



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE  
CAMPUS ADVISORY BOARD  
MINUTES  
May 3, 2024  
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Advisory Board met at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, May 3, 2024.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair John Tickle called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Roll call of board members conducted with the following present:

Mr. John Tickle, Chair, Ms. Jessica Barfield, Mr. Allen Carter, Ms. Joan Heminway, Ms. Alexia Poe, and Ms. Tomi Robb

Absent: Mr. Tom Smith

**III. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Ms. Alexia Poe made a motion to approve the February 2, 2024, minutes provided the Secretary is authorized to make any necessary edits to correct spelling, grammatical, or format errors or other technical errors subsequently identified. Mr. Allen Carter seconded the motion.

The motion was unanimously approved.

**IV. RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING MEMBERS**

Chancellor Donde Plowman recognized the service of Ms. Jessica Barfield and Ms. Joan Heminway to the UTK Advisory Board. Chancellor Plowman expressed her appreciation and presented each of them with a clock to represent the time they had given in service to the university.

**V. CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE**  
**Dr. Donde Plowman, Chancellor**

Chancellor Plowman read an email she sent to the campus community regarding recent actions taken related to protests on campus.



Chancellor Plowman shared her experience while presenting the James F. Patterson Land-grant University Lecture at The Ohio State University in April. The modern land-grant university's role is to teach applied disciplines in partnership with industry to improve the lives and life of those across our state, nation, and world. Recent surveys indicate the public has lost confidence in higher education but not in individual universities. Across the state of Tennessee people express their love for the University of Tennessee. Chancellor Plowman stated she is committed to help our university lead in all that we do.

Chancellor Plowman reported on the relationship our university has with FIFA. The research being conducted here at the University of Tennessee and Michigan State University will produce the turf grass for the pitches in sixteen host stadiums across the United States, Canada, and Mexico for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Dr. Keith Carver stated the games would be viewed by over 20% of the world population. FIFA has donated \$2.5 million for the research fields here in Knoxville. We anticipate having a relationship with FIFA in the years to come and opportunities to partner with additional sports organizations due to the incredible research being conducted by our faculty.

Chancellor Plowman briefed the group on her recent trip to San Diego to speak to the relationship we have with Arizona State University to grow our online programming. ASU offers high quality online programming. Our partnership with ASU allows us to develop robust online programming for the people of Tennessee. The state of Tennessee currently has approximately one million residents with some college credit but no degree. Increasing our online programming will be aimed to assist people in completing degrees.

Last week, the University of Tennessee and Vanderbilt University co-hosted the Council on Competitiveness summit in Nashville. The summit focused on the momentum around the innovation economy in the state of Tennessee. We had great participation from university leadership, TVA, ORNL, the automotive industry, and the State of Tennessee.

Dr. Deb Crawford shared how great it was for the universities, industry, ORNL, and the State of Tennessee leadership to be in the same room learning from each other and discussing how we can work together to help Tennessee be competitive in the future.

Chancellor Plowman commented on the success we are experiencing in the athletic department. We currently have six programs ranked in the top 10 and two additional programs are ranked in the top 20.

Chancellor Plowman addressed the needs for our campus infrastructure. The growth in enrollment and in research is dependent upon our campus infrastructure. The chemistry building is in great need of being replaced. We continue to work with our legislative delegation and state leaders for funding to assist with replacing the building. We hosted a groundbreaking for two new residence halls recently. The residence halls are scheduled to be open fall 2025. A third residence hall is just getting started and will open fall 2026. The new



Agriculture and Natural Resources Building will open fall 2024 and the Croley Nursing Building is scheduled to open fall 2025.

Chancellor Plowman and Dr. Carver announced the hiring of a new dean for the College of Veterinary Medicine, Dr. Paul Plummer.

Chancellor Plowman provided information on the recent dedication of the Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs. The School has an undergraduate and master's program. The School offered a lecture series this spring focused on civic leadership. Dr. Zomchick reported 50 undergraduate students are already registered for the fall of 2024.

