

TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

Minutes of the Fall Quarterly Meeting

Senate Hearing Room 1

Cordell Hull State Office Building

November 7, 2019

Link to recording:

<https://www.tn.gov/content/tn/thec/about-thec-tsac/commission-members0/commission-meetings/fall-2019-commission-meeting.html>

Vice Chairman Vernon Stafford called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Member	PRESENT	ABSENT
Chairman Evan Cope		X
Commissioner Nancy Dishner	X	
Secretary Tre Hargett	X	
Commissioner Jimmy Johnston	X	
Commissioner Pam Koban		X
Treasurer David Lillard	X	
Commissioner Sarah Morrison	X	
Commissioner Jay Moser		X
Commissioner Vernon Stafford	X	
Commissioner Celeste Riley	X	
Commissioner Frank Watson	X	
Commissioner AC Wharton	X	
Comptroller Justin Wilson	X	
Commissioner Dakasha Winton	X	

At the start of the meeting, there were ten members present, constituting a quorum. Comptroller Wilson arrived the meeting at 10:58 a.m., which raised the count to 11 members.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Secretary Hargett, made a motion to move agenda items VII, VIII and IX to the beginning of the agenda and Commissioner Dishner seconded it. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF JULY 25, 2019 MINUTES

Secretary Hargett, made a motion to amend the minutes from July 25, 2019, Commissioner Wharton seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairman Cope could not attend the meeting on this date, but Chairman Stafford addressed the group on behalf of Chairman Cope.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT: Director Krause provided his report.

AGENDA ITEMS

VII. 2020-21 Operating State Appropriation Recommendations (Action Item)

Chairman Stafford recognized Crystal Collins, THEC Director of Fiscal Policy, who presented the 2020-21 State Operating Appropriations recommendations for higher education. Ms. Collins discussed the overall funding recommendation for the outcomes formula units, specialized units, strategic initiatives, statewide system priorities, THEC agency requests, and the Tennessee Student Assistance Award. Ms. Collins concluded her presentation by expanding the discussion of the funding requested for the specialized units and statewide system priorities.

Chairman Stafford asked a specific question about the cumulative change in appropriations at Southwest Tennessee State Community College. Ms. Collins indicated that although Southwest still trails where it began in 2010-11, the last two years have seen increases in funding. Commissioner Winton asked a follow-up question about interventions at struggling institutions. Ms. Collins discussed previous investment in the Institutional Outcome Improvement Fund grant program as well as campus visits to help institutions better understand the formula. After a final summary of the total operating appropriations recommendation, Commissioner Wharton moved for approval, with a second from Commissioner Winton. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with 9 ayes and 1 abstention by Comptroller Wilson.

VIII. 2020-21 Student Fee Recommendations (Action Item)

Chairman Stafford recognized Dr. Steven Gentile, THEC Chief of Fiscal Policy, who presented the 2020-21 Student Fee Recommendations. Dr. Gentile reviewed the 10-year history of tuition and fee growth by sector in Tennessee and discussed the assumptions used to determine the staff recommendation of zero to two percent, specifically student affordability, enrollment and inflationary patterns, and the recommendation of \$38 million to fund the Outcomes-Based Funding Formula and an estimated two percent salary increase. Commissioner Watson stated the need to have no further tuition growth and that he disapproved of any recommended increase. Secretary Hargett directed staff to communicate with the administration and the General Assembly—in official transmission of the Commission recommendation—how much additional state support is needed to keep tuition increases at zero percent. Commissioner Johnston spoke to the audience, stating that the recommended range has continued to narrow over the years and that institutional leadership should anticipate the trend moving forward. In response, Commissioner Johnston made a motion to approve the zero to two percent increase with a second from Commissioner Wharton. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with 9 ayes and 1 nay by Commissioner Watson.

