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## Board of Trustees Minutes

### Trustees Present:

John Davis, Chair	Phone Nguyen	Michele Vitali	Mason Wichmann
Jeremy Brown	Vince Jones	Celia Núñez	Nagi Naganathan ( <i>ex officio</i> )
Kanth Gopalpur	Kelley Minty	Mike Starr	

### Trustees Unable to Attend:

Kathleen Hill

### University Staff and Faculty Present in person:

Abdy Afjeh, Vice Provost-Research & Academic Affairs  
Ken Fincher, Vice President University Advancement & Interim Board Secretary  
Erin Foley, Vice President of Student Affairs & Dean of Students  
David Groff, General Counsel  
John Harman, Vice President Finance & Administration  
Joanna Mott, Provost & VP of Academic Affairs  
Adria Paschal, Senior Executive Assistant to the President  
Bryan Wada, Information Technology Consultant 2

1. **Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum** *Chair John Davis*  
Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm. The Board Secretary called roll and a quorum was declared.
2. **Reports**
  - 2.1 **Fall Census Enrollment Update, Dr. Joanna Mott**  
Chair Davis notes that today is the last day of classes for this term and a discussion on enrollment is topical and that there are a few important action items for the university that will be discussed. He started the meeting sharing that this is an effort to continue the engagement of trustees even more often than the regular board meetings. He reported that many of the board members and administrative staff attended the Oregon Business Summit, and it was a great event and opportunity to meet with many important state leaders in person. Education is a top line discussion topic for the year. Chair Davis also noted that everything printed to be discussed today would be posted on the Oregon Tech Board of Trustees website.

**Provost Mott shared her presentation on the Fall 2022 Census Enrollment Report.**

Provost Mott discussed the fall enrollment census, shared the resident housing numbers, head counts, and the pattern of enrollment. She noted dual credit numbers and that dual credit often does not have a sufficient impact on tuition revenue. Dr. Mott also reviewed the student enrollment by location and by year. Dr. Mott shared a roster of the highest enrolled majors by campus, and our online enrollment numbers. Chair Davis asked where we see trends; Dr. Mott answered it is all over the place and there are some programs that are small and others we need to look at and that this is a question worthy of further discussion as we are able to evaluate the data. Chair Davis asked about the highs, lows, and middles on enrollment. Dr. Mott answered our freshman enrollment is a very strong piece for us, and that is a real strength, our challenge is to retain those students. However, a big drop is shown in the transfer students and work is being done with the community colleges. Chair Davis asked if the transfer “portal” has been strained; Dr. Mott answered it has been down and all Oregon Public Universities that depend on transfer students are suffering and this is not unique to us. Trustee Brown asked about the demographics of the students and is there anything that jumps out at us. Dr. Nagi added that we saw a considerable spike in Hispanic enrollment with our dual enrollment. Trustee Phong asked which major is the highest major at Portland Metro and reported personally that he has noticed significant increase in diversity in his courses on the Portland-Metro campus. He also noted the current Governor and other entities are working to support underserved and it shows in the student population. Trustee Brown shared it would be helpful to see the surrounding states and what majors do we offer that are not offered in those states. How far can we go to recruit and offer programs where there is little to no competition. Trustee Brown perhaps we review two-year program where we could have good opportunities to develop partnership and degree completion programs. Dr. Mott added there are some degree completion programs in dental hygiene and some other majors. Chair Davis asked if at perhaps another meeting we could examine what programs are we actively recruiting for. Dr. Mott agreed. Trustee Ziari asked about engineering majors. Dr. Mott answered that our renewable energy is down in particular. She noted decrease in the number of faculty in that area in the recent past and that we are conducting a cluster hire for the fall. It is one area we are focusing on. Trustee Brown added that after some research on the website, he noted psychology may be morphing into business psychology, and whether we have programs that are appropriately named. Dr. Mott agreed there are programs such as Population Health Management that do need to be reviewed for name change [as they are not well understood]. Dr. Mott reported on retention numbers and retention initiatives. She noted there is an uptick on our retention number, but we are not back to our pre-covid numbers. Trustee Brown commented we should be mindful of the significance of the retention efforts as to whether the retention numbers are significant enough to pay attention to. He added what we are hearing from students that was affecting retention is the offering of classes so they can finish on time. He noted the need for the university to offer a pathway (commitment) for students to finish their program on time. Dr. Mott answered that 2-year schedules posted and are available, and she is working with the advisors and academic leadership to firm up the process.

