

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES

November 18, 2022  
Johnson City, Tennessee

The East Tennessee State University Board of Trustees met on Friday, November 18, 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. She welcomed those in attendance including Dr. Lisa Piercey, the newest member of the Board of Trustees. Dr. Piercey is an alum of the Quillen College of Medicine, served as the 14<sup>th</sup> commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Health, and was appointed to the Board for a six-year term by Governor Bill Lee.

Dr. Latimer highlighted the following notable university achievements and milestones:

- The university will celebrate commencement for the fall class of 2022 on December 10<sup>th</sup>.
- The College of Business and Technology launched the Andrew Leadership Academy. This academy, named for local business leaders Dewey Andrew and Scott Andrew, will focus on developing the region's next generation of business leaders and entrepreneurs.
- ETSU was included in a \$4.7 million national consortium to lead public health workforce research.
- The ETSU Research Corporation hosted an engaging Symposium on Innovation and Education for the Bioeconomy.
- The university celebrated 40 years of Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Roots Music Studies program with a celebration. During the celebration, the program's founder, Jack Tottle, and country music artist and ETSU alum, Kenny Chesney, were presented with honorary doctorates that night.

Dr. Latimer closed her remarks by encouraging everyone to follow ETSU's social media channels, subscribe to the email list, and visit the ETSU News website.

**II. Roll Call**

Board Secretary Dr. Adam Green led the roll call.

Trustees present were:

Trustee Allen Archer

Trustee Steven DeCarlo

Trustee Dr. Virginia Foley

Trustee Dorothy Grisham

Trustee Dr. Lisa Piercey

Trustee Ron Ramsey

Trustee Melissa Steagall-Jones

Board Chair Dr. Linda Latimer

*Absent: Trustees Charles Allen and Janet Ayers*

Dr. Green informed the board chair that a quorum was present.

### **III. Public Comment**

No requests to offer public comment were made by individuals present at the meeting.

### **IV. Approval of Minutes from September 16, 2022**

The minutes from the September 16, 2022, meeting of the Board of Trustees were approved as submitted with Trustee Foley making the motion to approve and Trustee Grisham seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Trustee Virginia Foley provided an overview of the items presented to the Academic, Research, and Student Success Committee, which included:

- Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Kimberly McCorkle presented a request to approve an expedited letter of notification regarding the establishment of a B.S. in Mechatronics Engineering.
- Dr. Chris Keller, Dean of the Honors College, and Dr. Megan Quinn, Associate Professor in Biostatistics and Epidemiology, presented an overview of the ETSU Global Year in Ecuador.
- Dr. Tony Pittarese, Dean of the College of Business and Technology, and Bradley Leon, Executive Director of the BlueCross Blue Shield BlueSky Tennessee Institute,

provided the committee with an update on the BlueSky Tennessee Institute and discussed the impactful partnership between ETSU and BlueCross BlueShield.

- Lastly, Dr. Bill Kirkwood and Dr. Megan Roberts from Student Life and Enrollment gave a presentation on student success initiatives across ETSU that are supporting students' progress toward degree completion.

At the conclusion of these presentations, the committee discussed the recent Symposium on the Bioeconomy hosted by the ETSU Research Corporation.

## **VI. Report from the Finance and Administration Committee**

Trustee Ron Ramsey provided the Finance and Administration Committee report to the board as noted below:

- In compliance with the Tuition Transparency Act, the committee received a report that will be provided to the Tennessee General Assembly. The full report may be found in the committee agenda materials.
- The committee approved the October 2022 budget revisions.
- Ms. Pam Ritter, Vice President for University Advancement, presented a proposal from University Advancement for naming the Millennium Centre Building. The committee approved the name of the building to be the James and Nellie Brinkley Center.
- The committee also heard reports of contracts and agreements over \$250,000 from July 2022 through September 2022 and of revenues and expenditures from September 2021 to September 2022.
- Dr. Michael Hoff, University Chief Planning Officer and Vice Provost of Planning and Decision Support, updated the committee on the budget model and operational efficiency assessment efforts to date.

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

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

- The committee approved the addition of two investigations to the audit plan for FY 2022-23.
- Ms. Rebecca A. Lewis, CPA, Chief Audit Executive, discussed the Audit Committee's responsibilities, which have remained unchanged from the previous year.
- Ms. Lewis also reviewed the audits and investigations performed from September 2022 through October 2022. A follow-up of the Executive Summary of the Financial and Compliance Audit Report for FY 2021 issued by the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury was included in the report. Also included were updates of the annual audit for

the President's expenses, the Research Development Committee Grants audit, and the completed audit heat map.