IX. 2020-21 Capital Projects Recommendations (Action Item)

THEC staff presented and recommended 8 capital outlay projects totaling \$310 million for approval. In addition, 73 itemized capital maintenance projects totaling \$150 million, and one special initiative project of \$5 million for Tennessee State University, were submitted for approval. Disclosed projects of revenue-funded projects totaling \$195.2 million were submitted for approval. Additionally \$55.8 million for TSSBA bonds were disclosed. All capital outlay, capital maintenance, and disclosure projects (attached) were approved for submittal in the State budget for FY20-21. Secretary Hargett made a motion to approve the Capital Projects recommendations with a second from Commissioner Dishner. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with 9 ayes and 1 abstention by Comptroller Wilson.

I. Postsecondary Education Authorization (Action Item)

Chairman Stafford recognized Dr. Stephanie Bellard Chase; she stated that the Committee on Postsecondary Educational Institutions (CPEI) recommended that reauthorization be granted from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 as follows: 40 institutions for regular authorization, 3 institutions for temporary authorization and 2 institutions for conditional authorization. She also stated that CPEI recommended temporary authorization for 8 new institutions, approval of 9 new programs for 7 institutions, and 37 institutions for optional expedited authorization (OEA).

Dr. Bellard Chase also provided a brief explanation of Optional Expedited Authorization or OEA, as created by the Higher Education Authorization Act of 2016.

Items 1-30 and 32-40 were voted on as one item after a motion by Secretary Hargett with a second by Treasurer Lillard. A voice vote was conducted and the motion passed unanimously. Item 31 was voted on separately after a motion by Secretary Hargett with a second by Commissioner Dishner. A voice vote was conducted with 9 ayes and 1 abstention from Commissioner Wharton.

II. Policy Manual Revision – Repeal of Obsolete Public Records Policy (Action Item)

Brett Gipson presented agenda item II, a revision to the THEC Policy Manual repealing Policy LR6.0 Public Records. In 2016, the enactment of Public Chapter 722 required all government agencies to adopt a written public records policy. The Commission approved such a policy on May 11, 2017. In 2018, the enactment of Public Chapter 712 required agencies to go a step further and promulgate administrative rules to replace the previously adopted policies. The Commission adopted such rules on May 17, 2019. The Attorney General's Office examined the Rules as to their legality and approved them on July 5, 2019. The Rules received a positive recommendation from the Joint Government Operations Committee of the General Assembly on September 18, 2019, and became effective October 15, 2019. The staff recommendation was to repeal Policy LR6.0 Public Records and remove it from the THEC Policy Manual. Commissioner Dishner made a motion to repeal the policy with a second from Commissioner Winton. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

III. Recommendations for Appointments to the Advisory Board for Historically Black Colleges and Universities Success (Action Item) HBCU Success Update:

Chairman Stafford recognized Dr. Brittany Mosby, who gave an update on the successful implementation of Summer Bridge programs at American Baptist College, Fisk University, Lane College, LeMoyne-Owen College, and Tennessee State University. The programs served 350 students, which represents almost 20% of the Tennessee HBCU freshman class of 2023 and summer-to-fall retention has been reported above 90% at each institution participating in the program, compared with a national average of 67% or less. Dr. Mosby also gave an update on the Summer Bridge Symposium that THEC hosted on October 24, 2019, the TN H.I.R.E. internship placement program that was successfully launched in the summer of 2019, the Executive-in-Residence program, which has rotated to American Baptist College, and a planning update on the second Joint HBCU Day on the Hill.

Advisory Board Appointment:

Dr. Mosby also presented Agenda Item III, a recommendation for the appointment of members to the Advisory Board for HBCU success. Tenn. Code Ann. §49-7-217(f) allows for the creation of the board, which may provide recommendations and guidance to the Commission in the following areas:

- Improvement of the identity, visibility, and distinctive capabilities and overall competitiveness of HBCUs;
- Engagement of the philanthropic, business, government, military, homeland security, and education communities in a dialogue regarding new HBCU programs and initiatives;
- Improvement of the ability of HBCUs to remain fiscally secure institutions that can assist the state in reaching its educational goals;
- Elevation of the public awareness of HBCUs; and
- Encouragement of public-private investments in HBCUs.

