

President's Cabinet Meeting Minutes

June 5, 2023

1. Student Guest: Harrison Wade is a member of Phi Theta Kappa and works in the Learning Center. He started his postsecondary career at Tennessee Tech but dropped out and took a two-year hiatus. He started as a Psychology major but got more interested in the neuroscience aspects of the field. He plans to go to UT/Knoxville and may pursue medical school. He stated that the best thing about Roane State is how much time and energy faculty give to students. He noted that, in contrast to his university experience, Roane State faculty really care about teaching and connecting with students. In terms of an area for improvement, Harrison noted that the structure of some online classes could be better. He sees a lot of students in the Learning Center who are having trouble navigating their online classes. He thinks there needs to be a balance between ease of working in the online environment and keeping the course challenging enough for students to learn deeply.
2. Access & Diversity: Marsha Mathews brought Tamra Oliver, Roane State's new Compliance Officer, to Cabinet to discuss the need for an Access and Diversity team or task force to evaluate allocation of access and diversity funds, review scholarship applications, etc. The consensus of the Cabinet was that a team is needed, and Tamra will coordinate membership. Karen Brunner noted that the Access and Diversity strategic plan on the Human Resources website was a requirement by TBR in 2011. The Board has not subsequently asked for any updates to the plan or initiated a process for development of a new one. Since multiple objectives related to equity, access, and diversity are embedded in the newly revised institutional Strategic Plan, the outdated document should be removed from the website.
3. Salary Pool Update: Marsha reported that TBR has mandated that 3% of the 5% salary increase approved by the General Assembly be allocated as an across-the-board COLA. Institutions may submit discretionary plans to TBR for approval for the remaining 2%. Roane State will request to use the 2% toward the college's salary plan. Information will be sent college-wide once TBR has approved the plan.
4. Rentals and Facilities: TBR policy states that all outside groups should be charged market value for rental of RSCC facilities plus security and cleaning as needed. Although this has been the common practice at the Roane County Campus, we have been allowing community groups at the smaller campuses to use the facilities free of charge if they meet during regular hours when the campus is open. Teresa Duncan indicated that reversing this practice in order to comply with TBR policy will not only damage community relationships but, in some cases could also result in a reduction in workforce hours that count toward the THEC funding formula. Dr. Whaley will reach out to TBR Counsel, Beth Martin, to see how much institutional discretion is possible under the policy.
5. Enrollment Update: Jamie Stringer reported that headcount was up 8% with about 6% of that attributable to early dual enrollment. He is encouraged to see the age range trending upward. We are closing the pre-COVID gap from 1,000 to 500 students. Sarah Self reported that the focus for the current marketing campaign is "Students First."

6. Knox County Project Update: TBR, Covenant, and RSCC are still negotiating naming for exterior signage on the building. A “placeholder” for approval of the name has been put on the agenda for the upcoming June Board meeting. Groundbreaking is tentatively scheduled for August 1. Dr. Battershell, the new Simulation Center Director, will begin July 3. Dr. Whaley and Scott Niermann had a good meeting with architects Barber McMurray and contractor Johnson & Galyon, and plans are on track to occupy the building prior to classes beginning fall 2025. Scott reported that the full campaign cabinet is in place and a brochure is being completed to leave with donor prospects. Barber McMurray did an excellent virtual walk-through of the facility for the campaign cabinet. Tamsin will ask if they can make a video of the walk-through to present to other stakeholders and maybe an abbreviated version at Convocation.
7. Cumberland County Project Update: Tamsin reported that materials for the addition were selected last week. Groundbreaking has been scheduled for September 28 with Speaker Cameron Sexton in attendance. We will try to get an artist’s rendering for the groundbreaking.
8. Fentress County Project Update: The architect has done some beautiful renderings that were shared with County Executive Jimmy Johnson. Groundbreaking is scheduled for October 25. Senator Ken Yager will be in attendance.