- The Recommendation Log Status as of October 31, 2022, was presented to the committee.
- The committee received an update on the Quality Assurance and Improvement Program.

## **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 Ramsey seconded by Trustee Steagall-Jones. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **IX. Action Item: Approval of ETSU Strategic Agenda, KPIs, and Peer Institutions**

Following the Board's approval of the new strategic vision derived from the ETSU Committee for 125 Chapter II, staff have revised the 2016-2026 strategic plan to incorporate new and revised action items. Dr. Michael Hoff, University Chief Planning Office, Vice Provost of Planning and Decision Support, presented the revised strategic agenda, key performance indicators, and peer institutions, as well as outlined the processes for the development of each.

Pillars and initiatives outlined in the revised strategic agenda include:

- Pillar I—Access and Success: The university will focus on ensuring access to higher education regardless of location, resources, and/or educational background.
  - Initiatives: Brand Development; Moon Shot for Equity; Facilities Master Planning; Strategic Enrollment Planning; Wraparound Advising; Updating the Academic Portfolio; Housing Transformation
- Pillar II—Teaching Excellence: Faculty excellence will distinguish successful institutions in the next decade.
  - Initiatives: QEP: Community-Engaged Learning; Moon Shot for Equity; Facilities Master Planning; SACSCOC and Discipline Specific Accreditation; Updating the Academic Portfolio
- Pillar III—Empowered Employees: ETSU is best served when employees at all levels feel empowered and trained on how best to implement their purpose and encourage innovation.
  - Initiatives: Moon Shot for Equity; Organizational Structure; Salary Enhancements; Training and Professional Development

- Pillar IV—Research and Innovation: Given the broad program portfolio, the university is uniquely positioned to drive both scholarly activity and funded research.
  - Initiatives: Enhanced Research Administration; Updating the Academic Portfolio; ETSU Research Corporation
  
- Pillar V—Equity and Inclusion: With a focus on being more inclusive and accessible, the goal is to create parity across demographic groups and provide students with the best possible learning experience.
  - Initiatives: Moon Shot for Equity; Training; Multicultural Center; Bridge Programs; Employee Recruitment; Strategic Enrollment Plan
  
- Pillar VI—Community and Stewardship: The next five years at ETSU will focus on community-engaged learning whereby students are provided educational opportunities within the community that benefit students and the regional areas around all ETSU educational sites.
  - Initiatives: QEP: Community Engaged Learning; Integrated Academic Health Science Center; ETSU Research Corporation; Moon Shot for Equity; Brand Development; Higher Education Research Center; Continue to develop regional partnerships
  
- Pillar VII—Financial Responsibility and Operational Excellence: To ensure ETSU can respond to the volatility, the university will make considerable changes to financial mechanisms and operational environments to ensure ETSU continues to be synonymous with a high-quality, affordable education.
  - Initiatives: Budget Model Update and Resource Alignment; Salary Enhancements; Facilities Master Planning; SACSCOC Accreditation; Strategic Enrollment Plan; Oracle ERP Transition

Dr. Hoff also provided the following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Board’s consideration:

<b>East Tennessee State University Key Performance Indicators - Fall 2022 Update - Draft</b>			
<b>Key Performance Indicator</b>	<b>Baseline 2022</b>	<b>Goal 2026*</b>	<b>Trend</b>
Undergraduate enrollment	10,553	11,846	↑
freshmen applications	9,614	12,000	↑
First-year average ACT	22.6	24	↔
First-time Transfers	1,079	1,100	↓
First-time Freshmen	2,056	2,100	↑
Dual Enrollment	651	800	↑

Graduate Enrollment	2,421	2,854	↔
Professional Enrollment	762	800	↑
Overall Enrollment	13,763	15,500	↑
International Enrollment	369	600	↑
Percent Non-White	26.31	33	↑
Out-of-state Enrollment	2,552	3,000	↑
Percent female	62.7	60	↔
Percent Male	37.3	40	↔
Percent receiving Financial Aid	87%	In Development	In Development
Veteran Students (includes dependents using benefit)	889	1,000	↑
Percent of students living on campus	21.40%	22%	↑
First-time Freshmen Retention Rate	72%	85%	↑
First-time Freshmen Graduation Rate	55%	60%	↑
First-time Freshmen Graduation Rate (non-white)	41%	60%	↑
Licensure Pass Rates	In Development	In Development	In Development
Percent of Graduates Employed/Continuing Education	90%	95%	↑
Great Colleges to Work For Overall Satisfaction	73%	76%	↑
Student-to-Faculty Ratio	15-to-1	18-to-1	↔
Percent of Courses Taught by Full-time Faculty	72.80%	70%	↑
Voluntary Staff Turnover	10.60%	In Development	In Development
Salary Equity (All Ranks Faculty Salary - Gap to Peer)	-\$9,376	\$0	↑
Research Awards	\$12,770,290	\$25,000,000	↑
Value of Proposals Submitted	\$176,117,546	In Development	In Development
Value of Proposals Funded	\$69,948,944	\$75,000,000	↑
Research Expenditures (HERD)	\$18,449,000	\$30,000,000	↑
Service Hours	12,981	In Development	In Development
Patient Visits	337,983	In Development	In Development
Martin Center Ticket Sales (baseline is only 5 mo.)	\$497,107	In Development	In Development
Attendance at Athletic Events	In Development	In Development	In Development

