
EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE BOARD – less faculty, staff, and student (12:15pm – 12:30pm)

The Board met in Executive Session per ORS 192.660(2)(f) and ORS 40.225 Rule 503 to consider information or records that are exempt by law from public inspection and to have confidential communication subject to attorney-client privilege.

Board of Trustees Meeting MINUTES

Trustees Present:

Jessica Gomez, Chair	Vince Jones, Vice Chair	Nagi Naganathan, President
Jeremy Brown	Rose McClure (in person)	(in person)
Lisa Graham	Kelley Minty Morris (in person)	Mike Starr
Tim Hasty (in person)		Michele Vitali
Kathleen Hill		

Trustees Unable to Attend:

Jill Mason	Paul Stewart	Fred Ziari
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University Staff and Faculty Present:

Abdy Afjeh, Vice Provost Research and Academic Affairs
Jolyn Dahlvig, Associate Dean of Students
Ken Fincher, VP Institutional Advancement
Erin Foley, VP Student Affairs and Dean of Students (in person)
David Groff, General Counsel (in person)
John Harman, VP Finance and Administration (in person)
Zach Jones, TOP Program Director
Don McDonnell, Medical Imaging Technology Professor (in person)
Travis Miller, Information Technology Consultant (in person)
Joanna Mott, Provost and VP Academic Affairs and Strategic Enrollment Management (in person)

Students Present:

Peter Wantuck	Mason Wichmann	Isaac Shephard
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Others Present:

1. Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum

Chair Gomez called the meeting to order at 1:16pm. The Board Secretary called roll and a quorum was declared.

2. Reports

2.1 President

President Naganathan reviewed the PowerPoint presentation included in the agenda report. He stated the collective bargaining agreement with Oregon Tech's faculty union was ratified on May 17, 2021. He reviewed the purpose of the campus culture assessment: to ensure our organizational culture is aligned with stakeholders' expectations and needs and that it positions the university to meet its objectives. He explained a committee representing campus and community stakeholders is working on the procurement process. The goal is to have the assessment work, which could include surveys, focus groups, interviews, analysis of policies and procedures and review of archival data, occur during fall term with a presentation of the consultant's report to the Board during winter term, and implementation immediately following. He noted House Bill 2472 (Oregon's Polytechnic University designation) was approved by the Senate and is moving back to the House. He gave updates on student programs, Green Zone training, and facility and capital projects. He reviewed student accomplishments, faculty accomplishments, and athletic highlights.

2.2 ASOIT

President Wichmann reported that KF ASOIT approved changes to the election bylaws, upgraded the website, and are working on annual officer transitions. He stated all positions except the Clubs Officer are filled and that Bries Landis is the incoming president.

President Wantuck reported PM ASOIT is finishing up answering questions that were asked during the strike in addition to working with KF ASOIT to unify internal documents to create an overall constitution. Each ASOIT would then have individual detailed documents addressing the uniqueness of each campus. He noted that the group is wrapping up the hiring for its vacant positions. This is the last meeting for both presidents.

2.3 Administrative Council

Co-Chair Jones listed the elected leaders of the Council and reviewed recommendations and feedback, included in the written agenda report, from the pulse-check survey that the administrative council administered. He noted 94 of 130 administrative employees responded to the survey. The purpose of the report is to identify issues that the administration and board might not see or be aware of.

2.4 Strategic Enrollment Management

Provost Mott reviewed the figures in the agenda report. She is hopeful there will be a 5-10% increase in freshmen and transfer students. She noted high school freshman GPA is the highest it has been in 5 years.

2.5 Faculty Senate

Faculty Senate President McDonnell stated faculty senate is looking to get its differences behind it and focusing on the recommendations of the Academic Standards Committee for the transition of Senate now that the union exists. The transition discussions will be important to determine future Senate duties and its purview. The bylaws, charter and constitution will also be reviewed. The last time the documents were reviewed it took approximately one academic year to complete. Faculty have been making good use of the high-flex classrooms; the rooms have enhanced the student learning experience. He acknowledged the chemistry professors who have taken the lead on planning the move of chemistry lab equipment and chemicals to the temporary lab in CEET. He noted that he would not apologize for the remainder of the report and that he is not a confrontational person and had to edit the report because he was confrontational

