

OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
655 Research Parkway, Oklahoma City

MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE
Wednesday, September 8, 2021

1. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF FILING OF MEETING NOTICE AND POSTING OF THE AGENDA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN MEETING ACT.** The Committee-of-the-Whole met at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, September 8, 2021 in the Regents Conference Room at the State Regents' offices in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Notice of the meeting was filed with the Secretary of State on September 3, 2021. A copy of the agenda had been posted as required by the Open Meeting Act.
2. **CALL TO ORDER.** Participating in the meeting were Regents Jack Sherry, Courtney Warmington, Jody Parker, Ann Holloway, Dennis Casey, Jeff Hickman, Michael C. Turpen, and Steven Taylor. Regent Hickman called the meeting to order.
3. **HIGHER EDUCATION DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD.** Chancellor Glen D. Johnson and the State Regents presented House Appropriations and Budget Subcommittee on Education Chair Mark McBride with the Higher Education Distinguished Service Award for his support during the 2021 legislative session and thanked him for his service. Representative McBride provided remarks.
4. **COVID-19.** Chancellor Glen D. Johnson introduced Dr. Johnny Stephens, Interim President of OSU-Tulsa and Interim President of the OSU Center for Health Sciences, and Dr. Dale Bratzler, OU's Chief COVID-19 Officer and OU Health's Chief Quality Officer.

Dr. Stephens began by providing a brief overview of the State's numbers positivity numbers, hospitalization numbers, and vaccine numbers, both across the state and by county. He provided current data on by region and at OSU's campuses and discussed the measures that the university has taken. He discussed the services that the campus provides, noting that they would be promoting the booster vaccines for the community once they were available. He mentioned that OSU's facilities have been utilizing RestoreAir in the larger classrooms and were looking at ways to utilize the latest technologies on their campuses. Dr. Stephens stated that they were going to start implementing the Healthy Together app that OU has been using and he also discussed the planning that is currently underway for the Spring 2022 semester.

Dr. Bratzler began by stating that the day's numbers are down, which is encouraging, though he added that health experts will be closely watching numbers in the coming weeks to see the impact of Labor Day activities. He then discussed the challenges that healthcare workers have faced during the pandemic. Dr. Bratzler highlighted a study that discusses what has made this current surge so difficult to control. He discussed that hospitalization is greatly reduced in those who are fully vaccinated, but that vaccinated people can still become infected which is why it remains important to wear masks in indoor settings. He also discussed the Mu variant, noting that it was present in 49 states and that health officials are watching it carefully. Dr. Bratzler then discussed OU's protocols, mitigation efforts, and health services available for students.

5. **STEM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT.** This item was taken out of order after the Higher Education Distinguished Service Award. Chancellor Johnson provided background on the State

Regents' allocation of \$12.9 million in FY22 for initiatives to increase the production of pre-engineering and engineering graduates at Oklahoma colleges and universities with the ultimate goal of being able to produce 3,000 more engineers each year. Chancellor Johnson introduced Dean of the College of Engineering, Architecture and Technology at Oklahoma State University Dr. Paul Tikalsky.

Dr. Tikalsky presented an update to the State Regents on engineering initiatives at state system institutions. He stated that Oklahoma has a growing aerospace and defense economy and discussed the pipeline for creating engineers, noting that it needs to be a systemwide approach including partnerships with CareerTech centers, community colleges, and thR1 institutions. He then discussed some of the STEM programs available at state system institutions, the difficulties with recruiting and retaining qualified staff, and the industries that are served by STEM graduates. Dr. Tikalsky, Dr. Lyn Kent from Tulsa Community College, Dean Ryan Stoddard from Rose State College, Dean Max Simmons from Oklahoma City Community College, and Dr. Vincent Bridges from Oklahoma City Community College concluded by discussing the partnerships with CareerTech centers and community colleges, the STEM camps that are available to students, and addressing some of the issues they have had with the flow of students.

