



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE
CAMPUS ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
May 13, 2020
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, Advisory Board met at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 13, 2020, virtually.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair John Tickle called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call of board members conducted with all present.

Members present: Mr. John Tickle, Chair, Dr. Louis Gross, Ms. Alexia Poe, Mr. Johnelle Simpson, Mr. Tom Smith, Ms. Syreeta Vaughn, Mr. Tim Williams

III. OPENING REMARKS BY THE CHAIR

John Tickle informed the group the budget discussion today would be based on the facts as we know them today. The information is based on having a normal fall semester, football, and state appropriations.

IV. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Tim Williams made a motion to approve the October 11, 2019 minutes provided the Secretary is authorized to make any necessary edits to correct spelling, grammatical, or format errors or other technical errors subsequently identified. Lou Gross seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. CHANCELLOR'S UPDATE
Donde Plowman, Chancellor

Chancellor Plowman provided an update on two new hires. Deborah Crawford will begin as the Vice Chancellor for Research on August 1, 2020. Deborah is very experienced and respected in the research community. We are thrilled to have her join our University. Her appointment will provide stability for the Office of Research and Engagement following several years of interim leadership. Frank Cuevas was appointed Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Life following the departure of Vince Carilli. Following a national search, Frank was selected to serve as the Vice Chancellor for Student Life. Frank has done a tremendous job over the course of the spring



semester transitioning students out of the dorms and will now turn his attention to operational plans for fall. Frank is a great addition to our cabinet.

Chancellor Plowman discussed the recent announcement related to students returning to campus this fall. The decision was not made lightly. We felt we needed to make this decision now in order to allow students and their families to make the best decision regarding fall attendance. We feel good about our decision. We will be working this summer to determine what the fall will look like with the necessary mitigation measures in place. We are exploring testing issues for the fall. Our main concern will be the health and safety of everyone.

Chancellor Plowman reviewed the three-phase plan to bring staff back to campus safely. Ninety-five percent of our staff were sent home in March. The return plan is based on CDC, state, and local guidelines and includes three phases. The first phase of the plan began on May 11th and we hope to have everyone back by August 11th. Each phase will last at least 14 days. We will continue to allow staff to telecommute should they need to do so.

The Re-imagining Fall Task Force was appointed by Chancellor Plowman and is under the direction of Steven Smith, Dean of the University Libraries and Ellen McIntyre, Dean of the College of Education, Health, and Human Sciences. The task force is responsible for looking at six areas: teaching and student success, workplace safety, residence halls and student spaces, research, visitors to campus, and engagement and outreach. Chancellor Plowman asked that they provide information on the six areas as they relate to three scenarios: 1) bringing students back to campus under “new normal;” 2) beginning semester with students on campus, but needing to return to online-only learning, and 3) continuing online-only learning. All three of these scenarios are intertwined. The final report is due May 18th. We are looking at numerous options related to testing, teaching, how to function in the residence halls, and in the dining areas. The chancellor’s cabinet will review the report provided and spend the summer operationalizing the necessary items to allow the fall semester to take place in the safest possible way.

Chancellor Plowman shared information on the Emergency Operation Center (EOC), which began in January and is ongoing. This group has done an incredible job and it has allowed us to be informed and act quickly in an environment of constantly changing information.

The University faced and overcame many challenges during the spring semester. The Office of Information Technology did a fantastic job and our system withstood the increase without an incident. Student Success programs such as advising, tutoring, and counseling switched to online. Refunds were provided without the students making a request. Laptops and wi-fi hotspots were provided to those in need. Faculty Senate worked with our administration to adjust our grading policies for the spring semester. Phone calls were placed to our current undergraduate and graduate students to see how they were doing and actions were taken based on those calls. Our team also reached out to admitted students. The Student Life Emergency Fund was established and we have raised to date \$277,310 to support our students. A video featuring VFLs crashing classes was shared with the group.



Chancellor Plowman reviewed the Volunteer Principles for Leading with Courage. Everything that our team did during these last few months was based on these guiding principles: 1) keep our community healthy and hopeful; 2) keep student on track toward success; and 3) be creative, be compassionate, be flexible. She expressed her appreciation and pride in everyone that has worked so hard.

