



# THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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## MINUTES OF THE FALL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES October 13, 2023

The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees met at 2:45 p.m. (ET) on Friday, October 13, 2023. The meeting was held in the Pilot Company Ballroom of the Student Union located at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Trustees Present: John C. Compton, Board Chair; Bradford D. Box; Charles Hatcher, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Agriculture; Decosta E. Jenkins; Shanea A. McKinney; Christopher L. Patterson; William (Bill) C. Rhodes III; Donald J. Smith; David N. Watson; T. Lang Wiseman; and Woodi H. Woodland (Student Trustee).

University Officers in Attendance: President Randy Boyd; Cynthia C. Moore, Board Secretary and Special Counsel; Chancellor Steve Angle (UT Chattanooga); Chancellor Peter Buckley (UT Health Science Center); Chancellor Yancy E. Freeman (UT Martin); Interim Chancellor Linda Martin (UT Southern); and Chancellor Donde Plowman (UT Knoxville). Other members of the UT senior leadership and administrative staff were also in attendance.

Ms. Moore announced the presence of a quorum. The meeting was webcast for the convenience of the University community, the general public, and the media.

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### **Opening Remarks by the Chair**

Chair Compton opened the meeting and welcomed Steve Moldrup, Co-Director of the Collegiate Abbey at UT Knoxville, who provided the invocation. Chair Compton began his remarks by remembering UT President Emeritus Joseph "Dr. Joe" Johnson, who passed away at the age of 90 on September 29, 2023. In recalling Dr. Joe's many contributions to the University over the course of his career, Chair Compton credited him with being the architect of the UT System. He called for a moment of silence in memory of Dr. Johnson.

Chair Compton offered his thanks to the members of the University team who assisted with the preparations for the September 20, 2023 Sunset Hearing before the Education, Health and General Welfare Joint Subcommittee of the Government Operations Committee. He noted, in particular, the efforts of Cynthia Moore, Board Secretary and Special Counsel, and Brian Daniels, Chief Audit and Compliance Officer, in preparing a detailed response to the Sunset public hearing questionnaire.

### **Requests to Address the Board**

Chair Compton introduced four individuals who registered to address the Board. A summary of the speakers' comments is attached hereto as [Attachment 1](#). He thanked the speakers for bringing their concerns forward to the Board. As many of the comments addressed the shortage of rental

units and/or the cost of housing in Knoxville, Chair Compton recognized their concerns. He pointed out that the Consent Agenda that will come before the Board later in the meeting does contain a resolution to approve the construction of new on-campus student housing on the UT Knoxville campus. If approved, this development will add an additional 1,900 beds to UT Knoxville's housing inventory. Chair Compton added that the Board, the UT System, and UT Knoxville are continuing to work toward adding more on-campus housing.

### **Appointment, Initial Compensation, and Other Terms of Employment of University Officer**

President Randy Boyd reminded the Board that at the Winter Meeting held on February 24, 2023, the Board approved a resolution appointing Dr. Keith Carver to serve as Senior Vice Chancellor and Senior Vice President of the UT Institute of Agriculture (UTIA) for two years. President Boyd stated that over the past six months, Dr. Carver has excelled in leading UTIA, garnering support from the University community, as well as external constituents, community leaders, and government officials. The action before the Board would allow Dr. Carver to continue to serve in this role and remove the limited nature of his initial appointment. Dr. Carver's qualifications, recommended compensation, and other terms of employment were included in the meeting materials under Tab 1.

Upon recommendation of President Boyd, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved the appointment of Dr. Keith S. Carver Jr., as Senior Vice Chancellor and Senior Vice President for UTIA (*Resolution 070-2023*).

### **Committee Reports**

Audit and Compliance Committee. Committee Chair Decosta Jenkins discussed highlights of the Committee meeting held earlier in the day, which included updates on: (i) institutional compliance efforts at the University; (ii) athletics compliance programs for UT Chattanooga, UT Knoxville, UT Martin, and UT Southern; and (iii) Title IX. There were no action items to come before the Committee.

Education, Research, and Service Committee. In light of the absence of Committee Chair Jamie R. Woodson, Dr. Bernard Savarese, Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs, Research, and Student Success, provided an overview of the action items being brought forward for the Board's approval as set forth on the consent agenda. The Committee also heard presentations on: (i) recent steps intended to strengthen the University's position in a competitive enrollment environment; (ii) updates on the University's research enterprise and the UT Research Foundation; (iii) and a progress report on the strategic enrollment planning efforts. Following Dr. Savarese's report, Chair Compton presented new Student Trustee Woodi H. Woodland with the official Board of Trustees lapel pin.

