
Executive Committee Minutes

Trustees Present:

John Davis, Chair Kelley Minty Vince Jones
Jeremy Brown Nagi Naganathan (*ex officio*)

Trustees Unable to Attend:

Celia Núñez
Fred Ziari

Other Trustees in Attendance:

Phong Nguyen Kanth Gopalpur Stefan Bird

University Staff and Faculty Present in person:

Abdy Afjeh, Vice Provost Research & Academic Affairs & Interim Dean of ETM
Erin Foley, Vice President of Student Affairs & Dean of Students
Ken Fincher, Vice President University Advancement & Interim Board Secretary
David Groff, General Counsel
John Harman, Vice President Finance & Administration
Kimberly Koops, AVP of Government Relations
Michelle Meyers, Director of Audit and Compliance
Alicia Dillon, AVP Business Affairs
Beverly McCreary, Assistant Vice Provost of Faculty Relations
Joanna Mott, Provost & VP of Academic Affairs
Adria Paschal, Senior Executive Assistant to the President
Bryan Wada, Information Technology Consultant 2
Lori Garrard, Executive Assistant to VP of University Advancement

1. **Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum** *Chair John Davis*
Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 10:04 am. The Board Secretary called roll, and a quorum was declared.
2. **Consent Agenda** *Chair John Davis*
 - 2.1 Approve Minutes of the January 26, 2023, and March 17, 2023 Meetings

No changes voiced. Minutes approved as submitted.

3. Reports

3.1 Government Relations Update *AVP of Government Relations Kimberly Koops*

- **AVP Koops** shared her background with the committee.
- **AVP Koops** discussed the legislative sessions and Oregon Tech's priorities, including the Public University Support Fund, Oregon Opportunity Grant, and other funding opportunities.
- **AVP Koops** shared information on notable state bills that are being tracked that are applicable to Oregon Tech and higher education.
- **Trustee Davis** asked **Koops** to talk about the status of the budget discussion in the legislature. **Koops** advised that the governor has come out with her proposed budget, which was a cut for higher education. The co-chair's budget has been made public and includes a reduction from the current service level. She emphasized how critical it is for Oregon Tech to advocate for a higher funding level. **Chair Davis** asked about the budgetary timeline, and **Koops** advised we should hear something in late May or early June.
- **AVP Koops** discussed Oregon Tech's specific priorities in the legislature, including an \$18 million bonding request for emergency geothermal system renovations, \$15 million for technical and regional university sustainability, and the 75th Anniversary resolution.
- **AVP Koops** advised that our "take home" priority is the geothermal emergency renovation request. Geothermal is a defining aspect of Oregon Tech that needs to be repaired and continued. The governor's budget did not include any capital projects for higher education, so this project is taking a unique path for approval. It does not fit into the HECC rubric to score the project, and advised to take it to the legislature. Community partners and internal Oregon Tech stakeholders have submitted many letters of support.
- **AVP Koops** advised that there have been several tours of the Portland Metro campus to legislators and frequent visits by **President Naganathan** to the legislature. Members of the Board including Chair Davis have also presented testimonies.
- Upcoming Lobby days: TRU Day 5/4/2023, Polytechnic Pride Day 5/23/2023.
- **AVP Koops** talked about SB273, which expands the governing board of public universities to 16 members. She shared details of the proposed bill.
- **AVP Koops** shared additional topics that have been put before the federal and state legislatures on behalf of Oregon Tech.

4. Discussion Items

4.1 Faculty Senate Resolution *Chair John Davis*

- **Chair Davis** provided background information regarding the resolution regarding the attrition of faculty at Oregon Tech.
- **President Naganathan** stated that with the pandemic, there have been significant changes to the workforce. Hiring faculty continues to be a priority in the provost's office.
- **Chair Davis** affirmed that attrition and retention of faculty are essential to the Board of Trustees. There were four points specifically asked in the resolution. They include:
 - Amend the strategic plan or academic master plan that faculty retention at Oregon Tech is a serious problem and needs addressed
 - That the Board of Trustees need to work with senior administration and the senate wellness committee for formal and consistent exit interviews

- Calling on senior administration to collaborate on a health index
- Calling senior administration to participate in regular open forums led by the faculty senate.
- **Trustee Brown** stated there was a comprehensive presentation regarding the issues and observations. The resolution seems to conflict with the materials shared by senior administration, specifically in comparing Oregon Tech to other universities.
- **VP Harman** advised that Oregon Tech does have an exit interview process that is voluntary.
- **Trustee Brown** stated that this is an opportunity to think about faculty staffing and have a further conversation. Oregon Tech seems to have a lot of tenured faculty, percentage-wise, compared to other institutions. **Trustee Brown** asked if Oregon Tech should continue to add faculty to a degree program that is declining in popularity or if they should invest in a new academic endeavor.
- **Trustee Nguyen** advised he currently sits on six search committees. They are for regular classes that are required. He stated that the requests in the resolution are legitimate and the issues need to be addressed. The appropriate parties need to communicate and devise a solution to the issues.
- **Trustee Brown** added that we cannot just hire faculty because someone left. Oregon Tech needs to review the current programs and prioritize manning.
- **President Naganathan** stated we must be vigilant for the short and long term. He noted that the total enrollment is down, and we must be mindful of which programs need staffing. **Dr. Beverly McCreary** stated that she is working with the faculty senate and human resources to work on the concerns raised. They are working to track workload to help understand how best to shift faculty [capacity] to fill the needs.
- **Chair Davis** acknowledged that enrollment is everyone's issue and is essential to the vitality of the university. Students must be put first, and students have stated to him that faculty grievances are bleeding into the classrooms, which is not the appropriate platform for discussion. **Chair Brown** noted that this is creating an unhealthy culture for the retention of students and faculty. Oregon Tech needs to create a more cohesive environment for everybody.

5. **Other Business/New Business**

None

6. **Adjournment:** 11:14 am

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Ken Fincher

Vice President University Advancement & Interim Board Secretary

Handwritten text, possibly a signature or date, located in the lower right quadrant of the page.