Kari Alldredge provided a Fall 2020 enrollment update. Kari report for the first time in our history we had over 25,000 first year applications. The more aggressive aid policies that were put in place last fall have benefitted us this spring. We have an increase in in-state and out-of-state applications. We are currently up 79 confirmations compared to this time last year. We are maintaining our commitment of access to education. We offer 90% of our applicants a pathway to admission. Our Volunteer Bridge program in conjunction with Pellissippi State Community College is trending up. Our transfer applications and confirmations are trending up over this time last as well. Currently our confirmations for returning students is steady, which is a positive note considering the environment we find ourselves in today. Kari's team and the Student Success team led by Dr. Amber Williams, is reaching out to all of the returning students that have not registered for fall. Our spring graduate numbers are up 10% for undergraduates and 11% overall when graduate students are included. Summer enrollment is up 10% for undergraduates. We have an additional 700+ students enrolled for summer courses.

Chancellor Plowman updated the group on the status of the strategic visioning process. Due to the work related to COVID19 in the spring, we have pushed back the timeline. She will keep the group updated as the process begins to move in the future.

Tim Williams asked about FAFSA completion rates. Kari explained the state of Tennessee has one of the highest completion rates. We have heard from parents that have lost their jobs and we are working with them to develop a financial plan. Chris Cimino stated the University received \$19.2 million from the CARES Act. As prescribed by the Federal government, 50% of those funds, \$9.6 million, must be used to assist students. Ninety percent of the first \$9.6 million will be sent to Pell and non-Pell eligible students as block grants and the remaining 10% will be used in a similar fashion as the Student Life Emergency Fund. The second \$9.6 million is to be used by the institution. We have not made the decision on how to use those funds yet.

Lou Gross shared ways in which our faculty will be assisting in the re-imagining fall work through their research. Lou reached out to the re-imagining fall task force to consider involving IRB in the process. Lou also shared that we participated not in online teaching but remote teaching. Many things will need to be considered to implement online instruction and there are expenses associated with that change.

Matthew Scoggins shared the task force is exploring testing options with ORNL, UT Medical Center, and faculty research. Looking forward to the final report at the end of the week and exploring potential options.

Chancellor Plowman expressed the need to think about how we manage through the risks associated with bringing students back to campus. We had no options for isolation beds in the spring. We will have a plan for isolation beds for the fall. We are working with the city and county mayors as we prepare for students to return. Communication will need to be clear on how things are going to be different and how things will work in the fall for our students.

Syreeta Vaughn asked if there are any classes that we will not be able to offer virtually in the fall. Chancellor Plowman stated each department will need to look at their class offerings and determine how best to present the classes. Each class will need to have a virtual component for students who become ill and have to isolate. Syreeta asked about potential impacts on seniors that could keep them from graduating on time. Chancellor Plowman said we will need to determine how to handle those situations. David Manderscheid reported several professors were flexible during the spring semester and worked with students to meet their needs.

Lou asked if we had any information on the applications and commitments related to graduate students. Kari reported we are flat at this point for graduate students.

VI. FY2020-2021 OPERATING BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

Chris Cimino, Senior Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administration

Chris Cimino reported we are proposing a 0% tuition and mandatory fees increase for undergraduate, graduate, law, and UT Space Institute for only the second time in our history. We are also proposing no increases on housing and meal plans, which the first time in our history.

Chris reviewed the proposed state appropriations for FY 2020-2021. The numbers included in the report were in the Governor's budget pre-COVID19. We do not know if these numbers will remain the same when the legislative body reconvenes. Chris recapped the process for determining the amount of formula improvement funds based on our metrics. The salary funds are based on a partial funding of a 1.5% salary increase. Lou questioned if we are obligated to give a salary increase. Chris stated it is based on how the appropriations bill is worded and if it allows any flexibility for the institution.

