted, and since both these colleges begin classes prior to main campus, tuition and fee approval is necessary at this time. The prior year increase was 2% for medicine and 3% for pharmacy.
  - a. Chair Niswonger called for a vote and the tuition increase for each of the colleges was approved.
- B. The committee approved a 2% across the board salary increase. DeCarlo said the state appropriation did not specify a salary increase for main campus. He noted that the Gatton College of Pharmacy does not receive state appropriations. The Quillen College of Medicine and Department of Family Medicine did receive appropriations for a 2% salary increase. The 2% increase will be implemented July 1 with a \$500 minimum increase.
  - a. Chair Niswonger called for a vote and the 2% salary increase was approved.
- C. Non-mandatory fee increases were presented to the Finance and Administration Committee. DeCarlo said course fees are being simplified and will be assessed based on the subject. Some fees will increase to provide funds for college-level investments in line with the new distributed budget model. The fees apply to the colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business and Technology and Clemmer, and are similar to those charged in the Academic Health Sciences, which resulted in the Building 60 Interprofessional Education Research Center investment and other enhancements. The fees were presented to the Student Government Association in March and received endorsement.
  - a. Faculty Trustee Alsop asked what percentage of the fee increase would go directly to department chairs because the funds are being generated by students enrolled in the departments. President Noland said the distribution of fee revenues proposed to the Board would remain within the college from which those fees were generated. The deans, in conjunction with the chairs, he added, would have the ability to distribute those investments the same way they have the ability to manage college-level budgets within the new decentralized budget model.
  - b. Chair Niswonger called for a vote and the non-mandatory fee increase was approved.

Continuing his report, DeCarlo said the committee discussed comparative tuition and mandatory fees for public institutions in Tennessee. Tuition and mandatory fees will be presented at a called meeting in May and require a public comment period. The committee also conducted its quarterly review of agreements over \$250,000. DeCarlo concluded his report by commending Dr. B.J. King on the outstanding audit report results with no findings.

**V. Report from the Academic, Research and Student Success Committee**

Dr. Wilsie Bishop, Senior Vice President for Academics, provided the committee report on behalf of Committee Chair Latimer.

- A. Dr. Bishop said promotion and tenure is the culmination of a year's work from faculty submitting their dossiers for review. She reported that the recommendations were endorsed by the committee unanimously.
  - a. Chair Niswonger called for a vote. The promotion and tenure of faculty members was approved.
- B. The approval of the Letter of Notification regarding the establishment of a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy was brought before the committee. Dr. Bishop said this program will be housed in the College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences and the letter of notification is the first step in the process of full approval. If the letter is approved by the Board, it will then go to THEC and back to campus for action and then to the Board again for final approval, Dr. Bishop added.
  - a. Chair Niswonger called for a vote and the letter of notification seeking to establish a doctoral program in occupational therapy was approved.
- C. Another Letter of Notification brought before the committee was for the establishment of a Master of Fine Arts in Digital Media. This proposed degree would help graduates further their professional, technical and artistic skills to break into an increasingly competitive industry.
  - a. Chair Niswonger called for a vote and the letter of notification seeking to establish a MFA in digital media was approved.

Continuing her report, Dr. Bishop said the committee also approved future holidays to be observed by the university and held dynamic discussions about the role of research and its ability to move the institution forward as well as student bridge programs and providing mentorship opportunities for students.

## **VI. Report from the Audit Committee**

In his report, Committee Chair Golden said the committee reviews the audit charter annually and no changes were recommended. Minor changes were made to the 2018-19 audit plan and the committee received reports on investigations performed. One investigation to note involved the Center for Academic Achievement, specifically due to the appearance of inappropriate procurement card purchases. An investigation of the center occurred and inappropriate charges were identified and also raised concerns of abuse of time. This resulted in a referral to ETSU Public Safety and the person who was at the center of it is no longer an employee at the university. Golden concluded his report by also mentioning the exceptionally clean report from the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury of the university's audited financial statements.

## **VII. Consent Agenda**

Chair Niswonger requested that approval of changes to the Institutional Mission Profile annually submitted to the Tennessee Higher Education Commission be added to the consent agenda. The chairman noted that a copy of the profile changes has been provided to trustees. The update reflects the university's change in Carnegie Foundation Classification.

Trustee Alsop made a motion to add the profile approval to the consent agenda. It was seconded by Trustee Golden and unanimously approved.

With no requests for any items to be removed from the consent agenda, trustees unanimously approved the consent agenda with a motion from Trustee Ayers and a second from Trustee Grisham. Items included on the consent agenda are:

- A. Minutes from the February 22, 2019, Finance and Administration Committee meeting
- B. Minutes from the February 22, 2019, Academic and Student Affairs Committee
- C. Minutes from the February 22, 2019, Audit Committee

#### **VIII. Rule on Residency Classifications**

Chair Niswonger said the rule was previously approved by the Finance and Administration Committee and the text has been edited to meet the requirements as outlined by the Tennessee Department of State. The text, he noted, is available in the meeting materials. Following approval by a roll call vote, the proposed rule will be forwarded for consideration by the state through the steps required by law.

At the request of Chair Niswonger, Secretary David Linville initiated a roll call vote. The Rule on Residency Classifications was approved with no objections.

#### **IX. Policy on Appearances before the Board**

Chair Niswonger stated that the Board of Trustees sets rules, policies and guidelines for the operation of the university as defined by the FOCUS Act. In order to ensure transparency and accountability, the Policy on Public Appearances before the Board outlines the ability of individuals to address the Board during a regularly scheduled board meeting. A copy of the policy is included in the meeting materials, he added.

Trustee Powell made a motion to approve the Policy on Appearances before the Board. It was seconded by Trustee Ayers and unanimously approved.

