



# THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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## MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE January 9, 2026

The Executive Committee of The University of Tennessee Board of Trustees met at 9:00 a.m. (EST) on Friday, January 9, 2026. The meeting was held virtually with all Committee members participating electronically. A physical location for the public to attend the meeting was hosted in the University of Tennessee Tower, Plaza Level - Room P08, located at 400 W. Summit Hill Drive, Knoxville, TN 37902.

**Committee Members Present:** John C. Compton (Committee Chair); Decosta E. Jenkins; William C. (Bill) Rhodes III; Donald J. Smith; and Jamie R. Woodson.

**Other Trustees Present:** Andy Holt (Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Agriculture); Ashlee C. Mallon (Student Trustee); Christopher L. Patterson; J. David Wade; David N. Watson; and T. Lang Wiseman.

**University Administration:** President Randy Boyd; Cynthia C. Moore, Board Secretary and Special Counsel; Chancellor Melinda Arnold (UT Southern); Chancellor Lori Mann Bruce (UT Chattanooga); Chancellor Peter Buckley (UT Health Science Center); Chancellor Yancy Freeman (UT Martin); and Chancellor Donde Plowman (UT Knoxville). Additional members of the UT senior leadership and staff were also in attendance.

Ms. Moore announced the presence of a quorum. The meeting was webcast for the convenience of the University community, the general public, and the media.

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### Opening Remarks of the Chairperson

Chair Compton welcomed Committee members and noted the University's strong momentum entering the spring semester. He emphasized the importance of the Committee's role in reviewing and refining elements of the proposed UT System Strategic Plan as specified in the Committee's Charter and indicated that the primary focus of the meeting would be on the review and refinement of key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics, as requested by the Trustees at the last Board meeting.

### Appointment of University Officer

President Boyd recommended the appointment of Ms. Melissa Tindell as Vice President for Communications and Marketing for the UT System. President Boyd expressed strong

support for Ms. Tindell highlighting her tenure with the UT System, her prior service as interim vice president, and her demonstrated leadership, communication expertise, and ability to build strong relationships across campuses and stakeholders. He noted that feedback from chancellors, senior leadership, and Board members was overwhelmingly positive. Committee members expressed strong support for the recommendation and commended Ms. Tindell's performance and contributions.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, a roll call vote was taken, and the Committee unanimously approved the resolution appointing Melissa Tindell as Vice President for Communications and Marketing, including the initial compensation and terms of employment as set forth in the offer letter. (*See Resolution 01-2026*)

## **President's Update**

2025 Objectives and Accomplishments. President Boyd provided an overview of the University's 2025 objectives and accomplishments, noting that a comprehensive summary had been previously distributed to the Board. He expressed pride in the University's performance across multiple areas, including enrollment growth, research funding, fundraising, and capital investment. He emphasized that all campuses experienced enrollment growth and achieved record performance, describing 2025 as an exceptional year for the University. Committee members commended the leadership teams for delivering strong results against ambitious goals.

Strategic Plan and Key Performance Indicators. President Boyd then presented an update on the development of the strategic plan, with particular emphasis on refined KPIs and targets for 2030. He explained that the revised framework reflects Board feedback to simplify and focus the number of top-level metrics while maintaining detailed supporting measures.

Key areas discussed included:

- **Enrollment Growth and Student Success:** Targets for total enrollment, online enrollment, retention, graduation rates, and reduction of student debt.
- **Post-Graduation Outcomes:** Expanded efforts to measure graduate success, including income data and workforce placement, supported by new data-sharing initiatives.
- **Research and Innovation:** Goals to increase total research funding, federal funding, and partnerships with national laboratories, as well as commercialization activity.
- **Workforce Development:** Initiatives to expand work-based learning opportunities, develop new credential models, and align academic offerings with state workforce needs.

- **Community Engagement:** Development of a system-wide economic impact measure and expansion of outreach initiatives, including rural health programs.
- **Talent Development:** Metrics related to employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention, supported by benchmarking through national surveys.
- **Administrative Excellence:** Continued implementation and enhancement of enterprise systems, including the DASH ERP platform and future student information systems.
- **Advocacy and Investment:** Legislative priorities, public perception metrics, and private fundraising goals.
- **Infrastructure Modernization:** Significant planned investments in capital projects, housing capacity, and alternative financing strategies.

Committee members engaged in discussion regarding several metrics, including retention and graduation targets, post-graduation outcomes, and workforce alignment. Members encouraged continued refinement of measures related to graduate success and employer satisfaction.

President Boyd noted that additional refinements would be incorporated prior to presentation of the final strategic plan for Board approval at the upcoming winter meeting.

### **Planning for Winter Board Meeting**

Chair Compton reviewed preliminary plans for the Winter Board of Trustees meeting slated to be held at the UT Health Science Center in Memphis. He noted efforts to streamline Board materials to improve clarity and focus on key decision items, with supporting materials provided separately for reference.

The discussion focused on:

- Proposed committee agendas and key action items;
- Enhanced structure for Board materials and reporting;
- Campus presentations focused on strategic priorities; and
- Planned site visits and events in Memphis.

Committee members expressed support for the revised approach to materials and meeting structure, noting the importance of balancing comprehensive information with efficient use of meeting time.

## Consent Agenda

Chair Compton asked if there were any requests to remove any items from the agenda. There being none, upon motion duly made and seconded, a roll call vote was taken, and the Executive Committee, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, unanimously approved: (i) the minutes of prior meeting (September 19, 2025), and (ii) a Resolution Appointing a Managerial Group for U.S. Government Contracts (*See Resolution 002-2026*).

## Closing Remarks

Chair Compton thanked Committee members, the President, the Board Secretary, and the University leadership for their continued work and preparation for the upcoming Board meeting. He noted the importance of continued engagement on the strategic plan and looked forward to further discussion and approval at the next meeting.

## Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Committee, the Chair adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/Cynthia Moore

Cynthia C. Moore

Secretary and Special Counsel