Tom Smith shared the state's sales tax revenue dropped 6% in April and anticipates this trend continuing. Chris stated we are considering options where some of these funds could be called back due to the situation this year and are making plans accordingly. Tom expressed his concern this situation will be worse and will take longer to recover than the recession in 2008. Chris shared strategies have already been put in place to curve expenditures during this time.

Tim Williams asked if the state appropriations are changed prior to the passing of the bill, will a new budget be brought before this group. Chris shared the possibility of adding an adjustment sheet to the information provided to the UT Board of Trustees showing what adjustments would be made within the proposed budget. The action item you will be voting on today is prepared in a way that allows the Chancellor the flexibility to make certain changes. We would have the



ability to call a meeting with this group to make you aware of any changes we would need to make. Alexia Poe shared the timing of the legislature reconvening is still uncertain. Chancellor Plowman stated she would like to reconvene this group and review any changes that are needed. Tim Williams recommended placing a hold on the calendar in anticipation of needing to meet.

Chris reviewed the comparisons between FY20 original, FY 20 probable, and the FY21 for the budget, unrestricted E&G revenue, and unrestricted E&G expenditures. Lou questioned the difference from FY20 probable and FY21 proposed budgets in instruction dollars. Chris explained the FY20 probable number is higher due to carry over, start-up costs, and non-recurring dollars.

Chris shared the auxiliary budget summary. The proposed FY21 budget for athletics is a balanced budget. The budget does not assume a change in fall sports. Tom Smith asked for an explanation of how a decline in athletic revenue impacts the university as a whole. Chris stated athletics generates enough revenue to cover all of their sports. All of our auxiliaries are required to generate enough revenue to cover their expenditures. We are working on a new budget model for the campus. The new model will allow us to determine how best for the auxiliary services to contribute to the campus in a more transparent way. Times like these demonstrate how important it is to build our reserves to get us through times like we are experiencing now.

Lou asked if Chris would address the use of reserves. Chris reminded the group of the thorough review of the reserves at the last meeting. Chancellor Plowman stated her appreciation of the past work to build our reserves to the level they are now. Chris stated some of the reserves are restricted for very specific needs. Making use of any of the funds is dependent on what happens over the next few months.

Due to the current pause on hiring, Lou questioned if the proposed budget contains information on payroll savings. Chris responded we will wait until June to see what happens with regard to state appropriations. Depending on the amount we receive, we will proceed with the needed reallocations.

Tom Smith made a motion to adopt the Resolution:

Resolved: The University of Tennessee, Knoxville Advisory Board recommends approval of the proposed operating budget for FY2020-21 attached as Attachment A hereto and authorizes the Chancellor to present the proposed operating budget to the President as provided 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 26, 2020, 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 FY2020-21. Syreeta Vaughn seconded the motion.



Lou noted the Resolution does not include the information discussed related to the need to bring the budget back to this group should there be changes. Tom requested the Chair move forward with the Resolution as written. Lou requested the Chancellor inform the Advisory Board were a revised budget proposal be necessary. Chancellor Plowman committed to reconvening this group should the budget be revised prior to the Board of Trustees meeting.

The motion was unanimously approved.

VII. RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS

Donde Plowman, Chancellor

Chancellor Plowman offered her appreciation and thanks to Lou Gross, and Johnelle Simpson for their service and the impact they made while serving on the UTK Advisory Board.

Beginning in July, Beauvais Lyons will serve as the faculty member and Karmen Jones will serve as the student representative following her election as SGA President.

Chancellor Plowman expressed her appreciation for the support and advice the Board has offered to her during her first year as Chancellor.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

Alexia Poe shared information related to Gov. Bill and Crissy Haslam's work to start a program for the summer to assist with summer slide. Please share this information with any college students that have a heart for service. The website is www.tennesseetutoringcore.org.

John Tickle thanked Chancellor Plowman for keeping the group informed, her transparency, and leadership.

Lou shared his appreciation of his time on the Advisory Board and to the members.

IX. ADJOURN

With no further business to come before the advisory board, the chair adjourned the meeting at 2:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan E. England
Susan E. England, Secretary