

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

September 16, 2022
Johnson City, Tennessee

The East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees met on Friday, September 16, 2022, at 1:30 p.m. in the East Tennessee Room of the D.P. Culp Student Center. The meeting was also live-streamed and recorded.

I. Call to Order

Board Chair Dr. Linda Latimer called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and thanked those attending. The chair distributed a document outlining significant university accomplishments, highlighting the following:

- 2,056 first-year students joined the campus community less than a month ago, making ETSU's incoming class one of the largest in the institution's history.
- The University recently welcomed more than 60 new faculty members during its annual Faculty Convocation ceremony. At the event, the distinguished awards for teaching, research, and service were afforded to Dr. Cerone Foster, Dr. Kate Beatty, and Ashley Sergiadis respectively.
- ETSU continues to deepen its research efforts across a variety of disciplines.
- ETSU was named by Forbes Magazine as one of America's Best Employers.
- The ETSU Research Corporation will be hosting a Bioeconomic Symposium on October 27th. The chair encouraged trustee participation to learn more about this emerging technology.

II. Roll Call

Board Secretary Dr. Adam Green led the roll call.

Trustees present were:

Trustee Charles Allen, Jr.
Trustee Allen Archer
Trustee Janet Ayers
Trustee Steven DeCarlo
Trustee Dr. Virginia Foley

Trustee Dorothy Grisham
Trustee Ron Ramsey
Trustee Melissa Steagall-Jones
Board Chair Dr. Linda Latimer

Dr. Green informed Board Chair Dr. Latimer that a quorum was present.

III. Public Comment

No individuals in attendance at the meeting requested to offer public comment.

IV. Approval of Minutes from April 22, 2022

The minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting of April 22, 2022, were approved as submitted, with Trustee Ayers making the motion to approve and Trustee Steagall-Jones seconding the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

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

Committee Chair Janet Ayers provided an overview of the items presented to the Academic, Research, and Student Success Committee including:

- Provost Kimberly McCorkle presented a recommendation for tenure upon appointment for three faculty members. The committee unanimously approved this recommendation.
- The committee received an update on academic actions occurring between January 1 and July 31, 2022. Through the university's curriculum review process, 37 actions were reviewed and approved.
- Dr. David Linville presented an executive summary of the Annual Institutional Review for Graduate Medical Education, including the years 2019-20 and 2020-21.
- Provost Kimberly McCorkle and Dr. Cheri Clavier updated the committee on the timeline and process for the university's reaffirmation of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).
- An overview of the university's support for Military and Veterans Services affiliated students was provided by Col. (R) Dan Bishop.
- Mr. David Golden and Dr. Stephen Marshall presented an update on the ETSU Research Corporation.

VI. Report from the Finance and Administration Committee

Committee Chair Steven DeCarlo presented the Finance and Administration Committee's report to the board including:

- The committee received an update from Dr. Heather Levesque on the passage of the HOPE Expansion Bill that led to a change in the tuition rate for Dual Enrollment students. The committee approved a new hourly tuition rate of \$538.65. The committee also authorized the university president to adjust fees and tuition for Dual Enrollment courses in response to Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation actions.
- On behalf of the Quillen College of Medicine, staff requested revised summer term tuition rates beginning in the summer of 2023. A rate of \$2,200 for two equal, short summer terms and \$4,000 for a longer, more complex course was approved.
- Dr. Joe Sherlin and Ms. Laura Bailey provided an update related to residence halls. Housing rates for fiscal years 2024-27 were presented and approved by the committee with the understanding that future adjustments to rates will be proposed based on renovation schedule and market and inflation analysis. Staff reserve the right to bring future rate adjustments to the Board of Trustees based upon changing market conditions.
- Staff provided a financial update comparing operating revenues and expenditures from June 2021 to June 2022 and reviewed contracts and agreements over \$250,000 for the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2022.
- Staff provided an update of the ETSU Foundation revealing a record year of giving in fiscal year 2022.
- Staff provided an update on capital projects and facilities.

