

MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES

The Middle Tennessee State University Board of Trustees met on June 16, 2020, via teleconference.

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Board Chair Steve Smith called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Lt. Gen. Keith Huber led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Introduction of Student Veteran

Gen. Huber introduced U.S. Air Force Captain Christopher Murphy. He is a native of Arizona and graduated from the R.O.T.C. program at the University of Arizona in 2011. He then selflessly served in the U.S.A.F. for eight years. He was the combat systems officer in an aircraft referred to as the U28 Alpha, an aircraft specifically formatted and crewed for Air Force special operations. He has 1,800 flight hours, 1,200 of which were in hostile air space in combat. He came to MTSU to enter the Aerospace program because of the program's reputation and because MTSU is veteran compatible. Capt. Murphy expressed his thanks for the opportunity to present to the Board. Chairman Smith thanked him for his service.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Chairman Smith and Dr. McPhee thanked those on the call for their dedication during this challenging time.

Roll Call and Statement of Necessity

Chairman Smith asked Board Secretary Heidi Zimmerman to call the roll. Ms. Zimmerman stated that because members of the Board were participating in the meeting electronically, in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated Section 8-44-108(c)(3), there were two questions

that needed to be answered by the trustees for the record. First, could the trustee clearly hear those participating on the call in order to participate in the meeting. Second, were other individuals present in the room; if so, they would need to be identified.

Trustees participating electronically were J.B. Baker, Thomas Boyd, Pete DeLay, Samantha Eisenberg, Darrell Freeman, Joey Jacobs, Chris Karbowiak, Mary Martin, Stephen Smith, and Pam Wright. The trustees indicated they were able to hear others on the call. No trustee indicated that there were others present at their locations. President Sidney A. McPhee; Alan Thomas, Vice President for Business and Finance; Mark Byrnes, University Provost; Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Bruce Petryshak, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Deb Sells, Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for Enrollment and Academic Success; Andrew Oppmann, Vice President for Marketing and Communications; General Keith Huber; Brenda Burkhart, Chief Audit Executive; Chris Massaro, Athletic Director; and, Kim Edgar, Executive Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, also participated in the meeting.

Ms. Zimmerman stated that a quorum was not physically present but that one would exist with inclusion of trustees participating by electronic means. In accordance with T.C.A. § 8-44-108(b)(2), in order to proceed without a physical quorum, the Board was required to determine whether a necessity for the meeting existed. Ms. Zimmerman provided the following circumstances for the Board's consideration to establish the necessity for holding the meeting: The Board's agenda items included consideration of information and recommendations from three (3) Board of Trustees Committees: Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee, Audit and Compliance Committee, and Finance and Personnel Committee. These committees met on June 2, 2020, and made recommendations for the Board's consideration. Additionally, reports from the committee meetings and the President would be provided. The new student trustee will also be voted upon. As regards its governance responsibility for the University, it is necessary for the Board to meet in order to consider these matters and recommendations, and vote on them. Due to concerns related to exposure to the coronavirus, it

was determined that the Board meeting should be held electronically and, thus, there was not a physical quorum present without electronic participation of the trustees. In order for a quorum of the Board to participate by electronic means of communication and for the meeting to continue, a determination needed to be made on the necessity of holding the meeting.

Chairman Smith requested a motion be made and a roll call vote taken for a determination on the necessity of holding the meeting. Motion was made by Trustee DeLay and seconded by Trustee Karbowskiak. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously with nine (9) Aye votes. Necessity for the meeting was established and the meeting proceeded.

Public Comment

Chairman Smith stated that a request to address the Board had been received and he had encouraged this participation. However, the requestor has not been heard from further and it did not appear that she had joined the meeting. Chairman Smith indicated that if she did, she would be fit in between committee reports.

Approval of Minutes – Action

The first agenda item was approval of the minutes from the March 31, 2020 Board meeting. Trustee DeLay made the motion to approve the minutes from the March 31, 2020 meeting, and Trustee Baker seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion to approve the minutes from the March 31, 2020 meeting of the Board passed unanimously.