Total Funds Raised (Giving)	\$42,457,933	In Development	↑
Composite Financial Index (higher is better)	4.47	3	↑
Net Operating Revenues (higher is better)	10.86	4	↑
Primary Reserve Ratio (higher is better)	0.51	0.4	↑
Deferred Maintenance Value	\$9,200,000.00	In Development	In Development
Discount Rate (lower is better)	22%	25%	↑
Total Funds Raised (Research and Giving)	\$112,406,877	In Development	In Development

Dr. Hoff also provided Trustees with an overview of ETSU’s Peer selection process that included:

- 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 Trustees’ consideration including:

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Average Rank</b>
University of South Alabama	4.38
University of North Carolina at Greensboro	4.33
Marshall University	4.19
Northern Illinois University	4.13
Western Carolina University	4.12
University of Memphis	4.00
Wright State University - Main Campus	4.00
University of Louisiana at Lafayette	4.00
University of Tennessee - Chattanooga	3.96
East Carolina University	3.93
Central Michigan University	3.88
The University of Montana	3.85
Wichita State University	3.85

University of Missouri - Kansas City	3.85
Arkansas State University	3.78

The adoption of the revised strategic agenda, associated key performance indicators, and list of peer institutions was approved as submitted with a motion from Trustee Steagall-Jones and seconded by Trustee Grisham. The motion was passed unanimously.

## **X. Enterprise Resource Planning System Update**

Dr. Karen King, Chief Information Officer, provided an update on the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system highlighting the following:

- The current Ellucian Banner ERP system at ETSU has been in place for more than fifteen years.
- In 2019, the President directed an assessment of the current system to determine the efficacy and efficiency of the system, as the contract will expire in December 2022.
- Based upon the results of this assessment, the campus began its consolidated efforts to move from Banner to a new operating system. Working in conjunction with the University of Tennessee system, the campus selected Oracle as the new operating platform. Through the support of our legislative delegation, Governor Lee included funding for this initiative in his 2022 budget.
- Oracle provides complete financials, Enterprise Performance Management (EPM), Human Capital Management (HCM), finance and HCM analytics, a customer success program, Oracle learning subscriptions, and Oracle Guided Learning (OGL).
- Highstreet has been selected as ETSU’s deployment partner and has been working with the implementation team on all components of the ERP, including (HCM) and (EPM).
- Implementation has begun and the project has been dubbed VOYAGER. The new ERP system is currently in the design and configuration stages. The subsequent stages will be validation testing, transition, and finally, realization. Finance will launch in September 2023, with HCM following in January 2024.

Topics of discussion included:

- Faculty access in the ERP’s finance and HCM sections will be focused on faculty/staff search, employee dashboard/self-service, expense report input, and departmental financial accounts.
- Oracle has a student system, but it is not yet operational. While it is hoped that the Oracle student system will be ready and the university can make that move, student



evaluations must be completed as soon as possible so a decision can be made when the time comes.

- State funding for the ERP and the allocations between the UT system and the LGIs were explained by Dr. King.
- Data standard parameters were examined.
- Staff were encouraged to examine challenges other Oracle adopters experienced when launching.

## **XI. Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Roots Music Studies 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Update**

Dr. Ron Roach, Chair and Professor for the Department of Appalachian Studies and Director for the Center of Excellence for Appalachian Studies and Services; Mr. Dan Boner, Professor Department of Appalachian Studies and Program Director of Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Roots Music; and Mr. Nate Olson, Academic Director; presented an overview of the ETSU Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Roots Music Studies program. They also discussed the program's recent 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and key focus areas as the program looks to the future. Presentation materials were included in the board agenda materials.

## **XII. President's Report**

President Noland's presentation to the Board offered an update on multiple pillars of the Board approved strategic agenda.