VII. Report from the Audit Committee

Committee Chair Steagall-Jones presented the Audit Committee report noting the following:

- Ms. Rebecca Lewis presented the audit plan for 2023, which the committee approved.
- The committee received a summary of audits and investigations conducted from April to August 2022 as well as an annual report on Audit Functions for FY 2022.
- ETSU Internal Audit employee profiles were presented and approved by the committee, and the operating budget for the Office of Internal Audit was shared as an information item.
- Committee members received an update on the Institute of Internal Auditors requirement that the Office of Internal Audit undergo an external evaluation every five years. Committee Chair Steagall-Jones stated that she is comfortable with the self-assessment, barring any other suggestions from the committee.

VIII. Consent Agenda

With no requests for any items to be removed from the consent agenda, the Board of Trustees approved the consent agenda with a motion from Trustee Dr. Foley seconded by Trustee Steagall-Jones. The motion was passed unanimously.

IX. Action Item: Library Fines Rule

Dr. Mark Fulks, University Counsel, presented the Library Fines Rule. The rule, background, and previous board approval were fully detailed in the agenda materials. The Library Fines Rule was approved as submitted, with Trustee Grisham making the motion and Trustee Ramsey seconding the motion. After a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

X. Roan Scholars Leadership Program Update

LTC (R) Scott Jeffress, Executive Director of the Roan Scholars Leadership Program, provided an update on ETSU's premier leadership-focused scholarship program. Since Mr. Louis Gump, the founder of the Roan Scholars Leadership Program, first introduced the idea for the program in 1997, its mission has been to challenge, inspire, and connect Roan Scholars so they can realize their potential to impact the region and beyond in a positive manner. In the fall of 2000, the first Roan Scholars arrived on campus. There are 91 Roan alumni and 31 Roan Scholars currently on campus. Highlights from the presentation included:

- The scholarship is available for students from Northeast Tennessee, Southwest Virginia, and Western North Carolina.
- More than 300 students applied for the program this year, and nearly 120 were interviewed. Even though fewer than 10 of the 120 candidates were selected for the program, almost two-thirds enrolled at ETSU this fall.
- Of the 91 Roan alums, 60 percent live and work in the Appalachian Highlands, and more than 90 percent have made a gift to the program.
- Through programs such as Alternative Breaks, Summer of Service, leadership conferences, corporate site visits, study abroad, and mentorship, the Roan Development Model emphasizes high-impact, hands-on learning for the whole year. Class-based programs include the Outdoor Leadership Challenge, Roan seminars, and leadership learning experiences.
- All-Scholar programs include Roan Impact Focus, Physical Vigor Weekend, and Leadership Voices.
- Rising juniors and seniors can now apply for the Extraordinary Opportunity Grant, thanks to a generous contribution from Eastman Credit Union. This grant will help them

pursue meaningful experiences outside the classroom that will help advance their career and personal goals while removing financial barriers.

- Future plans call for increasing the number of Roan Scholars per class to ten, expanding geographically to a 250-300 mile radius, refining the development model, and securing the financial future.

Mr. Gump intended for the Roan Scholars Program to be primarily self-funded. Today, the endowment (\$6.5 million), combined with university support (which provides matching scholarship funds), helps maximize donor contributions.

XI. ETSU Peer Institutions and KPIs Discussion

Dr. Michael Hoff, University Chief Planning Officer, presented the process used to select the preliminary list of peer institutions and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the board's consideration. As part of the implementation efforts associated with the work of the Committee for 125 Chapter II, the Board of Trustees suggested creating a new set of institutional peers. These peer institutions will be used to measure and assess institutional progress around a series of performance metrics that are present and aspirational in nature and aligned with the vision of the Committee for 125.II.

The proposed ETSU peer group for 2022 was included in agenda materials, and the peer selection process included the following methodology:

- Quantitative analysis using peer data set from IPEDS data submissions – produced 18 potential peers
- Formal presentation of potential peers and methodology to various stakeholders with discussion and feedback
- Revised peer group of 23 institutions circulated among university leaders, faculty, and staff for ranking
- Combined analysis produced 15 peers for consideration

When asked to elaborate on the methodology and the process used to identify the peers selected, Dr. Hoff stated that staff utilized a clustering method, which examines each institution based on those 38 criteria, assesses them on all variables using a three-year average, and then groups them around statistically comparable institutions. Dr. Hoff stated that follow-up analysis could be provided. President Noland added that the overall level of funding is not included when calculating peers. The institution does not pick peers with similar levels of state support per FTE; it is looking at peers of a similar size, degree mix, and regional clustering, which drives the outcome.