Committee Report: Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics

Committee Chair Pamela Wright gave the report from the June 2, 2020 meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee. The meeting began with approval of the minutes from the March 17, 2020 meeting. The Committee report contained three (3) action items presented by Provost Mark Byrnes to be considered and voted on by the Board. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the Board meeting and were contained in the Board notebooks.

Tenure and Promotion Candidates – Action

Faculty members applied for tenure and/or promotion in September 2019 and were reviewed by their department chair/school director, department/school committee, college committee, college dean, provost, and president, as stipulated by MTSU Policies 204 Tenure, 205 Promotion of Tenured and Tenurable Faculty, and their respective college and department policies. The President and University Provost recommended they be granted tenure and/or promotion effective August 1, 2020. The Committee unanimously approved 24 candidates recommended for tenure and 49 candidates for promotion.

Revision to Policies 204 Tenure and 205 Promotion of Tenured and Tenurable Faculty – Action

Proposed revisions eliminate redundancies, clarify procedures, and streamline processes for faculty assessments by providing for electronic submission of materials and recommendations at each level. Faculty representatives, administrators, and the Faculty Senate collaborated to update these important policies. The Committee also unanimously approved these recommended policy revisions.

Request for Approval of New Academic Degree Program: M.S., Athletic Training – Action

University Policy 251 Approval of Academic Programs, Units, and Modifications, states that all academic actions that require review and approval by THEC must be approved by the Board of Trustees. Provost Byrnes proposed a change of degree designation for the existing Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Athletic Training to Master of Science (M.S.) in Athletic Training per recommendation of accrediting body, effective May 2020. This proposed change of degree designation was approved.

Motion

Trustee Wright made the motion to approve the action items recommended by the Committee and Trustee Martin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion to approve the action items passed unanimously.

Committee Report: Audit and Compliance Committee

Trustee DeLay reported that the Audit and Compliance Committee met on June 2, 2020. The agenda for the meeting did not include any action items for the Board's consideration but did include several information items. The Committee approved the minutes from its March 17, 2020 meeting.

External Reviews – Information

Results of three external reviews were presented by Ms. Brenda Burkhart, Chief Audit Executive.

First, the Tennessee Comptroller of the Treasury issued the financial and compliance audit report for the year ending June 30, 2019 on March 11, 2020. The independent auditor's report included unmodified opinions on the fairness of the presentation of the financial statements.

The audit report contained no audit findings.

Next, the Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, Office of Criminal Justice Programs conducted an on-site review of the STOP (Services, Training, Officers, Prosecutions) Contract for the Law Enforcement Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Investigator for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020. There were no findings of noncompliance.

And third, Atlas Research completed a desk review in March 2020 and submitted its report to the National Science Foundation. It was concluded that there were no major deficiencies. The report cited five (5) concerns as minor which recommended improvements with the documentation of procedures.

Internal Audit – Information

MTSU Policy 70 Internal Audit Section IX.F. requires significant results of internal audit reports be presented to the Audit and Compliance Committee quarterly. Since the March 17, 2020 report

of audit results to the Audit and Compliance Committee, there have been no internal audit reports issued.

Committee Report: Finance and Personnel Committee

Trustee Jacobs reported that the Finance and Personnel Committee met on June 2, 2020. The Committee approved the minutes from its March 17, 2020 meeting. There were six (6) action items for the Board's consideration. Materials outlining these actions were made available for review prior to the meeting and were included in the Board notebooks.

Capital Outlay Project Submittal – Action

The proposed MTSU capital outlay project for FY 2021-22 is the Applied Engineering Building project that will provide lab, classroom, office space, and common space for the degree areas of Mechatronics Engineering (B.S.) and Engineering Technology (B.S. & M.S.). The Applied Engineering Project will provide needed space focused on collaborative learning to help students cultivate the knowledge and skills required in the viable and emerging fields of applied engineering.