#### **X. Resolution of Appreciation for Ms. Keyana Miller**

Dr. Noland applauded Student Trustee Miller for her leadership in the Student Government Association and as the 2018-19 student representative on the Board of Trustees. He made a motion to adopt the resolution, which the Board unanimously approved. Dr. Noland presented a framed copy to Miller. She spoke briefly to the Board.

#### **XI. Resolution of Appreciation for Dr. Fred Alsop**

Dr. Noland extended his appreciation to Dr. Alsop for being the first faculty trustee to serve on the Board of Trustees. He read the resolution and made a motion for the Board to adopt the resolution. It was unanimously approved. Dr. Noland presented a framed copy to Dr. Alsop. He stated to the Board that this role has been the highlight of his extensive career at ETSU.

**XII. Resolution of Appreciation for Mr. Edward Kelly**

Dr. Noland congratulated Ed Kelly (Legal Counsel) on his 40-year career in higher education. After reading the resolution as written, he motioned for its adoption. It was approved by the Board and Kelly was presented a framed copy before addressing the Board.

**XIII. Resolution of Appreciation for Dr. Jane Jones**

Dr. Noland thanked Dr. Jane Jones (Chief of Staff) for her 45 years of service to ETSU. He read the resolution and proceeded to make a motion for adoption by the Board. It was approved and Dr. Noland presented Dr. Jones with a framed copy of the resolution. She spoke briefly.

**XIV. Resolution of Appreciation for Dr. Bert Bach**

Dr. Noland applauded Dr. Bert Bach (Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs) for 43 years of service in Tennessee Higher Education. He read the resolution aloud and made a motion for its adoption. The Board approved the resolution and Dr. Noland presented a framed copy to Dr. Bach who then told the Board that his years at ETSU had been wonderful because of his colleagues.

**XV. President's Report**

Dr. Noland began his report by recognizing the loss of leadership that will occur as those individuals previously mentioned enter retirement. He commended their heart, dedication and impact on students during their tenure at ETSU.

Furthermore, he thanked the Board and the ETSU community for its patience while he and his family explored an opportunity at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The president reflected on the wonderful qualities that define ETSU, in particular the faculty and staff that he had established relationships with over the past seven years. Dr. Noland apologized for placing the institution and the region in a unique and awkward position during the spring semester. Furthermore, he reflected on the power of conversations he had with individuals across campus who wished him luck, but wished that he would stay at ETSU. Dr. Noland noted that he has been moved by the power of ETSU to impact the lives of the people of this region and the work that is underway, including the recent launch of a \$120 million capital campaign and ETSU Health, as well as various events held on campus that support ETSU's service mission. Dr. Noland noted that after much thought and prayer that these factors, coupled with his love for the university, led him to speak with Dr. Randy Boyd, University of Tennessee interim president, and withdraw his name from consideration for chancellor.

Following much applause from meeting attendees, Dr. Noland continued his report. He said ETSU Health provides the university's clinics with the opportunity to be the practice of choice with potential integration of services and places a focus on interprofessional education, which makes ETSU unique.

As part of his legislative update, the president noted that the legislative session was moving forward a bit later than normal due to Gov. Bill Lee's inauguration. ETSU was second in the state in terms of outcome funding and the budget also included deferred maintenance funding. The \$72 million capital project, a new humanities building, was not funded. However, the project was fifth on the list and three were funded, which improves its chances of being funded next year, Dr. Noland added. Efforts are already underway, he noted, for ETSU to raise its portion of the matching funds for the project. Additionally, there has been a focus on telling the story of ETSU's health sciences in Nashville. Dr. Noland said he is hopeful that legislation will move through to enhance the number of residency position for Quillen College of Medicine and he is also hopeful that there will be support for rural health at ETSU, potentially an expanded role in rural health research. Other health sciences-related initiatives, he explained, are not likely to be funded this year, however, the stories of those initiatives have been shared and will be again next year.

Dr. Noland then provided an overview of items to come before the Board of Trustees in May. At a special called meeting, the university budget and tuition and fees will be brought forward for consideration. He anticipates fee increases will be around 2% and said conversations about compensation for adjunct faculty are underway within the colleges.

At the previous board meeting, Dr. Noland outlined the process to review university structure disaggregated into immediate, near term and long term opportunities. In the immediate term, actions in the reporting structure for Admissions, Community Service and Engagement, Equity and Inclusion, and Compliance have taken place. The president reported that the restructuring process will ensure the university is properly aligned to meet its strategic planning objectives. Dr. Noland said medium term actions will be made before the start of the fall semester, such as the examination of research and innovation. Long term items will be examined in the fall, such as the alignment of academic programs within colleges. Dr. Noland will provide progress updates at each Board meeting.

Dr. Noland announced that the MOU with Ballad Health had been finalized and allows for both entities to move forward with a formal research partnership. A joint committee will be established to frame the operations of the MOU. Within the area of rural health, Dr. Noland said ETSU has a unique opportunity to address some of the rural challenges Gov. Lee has outlined.

Dr. Noland concluded his report with a construction update. He noted the ongoing construction of the Martin Center for the Arts and said renovations to the D.P. Culp University Center remain on time and within budget. THEC is requiring the university to update its facilities master plan in order to move forward with renovations to Lamb Hall. He said a number of deferred maintenance projects will begin this summer, including enhancement to Brown Hall.

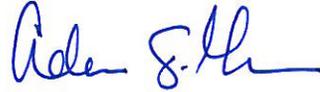
Dr. Noland then introduced the newest Board members – Dr. Virginia Foley (faculty trustee) and Cristopher Santana (student trustee).

**XVI. Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

**XVII. Adjournment**

Respectfully submitted,



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Adam Green  
Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees at its September 20, 2019 meeting.