

MINUTES
TENNESSEE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION
January 28, 2010, 1:00 p.m. CDT

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jack Murrah at 1:00 p.m.

Commission Members present:

Ms. Sue Atkinson	Mr. Ross Rowland
Mr. Charles Bone	Mr. Robert White
Mr. Cato Johnson (via teleconference)	Mr. Justin Wilson
Mr. David Lillard	Ms. Katie Winchester
Mr. Jack Murrah	

Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Murrah thanked everyone for their attendance and welcomed guests to the meeting. He then called for a motion to adopt the meeting agenda. Ms. Katie Winchester made a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Robert White seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

Approval of Minutes, November 19, 2009 Meeting

Mr. Murrah called for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2009, Commission meeting, with technical adjustments. Mr. White made a motion to approve the minutes with adjustments. Mr. Cato Johnson seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

Systems' Reports

University of Tennessee

Mr. Murrah recognized Dr. Jan Simek, Interim President of the University of Tennessee, to present his report. Dr. Simek discussed the recently enacted Complete College Tennessee Act. He stated that some faculty members had reservations regarding curricular issues and noted that meetings were held with them to clarify the legislation. He stated UT is committed to the Complete College Tennessee Act. Dr. Simek then discussed the UT partnership with the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and stated that it will greatly enhance the UT Knoxville research efforts. He then discussed the collaboration with the Memphis Research Consortium and the UT Health Science Center to enhance medical research in the state. In closing, Dr. Simek discussed the need to increase the number of graduates at UT campuses.

Tennessee Board of Regents

Dr. Charles Manning, Chancellor, Tennessee Board of Regents, was recognized to present his report. He began by commenting on an economic development meeting held the day before and commented on the reported decrease in state revenue and the impact on higher education. He then discussed the provisions of the recently passed legislation regarding higher education reform, with

respect to transfer policies and developing a more unified community college system.

Chairman's Report

Mr. Murrah commented on the productive work session earlier in the day. He stated that Tennessee higher education is in the best policy environment but worst funding environment, with opportunities to address the situation set forth by the Governor and legislature with the new legislation. Mr. Murrah then commended the THEC staff for their work providing leadership and assistance with the Governor's committee on the new legislation. He pledged the commitment of THEC to fully implement the Complete College Tennessee Act.

Executive Director's Report-THEC/Tennessee Student Assistance Corporation

Dr. Rhoda was recognized to provide his report. He began his report by commenting on the new legislation. He stated many challenges will be faced and that staff will take the lead in the implementation of the Act and be supportive of the systems in their efforts. Dr. Rhoda then called on Mr. David Wright to give a brief update on the Making Opportunity Affordable initiative. He gave an overview of the MOA and updated the Commission on recent activity. Mr. Wright then noted Ms. Christine Luce has taken the position of MOA Implementation coordinator and Ms. Taya Owens has assumed the position of research and planning analyst.

Dr. Rhoda then discussed the status of Lambuth University; he noted that Lambuth has obtained a letter of credit, is current on payroll, and continues on SACS probationary status. Dr. Rhoda next commented on the Tennessee Institute of Public Health and its transfer to East Tennessee State University College of Public Health, noting that the current board will continue to serve. In closing, Dr. Rhoda briefed the Commission on a meeting with the US Department of Education regarding the direct lending program and the challenges states will face with its implementation. He advised that TSAC staff was working closely with campus financial aid offices concerning the transition.

Action Items

Temporary Authorization of New Institutions and Approval of New Programs Under the Postsecondary Authorization Act

Dr. Stephanie Bellard-Chase, Assistant Executive Director for Postsecondary School Authorization, presented the recommendations of staff and the Postsecondary Education Authorization Advisory Committee to grant temporary authorization to proposed new institutions and new programs. A listing of the institutions and programs is included as Attachment A to the official copy of the minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Charles Bone to adopt the recommendations as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. David Lillard. There being no further discussion, Mr. Murrah called for a vote on the motion that was duly adopted.

Mr. Murrah led a brief discussion of efforts to more fully disclose outcomes of authorized institutions, such as student completion and placement.