Next, Dr. Hoff discussed Key Performance Indicators (KPI) development. Potential categories include enrollment, student success, post-graduation outcomes, equity and inclusion, research, faculty/staff, finance, and facilities. Proposed KPIs and post-graduation outcomes for the class of 2020 were included in agenda materials. The next steps are to finalize operational definitions of KPIs, develop a dashboard of KPIs, ensure internal metrics of performance are aligned with institutional KPIs, and provide a report of institutional performance at every board meeting. The final peer set and KPIs will be provided for approval at the November 2022 Board of Trustees meeting.

Dr. Hoff was asked to name the three most important KPIs that indicate the need for action. From the institution's perspective, he said the three things he thinks about the most are first-time freshmen, graduation rates, and net revenue. Dr. Hoff was also asked if an online enrollment KPI should be included as one of the points of delineation. He responded that the university needs to be more committed and specific about developing online programs and coding students as online students. Currently, a number of courses are taken online by students who are not typically considered online students. Some institutional effort will be required to include this in the KPI. Further discussion ensued regarding KPI variables.

XII. Community Update and Discussion

Mr. Joe Wise, Mayor of Johnson City, and Ms. Cathy Ball, City Manager, presented a community update providing an overview of multiple initiatives underway across Johnson City including:

- The West Walnut Street Taskforce was established nearly 10 years ago, community and business leaders recognized the significance of the corridor between ETSU and downtown Johnson City. Significant progress has already been accomplished, and ETSU has actively participated in this project.
- Ms. Ball presented a report on the city's infrastructure investments and opportunities in the West Walnut Corridor. Johnson City has invested \$41 million in this corridor to take utilities underground, make stormwater improvements, and build infrastructure. Smart poles, pedestrian walkways, bike paths, and green spaces are among the many proposed improvements. The city manager also displayed several architectural renderings of how the corridor might look once the project is completed.
- The Model Mill Project was a significant investment by Summers-Taylor Inc., and the anchor space on West Walnut Street will serve as a catalyst for future development along the corridor.
- Ms. Ball also spoke about the Ashe Street Courthouse. The Governor included \$5 million in the FY 2022 budget for the historic building's restoration. This space is intended as an incubator and accelerator for rural health research. There are numerous

opportunities for the city and ETSU to collaborate with the community while ensuring this space is used for the public's benefit while meeting the Governor's requirements. Work is already underway on this project.

- Presenters also noted that resources exist to help make the area more attractive for redevelopment. The entire corridor is contained within an opportunity zone allowing businesses to defer capital gains until 2026. Gain forgiveness can eliminate 15 percent of the gain forever, with the remaining 85 percent deferred until 2026. Tax-free appreciation of investments will be deferred until 2047.

President Noland welcomed the opportunity to hear from Mayor Wise and Ms. Ball about how the university can help the city bring this project to fruition. The mayor emphasized the uniqueness of the opportunity zone for those who have a philanthropic interest in ETSU but also have tax considerations; there is a \$41 million public investment opportunity by way of right-of-way and infrastructure, with the federal tax programs that can incentivize. The city manager added that now is the perfect time to sit down with other stakeholders along the corridor and discuss how to make this happen.

Topics of discussion are included:

- Presenters were asked about the completion date for the West Market Street Corridor. According to Ms. Ball, new construction in the corridor can occur alongside ongoing projects. Property owners regularly communicate with the city; however, their eagerness to move forward with new construction is a factor. The mayor said it is important to distinguish between the right-of-way, infrastructure, Ashe Street Courthouse, and other tracks when looking at a timeframe. Some aspects of the plan are outside the city and task force's control, and Mayor Wise estimates the project could take five to 10 years longer than anticipated.
- Ms. Ball was also asked to elaborate on Rural Health Research as related to the Ashe Street Courthouse renovation. Ensuring that the project improves the rural health of the community is a top priority, and the city is committed to it, stated Ms. Ball. Discussions are in progress with ETSU regarding the plan, and a request for proposals will be extended to interested parties.

XIII. President's Report

President Noland's address to the board offered an update on ETSU's progress with the Committee for 125 Chapter II strategic plan focused on Access, Success, and Impact.

