

Board of Trustees Meeting
Friday, January 19, 2024
12:00 – 5:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Call to Order/Roll/Declaration of a Quorum

Chair Santos called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He and the board recognized departing trustees, Dr. Jonathon Bullock and Andrew Gay.

Trustee Brent Barry read the SOU Land Acknowledgment.

The secretary called the roll and a quorum was verified.

Daniel Santos	Present	Shaun Franks	Present
Rick Bailey	Present	Christina Medina	Present
Brent Barry	Present	Mimi Pieper	Present
Jason Mendoza	Present	Liz Shelby	Present
Iris Maria Chavez	Present	Barry Thalden	Present
Sheila Clough	Present	Bill Thorndike	Present
Debra Lee	Present		

Public Comment

Sage TeBeest, President of SEIU, spoke about the then-current collective bargaining session saying that staff have endured, been supportive, and open-minded for the success of SOU. She hopes SOU will honor their sacrifices with a fair contract.

Amy Harper, SOU costume shop assistant and alum said that [staff members] have seen a lot of changes in last five years, comparing the minimum wage of \$15 hr. to high inflation measures. She said SOU is more of a commuter campus but employees, students and alumni can't afford to live in this community.

Consent Agenda (Action)

Trustee Chavez moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of meeting minutes from October 20, 2024. Trustee Lee seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Reports

Committee Reports

Trustee Brent Barry provided a summary of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASAC). He said the committee heard updates on faculty workload issues; student success; innovation strategies; and an enrollment goal-setting simulation. A highlight of the meeting was a presentation from Dr. Vath on student support services including the TRIO program. This was followed by a tour of the Stevenson Union including the Center of Belonging and Engagement, the food pantry, the Veteran's program, and Career Connections.

Regarding the Finance and Administration Committee, Trustee Shaun Franks shared notable points from the meeting. The university transitioned to Workday earlier in January and is preparing to start the student phase; it is engaging in an external review of SOU's budget process; and an Institutional Budget Committee was created to guide the FY 2025 budget process. Committee recommendations coming forward for the board's approval are: 1) the capital projects prioritization including the Creative Industries project; and 2) the softball complex. Lastly, the committee discussed a financial stability target.

Chair Santos reported on the activities of the Executive, Audit, and Governance Committee (EAGC). Their agenda included a report from SOU's internal auditor, David Terry in the areas of a financial aid audit, the hotline, preparatory work on a Veteran's Program engagement, and possible future activities. The external audit has been delayed and will be presented to the board in April; Jean Bushong and Agnes Maina discussed this topic. Regarding Senate Bill 273, SOU has been a leader in implementing its provisions. The committee also discussed upcoming officer elections and learned that Bill Thorndike will chair an elections work group that Trustees Chavez and Mendoza will serve on as well.

ASSOU Report

President Brayden Clayburn provided an update on numerous activities of the Associated Student of Southern Oregon University (ASSOU). He announced new leaders in ASSOU for the vice president, speaker of the senate, and vice speaker. The Student Fee Budget and Allocation Committees have started up; SOU representatives will soon attend a statewide luncheon on legislative priorities; and President Clayburn will attend the upcoming Oregon Student Association's executive meeting at University of Oregon. Additionally, SOU will be taking 14 students to the upcoming Lobby Day; ASSOU committees are reviewing and revising bylaws and rules; and ASSOU is looking forward to the possibility of holding blood drives.

SOU Faculty Senate Report

Jackie Apodaca, chair of the SOU Faculty Senate, was not present but emailed the board with her comments about difficulties faculty are facing with getting textbooks for their classes and seeking open educational resources or anything online.

SOU Staff Assembly Report

Staff Assembly Chair, Hart Wilson, reported that the assembly administered a survey and everyone felt that SOU's equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts should be everyone's concern. They are also looking at workload issues, guided the faculty's recent process. Reporting on various other topics, she said the super-cabinet structure is going well; the assembly has plans for a listening session; they are excited that unclassified staff increases are being considered; and the assembly continues work on its Bylaws.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Report

Jonathan Chavez Baez presented the EDI vision and plan, as detailed in the meeting materials. To operationalize this plan, SOU will focus on retention, recruitment, education and professional development, partnership building, and lifelong connections to SOU, which were explained in depth. For 2024, Mr. Chavez Baez lead will the creation of a Hispanic-serving institution taskforce, launch strategic programming for the five focus and financial aid, and

reconfigure the President's Committee on Equity and Diversity. The native nations liaison will work on getting a memorandum of understanding with Oregon's Tribes.

Much discussion ensued regarding the demographic shifts in the region along with significant workforce shortages statewide. SOU's EDI work intersects well with the employers looking to grow and diversity their workforces to the mutual benefits of students and employers.