Capital Disclosures - Action

MTSU plans to submit two (2) projects as part of the FY 2021/2022 MTSU Capital Disclosure Request. First, the New Student Housing project to be located on the western half of the current Womack Lane housing site and second, the Student Athletic Performance Center project that is included as part of the MTSU Athletic Master Plan and amended into the 2016 MTSU Campus Master Plan. The Student Athletic Performance Center will take the place of the Football Operations Facility (disclosed FY 19/20) on the MTSU Disclosure list and includes the addition of scope originally envisioned in later phases of the Athletic Master Plan.

Capital Maintenance Project Submittal – Action

The Capital Maintenance Project requests to be submitted to THEC are as follows:

- Capital Maintenance requests for ten (10) projects for FY 2021-22 totaling \$9,965,000; and,
- A summary of potential project requests for four additional years, FY 2022-23 thru FY 2025-26.

Tuition, Fees, and Housing Rates – Action

The University proposed no increase in tuition for undergraduate students which complies with THEC’s guiding range of 0 – 2.0%. The University proposed no increase in tuition for graduate students for the upcoming academic year, as well. In addition to tuition, no increases are requested for mandatory fees, non-mandatory fees, or housing rates.

Estimated 2019-20 and Proposed July 2020-21 Operating Budgets – Action

The July budget for the upcoming fiscal year does not include a tuition increase or any fee increases; however, it does include an appropriation increase as approved by the General Assembly in March 2020 and some adjustments for enrollment. It also included a salary pool budgeted for 2020-21 which is equal to the current Governor’s Budget funding for salary increases.

Revision to Policy 641 Student Fees-Incidental Charges and Refunds – Action

At the June 2019 Board of Trustees meeting, the Board approved changing the Corporate Partnership Rate from the eRate to the in-state rate for undergraduate students. The University requested a comparable rate for graduate students and must revise the policy to reflect these changes.

The six action items before the Committee were approved unanimously.

Motion

Trustee Jacobs made a motion, seconded by Trustee DeLay, to approve the action items recommended by the Finance and Personnel Committee. Chairman Smith asked how the

legislature's plan to not include salary increases for teachers affects MTSU. Dr. McPhee explained that it is still a moving target since the legislature is still in session. He stated that he would provide an update in his President's Report, but the bottom line is that the current budget passed by the Senate has taken out increases for all state employees, including higher education. Trustee Eisenberg asked Dr. McPhee if this will impact whether or not MTSU will be able to raise or keep the cost of tuition the same. He replied that regarding the budget, the University would be held harmless contingent on zero tuition increases. He stated again that more detail will be provided in the President's Report.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion to approve the action items passed unanimously.

Appointment of Student Trustee

Chairman Smith stated that it was with mixed emotions that Trustee Samantha Eisenberg is recognized for her service as the third Middle Tennessee State University Student Trustee. He indicated that Ms. Eisenberg has done a remarkable job in representing the students at MTSU over the past 12 months as Student Trustee, and has dedicated herself to MTSU throughout her career. Her hard work and passion in improving the student experience on the campus will be missed. He wished her the very best as she continues to pursue her graduate studies at MTSU.

Trustee Eisenberg provided the following comments: "I would like to thank everyone for all their guidance and wisdom over this past year. This has been an incredible opportunity to learn from everyone, both administration and Board Members, and serve alongside you. As I talked to Dr. McPhee on numerous occasions, I am so grateful that he took the chance on me to be a true representative of all our vastly diverse student body. However, I really feel I would be remiss to consider myself a true representative if that didn't include advocating for all of our students, including those that come from backgrounds different than mine. I've talked to you all earlier in one of our previous meetings about how I thank campus security for making me feel safe while being so far away from home, but not all of our student body are fortunate enough to feel the same. As leaders of this campus of the Middle Tennessee area, it is our job to listen to the needs