the first time he wrote it. He stated course coverage during the strike was not as seamless as students were assured by senior administration. Many students found themselves without faculty for a few days and some had no professors at all. In some cases, the adjuncts were not qualified to teach the material. He gave examples of issues that occurred: a marine ecologist was hired to teach a computed tomography course; major Canvas shell disruption created confusion for students causing them to perform tasks that were not intended; opening of all quizzes and exams exposed faculty test-question banks; using faculty intellectual property in other faculty shells (administration took videos from one shell and put them into other shells; this was faculty work that was not done on the clock; it was off-contract work that this faculty did); changing quiz/test/assignment scores; and changed canvas dashboard pictures – creating confusion for the students and extra work for faculty to clean up the incompetence of the adjunct instructors. At this point the union contract is ratified and he is sad to say that faculty are angrier than ever due to the slanderous messaging from the president's office put out to the students and the community during the strike. The messaging that went out left some community members wary of faculty leading to some faculty feeling uncomfortable when they are in public. We are beyond the point of reconciliation. Faculty's trust of senior administration is non-existent due to their lack of trust, collaboration, communication, transparency, inclusiveness, honesty, and integrity. He stated during the 2018 academic year, Casa Grande Consulting, LLC was contracted by the Provost at the time to summarize observations and recommendations of the academic shared governance at Oregon Tech. The number one recommendation was: "continue work to nurture an institutional culture of effective shared governance that manifests in a two-way symmetric fashion: trust, collaboration, communication, transparency, inclusiveness, honesty, and integrity." The results of this study were not shared with the university community and the poor shared governance practices continue. Over the past two years faculty senate conducted two faculty surveys that resulted in matching data points. Faculty senate then conducted a vote of no confidence with an 8% approval rating of the president. Simultaneously, faculty senate made multiple attempts to work with the president, to no avail. Faculty senate also expressed concerns to the board regarding the lack of shared governance and deteriorating faculty morale, neither has been looked into by the board. Now faculty find the university spending more money for a third-party independent study on campus climate. The RFP for the study will not be completed until the last day of school which indicates that the study will not be conducted until fall term as most faculty will not be under contract for the summer. This means that this uncomfortable relationship will be carried into next academic year. As a heads up, many faculty and unclassified staff, have developed plans for leaving Oregon Tech should this hostile environment not be resolved. The university has already hemorrhaged good faculty and staff due to the loss of job satisfaction. He stated he loves and has been dedicated to the university. He is an alum, a donor to the foundation, and a professor. He has donated his time, labor and experience to Oregon tech and is saddened to say that he, too, has developed an exit plan despite his strong desire to retire from the university. Faculty have expressed their level of confidence in the president and have lost faith in the board of trustees due to the apparent lack of effort to address any of the faculty concerns over the past years. In attempt to carry a message back to faculty he stated he had a few questions that are not rhetorical. He asked, "With the lack of past results how can faculty trust that the board will do anything different?" **Secretary Fox** explained there is no discourse with the Board at this time as they simply listen to the reports. **Faculty Senate President McDonnell** requested, but did not demand, the board

provide a written response to the questions that he will provide to the Board Secretary. He asked, “Should you proceed with the third-party evaluation what will you do with the results? At what level of dissatisfaction will you take action? What type of action are you considering? What is your estimated timeline?” He stated right now faculty is in the dark. He noted the Senate Executive Committee drafted and sent a letter to offices of Governor Brown and Senator Dembrow to request their input regarding this situation. **Faculty Senate President McDonnell** stated Senator Dembrow did not endorse a third-party consultant; however, he stated if the university chooses to do so he recommends getting a strong firm with university experience. **Faculty Senate President McDonnell** asked how faculty can be confident that this will happen being that Dr. Naganathan will be selecting the firm.

2.6 **COVID-19** – written report in the agenda packet

2.7 **Legislative** – written report in the agenda packet

2.8 **Foundation** – written report in the agenda packet

2.9 **Academic Quality and Student Success Committee**

Trustee Brown summarized the reports and presentations made at the meeting. He reviewed the two items on the consent agenda requesting the board make recommendations to the Provost’s Council for an online offering for surveying and a graduate certificate in medical family therapy.

2.10 **Finance and Facilities Committee**

Vice Chair Jones summarized the FOAC and VPFA reports including updates on capital projects. He noted the committee approved the Internal Audit Plan for fiscal year 2021-22.

2.11 **Executive Committee**

Chair Gomez shared that the committee recommended the Governor reappoint Trustee Vitali for a full term to the Board.

3. **Consent Agenda**

3.1 **Approval of the Minutes of the April 8 and April 20, 2021 Meeting**

3.2 **Recommendation of Approval to the Provost’s Council to Offer a BS in Surveying Online**

3.3 **Recommendation of Approval to the Provost’s Council to Offer a Graduate Certificate in Integrated Behavioral Healthcare and Medical Family Therapy**

Trustee Minty Morris moved to approve the consent agenda. **Trustee Graham** seconded the motion. With all trustees present voting aye, the motion passed unanimously.