Chair Davis thanked Dr. Mott and shared with the board that the reason these conversations are taking place now is because enrollment and the President’s Goals are typically discussed at the November board meeting, but that meeting was moved up to October and the final data was not yet available.

### 3.0

#### Action Items

##### 3.1 2022-2023 Institutional/President's Goals, *Chair John Davis*

Chair Davis shared that he and Vice Chair Jones have met and discussed this action items between themselves as well as with President Naganathan. Chair Davis thanked Trustee Jones and President Naganathan for their work in developing the Institutional/President's Goals. Chair Davis shared the positive growth in degrees awarded, and freshman class enrollment. Chair Davis noted the strong job market is a challenge for the university and there is a challenge to be faced concerning the number of college-bound students. President Naganathan noted several 'firsts' at Oregon Tech: the DICE Office; the Climate Assessment; negotiations with the HECC; the faculty union negotiations; regional innovation hub, fundraising, research, and other first initiatives and related accomplishments. Chair Davis added when contrasted with other universities shows budget stability and financial achievements, while creating such results. Trustee Jones added it has been a collaborative effort to develop and work out the goals. From his perspective he asked that we focus on looking at the university's academic programs and our footprint, and as always, our financial condition. He added there are some critical facilities updates that are needed. Trustee Brown added an additional compliment that President Naganathan is still here with us and has chosen to make some difficult and unpopular decisions. Chair Davis added that President Naganathan is the longest serving President of the Oregon Public Universities. He noted how traumatic and disruptive a change of Presidents can be to a university, and how important it is to have stability. He added while we are not being pollyannish, there have been challenges, we have emerged intact. He then asked President Naganathan to present the goals to the Board. President Naganathan summarized the 8 goals for the Board's consideration. The goals relate to accreditation, enrollment growth, facilities planning, research, new degree programs, organizational effectiveness, and a comprehensive capital campaign. These goals all compliment the university's strategic plan. Trustee Gopalpur indicated he liked the goals and asked if there would be mid-year check in reports. President Naganathan answered that every meeting between now and the end of the year a dashboard will show progress on these goals. Chair Davis added that he and Vice Jones meet routinely with President Naganathan to discuss the strategic plan and expectations. Trustee Ziari asked about the two new degree programs and how it compares with the goal of being a polytechnic university and are we working with industry on these degrees. President Naganathan answered that one component will be the relevance to Oregon Tech and there is a process to roll out new programs, and we will work with the Executive Think Tank to assess industry needs. Trustee Ziari agreed it is important to bring it to the board's attention. Trustee Brown asked if the new programs being added will impact enrollment, and will programs be dropped as new ones are added. Also, there has been a lot of talk about Portland Metro and enrollment. He asked what our plan for Portland Metro is, and there needs to be a definition of what we see Portland Metro to be and will be. He also mentioned the need to carve some funds out of the budget to allow for a successful capital campaign because there are a lot of steps to a capital campaign. It would be appropriate to provide the president resources if there is a goal such as the capital campaign.

**Trustee Ziari moved to approve the 2022-23 university/president's goals as presented.**

**Seconded by Trustee Starr and Trustee Gopalpur.**

**With all persons present voting aye, the motion passed unanimously**

### **3.2 President's Contract** *Chair Davis*

Chair Davis provide the background on the reason for the President's contract review at this time highlighting Dr. Nagi's service at Oregon Tech and that his compensation is subject to Board's discretion and include benefits typically provided to all university president. Dr. Nagi's salary and compensation have remained the same since he came to Oregon Tech, except for a housing stipend increase. Chair Davis noted that President Naganathan also took a voluntary salary reduction during the pandemic as part of the cost cutting process the university implemented. His achievements were discussed including his consistent ability to maintain a positive budget, his ability to work effectively with the legislature, increase in graduation and the adoption of Oregon Tech as Oregon's Polytechnic University, which is important, given that at one time there was a concern Oregon Tech would be combined with the regional universities. Chair Davis also shared Dr. Nagi's strong relationships with legislators, donors, stakeholders, and provides leadership to higher education organizations in Oregon. Trustee Jones added that President Naganathan has been able to maneuver through the challenges and Oregon Tech has been able to maintain fiscal health and the financial reports are all positive. There have been considerable facility improvements and challenges and that President Naganathan has been proactive. Chair Davis pointed out that when he visited campus as a legislator, the Klamath Falls campus looked tired. He then named a number of improvements, new buildings, and renovations. Chair Davis provided the background for the three-part written motion related to Dr. Nagi's compensation including the contributions to his retirement plans. Chair Davis noted that outside legal counsel provided guidance on how to fulfill the motion related to retirement compensation. Chair Davis opened the floor for discussion. Trustee Brown noted his concern that the board has not addressed this issue in the past, he suggested the board think seriously about making this an annual discussion with the board. Trustee Brown said the Board should be willing to consider a percentage higher than 2%, that an annual increase should be negotiated and tied to the president's performance, that if others on campus receive a larger increase, then we will see that our president is falling behind campus and perhaps others throughout the state. Chair Davis answered it is well taken advise and perhaps it could happen during the summer session. Trustee Jones also added it would be a good discussion to have in the Executive Committee as well.