University Advancement Report

Vice President Janet Fratella delivered an overview of the SOU Foundation (SOUF), beginning with a review of its mission and vision. She discussed growth of the SOU alumni network; growth in the value of media coverage; growth in the advertising value of SOU's marketing; and current areas of focus in marketing including search engine marketing, display ads, sponsored stories, and billboards. She reviewed grants applications to awards resulting in growth to nearly \$10M in awards. Regarding giving, she highlighted the a \$40.5M endowment, the lower cost of a dollar raised at \$.20, an FY 2024 goal of \$11M, FY 2023 results of \$11M; numerous individual donors, and board giving. The university is still in the silent phase of a \$100M fundraising campaign, having raised \$28.9M to date.

President's Report

President Bailey provided an update on his goals in the areas of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion; student enrollment, support and success; a long-term fiscal sustainability roadmap; strengthening internal and external outreach; and positioning the university or an inaugural comprehensive campaign. All goals have numerous activities underway. Regarding a strategic plan, the conversation will start around 2025-26 as financial stabilization, an enrollment and retention roadmap, and a more complete post-pandemic picture are expected

President Bailey praised Dr. Susan Walsh, who is retiring and noted that Dr. Casey Shillam will be SOU's new provost. A search is underway for the vice president for finance and administration, the vice president for EDI position will not be filled immediately, and the general counsel's portfolio now includes government relations. Dr. Bailey also discussed fiscal stability and growth, focusing on the revenue-generating projects, noting there is significant solar growth and SOU is not counting savings yet. Lastly, Dr. Bailey reviewed his community engagements and events, including a cabinet celebration of Dr. Woolf, who was appointed as the president of New Mexico Highlands University.

Action, Information, and Discussion Items

External Audit Update

Jean Bushong, principal at CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) noted the scope of the audit engagement was the audit of the financial statements and the single audit for financial aid, assuring reader that they can rely on the statements. Management has responsibilities for both the financial statements and the compliance for those federal dollars, governance's oversight and the auditor's responsibilities, differentiating responsibilities from those of the internal auditor. There are two unique standards affecting the audit this year: GASB 94, affecting public-private and public-public partnerships and GASB 96 affecting the accounting for subscription-based technology. Management is finalizing the implementation of these standards into SOU's FY 2023 financial statements.

The auditor's testing is ongoing, there is nothing to report at this time, and CLA plans to file the statements before the March 31 deadline Ms. Bushong said that management was and continues to be very helpful in the process. Controller Agnes Maina reviewed the audit timeline starting March 30 and draft financial statements were provided to the auditors two weeks ago. The report will be available in the April meeting for further discussion.

Accreditation Update

Provost Walsh said the accreditation site team was at SOU in October. She reviewed four commendations: planning and development on the new general education model; the prioritization of student access and success amidst the pandemic, wildfires and other challenges; faculty and staff resiliency and commitment; and President Bailey's bold, transparent action to address financial issues. Dr. Dan DeNeui reviewed the recommendations: demonstrate a continuous process to assess institutional effectiveness; set goals and objectives to define mission fulfillment; benchmark disaggregated student achievement and use the data to inform student achievement goals; demonstrate the results to improve learning outcomes and support services; publicize learning outcomes; and create a regular and substantive interaction policy.

The next steps are to meet the accreditor in Seattle where they deliberate, provide feedback, and then a month later, SOU expects to receive the approval. The accreditor, NWCCU knows this work takes time and they will monitor from afar.

Core Information System Replacement (CISR) Project Update

Chief Information Officer Tom Battaglia reported that SOU went fully live on the human resources, finance, and payroll portions of Workday on January 2, 2024. It required a lot of work and there are very weary people. An important milestone was reached in testing: after the second parallel test, payroll ran at 99 percent accuracy and the target was 97 percent. There was a six-month extension and two modules in scope were added, yet SOU is meeting its project budget target and will probably end up at 101 percent of budget for this phase.

The university is ramping up efforts for Phase 2, as Drs. Matt Stillman and Karen Stone are helping to lead this work. They are looking at everything from training to staff augmentation, as SOU cannot have a negative impact on service levels to students. Vice Chair Clough suggested quantifying Workday efficiencies to examine in the context of workload issues or relief. President Bailey praised Mr. Battaglia for his project leadership.

Budget Update

Dr. Neil Woolf introduced the topic and explained that revenue estimates remain conservative, as the one-time funding of \$25M allocated to the technical and regional universities is looking feasible to support the CISR project, marketing, and the benefits navigator position. The HECC true-up resulted in \$163K from HECC's earlier projections and next year, it's also reduced by -\$169K.

President Bailey explained that in SOU's continued refinement of processes, it was discovered that there was a data transfer issue with the way courses like OLLI and training courses counted in the pro forma. The pro forma assumed those were full-tuition paying

students, but they don't pay the same rate. So, there was an over-inflation of tuition revenue by \$847K this year and \$926K next year. Refinement efforts include the validation of data into budget models, pro form formulas will be validated quarterly. Future efforts include an external review and trip-wire development processes in Workday. Josh Lovern explained that the review resulted in an update to projections, and various other adjustments were made based on several factors such as labor, lottery funding, and others. Overall, the university was projected to be down by \$195K and "in the black" moving forward. President Bailey is confident SOU can monitor its spending and bring it in line.