Access updates included:

- The President affirmed that the university had launched the Enhance Bridge programs for underrepresented students that couple pre-enrollment services with mentoring throughout the freshman and sophomore years. The program's participation was expanded in the fall, and the program participants had a retention rate of 85 percent, which was higher than the traditional undergraduate population.
- The number of Military-Affiliated students at ETSU is currently 750, while the number at Middle Tennessee State University is 1,100. Col. Bishop is looking to drive performance in this area to surpass MTSU. In-state tuition has been restructured, and the Office of Military and Veteran Services has rebranded.
- Capital Plan projects underway include Brown Hall, construction of the academic building, the ETSU Health facility on the Innovation Campus, and Lamb Hall. All other projects are expected to move forward within the next four years.
- Within the next year and a half, the Board will be presented with proposals for innovative programs such as health care administration, mechatronics, hospitality and tourism, and synthetic biology.
- Provost McCorkle is actively engaged with college deans to identify a third-party partner to assist the university in taking online degree programs to market.
- The Appalachian Highlands Center for Nursing Advancement, funded by Ballad Health, will develop pipeline programs for high school students across the region.
- Dr. Block in the Quillen College of Medicine recently launched the EQUIP program, designed to position students from rural and underserved areas who are interested in attending ETSU.
- In the spring of 2023, a P-20 initiative will be launched to improve college-going rates, K12 principal leadership, and transfer and articulation with the university's CTC partners.

Success updates included:

- ETSU received nearly \$11 million this summer for seven USDOE TRIO grant programs to support the center. middle schoolers, high schoolers, college students, adults, and veterans can participate. ETSU has 10 TRIO grants and is one of five colleges that offer all seven TRIO programs.
- Planning for the Comprehensive Student Success Center will align with ETSU's Moonshot initiative—efforts to close achievement gaps and enhance student success.
- The peer selection process is underway, and final institutional peers and KPIs will be presented to the Board of Trustees at their fall 2022 Quarterly Board meeting.
- Staff is working on updating the Strategic Facilities Master Plan, which will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval in 2023.

- In the next few months, Provost McCorkle will start a process to redesign and update the general education curriculum.
- According to the Great Colleges to Work For Survey, ETSU has the highest level of employee satisfaction across all categories that faculty and staff have ever reflected at the institution. Additionally, ETSU was named to Forbes' list of America's Best Employers in 2022.

Impact updates included:

- Huron consultants have spent the majority of this year reviewing the university's budget model to identify areas for assessment and improvement. The Huron Phase I study will be presented to campus in the coming weeks. The Huron Phase II report will be presented to the campus in the middle of the semester. ETSU will begin the phased implementation of process and structural efficiencies during the 2022-23 academic year.
- The Oracle ERP implementation process is underway.
- ETSU has been accepted as a member of the Association & Land-Grant Universities, effective summer 2022.
- Staff will recommend a four percent across-the-board salary increase for the Board's consideration in November 2022.

Next, President Noland invited Mr. David Golden, CEO of the ETSU Research Corporation, to provide a summary of current economic development work led by the Research Corporation. A few years ago, the Research Corporation predicted that bioindustrial manufacturing and synthetic biology would be the next big deal. The Research Corporation collaborated with BioBuilder to add synthetic biology to conventional biology education. In addition, they worked with the Niswonger Foundation to develop a high school biology course that is currently offered in 19 high schools in Northeast Tennessee. ETSU is the only institution in the world to do this. As a result, this university made headlines at SynBioBeta, the largest conference event of its sort in Silicon Valley. Mr. Golden also spoke about partnerships with Omega, a non-profit bioindustrial manufacturing initiative started by the Department of Defense, and BioMADE, a bioindustrial manufacturing innovation institute.

President Noland concluded his remarks by reading a letter he received regarding the death of Dr. Thomas Townsend noting the impact Dr. Townsend had on the lives of families across the region.

XIV. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

XV. Executive Session

There was no need for the board to convene in an executive session.

XVI. Adjournment

Committee Chair Dr. Latimer adjourned the meeting at 3:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Adam Green", is written over a horizontal line.

Adam Green

Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees at its November 18, 2022 meeting.