of our black students and make it a priority that they feel that same sense of safety and belonging here that we do. MTSU is incredibly fortunate to have such influential and generous leaders on our Board and in our administration. And I know many of you have strong relationships with our governor, legislators, and council members. I want to take these last few moments as your student voice to urge and encourage you to speak with your colleagues and our leaders regarding these important issues. I have reached out to both current and former black student leaders and asked them what we can do to help resolve these issues for their campus community, and they provided so many great ideas, that I would not be able to do them justice here today if I would list every single one of them. But I do want to highlight some of their very feasible points. I have always taken pride in how concerned we are with our student experience, and the constant innovation in how we improve it each year. It is crucial to use those motivations to evaluate the black student experience as well and innovate on their behalf.

1. We need to make African American history count toward the general education history requirement. Most students come out of our high school already having courses in American and Tennessee History, with that curriculum not including much of black history. This has already been done with English, and we need to acknowledge that black history is a valid educational topic to supplement the education they already have and meet this general requirement.
2. We need to go further than acknowledging the history of racism at MTSU and we need to continuously teach it and address it. New students and members of the community are coming on to campus all the time, and by not keeping this conversation open and discussing how we are actively working to remedy these sentiments, we are creating a sense of uneasiness in the black community.
3. We need to actively work at diversifying our faculty. MTSU student population is about 20% black and we have less than 10% black faculty members. We also need to allow our minority staff to review our curriculum for cultural competency to be sure we aren't continuing to perpetuate the problematic systems in place.
4. We need to hire a separate black Chief Diversity Officer to address issues facing minorities on campus that only a person of color could truly understand.

5. One topic that is always of concern to the Board is our sports programs. We are comprised of a substantial number of black student athletes and we cannot expect the best out of these athletes if they cannot rely on their leaders to support their needs. With them in mind I ask you to utilize your platform and influence in the Greater Nashville area to make space for the voices that have been silenced for generations and actively listen and work to remedy the struggles they are facing.

You all work incredibly hard to make sure our University is at the top of its game and provide the best experience possible. As your colleague and ally, I ask that we listen to our black community and be sure that they are included when we make these important decisions. All 50 of our states and 18 other countries are fighting to ensure that the black voice is heard and MTSU has the chance to embody that change. I have enjoyed my time with you all, more than words can fully express, but as my last request, I ask that we do not contribute to these problems with our silence and make sure to keep MTSU on the right side of history.”

Chairman Smith and Dr. McPhee thanked Trustee Eisenberg for doing a wonderful job. Dr. McPhee stated that he listened carefully to her remarks made on behalf of the students she represents. He stated that during the last two years a climate survey was done on campus, and he has met twice a semester with a multi-cultural group students. Some of the same themes Trustee Eisenberg shared were also expressed during those meetings. Dr. McPhee acknowledged that there are issues on the MTSU campus, as on other campuses, and stated that he and his staff are committed to having conversations that will lead to actions in the coming year. He stated that he is listening and will continue to take steps to make this campus welcoming for all students.

Trustee Freeman thanked Trustee Eisenberg for her remarks. He thanked her for her concern, and for providing some guidance and direction on what needs to be done to make sure everyone feels comfortable in the campus environment. He stated that he feels comfortable the Board will take some of those actions moving forward.