Chancellor Plowman read the UT System Neutrality Policy to the advisory board. Leadership felt it was important to clarify the expectations and positions of the leaders of each campus and the president. The statement is meant to be used as a guide. Prof. Heminway asked for guidance on how someone serving in the faculty senate president role should operate under the guideline. Chancellor Plowman responded each leader should consider themselves to be speaking for the group they lead. Ms. Poe encouraged intentional thought behind how the neutrality statement is shared across campus to those serving in roles like Prof. Heminway.

Chancellor Plowman reminded the advisory board members of the new guaranteed admission process for Tennesseans. Offers of admission were given to over 6,000 Tennesseans. The potential students have not confirmed their admission at the typical rate. We believe the delay is due to issues related to the FAFSA process. We have been able to send out 70% of our financial aid packets. Many universities across the country have been unable to send out any financial aid packets. We will continue to monitor the numbers and work toward building our fall class.

## **VI. FY 24-25 BUDGET PRESENTATION**

### **Mr. Allen Bolton, Interim Senior Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administration**

Chancellor Plowman reminded the members of the advisory board their responsibility to approve our budget recommendations we plan to submit to the Board of Trustees for approval.

Mr. Allen Bolton greeted the advisory board and recognized the work of Ms. Kim McCulloch, Associate Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration, and her team for the work they do to assist in the annual development of the budget. Mr. Bolton thanked Provost Zomchick for his partnership in the budget process.

Mr. Bolton reported on the committee's work to improve alignment of our budgeting process with our institutional goals. An institutional funding strategy for capital projects was developed. This will allow us to carve out \$15-20 million for capital projects prior to the budget process. This year we will designate \$20 million to begin work related to the chemistry building. We adopted a revenue-based budgeting principle. Adjustments have been

made to the model nomenclature. Expectations were re-aligned related to university funding to colleges as a result of year one results. Digital learning was moved within the model with a revenue sharing plan. Chancellor Plowman reminded the advisory board members of the huge change in how we address budget allocations, which provides deans with more control and incentives to grow revenue and decrease expenses. The future enhancements to the model include a transition to a new enterprise performance management system in January 2025, a shortening of the budget cycle timeline, and implementation of a framework for annual budget meetings in fall 2024.

Mr. Bolton acknowledged Mr. Brian Browning, Associate Vice Chancellor for Operations and Real Estate, for Ms. Tenera Teal-Tate, the new Director of Parking and Transportation.

Mr. Bolton reported on some of the findings from the parking and transit assessment. The university engaged with Wood Solutions Group for the assessment. Growth in student parking demand exceeds the growth in student parking spaces. Our parking rate structure is relatively undifferentiated, which leads to higher demand and expectations. We have inadequate on-demand or visitor parking options. The use of technology is behind our peers. Our transit system has capacity, and we need to find ways to increase its use.

Mr. Bolton shared the new strategies for student parking. Commuter parking will move to a zonal basis with core and periphery parking options. Permits for those areas will have different price levels. Student parking permits will be sold on a hierarchical basis. The students with the most accumulated academic hours will be eligible to purchase permits first, the students with mid-tier academic standings will be second, and the first-year students will be the last group. The T-bus routes will be enhanced and expanded. A new hybrid fleet of T-buses will arrive in July. Our space locator technology will be enhanced.

The cost of staff parking permits will not increase. Approximately 500 new staff spaces on the main campus will be available for assignment. The expectation is an increase in pricing levels for staff will be implemented in fall 2025 with increases every two years going forward.

More parking spaces for visitors will be available. Approximately 1,200 hourly parking spaces will be available with a mobile payment system. Departments will have the ability to provide guests with free parking more easily. Our wayfinding technology will be improved for guests.

Chancellor Plowman stated we plan to encourage first-year students not to bring a car to campus. Prof. Heminway expressed her appreciation on behalf of staff members and the ability to find parking due to the improved periphery parking options.

Ms. Jessica Barfield asked if graduate students, who also have teaching responsibilities, were thought of during the process. Mr. Bolton confirmed they will be included in the first cohort.

