

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

March 7, 2024

Roaden University Center, Room 282

### MINUTES

Meeting streamed live via link found on this web page:

<https://www.tntech.edu/board/board-and-board-committee-meetings.php>

#### AGENDA ITEM I – CALL TO ORDER

The Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees met on Thursday, March 7, 2024 in Roaden University Center Room 282. Chair Trudy Harper called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m. CT.

Chair Harper asked Mr. Lee Wray, Secretary, to call the roll. The following members were present:

- Addison Dorris
- Jeannette Luna
- Thomas Lynn
- Rhedona Rose
- Camron Rudd
- Johnny Stites
- Barry Wilmore
- Trudy Harper
  
- Fred Lowery – joined electronically at 2:00 p.m.

A quorum was physically present. Tennessee Tech faculty, staff and members of the public were also in attendance. Mr. Lowery confirmed that he could simultaneously hear and speak to the Board members, that he was by himself, and that he received the Board materials in advance of the meeting. Mr. Tom Jones was absent.

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## **AGENDA ITEM II – INTRODUCTION OF NEW BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEMBER**

Chair Harper stated that Camron Rudd was appointed by Governor Lee and confirmed by the Tennessee General Assembly to serve on Tennessee Tech’s Board of Trustees. Mr. Rudd serves as Chief Operating Officer of Hörmann North America, a family-owned entry systems manufacturer headquartered in nearby Sparta, Tennessee. He has held progressively responsible positions with the company since his start as engineering department manager in 2005.

Chair Harper stated that Mr. Rudd was a 2005 graduate of Tennessee Tech, holding degrees in both mechanical engineering and foreign languages with a concentration in German. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Cookeville-Putnam County Chamber of Commerce and was the 2021 recipient of Tech’s Outstanding Young Alumnus Award.

## **AGENDA ITEM III – SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENTS**

Chair Harper introduced Dr. Steve Canfield, Mechanical Engineering Professor, who introduced three students, Jakob Coats, Lacy Grinder and Ian Sweetin, who are all part of Tennessee Tech Engineering for Kids (TEK) which designs equipment for children with special needs. The program matches a child with a specific need to a team of Tech engineering students in Dr. Canfield’s kinematics and dynamics of machinery course.

## **AGENDA ITEM IV - APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chair Harper asked for approval of the minutes of the November 30, 2023 Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees meeting. She then asked if there were questions or comments regarding the minutes. There being none, Mr. Stites moved to recommend approval of the November 30, 2023 Board of Trustees minutes. Ms. Rose seconded the motion. Chair Harper called a voice vote. The motion carried unanimously.

## **AGENDA ITEM V – STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORT**

Ms. Dorris reported on student life on campus. She stated that the semester started off with Snowmageddon and students made the most of the time sledding, crafting snowmen on the Quad and hosting snowball fights on the President’s lawn.

Once the snow cleared, Tennessee Tech students celebrated Black History Month with an open mic night, a soul food dinner and black history trivia night. Another series of events that created excitement around campus was E-week when the College of Engineering participated in National Engineers Week to celebrate how engineers make a difference in our world.

Ms. Dorris stated that student concerns included the lack of parking in the inner parts of campus. The SGA partnered with Dr. Stinson to find solutions to students’ parking issues. Discussions led to the potential for a new transportation, parking, and infrastructure fee,

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commonly called the TPI fee. If approved, the fee would generate revenue for parking garages, parking garage and lot maintenance, sidewalk repairs and other general infrastructure around campus.

Ms. Dorris stated that a recent road rage incident led to shots being fired at an eatery near campus. Students were notified via the alert system and swift action was taken by local and campus law enforcement to secure the campus.

Ms. Dorris stated that excitement is growing for the upcoming March 27 solo concert. Students are thrilled at this year's artist selection.

#### **AGENDA ITEM VI – PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Oldham stated that he would focus his comments on three major areas of the university in terms of its development and its mission: growth, competition, and impact. He stated that the first two, growth and competition, ultimately were what goes into allowing us to have the impact we want to have and that our mission lines up for us to have. In terms of growth, Ms. Lykins' enrollment report was quite encouraging about the progress made in the very competitive area of recruiting.

Campus development, in terms of growth, can easily be seen. We should be moving into the Ashraf Islam facility around the time of the June Board meeting. Also, the Peachtree road project through the center of campus should be nearing completion by the June Board meeting.

President Oldham stated that we are also seeing growth in reputational value as compared to other peer institutions. These are all things that help us compete at the highest levels in a very competitive market of higher education. He stated that Tennessee Tech's women's basketball team would tip off in the second round of the OVC Tournament later in the day.

He stated we also compete for research dollars and he was very excited to report that Tennessee Tech surpassed their goal of \$40,000,000 generated for research funding during the current year. The ambitious goal was set to be reached by 2025 but was reached a year early.