Dr. McPhee gave a summary of the selection process for Student Trustee. This process was managed by the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs, and the Student Government Association. Applications were submitted to the SGA office and, once applications were received, recipients were sent a confirmation email. The SGA Executive Board reviewed the applications and selected applicants to be interviewed. Those applicants were then notified that they were being considered. After the interviews were conducted, the Vice President for Student Affairs and the SGA identified three finalists and sent their applications to the Office of the President. Dr. McPhee personally interviewed the top three applicants. As a result of this process, Ms. Delanie McDonald is recommended as the next Student Trustee. Ms. McDonald was born in Carthage, TN, and homeschooled all of her life. As an undergraduate student, she attended MTSU as a Buchanan Fellow, the top academic scholarship at the University, and obtained a Bachelor of Science in Public Relations with minors in Communications, graduating with an honors degree. She was involved in SGA all four years as secretary, senator, Executive Vice President, and President. She also served on the President's Cabinet, as a Blue Elite Tour Guide, Student Orientation Assistant, and was a member of dozens of University Committees. Ms. McDonald recently graduated Summa Cum Laude and is now pursuing a Masters degree in Higher Education Administration and Supervision. Dr. McPhee stated that she is passionate, driven and has all the characteristics of what it means to be True Blue. He welcomed Ms. McDonald to the Board.

Chairman Smith also welcomed Ms. McDonald and asked for a motion to accept the recommendation of Ms. Delanie McDonald as the fourth Student Trustee. Motion was made by Trustee Wright and seconded by Trustee Karbowiak. A roll call vote was taken. The motion approving Ms. Delanie McDonald as the new Student Trustee passed anonymously.

Trustee McDonald stated she has known and worked with the previous Student Trustees. She stated that it is an honor to join them and to try to fill their shoes over the next year. She expressed her excitement in continuing to work as a voice of the students at the University and thanked the Board for giving her the opportunity.

Report of the President

Dr. McPhee referenced the information session the Board held on May 27, the committee meetings held on June 2 and the many communications sent to the campus that were copied to the trustees, and stated he wanted to provide a brief update about recent actions and activities.

Residence Halls

Following the guidelines of the CDC and the American College Health Association, MTSU announced the decision to reduce density in the residence halls by making every room a private room. Dr. McPhee stressed that student safety and health is the top priority. This will reduce the housing capacity from 2,973 students to 1,908 students for AY 2020-21. Priority will be given to freshmen living away from home for the first time and out-of-state students in assigning those limited housing spaces. The usual private room surcharge will not be charged for these private assignments. Upperclassmen are being encouraged to consider accommodations in the nearby apartment complexes which generally offer apartment designs very similar to Scarlett Commons, MTSU's on-campus apartment complex.

August Commencement

August Commencement ceremonies in Murphy Center were cancelled due to ongoing concerns regarding COVID-19. Dr. McPhee acknowledged that this is an enormous disappointment, not only to the August graduates and the many May graduates who intended to participate in the summer celebration, but also to their family members and friends. However, the first and greatest priority continues to be the health and safety of the university community. It was determined that it would not be prudent to gather together thousands of attendees at this time. The August graduates will receive the signature MTSU True Blue Graduation Box, similar to the ones given to May graduates. A virtual graduation ceremony will be held as it was in May.

Convocation

The annual Convocation ceremony is the cornerstone of the fall opening activities where new students are welcomed into the MTSU community and a message is delivered by the author of the summer reading book. The same public health issues impact this year's Convocation as are impacting August Commencement, preventing the gathering in Murphy Center to celebrate the beginning of the year in traditional fashion. Dr. McPhee explained that there is a plan to accomplish the goals of Convocation through a creative alternate format. More information will be provided regarding how to watch and participate in these alternate activities closer to the scheduled date.

Other Good News

Even with the distraction of the ongoing pandemic, great things are still happening at MTSU:

- MTSU Honors College students continue to receive national and international scholarship awards. The National Science Foundation has awarded two graduate research fellowships to MTSU graduates Jessica Shotwell, who is studying sociology at the University of Maryland at College Park, and Samuel Remedios, who is studying computer science at Johns Hopkins University.
- For the first time, MTSU Creamery milk was sold at the Main Street Murfreesboro Saturday Market and it sold out. The Creamery will participate all summer at the market, which will operate from 8 a.m. to noon every Saturday through Sept. 26, joining about 50 other vendors.
- From the College of Media and Entertainment, Media Arts Professor Bob Gordon is preparing an increase of Media Arts' Sports Productions for ESPN. Dr. Gordon and his students will be preparing for about 40 live games this semester. The ESPN liaison has recognized MTSU as having one of the best college live production operations in the country.
- TopMarketingCompanies.com ranked the Marketing program in the Jones College of Business as the #12 ranked in the country.