Mr. Bolton reminded the advisory board members that tuition is 35% of our budget and is the largest single source of revenue. Our tuition recommendations are based on many variables such as costs and enrollment growth. Tuition has been flat for the past five years. The CPI growth during those years is 3½%. We are recommending a 2% increase for in-state undergraduate students and a 4% increase for out-of-state undergraduate students. When mandatory fees are included the in-state undergraduate rate increases to 2.4%. Mandatory fees apply to all students for services that apply to all students. The tech fee supports the technological infrastructure for the campus. This fee has not increased in nine fiscal years. Chancellor Plowman shared the increase will not cover the additional dollars needed to address cyber security. Mr. Bolton complemented Mr. Ramon Padilla and Mr. Dan Harder on the work they are doing to improve the IT and security needs of the campus. The transportation fee increase is the second increase of a five-year process. The online fee is to support the online student experience and online student success coaches.

Mr. Bolton addressed the differential tuition recommendations. These programs require additional use of space and instrumentation in their curriculum. Program fees, course fees, and special fees were covered in the material shared prior to the meeting. The Vol Shop created a \$249.00 fee that will cover all required digital material and book costs.

Mr. Bolton reviewed the state base appropriations for FY 2024-2025 with the advisory board. Mr. Bolton expressed appreciation to Governor Lee and the citizens of Tennessee for their continued support. We expect to receive \$22 million in new recurring dollars and \$9.4 million for one-time maintenance projects. The total preliminary budget is \$2.2 billion. Mr. Bolton reminded the advisory board they are required to approve the unrestricted and auxiliary dollars, which is a 13.4% increase. Mr. Bolton reviewed information on the FY 2024-2025 proposed unrestricted E&G by functional area graph and the auxiliary budget summary.

Mr. Carter moved for adoption of the following resolution:

Resolved: The University of Tennessee, Knoxville Advisory Board recommends approval of the proposed operating budget for FY 2024-25 attached as Attachment A hereto and authorizes the Chancellor to present the proposed operating budget to the President as approved in Board Policy BT0026.

Further Resolved: The Advisory Board authorizes the Chancellor to provide additional information to the President prior to the Board of Trustees meeting on June 24-25, 2024, to support any needed adjustments to the proposed operating budget based on changed circumstances or new data made available to the Chancellor relating to UTK's anticipated operations in FY 2024-25.

Prof. Heminway seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

## **VII. FOR ALL – A LIBRARY THAT LEADS**

### **Dr. Steven E. Smith, Dean, University Libraries**

Dean Smith expressed his appreciation to the advisory board and the university administration for the support given to the library.

Dean Smith reminded the advisory board members that the library serves every student, faculty, and staff member on campus. The library is available 24/7 either in-person or online. The library is ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> among public research libraries and 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> in the SEC.

The library houses over four million electronic resources due to the early adoption of electronic resources. The library has been creative in how they manage their print collections and rank well compared to other universities. The library answers approximately 5,000 research assistance sessions annually. Librarians teach approximately 400 library instruction classes. The library checks out a variety of items such as print materials, photography/videography equipment, and laptops. Over five million online items are accessed annually. Tennessee Research and Creative Exchange (TRACE) is an open access repository containing research and creative work by UT scholars and researchers.

The John C. Hodges Library has approximately two million visitors a year. There are four additional libraries that fall under the University Libraries. A new off-campus state-of-the-art storage facility is being developed. Off campus storage is critical to allow for our current space to be repurposed for students, faculty, and staff to work, study, and perform research. The library is constantly working to use our space in new and different ways to assist students' wellbeing by providing opportunities for social interaction with other students.

Dean Smith provided information on the UT Press. They also provide support for the UT Space Institute in Tullahoma, maintain a partnership with the ORNL Research Library, and use their leverage to share e-resources with the UT System campuses. The library serves as host and partner with several critical UT services within the physical walls of the library.

Dean Smith shared several testimonials on the positive impact of the library from current and former students, faculty members, community members, and alumni.

Chancellor Plowman expressed her appreciation for the work Dean Smith and his staff do daily to serve the campus community in new and exciting ways. Prof. Heminway expressed her appreciation for the work being done by the librarians and staff members. Ms. Robb commented on the important role the library played during her time as a student.

## **VIII. CLOSING REMARKS**

Chancellor Plowman thanked the advisory board members for attending and their willingness to serve the University.



**IX. ADJOURN**

With no further business to come before the advisory board, the chair adjourned the meeting at 11:43 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Susan E. England*  
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Susan E. England, Secretary