Dr. Neil Woolf reviewed the charge of the Institutional Budget Committee, the membership, and their upcoming training. The budget development schedule started in December and culminates in June of each year, which is not a rigid timeline.

Capital Projects Prioritization (Action)

Chair Santos said the board regularly approves the prioritization of capital projects, which helps SOU to compete for funding for capital projects, along with the other OPUs. The Finance and Administration Committee has reviewed the prioritization and has recommended it to the board's for approval. Dr. Neil Woolf noted that it is the same prioritization as a couple of years ago, as SOU's priorities as well as the HECC's scoring matrix remain unchanged. Although SOU's Creative Industries project scored highly, the legislature only funded the top three projects. It is expected that this project will be at the top of the list for the next biennium and SOU has strengthened its proposal.

Trustee Thorndike moved to approve the Capital Projects Prioritization, as presented. Trustee Franks seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Expenditure Authorization: Design Services Contract and SOU Softball Project (Action)

Dr. Woolf and Matt. Sayre discussed the progress of the Softball Project and asked the board to approve the expenditure for the design service contracted. The Finance and Administration Committee reviewed this item and has recommended it to the board for approval. Mr. Sayre noted that SOU would not be in the position to build the complex if it did not have three national championships in last four years. Donors are very interested in having a complex to reflect the performance of SOU's athletes and coaching staff. The sport of softball was added in 2001 and SOU is still using that equipment. Following a bid process, SOU selected KSW for design services at a cost of \$305K, has fundraised 100K, and has \$500K in donor funds banked. Mr. Sayre reviewed renderings of the proposed complex. Much discussion ensued regarding maintenance and expected cost savings.

Trustee Thorndike moved to approve the resolution for the expenditure of a design service contract for the Expenditure Authorization for Design Services Contract and Conditional Approval of SOU Softball Complex, as presented. Trustee Clough seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Trustee Brent Barry was not present for the vote.

Government Relations Update and 2024 Legislative Session Priorities

Rob Patridge reported that the good news HECC approved the \$25M piece to ask the legislature for the additional \$18M. He reviewed the combined legislative agenda of the

OPUs for the 2024 session. Supporting students on campus requires \$6M for Strong Start programs and \$6M for emergency needs. In preparing students to meet Oregon's workforce needs the OPUs are seeking \$30M to boost the semiconductor workforce and talent pipeline. For the behavioral health workforce, the OPUs are requesting \$6.2M to create more licensed professionals and Senator Golden is sponsoring that bill. The university is also seeking \$6M to complete Central Hall. Mr. Patridge added that an offer was made for a government relations director and he thanked Trustee Chavez and Chair Santos for their assistance.

2024 Recommendation of SOU Honorary Degree (Action)

President Bailey and Provost Walsh discussed SOU's Honorary Degree and made a recommendation to the board to support the nomination of Mr. Sid DeBoer. President Bailey separated the idea of Mr. DeBoer's contributions to SOU and instead recognized him for what he also has done writ large for business, the community and the world, how he built his business and beyond. Dr. Susan Walsh, who chaired the Honorary Degree Committee prescribed by the board, said the committee followed the policy to the letter and used the criteria the board established. Discussion ensued about Mr. DeBoer's contributions locally to internationally.

Trustee Thorndike moved to approve the 2024 recommendation to award an SOU Honorary Degree to Sid DeBoer. Trustee Clough seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Board Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Work Group Report

The board's EDI Work Group chair, Trustee Medina, reviewed a draft of the Board Statement on Social Justice, Anti-Racism, and Non-Discrimination with trustees. She asked trustees to review the statement closely and invited trustees' constructive feedback on the relevant, important and timely statement, as the work group has been gathering information and would seek the board's approval on it in April.

SOU Board of Trustees Officer Election Process

Chair Santos referred to the Board Statement on Officer Elections and discussed the board's officer elections process. He announced that he was appointing a work group to gather information for upcoming officer elections in June. Trustee Bill Thorndike will chair the committee; Trustees Iris Maria Chavez and Jason Mendoza will also serve on the work group, which the board secretary will support.

Future Meetings

Chair Santos said the next meeting of the board is April 19, 2024 at noon. If trustees have agenda items for a future meeting, he asked them to send them to the board secretary.

Collective Bargaining Update [Executive Session Pursuant to ORS 192.660 (2)(d)]

Chair Santos said that pursuant to ORS 192.660(2) (d), the committee would enter into an executive session to conduct deliberations with persons designated by the governing body to carry on labor negotiations. He said no final actions or decisions would be made during this session. At the end of the executive session, the committee would return to open session and welcome members of the public back to the meeting and the videoconference (if any remain). Following the executive session, which was expected to conclude in approximately 15

minutes, online attendees would be able to use the meeting link to rejoin. In addition to SOU board members, the following persons were permitted to remain for the executive session: Rob Patridge, Neil Woolf, Brian Caulfield, Susan Walsh, and Alana Lardizabal.

At the conclusion of the executive session, Chair Santos returned the meeting to a public session.

Adjournment

Chair Santos adjourned the meeting at approximately 3:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,



Sabrina Prud'homme
University Board Secretary

Date: April 19, 2024