

Staff Advisory Committee to the President
February 6, 2014, 1:30 p.m.

Members Present: Joy Cook, Brooke Dedmon, Susan Henry, Patrena Hicks, Kaye Loftis (presiding), Tina Martin, Donna Russell, Cheryl Sullivan and Denette Way

Others Present: John Brooks, President Oldham and Terri Taylor

President's Comments

President Oldham opened the meeting stating that a lot is happening on campus, and it is hard to keep abreast as everything is moving so rapidly. Recruiting for higher education is extremely competitive as 70% of the budget is tuition dollars. TTU is the only state university that has shown growth in the past two years, but the University has some updating to do with the implementation of academic programs. Program updates are moving at such a fast pace that it is hard to communicate effectively all these changes. The administration will work to improve the communication efforts to inform the campus of new and revised academic programs.

The Governor unveiled his 2014-2015 budget recommendations earlier this week and introduced the "Tennessee Promise." This historical proposal commits to providing on a continuing basis two years of community college or a college of applied technology (TCAT) absolutely free of tuition and fees to graduating high school seniors. This provides a statement to parents and students that education beyond high school is a priority in the state of Tennessee. To make the Tennessee Promise sustainable over time, the Governor proposed transferring lottery reserve funds to create an endowment, with the goal of strategically redirecting existing resources. This also reduces the lottery scholarship amounts for freshman/sophomore years to \$3,000 per year but increases the amount to \$5,000 per year for junior/senior status. President Oldham stated the impact of the "Tennessee Promise" on TTU is expected to be minimal.

There were no funding formula increases announced, and a decrease of \$900,000 in state funds is anticipated. Out of seven building projects, only two were chosen, which pushes TTU's science building back a couple of years. Relative to a budgeted salary increase, it is unclear at this time if a cost-of-living adjustment will be included. The Governor's budget recommendations now await the reaction/action from the state Legislature.

On another matter, President Oldham announced that TTU's Master Plan was presented to THEC at the January 30 meeting. The plan is devised to improve access to campus (including parking options) and is designed for implementation in 10/20/30 year increments. It addresses campus concerns as a whole with students being the focus. The Master Plan allows for growth of programs and facilities. Employees are encouraged to view the entire plan online. Also, the proposed new Fitness Center is awaiting approval by the TBR at the upcoming March meeting. TTU could potentially start on the building in 2015.

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A short-term project at the University Center is planned to address structural issues on the back which will include the addition of a front on the backside of the building. Enhancing dining options are also underway to include the addition of Chick-Fil-A in the Swoops Grill and a sandwich shop to be added where the mini-mart previously occupied.

The Foundation is purchasing the MMA building located at the corner of Dixie Avenue and Eighth Street. The offices of University Advancement, Alumni and Communications and Marketing will be moving to the new location.

Suggestion Box

Suggestion—A suggestion was received which requested the expansion of the Library hours of operation on Sunday morning of finals week.

Response—Library administration will review statistics to see how many people are in the Library at 1 p.m. on the Sunday of finals week. Based on those statistics, the hours will be reviewed by the Library administration. The Library currently opens at 1 p.m. on Sunday of finals week and remains open until 2 a.m.

Suggestion—An anonymous suggestion was received pertaining to lack of suitable custodial services being performed in many buildings. The suggestion stated this appears to have occurred since the janitorial staff was outsourced, and also included the statement “Decisions like this do not need to be made in haste in a vacuum because it affects everyone on campus.”

Response—Since this is a generic complaint, President Oldham stated he is unable to address this complaint specifically. However, there is a link on the Facilities webpage to report a problem area or to request specific custodial services. President Oldham encourages good effective communications of issues that might provide leverage with the SSC contract as contract negotiation items.

There being no further business, Chairman Loftis adjourned the meeting at 2:20 p.m.

Terri Taylor, Recorder