

Staff Advisory Committee

May 8, 2025 – 1:30 p.m.

Members Present: Brian Allen, Joyce Arnold-Hesson, Christa Blair, Eric Carlile, Jennifer Dewar, Emily Disbrow, Joni Gilmore, Liam Harder, Amy McCoy, Peggy Nettenstrom, Lisa Rice, Catherine Warren

Members Absent: Melanie Mabrey, Lisa Norsworthy, Gary Stafford, Noel Stojkov, Deborah Yu

Others Present: President Oldham, Kevin Vedder, Lee Wray, Aleta Cannon

Summary:

Approved Agenda

Approved April 3, 2025 minutes

Discussed Staff Day shirt design

Discussed Board of Trustees Breakfast

Comments by the President

Proceedings:

Chair Lisa Rice called the meeting to order at 1:36 pm. Jennifer Dewar motioned to approve the agenda for May 8, 2025. Liam Harder seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Eric Carlile motioned to approve the April 3, 2025, minutes. Catherine Warren seconded. Motion APPROVED.

Aleta Cannon updated on the design for the Staff Day 2025 shirts. The words to use in the shirt design had been sent to Creative Services and they would have the first draft ready the following week. Cannon would be out of the office that week but would try to forward it to the committee once it was received. If the draft of the design was acceptable, it would then be forwarded to the t-shirt vendor so they would have it for printing.

Cannon also discussed the upcoming Board of Trustees breakfast before the June 26, 2025, Board of Trustees meeting. Invitations would be mailed out in the coming weeks. Everyone on the committee was invited to attend the 7:00 am breakfast to meet and talk with the trustees.

President Oldham thanked everyone for the wonderful year. He thought it had been an outstanding year in many ways and the great things that had happened were because of people. Commencement was the following day, May 9, 2025, and there would be close to 1,500

graduates. Purna Saggurti would be receiving the fifth honorary doctorate that Tennessee Tech had given. He was a chemical engineering graduate from the class of 1982, and the current chairman of the board at Bank of America. He served on Tennessee Tech's Board of Trustees for several years and it would be great to have him back on campus again. He would be the keynote speaker for Commencement.

Provost Lori Bruce had accepted the position of chancellor at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and the news was formally announced that day. There would also be a search for the next director of Athletics, as Mark Wilson would be stepping down at the end of June 2025. There had been a recent change in Tennessee Tech's Carnegie classification and the university was classified again as an R2 institution. Tennessee Tech was also one of twenty-seven R2 universities that were also considered opportunity universities, which meant that the university was both accessible to students while also providing high salary earning capabilities.

Enrollment continued to look positive for the fall 2025 semester. The university was on track to have 2,000 freshmen and was close to having an overall enrollment of 11,000 students. This was a five percent increase in enrollment over fall 2024. The tuition increase was approved by the Board of Trustees the previous week. There would be an average salary pool of 2.6% that would allow the third and final round of the Mercer market study implementation. The revised budget would be looked at in October for additional projects. President Oldham thanked everyone again and stated the best days were still ahead and welcomed any questions.

Chair Rice stated the grounds had been looking beautiful and asked if it would be possible to get an aerial photo print. Lee Wray said that he would check on getting prints to distribute. Joyce Arnold-Hesson asked about the pay schedule changes. She stated that after looking at the excel sheet for the pay schedule breakdown, she wondered if this was presented to employees when they were polled on whether they wanted to move to the biweekly pay schedule. Kevin Vedder answered that no; it had not been shared because it was not known yet how the schedule would look. It had to be developed, and it was later made known that there would be 26 pay periods when the biweekly pay schedule began. Arnold-Hesson asked if another poll could be done with more information regarding the pay schedule and using the information from the spreadsheet to give staff more insight. Vedder answered that it could be looked at and brought to the attention of Emily Wheeler and Jenni Roberts in the Business Office. Arnold-Hesson was concerned about the changes and the effect they would have and wanted to see if it could be looked at again to address additional concerns. Vedder noted the concern but stated that to move forward with the Talon project, the pay schedule would have to move forward as planned. The decision was based on feedback from the polls, with the information that was available to share at the time. The majority of C&S staff that voted were in favor of the biweekly pay schedule.

Chair Rice stated that the Staff Day planning committee would meet again on Tuesday, June 3, 2025, to continue planning for Staff Day to get ready for registration and review the final t-shirt design.

Denette Way motioned to adjourn. Carlile seconded. Adjourned at 1:58 pm.

Documents on file:

Agenda, May 8, 2025
Minutes, April 3, 2025

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