Finance and Administration Committee. Committee Chair Rhodes provided highlights from the Committee's meeting that morning, including: (i) a report on the University's financial performance for Fiscal Year 2023, compared to Fiscal Year 2022; (ii) an update on the Enterprise Resource Planning Project, which is both on schedule and on budget; and (iii) a presentation on the annual UT System Workforce. Mr. Rhodes concluded his report by advising that the Committee

is recommending seven items, which were included on the Consent Agenda, for consideration and approval by the Board (as presented in the meeting materials under Tab 2.5).

Upon recommendation of Chair Compton, and without objection from any members of the Board, the Board considered the seven agenda items as a single action. Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board of Trustees unanimously approved: (i) 2024-25 Operating Budget Appropriations Request for Specialized Units; (ii) Public Private Partnership (P3) for Student Housing at UT Knoxville; (iii) Updated Board Policies (Statement of Treasury Policy and Statement of Investment Policy); (iv) Report on Uses of Fiscal Year 2023 Tuition and Fee Revenue; (v) Acquisition Easement at Clyde Austin in Greeneville, TN (UTIA); (vi) Disposal Easement to Greeneville Energy Authority (UTIA); and (vii) the proposed naming of the new School of Nursing Building at UT Chattanooga as the “Dorothy and Jim Kennedy Health Sciences Building” (*Resolutions 071-2023 through 078-2023*).

### **President’s Address**

Prior to calling on President Boyd for his address, Board Chair Compton reminded all those present that for the five years that President Boyd has served in that position, he has declined to take a salary, has not sought reimbursement for any expenses, and has continued his charitable giving to various projects across the University. Further, the Trustees and senior leadership team, including President Boyd, complete and submit annual conflict of interest disclosure forms that are thoroughly examined. Chair Compton noted that following review, no conflicts of interest or perceived conflicts have been identified with respect to President Boyd. Chair Compton expressed his gratitude to President Boyd for the many ways in which he has worked to advance the University, as well as the greater Knoxville community.

President Boyd began his remarks by expressing his gratitude to the members of the University community for the work they do to ensure the success of the University. He also thanked Governor Lee and the members of the State legislature for the overwhelming financial support provided to the University. President Boyd contrasted the support that the University receives to that of other public institutions across the country, which struggle with a lack of public support that has caused multimillion-dollar deficits in their budgets and severe cuts to their academic programs. He credited the State’s ongoing support to the extraordinary work being done by the faculty, staff, students, and leadership teams across the UT System.

President Boyd extended his words of appreciation to the Board of Trustees for their service to the University and to the state of Tennessee. President Boyd observed that there is a spirit of collegiality that extends from the Board through the entire UT System. He noted that across the country, one can find examples of boards and administrations that are at odds with each other. He also noted that the leaders of some higher education systems feel siloed and isolated from other member campuses, which is not the case at the UT System. President Boyd then moved into his formal remarks, which followed the five pillars of the UT Strategic Plan.

Enhancing Educational Excellence. Enrollment across the UT System grew by 4.8% over the prior year. Over the last 5-year period, total enrollment has seen a 13.8% increase, with the UT Knoxville campus having enrollment growth of over 20%. During that same five-year period, the six-year and four-year graduation rates increased by 3.8% and 3.1%, respectively.

President Boyd pointed out that while media reports often decry the cost of pursuing higher education, the University has been working to ensure affordability and access. Indeed, over the last five years, if taken as an average, tuition increases across the UT System amounted to only a 1% increase per year. The University is also addressing affordability and access by raising the financial eligibility threshold for the UT Promise and implementing a new Guaranteed Admissions Policy.

The University's efforts to grow student enrollment play a pivotal role in achieving the State of Tennessee's Drive to 55\* initiative to expand the state's skilled workforce. When President Boyd assumed office, he learned that when compared to its peers in the Southeastern Conference (SEC), UT Knoxville ranked 14<sup>th</sup> out of 14 in terms of enrollment growth over a ten-year period and had the slowest growth of any SEC school. The UT System has worked to turn those numbers around, with enrollment applications increasing across all campuses led by UT Knoxville, which saw applications for Fall 2024 rise by 70% (with increases of 39% for in-state applicants, 98% for out-of-state applicants, and 75% for applicants of color). Additionally, applications for the Fall of 2024 rose by 16% for UT Chattanooga, 30% for UT Martin, and 17% for UT Southern. President Boyd offered his thanks and congratulations to the Chancellors and admissions teams across the UT System for their dedication in increasing student demand and enrollment.

Expanding Research Capacities. Over the last five years, the University has seen research dollars grow by 27.7% and is working to increase that number even further. One component of growing research is working with partners, such as the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). The University also partners with Tennessee State University (TSU), the state's other land grant institution, particularly in the area of agriculture research. Joint grants and grant applications total approximately \$100 million, and the two institutions are discussing other partnership opportunities. President Boyd believes that UT and TSU are more closely aligned than many other land-grant universities in the country and are working to build an even stronger relationship.