**Motion to accept the motion with a supplement to the motion for the Chair to negotiate the final language and to sign the agreed upon contract.**

**Motion: Trustee Starr**

**Second: Trustee Mason**

**With all persons present voting aye, the motion passed unanimously.**

## **4.0 Discussion Items**

### **4.1 Oregon Tech Legislative Priorities** *Vice President John Harman*

Vice President Harman reviewed the Consolidated Higher Education Funding Request and the need for the state to make an increased investment in higher education. There are a number of programs that need funding which will in turn provide for an affordable and accessible higher education experience for Oregonians. VP Harman also reviewed

Other State Funding Appropriations that also have a significant impact on our funding. VP Harman also reviewed our Capital Projects Funding which includes an ask for funding for a new Center for Student Success as well as renovations to the Learning Resource Center, and Semon Hall. VP Harman also shared our ask for an Oregon Tech 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Proclamation.

#### **4.2 Geothermal System Discussion** *VP Harman*

VP Harman reviewed the geothermal infrastructure and its history at the university. There is major risk of failures due to its age (60+ years). \$14m in improvements have been identified, which will grow to \$18m due to anticipated cost increases. Over 2.4 million dollars have been spent on maintenance over the past few years. Support for this endeavor will need to come through a legislative ask as there is no other resource within the state funds for such a project. This would be a multi-year project, there is precedent, and we need to articulate our message well. Trustee Davis asked what the process is to undertake to ask for these funds. VP Harman answered the marketing team will produce a compelling case to be shared with the legislature, we will work with our legislative partners and peers at other institutions as well. We will show our due diligence and show proof that this is the best value for the university and state and will be cleaner (green) energy as well. He also noted this is representative of what we teach in our programs. Chair Davis shared the reason this is brought to the board is to have the board use the influence they have to advocate for support from the legislator.

#### **4.2 Legislative Outlook** *VP Harman*

VP Harman credited our external consultant Drew Hagedorn for his support in developing our legislative priorities. He reviewed the new executive and legislative personnel and positions. He also reviewed the new governor's budget plans as best we know now. There is no longer a super majority in either house of the legislature. He also shared the renovation at the capital building in Salem will most likely cause more work to be done remotely. There may be more joint committee meetings as well. Speaker Rayfield is considering a new Higher Education Committee in the House. Trustee Davis mentioned at the business summit higher education was touted as a means to boost for economic development.

Trustee Gopalpur added that it will be interesting to see how they will follow through. He added the governor indicated education as one of her 3 priorities and whether it means k-12, higher ed, or both. Chair Davis added that this is a unique situation in Oregon politics with many new persons in positions. He added that during his time in the legislature, Oregon Tech was the only entity that could come to him unapologetically. Trustee Gopalpur added that he was also aware of discussions around workforce development. President Naganathan shared that we have a lot of ambassadorship opportunities here and we are beginning to host some of the new legislators. He was able to greet the Governor-elect briefly. Her priorities include housing and homelessness, mental health, education, and accountability. He indicated there is an opportunity in the newness and there is a lot of work to do. Chair Davis added that k-12 often takes up all the air in the room because it is such a large budget item, and he sees possibilities and hope. President Naganathan added that the board secretary will reach out to the board members regarding the dates for the January board meeting. As such, the next Oregon Tech Board of Trustees meeting is planned for Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at the Portland-Metro campus in Wilsonville and at OMIC in Scappoose on Thursday, January 26, 2023. Chair Davis thanked the staff

for their support of the board. There being no other business the board adjourned.

5. **Adjournment** (3:54pm)

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Fincher", with a large, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

**Dr. Ken Fincher**

*Vice President University Advancement & Interim Board Secretary*