We also compete to recruit talented faculty and staff and we compete to keep the best. We want to make sure our compensation plans reward employees and appropriately compete with the market. We want to maintain a top-level infrastructure so we can compete successfully.

That leads us to the impact we make in a variety of ways. How does Tennessee Tech impact the individuals we serve? The total state-wide Tennessee Tech economic footprint is well over a billion dollars annually and includes workforce, talent pool, and career development. Both the City of Cookeville and Putnam County have agreed to make major financial contributions to our Tucker Stadium project. Averitt Express continues to be a great partner. Whisper Aero, Hörmann, United Cleanup of Oak Ridge, Wilson Bank and Trust, SAIC, Alliance Bernstein and others are all helping in various ways to work with us to, not only educate students and provide

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opportunities for practical experience and to place students in positions to be successful, but are also helping steer our curriculum in the right direction.

**AGENDA ITEM VII – ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS –  
CONSENT AGENDA - A. POLICY 261 (ACADEMIC CREDIT FROM OTHER INSTITUTIONS) B.  
EXPEDITED NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM PROPOSAL (ENAPP) FOR THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE  
(B.S.) IN NUCLEAR ENGINEERING**

Following discussion at the morning committee meeting and upon the committee’s recommendation, Ms. Rose moved the Board approve the consent agenda. Because the recommendation came from committee, a second was not needed. Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM VIII.A. – AUDIT & BUSINESS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS –  
COMPENSATION STUDY RESULTS**

Following discussion at the morning committee meeting and upon the committee’s recommendation, Mr. Stites moved to approve the proposed market study results as presented in Mercer’s Compensation and Classification Study. Because the recommendation came from committee, a second was not needed. Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM VIII.B. – AUDIT & BUSINESS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS –  
COMPENSATION PLAN**

Following discussion at the morning committee meeting and upon the committee’s recommendation, Mr. Stites moved the Board approve the proposed compensation plan as follows:

2 % retained in FY2023-24 to address market study.

- Retroactive to January 1, 2024
- Bring all permanent employees ≥ \$15/hour.
- Employees who are on or were on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) for FY2023 are ineligible.
- Move university as a whole toward market median.
- Focus on areas of competitiveness.

3% pool for recurring salary increases in FY2024-25

- Pending approval of Governor’s FY2024-25 budget
- Address market study with merit component incorporated.
- Effective July 1, 2024
- Employees with satisfactory or better evaluation are eligible for raise.

- Employees who are on or were on a Performance Improvement Plan for FY2024 are ineligible.
- Employees hired prior to 4/1/2024 and still employed on 7/1/2024 are eligible.
- Minimum award of 1% to maximum award of 10%

Because the recommendation came from committee, a second was not needed. Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM VIII.C. – AUDIT & BUSINESS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – NON-MANDATORY FEES**

Following discussion at the morning committee meeting and upon the committee’s recommendation, Mr. Stites moved the Board approve the proposed 3% housing rates increase and the \$250 Ready-To-Teach specialized academic fee to be effective Fall 2024. Because the recommendation came from committee, a second was not needed. Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM VIII.D. – AUDIT & BUSINESS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – DISCLOSED PROJECT MODIFICATION**

Following discussion at the morning committee meeting and upon the committee’s recommendation, Mr. Stites moved the Board approve the disclosed project modification. Because the recommendation came from committee, a second was not needed. Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion passed unanimously.

**AGENDA ITEM VIII.E. – AUDIT & BUSINESS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS – NAMING OPPORTUNITY**

Following discussion at the morning committee meeting and upon the committee’s recommendation, Mr. Stites moved the Board approve the naming of the Randall and Marjorie Warden Agriculture Engineering Technology Laboratory. Because the recommendation came from committee, a second was not needed. Mr. Wray called a roll call vote. The motion passed 7-0, with one abstention by Captain Wilmore. During the morning Audit and Business Committee, Captain Wilmore questioned whether a building should include the name of the donor’s spouse.

**AGENDA ITEM IX – BOARD SECRETARY REPORT**

At the March meeting, Mr. Wray reviewed the results of the Board self-evaluation. One of the results was that Trustees would like to have more training in Board matters. Per Chair Harper’s request, Mr. Wray checked with the Association of Governing Boards for Universities (AGB) about potential training for Trustees and learned that training was offered only to new

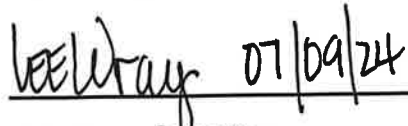
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Trustees. Other options include podcasts, FAQs and blogs for issues that face Trustees. Each quarter prior to a Board meeting, Mr. Wray will share a podcast, FAQ or blog relevant to topics that we are currently discussing. Mr. Wray shared several pointers used by AGB.

**AGENDA ITEM X – ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the Tennessee Tech Board of Trustees meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

Approved,

  
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Lee Wray, Secretary