The board shall be appointed by the Commission and include representatives of a variety of sectors, including philanthropy, education, business, finance, entrepreneurship, innovation, and private foundations, as well as sitting HBCU presidents. The list of individuals recommended by THEC staff for appointment to the board was provided in the Commission meeting materials. The HBCU presidents will serve as ex-officio members of the advisory board.

Commissioner Winton made a motion to approve the appointments with a second from Treasurer Lillard. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. New Academic Programs (Action Item)

A. Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), Data Science, Bachelor of Science

One academic program was presented for approval by the Commission, a Bachelor of Science in Data Science at MTSU. Dr. Julie Roberts introduced Dr. Mark Byrnes, the Provost at MTSU, who presented the program to the Commission for their approval.

Dr. Byrnes explained the development and goals of the proposed Bachelors of Science in Data Science program. The program was developed as an interdisciplinary course of study that allows students to learn the skills needed to manage the increasing volume of data, decipher meaning from data, and articulate strategies based on the analysis of data for agencies and organizations in a variety of fields. The program is projected to have high enrollment and meet identified business needs in the State of Tennessee. Commissioner Dishner made a motion to approve the program with a second from Commissioner Johnston. The Commission unanimously approved the Bachelor of Science in Data Science program at MTSU.

Regarding new program development, Mr. Krause informed the Commission that they should expect an update from THEC staff regarding streamlining the new academic program approval process at the January Commission meeting.

V. TBR Community Colleges: Mission Profiles (Action Item)

Dr. Russ Deaton presented on Agenda Item V, TBR Community Colleges Mission Profiles. TBR recognizes the importance of institutional mission profiles, as they are called for in the Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010 and reiterated in the FOCUS Act of 2016. Across all public institutions in Tennessee, these profiles are important to several public policy issues, including the outcomes-based funding formula, campus Strategic Plans, and as a guide for the Commission as it considers new academic program approval. TBR staff worked with campus presidents to develop the profiles, incorporating several principles into each of them.

First, is that the foundation of each profile is TBR's open access mission. As the only public system in Tennessee charged with this mission, TBR opens its doors to students of every background, income, demographic, preparation level, and life circumstance. TBR does not screen or impose admission criteria on students once they have completed high school or the equivalent. The system serves all Tennesseans, and that Open Access mission is central to its identity.

Each college profile is infused with this Open Access mission, and specific student populations that the college serves which help define that institution's identity. The profiles emphasize the makeup of each school, who it serves, the types of programs it offers, and importantly, its geographic area of responsibility which includes off campus centers and sites.

Each profile includes data that can be easily updated annually that provide a snapshot of the college, giving the reader a high level sense of the profile of each institution.

These profiles have a consistent structure across the 13 community colleges and have been reviewed by TBR staff. They were approved at the September TBR quarterly meeting.

Secretary Hargett made a motion to approve the TBR Mission Profiles, which was seconded by Commissioner Wharton. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

VI. Columbia State Community College Master Plan (Action Item)

Executive Director Mike Krause introduced Dr. Janet Smith, President of Columbia State Community College, who presented their Master Plan. Mr. Woody Giles assisted with the presentation.

Commissioner Wilson made a motion to approve the Columbia State Community College Master Plan, which was seconded by Commissioner Johnston. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

System and LGI Reports

Tennessee Board of Regents – Dr. Russ Deaton provided his report.

University of Tennessee –David Miller provided his report.

Locally Governed Institutions- Dr. Brian Noland provided his report.

Adjournment

Chairman Stafford adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

NEXT THEC COMMISSION MEETING:

Friday, January 31, 2020 at 10 a.m. CT in Nashville

THEC Chairman Evan Cope

THEC Secretary AC Wharton, Jr.