Access updates included:

- Tennessee Higher Education Enrollment Comparisons for 2021-2022
  - Enrollment across the state for the fall semester demonstrated that East Tennessee State University at the undergraduate level increased nearly two percent. Many of the institutions in Tennessee did not experience enrollment growth. Community college enrollment declined more than three percent.
  - The State's college-going rates peaked at 64.4 percent in 2015 and declined yearly thereafter. Within the Northeast Tennessee region, Unicoi County had the highest college-going rate of 62.5 percent in 2021. The most significant change was in Grainger County, which was -26.2 percent. Much of the work to change these numbers will be predicated on conversations about P-20 education related to educational leadership, data, and work that occurs from the student success perspective, as demonstrated by the Ayers Foundation in Unicoi County and the work it is providing with college success coaches.

- Barriers to College according to a national survey by Edge Research, HCM Strategists, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (2022)
  - Too expensive (38 percent)
  - Too stressful (27 percent)
  - More important to get a job and make money (26 percent)
  - Unsure about major/future career (25 percent)
  - Not worth the money (21 percent)
  
- ETSU Growth
  - ETSU has seen 25 percent growth in new-student enrollment over the past two years.
  - Freshmen applications are up over 9 percent year over year since this time last year. Applications for transfers are up 67 percent.
  - Tennessee applications are up 18 percent.
  - There has been a 40 percent increase in attendance for open houses.
  - This year, 2,219 more people have toured the campus, and housing is up 76 percent year over year.
  
- The First-time Freshmen CIRP Survey administered in 2021– College Choice
  - 68 percent of ETSU students stated ETSU was their first-choice college.
  - Campus visits had a significant impact on their overall decision, along with academic reputation.
  - The cost of attendance is the driving factor in that college choice. ETSU is in the top ten percent of institutions in the nation with the lowest amount of student debt. Half the students who graduate from ETSU graduate with no debt, and the other half graduate with debt, but that overall volume is less than \$20,000.
  
- Retention rates continue to trend upward, and graduation rates are at an all-time high, indicating student success.
- Housing modernization and new construction are part of the university’s strategic enrollment initiatives.
- Academic program growth and innovation will continue to expand, along with wraparound advising and a one-stop shop for student support.

Equity and Inclusion updates included:

- The Educational Advisory Board (EAB) has selected ETSU to participate in a nationwide Moon Shot for Equity initiatives, focused on closing equity gaps. This is a collective effort by the institution, in conjunction with our community college partners,

to build a safety net that ensures all students have the opportunity to move from entry on to graduation.

Fiscal sustainability updates included:

- ETSU's operating budget is \$530,001,000, and 61 percent of that budget is generated by tuition and other sources. 39 percent is generated from state appropriations. Over \$20 million is generated from carry-forward funds and fees available to colleges and divisional units, and \$1.4 million is in new investments to E&G university reserves.
- Salary enhancements approved by Board members earlier provides a four percent across-the-board raise with a floor of \$1,200 and a ceiling of \$7,000.
- The 2023-24 Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) appropriations recommendation and the 2023-24 THEC capital projects recommendation were shared with Board members.

President Noland reminded Trustees of ETU's SACSCOC reaffirmation timeline:

- September 2022: Compliance Certification Submitted
- November 2022: Off-site Reaffirmation Review—found compliant in all but three areas; confident documentation will be provided during the on-site review that affirms compliance
- February 2023: QEP and Focused Report Due
- April 2023: On-site Reaffirmation Review
- December 2023: Reaffirmation anticipated

President Noland concluded his update by sharing the following priorities for the upcoming TN legislative session with Trustees:

- Request that the state include a \$5 million reoccurring appropriation in its upcoming budget to support the Bill Gatton College of Pharmacy. The Gatton College of Pharmacy currently receives no state operating support and because of its complete reliance on tuition revenue, it is essentially a private college housed in a public university.
- Support full funding of the THEC state appropriations funding recommendation.
- Remedy technical and policy issues related to GME funding for the Quillen College of Medicine.
- Funding for the Brown Hall Phase II project and deferred maintenance projects.
- ETSU Board of Trustee confirmation hearings.

### **XIII. Action Item: Resolution of Appreciation for Dr. B.J. King**

The Board adopted a resolution extending heartfelt appreciation to Dr. B.J. King who has served at the university for 25 years, working her way from a position as an internal auditor to her current role as Chief Financial Officer for the university and the ETSU Foundation and ETSU Research Corporation.

The resolution was approved as submitted with Trustee Melissa Steagall-Jones making the motion and Trustee Foley seconding the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**XIV. Other Business**

No other business was discussed.

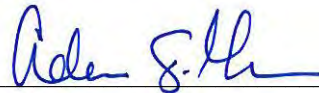
**XV. Executive Session**

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

**XVI. Adjournment**

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

Respectfully submitted,



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Adam Green  
Secretary of the Board of Trustees

Approved by the Board of Trustees at its February 17, 2023 meeting.