Fostering Outreach and Engagement. President Boyd stated that the University collaborates with its local and state partners to help address the grand challenges facing Tennessee. He highlighted a number of recent initiatives designed to improve the lives of those living in rural communities, including: (i) establishing the Rural Disability Resource Network, a state-wide collaborative network designed to address the problems of access to and awareness of disability services faced by families with children who have intellectual and/or developmental disabilities; (ii) expanding rural health care access in Tennessee via the UT Health Science Center mobile health unit; and (iii) addressing the shortage of nurses in Tennessee, particularly in rural communities, through academic initiatives such as the recently approved joint Bachelor of Science in Nursing programs at UT Health Science Center and UT Southern.

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\* A state initiative to raise the percentage of Tennesseans with college degrees or certificates to 55% by 2025.

The University continuously seeks to align its programs with the workforce needs of the state. Most recently, President Boyd, UT Knoxville Chancellor Plowman, and UT Chattanooga Chancellor Steve Angle traveled to Germany to meet with the University's partners at Volkswagen to discuss workforce development, apprenticeship programs, and research partnership opportunities. UT Martin Provost Philip Cavalier regularly meets with members of Ford Motor Company to discuss workforce needs at Ford's Blue Oval City development. Finally, the UT Health Science Center supplies many of the doctors, residents and other students working at Regional One, the UT Medical Center, and other partner hospitals.

Workforce and Administrative Excellence. President Boyd noted that to continue to excel, it is essential to have a strong leadership team. He thanked the Board for approving the appointments of Dr. Keith Carver, as Senior Vice Chancellor and Senior Vice President of UTIA, and Dr. Yancy Freeman, as Chancellor of UT Martin (the role previously held by Dr. Carver). He also noted that Dr. Stephen Streiffer has been selected to serve as the next Director of ORNL.

As discussed at the Finance and Administration Committee, for the second consecutive year, the University has earned certification as a Great Place to Work.<sup>TM</sup> President Boyd is proud of the fact that, this year, 74% of UT employees rated the UT System as a great place to work, which is 17 points higher than the average U.S. company. In addition, 84% of employees feel good about the ways the UT System contributes to the community and an equal percentage take pride in telling others they work for the UT System.

Advocating for UT. President Boyd briefly discussed several advocacy programs and initiatives used to advance the University:

- **Public Relations/Visibility:** The soon-to-be launched Value of Higher Education Campaign, a partnership between UT and the state's locally governed public institutions, to raise awareness of the importance of pursuing higher education. The "Everywhere You Look, UT" campaign now has 51 murals in 47 counties, and President Boyd hopes to see murals painted in all 95 counties across Tennessee.
- **Legislative Outreach:** At a Special Legislative Session on public safety held in August, the legislature approved \$30 million in funding to improve safety and security at the State's higher education institutions. President Boyd thanked Carey Whitworth and her team in the Office of Governmental Relations and Advocacy for their work on this important funding issue.

The University will work to advance a number of other initiatives in the next legislative session, including: (i) more funding for campus safety and security initiatives; (ii) funding for major capital projects; and (iii) additional recurring funds for the UT Health Science Center, as well as developing a funding formula for UTHSC that is similar to that used for other UT campuses.

- **Fundraising.** Financial support from the University’s alumni and friends is essential to ensuring that this is the greatest decade in the University’s history. To date, the University has raised more than \$1.235 billion toward the University’s \$3 billion goal, which would top the last campaign which reached \$2.245 billion.

President Boyd concluded his report by offering his own tribute to Dr. Joe Johnson, whom he considered to be a good friend, a great mentor, an inspiring University president, and a force for advancing higher education in Tennessee. Dr. Johnson devoted over 40 years of his career to the University, serving in a number of positions, before ultimately leading the University as its President. Dr. Johnson is credited with creating both the Tennessee Higher Education Commission and the UT System, as well as the partnership with UT-Battelle to manage ORNL. President Boyd fondly recalled Dr. Johnson’s ability to make everyone feel special through his positive, caring attitude and his personal letters.

### **Consent Agenda**

In introducing the Consent Agenda, Chair Compton announced that the Annual Report to the General Assembly is not yet finalized and will be provided to the Board once it is completed. He also called special attention to the proposed naming of the new School of Nursing Building at UT Chattanooga, which if approved, will be known as the “Dorothy and Jim Kennedy Health Science Building.” Chair Compton expressed his thanks to the Kennedy Family for their exceptionally generous gift of \$8 million that will be used to address the acute shortage of nurses in the region.

Chair Compton asked if there were any requests to remove any items from the Consent Agenda. There being none, upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board approved: (i) the Resolution to adopt the minutes of prior meetings of the Board, and (ii) the Resolutions pertaining to the other action items included on the Consent Agenda. (A complete list of the approved items appears at the end of these minutes.)