Potential Testing Center / Commissioner of Health

Dr. McPhee, with the MTSU executive team and medical staff, met with the State Commissioner of Health and her medical staff regarding the possibility of placing a COVID-19 testing site at either Miller Arena or the Bell Street Center. The Commissioner's Office will conduct a site visit and discuss additional logistics. The site would potentially serve MTSU students, faculty, and staff, as well as, citizens in this area.

Enrollment

As of June 15, enrollment for Fall 2020 new first-time freshman and new transfer enrollments are down slightly, about 4%. Undergraduate returnees are up 1%. Graduate enrollment is up 33% and new graduate enrollment is up significantly, topping 80%. Overall total enrollment is up 1.1% which equals 172 students over the same time last year. Dr. McPhee gave credit to the advisors, deans and faculty, and particularly Dr. Deb Sells and her colleagues in Admissions and Recruitment.

Budget Update

The Senate passed the Governor's amended budget and sent it to the House. The House passed its own version of the budget which differed from that of the Senate. Dr. McPhee explained that this means that the next step is a conference between the House and the Senate to develop a consensus budget. Despite all the challenges relating to the budget, higher education was held harmless from the 12% reduction that is being required of all state agencies. However, both budgets removed all new funding for higher education including funding for salary increases. Increases were initially 2.5%, then in March were cut to 1.5%, now it's 0% for any increases. With the funding formula reduction and the lack of salary increases, this equates to \$3.5 million in operating funds and \$1.7 million in salary funding for MTSU. If the University had been required to withhold 12%, this would have amounted to between \$18 million and \$19 million.

Dr. McPhee complimented THEC Executive Director Mike Krause and his colleagues for their advocacy with the Governor's Office to hold the universities harmless. This status came with the expectation that institutions continue their commitment that tuition and fees remain at current

levels, with zero increase. This as a positive for higher education; however, the University is still exploring initiatives to increase efficiencies and identifying reallocations that may be required to fund any new initiatives consistent with the mission and the positioning of the University as it continues to grow.

White House Round Table Discussion

Dr. McPhee stated that he received a call from the Office of the Vice President of the United States of America, Vice President Mike Pence. During that call, Dr. McPhee was invited to be part of a working group of university presidents at the White House to participate with the Vice President and the federal government at a round table discussion regarding strategies of re-opening institutions of higher education. They had heard that MTSU was one of the institutions that took the initiative to announce its reopening in the fall and they are following news reports from MTSU about how the pandemic is being handled. Dr. McPhee expects the meeting at the White House to occur within two weeks.

Dr. McPhee ended his report by thanking faculty and staff who faced an incredible challenge during the past four months, keeping an institution of this size - 3,000 faculty and staff and 22,000 students - running effectively and efficiently. Dr. McPhee explained that two town hall meetings have been held for faculty and staff. He emphasized that everyone is working to keep the campus safe for all employees and students. He noted that Phase I of bringing employees back to campus started on June 16. There will be three phases of moving back to campus and the situation is being carefully monitored.

Dr. McPhee thanked the Board for their continued engagement and involvement with the campus.

Concluding Remarks

Chairman Smith stated that prior to the beginning of the fall semester, there will be some type of Board event held on campus. He expressed appreciation for Cameron Sexton, Speaker of the House, who asked the Commissioner of Health to get in touch with Dr. McPhee. He

acknowledged the many challenges being faced and expressed appreciation for Vice President Mike Pence and Senator Alexander for their commitment to make the campus safe.

Adjournment

Chairman Smith adjourned the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heidi Zimmerman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "H" and "Z".

Heidi Zimmerman

Board Secretary