October 31 Revised Budgets, 2009-10

Mr. Vaden reviewed the FY 2009-10 revised operating budgets for higher education, summarized on Attachment B to the official copy of the minutes. Ms. Winchester made a motion to approve the staff recommendation on the revised 2009-10 October 31 operating budgets, which were submitted by the University of Tennessee and Tennessee Board of Regents for consideration by the Commission, and that staff be authorized to transmit the Commission's action on the revised budgets, along with the appropriate commentary, to the Commissioner of Finance and Administration for review and approval. The motion included the provision that Dr. Rhoda be granted the authority to make technical and other necessary adjustments as appropriate. Mr. White seconded the motion. After discussion, Mr. Murrah called for a vote on the motion, which was duly adopted.

Tennessee Technological University Master Plan Update

Mr. Vaden noted that the plan update had been presented at the worksession earlier in the day. He stated that the plan provides a comprehensive guide for the future growth and development of the TTU campus with short, medium and long range visions focusing on development areas for student housing, the science complex, and athletics. Mr. Vaden stated that the TTU Campus Master Plan had been thoroughly reviewed and THEC staff recommends it for approval. Mr. Murrah then called for a motion to approve the TTU Master Plan. Mr. White made a motion to approve. Mr. Bone seconded the motion; the motion was duly adopted.

Information Items

Academic Degree Program Review

Dr. Linda Doran, Associate Executive Director for Academic Affairs, was recognized to present the academic degree program review report, shown as Attachment C to the official copy of the minutes. She stated that the low-producing program review has been an essential quality and cost assessment tool for decades, and noted that a recent change is the low-producing study will be conducted annually; in the past it has occurred at three- and five-year intervals. Dr. Doran stated that the annual review addresses the need to ensure efficiencies in resource allocation for degree programs, responsiveness to changing job markets, and elimination of unnecessary program duplication. The report included the four components of THEC academic program review: (1) new program approval; (2) monitoring of new programs; (3) monitoring of low-producing programs; and (4) on-site evaluation of programs through accreditation or consultant review.

2009 Lottery Scholarship Annual Reports

Mr. David Wright, Associate Executive Director of Policy, Planning, and Research, was recognized to present the 2009 Lottery Scholarship Annual Report. Mr. Wright gave an overview of the annual legislative report, detailing the postsecondary outcomes of scholarship recipients from the program's inception Fall 2004 through Fall 2009, by select student demographic and academic characteristics. He stated that this year's report includes information on two important measures of postsecondary success -- graduation rates and the numbers of scholarship recipients earning degrees, as well as program overview and recipient demographics. The report also included data on scholarship renewal and enrollment behavior of students who forfeited the scholarship; college retention and graduation; and student enrollment choices and institutional freshman class academic profiles since creation of the lottery scholarship.

Mr. Wright also discussed the lottery-funded Wilder-Naifeh Technical Skills Grant Program, which awards \$2,000 to any Tennessee resident enrolled in a certificate or diploma program at a Tennessee Technology Center (TTC). He briefed the Commission on recipient demographics and programs of study; program completion rates for recipients and non-recipients; and student transfer rates from TTCs into Tennessee colleges and universities.

GEAR UP TN Status Report

Ms. Katie Tone, Associate Executive Director for P-16 Initiatives, was recognized to present the status report on P-16 Initiatives and GEAR UP activities. Ms. Tone gave a brief overview of the GEAR UP program and its purpose and goals. She briefed the Commission on grant winter activities, provided an update of the KnowHow2Go grant from the Lumina Foundation, and discussed the progress of the college access awareness campaign. Ms. Tone then recognized Ms. Wendy Tabor to present an overview on media efforts for the GEAR UP TN program. Ms. Tabor reviewed commercials and other outreach efforts being provided to increase awareness of programs available to students and their families to assist with the process of attending college.

Legislative Report

Mr. Murrah recognized Mr. Will Burns, Associate Executive Director of Legal and Regulatory Affairs, to make a report on the status of legislative items. Mr. Burns noted that the regular session had begun and the majority of bills relating to higher education pertain directly to the Lottery Scholarship program.

Spring Quarterly Meeting

Dr. Rhoda advised the Commission that the next meeting of the Commission will be on Thursday, April 29, 2010, in the THEC office.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40.

Approved:

Jack Murrah
Chairman

A C Wharton
Secretary