6. **ONENET.** OneNet Executive Director and Higher Education Chief Information Officer Von Royal provided an update on OneNet's 25 years of service to Oklahoma's researchers, schools, higher education institutions and their provision of high-speed internet services. He discussed the history of OneNet, the various partnerships that OneNet has, and how they provide their services. Mr. Royal added that through working with the Office of Management and Enterprise Services and other state agencies, OneNet has been able to provide a level of service and see a cost savings of close to \$6.2 million annually. He stated that OneNet is a member of Internet2, a computer networking consortium, The Quilt, a national collaboration consortium of state networks, and is a member of the Great Plains Network. Mr. Royal concluded by discussing OneNet's next steps in advancing technology on campuses.
7. **FUNCTION CHANGE/MISSION EXPANSION.** Chancellor Glen D. Johnson provided background to the Function Change/Mission Expansion moratorium, noting that at the State Regents' meeting on June 24, 2021, the State Regents voted to end the moratorium on institutional requests for function change or mission expansion and to establish a process by which such requests could be made.

Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Debbie Blanke discussed the draft process for review of these requests with the State Regents. She stated that the Academic Affairs staff first looked at how other states handle this process and then used that information to help them draft their proposal. Dr. Blanke discussed the requirements that institutions would need to submit in order for their requests to be considered, as well as the tentative timeline for these actions. She noted that one significant change to this process is the involvement of the requesting institution's governing board and their review of the request. She discussed the process for review and analysis, explaining the rubric for review that would be used and noted that there could be possible site visits if deemed necessary.

Regents stated that in regard to the review, they would prefer for the Academic Affairs Committee to further vet the process before it is recommended to the full board. Regents added that after requests have gone through the Academic Affairs Committee, they would prefer to have presentations done by the requesting institutions at the Committee-of-the-Whole meeting so in order to have time to discuss the request and ask questions before taking action.

8. **BUDGET REPORT AND REVENUE UPDATE.** Interim Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance Sheri Mauck provided State Regents with a budget and revenue update. Ms. Mauck began by stating that the July collections (first month of FY22) were up 10 percent above the estimate, representing about \$59.1 million. She stated that individual income taxes were down but corporate taxes were up 230.5 percent and net income taxes were up 2.1 percent. She added that sales tax collections were up 13.3 percent or \$24.4 million. Ms. Mauck stated that in regard to the gross production tax, natural gas collections were up 73 percent for July, which is an encouraging sign for the state. She added that for the institutions, 22 percent has been collected in one month from that revenue source. She then provided an update on CARES money, noting that as of July 31, institutions have reported spending \$261.4 million of the federal stimulus money that was available to them, not just direct allocations but also grants they may have received. Ms. Mauck then updated the State Regents on the schedule for the endowed chairs, adding that OCIA met earlier in the morning to consider the bond resolution. She concluded by stating that if they stayed on schedule, the anticipated closure would be late October or early November and the State Regents will have a use of proceeds agreement presented to them at their October meeting. Regent Taylor then discussed the work that the Investment Committee had done with Mercer to develop a schedule and allocation model for the money that will come from the Endowed Chairs.

Vice Chancellor for Administration Ms. Kylie Smith then provided State Regents with an update on the building lease renewal and an update on moving staff from Building 844 to 655. She stated that the consolidation would create over \$209,000 annually in savings. In relation to the building lease renewal that will be on the State Regents' agenda on Thursday, Ms. Smith discussed the building lease renewal contract that had been negotiated with OUHSC. She concluded that their hope is that the building consolidation will be complete by September 30, 2021.