### **Closing Remarks and Adjournment**

In his closing remarks, Chair Compton expressed his thanks to Senior Vice Chancellor and Chief Financial Officer David Miller and his team for their efforts to ensure that the UT System maintains a healthy balance sheet and sufficient reserves in the event the University faces financial challenges in the future. He also thanked Dr. Savarese and the University Chancellors and their campus colleagues for the work they have done to increase the student success measures across the System.

With no further business to come before the Board, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/Cynthia C. Moore

Cynthia C. Moore

Secretary and Special Counsel

## Approved Consent Agenda Items

- Items from the Finance and Administration Committee
  1. 2024-25 Operating Budget Appropriations Request for Specialized Units
  2. Public Private Partnership (P3) for Student Housing at UT Knoxville
  3. Updated Board Policies (Statement of Treasury Policy and Statement of Investment Policy)
  4. Report on Uses of Fiscal Year 2023 Tuition and Fee Revenue
  5. Acquisition Easement at Clyde Austin in Greenville, TN (UTIA)
  6. Disposal Easement to Greeneville Energy Authority (UTIA)
  7. Proposed Building Naming (UTC)
- Items from the Board of Trustees
  1. Minutes of Prior Meetings (Annual Meeting of June 30, 2023, and Special Meetings of July 14 and September 8, 2023)
  2. 2024 Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule
  3. Annual Report to the General Assembly
- Items from the Education, Research, and Service Committee
  1. Ratification of Administrative Action to Terminate or Inactivate Academic Programs
  2. Proposed New Academic Units and Unit Modifications
    - Department of Performing Arts, UTC
    - Department of Engineering Management and Technology, UTC
    - Department of Data Analytics, UTC
  3. Proposed Academic Program Modifications
    - CIP Code Change for Ph.D. in Plant, Soil, and Environmental Sciences, UTK
    - CIP Code Change for Master of Architecture, UTK
    - CIP Code Change for Bachelor of Architecture, UTK
  4. Grant of Tenure upon Initial Appointment

*(See Resolutions 071-2023 through 088-2023)*

## Informational Items

- Annual Report – University of Tennessee Foundation
- Annual Report – University of Chattanooga Foundation

## Attachments

Copies of the following materials were shown or distributed at the meeting and are filed with the official minutes of this meeting.

- President's PowerPoint Presentation: Igniting the Greatest Decade

## Attachment 1 - Summary of Speaker Remarks

- Constance Every, an alumnus of UT Knoxville (2013) and Knoxville resident, addressed the Board regarding what she views as alleged conflicts of interest between President Boyd's service to the UT System and his private business affairs and relationship with the City of Knoxville. The speaker also discussed the housing shortage and level of homelessness in Knoxville.
- Eve Shaw, a fifth-year doctoral student in the Department of Mathematics at UT Knoxville, addressed the Trustees on behalf of graduate students at the University. The speaker noted (i) the budgetary issues faced by many graduate students given the costs of living, health care, and housing in the City of Knoxville, and (ii) that under the current Family and Medical Leave policy, if a graduate student goes on leave, they can lose their stipend and health care insurance. The speaker relayed personal accounts of graduate students describing how financial stress is impeding their studies and/or teaching/research responsibilities, particularly if they have to seek employment outside of their position at the University. In conclusion, the speaker requested that the Board support (i) increasing the minimum stipend for nine-month graduate contracts to at least \$24,000/year, with guaranteed annual cost of living increases; and (ii) raising the hourly wage for facilities workers to at least \$20/hour.
- Adama Ba, an alumnus of UT Knoxville (2011) and a Knoxville resident, addressed the Board regarding the impact that enrollment growth at UT Knoxville is having on affordable housing in the city, particularly in North Knoxville. The speaker noted that rents have risen to such an extent that many residents must vacate their homes. He noted that the median income in Knoxville is \$38,000, which makes it difficult for residents to afford monthly rents that have risen to \$1,500 or more. The speaker asked the Board to carefully consider the impact of enrollment growth at UT Knoxville on residents of the city and to find ways to provide additional on-campus housing for undergraduate and graduate students.
- Patrick Clemens, a graduate student in Environmental Sociology at UT Knoxville, echoed the earlier comments regarding graduate student stipends and the lack of affordable housing in the City of Knoxville. The speaker reiterated that many graduate students: (i) do not have adequate Family and Medical Leave protection; (ii) are working multiple jobs outside of the University and taking on student debt; and (iii) are suffering from food insecurity forcing them to turn to food banks and/or seek assistance from the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The speaker also asked the Board to support raising the stipend for nine-month graduate contracts to at least \$24,000/year, with annual cost of living increases and guaranteed Family and Medical Leave.