4. **Discussion Items**

4.1 **July 15-16, 2021 Board Retreat**

Secretary Fox explained that the 2020 board retreat was cancelled due to COVID and prohibitions on gathering in-person. Staff is requesting direction on the preferred modality of the 2021 retreat. Discussion regarding benefits of meeting in-person and concern for

traveling and meeting in-person. **Consensus to plan the July 15-16 board meeting and retreat as in-person events.**

5. Action Items

5.1 Approval of the 2021-22 Fiscal Year All Funds Budget

VPFA Harman reviewed the PowerPoint presentation included in the agenda report. He explained the Oregon Higher Education Funding model, FY 2022 higher education funding, funds not included in the FY 2022 operating budget, budget assumptions, budget development principles, budget development process, and the budget summary. He confirmed the budget was developed with the collective bargaining agreement in mind.

Trustee McClure voiced her concern that additional funding might be needed for additional adjuncts given the workload changes in the CBA. **VPFA Harman** stated two weeks ago we had 47 positions advertised but we do not have an exact count for people looking to retire this year. He noted auxiliary budgets, which are usually cost-recovered, were not reduced based on the information received from student affairs and academic affairs. There was discussion regarding the estimated dollar amount for salary recapture. A request was made to have future Discussion occurred regarding increasing revenues from sources other than tuition and looking for opportunities as a result of the pandemic.

Vice Chair Jones moved to adopt the proposed Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget, including all fund types, as recommended by the President and as outlined in the agenda report. Trustee Starr seconded the motion. With all trustees present voting aye, the motion passed unanimously.

6. Other Matters

Trustee Starr noted there seems to be a disconnect and he is looking for constructive ways for the university to be more aligned. He stated it seems like the university is doing amazing things and the students are succeeding but something is amiss given the report from the senate president.

Vice Chair Jones stated he appreciates the positive financial situation and the amount of progress and improvements made on the campus.

Trustee Graham is optimistic that we can build on the innovative classrooms to benefit faculty and students, she appreciates the balanced budget conversations and is impressed with the students' performance in spite of the hurdles of last year.

Trustee McClure stated there are wonderful people and things happening at the university and she is proud of her students. She explained that the elephant in the room is the board now has a data set from administrative council that is similar to faculty senate's information, and we have a lot of work to do to fix the divide.

Trustee Hill stated change always brings a negative reaction. She noted Oregon Tech has been around for a long time, with a certain culture, and people were used to doing things a certain way and there has been a lot of change in the last several years. She feels badly that so many people are disappointed in the trustees but she feels good about the commitment the trustees

have and how thoughtful the trustees are about students, faculty and staff and where the university is headed. She appreciates the different opinions and noted being aware of them is the only way to address issues.

Trustee Vitali stated she is pleased with the financial health and audit plan for the university. She was surprised by the faculty senate report and understands there are still some things that need to be addressed and she is trusting of the process that it will be resolved through increased communication.

Trustee Minty Morris suggested the Chair reach out directly and have one-on-one conversations to discuss the role of the trustees and the commitment of the trustees.

Trustee Brown noted we need to be mindful of patching the wounds from the negotiations and recommended the trustees talk introspectively about why there are people who think specific things about the board and what the trustees can do to combat those thoughts rather than just say “they don’t understand what we do.” He suggested looking more toward the future and should ask how we can be more successful and bolder because of the pandemic and the change in enrollment patterns, and how can we be more successful and capitalize on our position to take better advantage of the things we have to offer on a larger scale.

Chair Gomez stated part of the job of trustees is to be strategic and guide the university into the future. There is a lot of uncertainty, but she is excited to get to a point where we can move forward and heal. She acknowledged that negotiating was a difficult time and it will take time to decompress and determine how to move forward in a healthy way. She has ideas on what might be helpful and will start working with the president to see what the opportunities are to improve communication and our culture. She stated that this is a collective responsibility – of faculty and staff - to help heal the rift. She explained that we need to recalibrate and acknowledge that we are all working hard and trying to do the best thing for Oregon Tech. She encouraged everyone to remember that we are in this together, there is a lot of work to do but there are opportunities and we are in a position to take advantage of them

President Naganathan is committed to do as many right things as possible. He believes the board’s direction to conduct an assessment will facilitate constructive conversations.

7. **Public Comment** - none

8. **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 3:58pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Fox
Board Secretary