9. **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE.** This item was taken out of order after the Proposed Executive Session. Dr. Tom McKeon, Governmental Relations and Workforce Development Coordinator, provided State Regents with the legislative update. He began by discussing the Concurrent Enrollment Task Force which was created by Senate Bill 292, describing the purpose of the Task Force and its members. He summarized the presentations that were made and some of the topics that were discussed at the first meeting of the Concurrent Enrollment Task Force on August 25, 2021. He stated that the committee is in place until November 30, 2022 and will then submit its findings and report to the legislature. Dr. McKeon then mentioned interim studies and discussed how OSRHE legislative staff were prioritizing the interim studies. He briefly discussed some of the topics of interest that higher education would have a stake in. He stated that the first interim study that OSRHE would be presenting at would be on September 20. Dr. McKeon concluded his update by discussing the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), with \$3.19 billion available to the State of Oklahoma for investment into projects that will benefit all Oklahomans. Dr. McKeon then stated that there were four working groups, with higher education being part of the Workforce and Economic Development group. He noted that the four working groups held their first meeting on August 25. Dr. McKeon then discussed how higher education could focus on building on areas that the Governor had outlined and how to leverage funding for possibilities. Dr. McKeon stated that the Council of Presidents had formed a task force to begin developing proposals and ideas for the state system. Dr. McKeon then discussed the ARPA proposal process.
10. **TASK FORCE REPORTS.**
 - a. **Online Education Task Force.** This item was taken out of order after the Budget and Revenue Update. Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs Debbie Blanke began by stating that they had a summer planning retreat and an OER summit is tentatively planned for later this fall to work on open educational resources. She stated

that membership renewals went out and they are hoping to have full membership once again. Dr. Blanke then discussed a virtual reality toolkits that the Council on Online Learning Excellence and OneNet are working on with four institutions – Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Rogers State University and the University of Central Oklahoma. She added that they received a grant from the American Association of Colleges and Universities and Open Educational Institute to learn how to have faculty develop open resources so that students will not have significant textbook costs. She added that once they are developed they will be open to all institutions and they will be targeting course equivalency. She concluded by discussing work on a proctoring managed contract.

- b. **State Regents Campus Safety and Security Task Force.** Associate Vice Chancellor for Communications Angela Caddell provided an update on the Campus Safety and Security Task Force. She began by stating that the Campus Safety and Security Summit which was originally scheduled for November 1, was moved to a virtual event this year after discussions with presidents. She discussed ongoing work with some of the summit partners to structure their content plan for virtual delivery. Ms. Caddell added that they are anticipating holding the virtual summit kickoff and keynote address on the originally scheduled date of November 1 and that all presenters are willing to present virtually. She said the plan is to hold one to two concurrent workshops per day through the month of November. She stated that in a virtual environment they have to take a different approach, but that they have the advantage of cost savings from not having facilities or catering and that by moving to virtual, they are able to offer the event free of charge with as more campus staff in attendance than if they were in-person. She concluded by stating that the next task force meeting will be Wednesday, November 3.

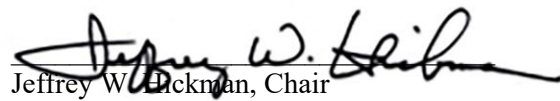
11. **PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION.**

- a. This item was taken out of order after the item on Function Change/Mission Expansion. Possible discussion and vote to enter into executive session pursuant to Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 307(B)(1) to discuss the employment of Matt Stangl as General Counsel; and pursuant to Title 25, Oklahoma Statutes, Section 307(B)(4) for confidential communications between the board and its attorneys concerning Knox v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, CJ-2020-2383, Oklahoma County District Court, and concerning U.S. Department of Education – Office of Civil Rights Complain No. 06032021, regarding Langston University-Tulsa, if the board, with advice of its attorney, determines that disclosure will seriously impair the ability of the board to process the claim or conduct a pending investigation, litigation, or proceeding in the public interest. Regent Parker made a motion, seconded by Regent Casey to enter executive session for confidential communications between the board and its attorneys concerning pending investigations, claims, or actions. Voting for the motion were Regents Sherry, Warmington, Parker, Holloway, Casey, Hickman, Turpen, and Taylor. Voting against the motion were none.
- b. Enter into executive session.
- c. Open session resumes.
- d. Vote to exit executive session. Regent Taylor made a motion, seconded by Regent Parker to exit executive session. Voting for the motion were Regents Sherry, Warmington,

Parker, Holloway, Casey, Hickman, Turpen, and Taylor. Voting against the motion were none.

12. **“BEST OF HIGHER EDUCATION.”** Regents received the September 2021 update on institutional activities via e-mail on Tuesday, September 7, 2021.
13. **CALENDAR OF EVENTS.** The calendar of events was distributed in written form to the Regents.
14. **ADJOURNMENT.** With no other items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:


Jeffrey W. Hickman, Chair


Steven W. Taylor, Secretary