

Trustees Present: Eric Schmutz, Colter Bennett, Beverly Burgess, Marilee Eyre, Sydney Nakken, Caytee Wankier & Michael Wankier.

Trustees Online: Jodi Hart Wilson

Trustees Excused: Derral Eves

Others Present: Lucia Maloy, Dialea Adams, Ryann Ford, Michael Schmidt, Jeffrey Miller, Camille Thomas, Katy Bowen, Amelia Willden, Jeff Kelley, Brian Barnes, Tony Oliver, Cody Bremner, Chris Monson, Scott Knowles, Matt Mckenzie, Tessa Anderson, Matt Zufelt, Bruce Johnson, Courtland Hansen, Robbie Paul, Cari Lawes, Mike Mower, Christopher Cox, Luke Carlson, Patrick Clark and Todd Brown

Online Attendees: Mindy Benson, Wendy Hutcheson, Aimee Uchman, Mackenzie Jenkins, Mitch Clarke, Patrick Clarke, Camaree Staheli, Jamie Campbell, Sean Heiner, Christine Fawson, Valeena Wood, Tyler Dawes, Chris Hall, Julie Ellis, John Fonseca, Amanda Healey, Julie Hartley (USHE), Kelly Goonan, Brianne Kramer, Ann Oberhelman, Elliani Decker, William Heyborne, Amie Hokanson, Valarie Olson, Brandon Ragan, Nate Esplin, Brad Kinross, Katya Konkle, Blair Bentley, David McGuire, John Lisonbee, and Lisa Arter

Welcome and Call to Order by Vice Chair Eric Schmutz

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM.

ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Minutes: October 11, 2024 Meeting [Tab A](#)

Motion was made by Trustee Michael Wankier, seconded by Trustee Beverly Burgess to approve the minutes as presented. The final vote was unanimous.

NOTE: Follow up items for VP Mary Pearson Report from the last trustee meeting.

- What is the endowment amount that SUU would need to be self-sustaining? SUU would need \$1.6B. We get \$81M from the state and have about \$38M in our current endowment funds.
- Are there any restrictions on the amount of an endowment we can have? The answer is no restrictions.
- Reported our online sales for bookstore and Chick-fil-a; 5.5% (\$9,000) for bookstore and 15% total sales for Chick-fil-a.

NOTE: Follow up items for VP Stuart Jones shared from the last meeting.

- What are we trying to do and how are we marketing our goals?
- What opportunities are needed to fund this building or that building? Plan for the future a bit more aggressively.

VP Jones said that these questions will be addressed in the campaign goals and overview that will be given during the President's Report near the end of the meeting.

Policy 13.4- Athletic Council-Repeal [Tab B](#)

Todd Brown, representing Doug Knuth, presented on policy 13.4. The Athletic Council has not been functioning for several years and is no longer a group that advises the Athletic Department. The policy should be repealed as it no longer applies. There was a complete restructuring in 2020 to manage athletics and is covered in policy (12.1) but neglected to repeal the policy at that time.

Motion was made by Trustee Marilee Eyre, seconded by Trustee Beverly Burgess to repeal Policy 13.4 Athletic Council. Vote unanimous.

**R401 School of Aviation (New Administration Unit)
Program Discontinuance (Master of Athletic Training)
Name Change (Speechwriting)** [Tab C](#)

Provost Shauna Mendini shared that there are three R401 proposals that are asked to be considered today.

- School of Aviation, due to the growth of the aviation program, proposed that a new administrative unit be created to house the Aviation Sciences department and its existing academic program and all hangar operations. Looking at the structure on how the aviation program should run together, not separately, there is a need to combine academic and mechanics of the program. Ken Hall will serve as the interim dean for the School of Aviation, once it is created. This school will not be combined with the School of Business. Mike Mower, Executive Director of Aviation/Chief Flight Instructor, shared that the program started in 2013 under a third party run program; as of 2016 it came under the umbrella of SUU. It has seen highs and lows-- currently 10% of all nation pilots are SUU grads. The need for space is the most critical due to growth and industry demand. SUU is considered the ivy league of aviation programs.

Motion made by Trustee Jodi Hart Wilson to approve the School of Aviation Creation, seconded by Trustee Caytee Wankier. Vote unanimous.

- Program Discontinuance for the Master of Athletic Training program will be discontinued due to the low student demand and the cohort size did not exceed the seven students enrollment cycle. With enrollment declining the last three cycles, it was decided that the master program should be discontinued. There are four other universities that have this program resulting in low student enrollment. Trustee Sydney Nakken commented that ending this program will affect our student athletic training interns that help out many athletic programs. Can the program be delayed or placed on hiatus rather than discontinuing the program? The Board of Certification has deemed SUU unable to continue this program. A discussion with Intermountain Health was suggested before making a final decision.

Motion made by Trustee Sydney Nakken to table the Program Discontinuance for the Master of Athletic Training program, seconded by Trustee Beverly Burgess. Vote unanimous.

- Communication Speech Writing certificate be changed to Speechwriting, which reflect the program changes to allow any undergraduate students to complete the certificate program.

Motion made by Trustee Colter Bennett, seconded by Trustee Caytee Wankier to approve the R401 proposals as presented, with the exception of tabling Master of Athletic Training Program. Vote unanimous.

Policy 6.3 Internships [Tab D](#)

Provost Shauna Mendini reported that this policy was initiated by our Career and Professional Development Center to:

1. Align with new legislation
2. Integrate better internal controls to approve internships with a focus on risk management best practices
3. Clarify expectations for academic units in awarding credit and preparing students for internships experiences.

Motion was made by Trustee Marilee Eyre , seconded by Trustee Beverly Burgess to approve Policy 6.3 Internships as presented. The vote was unanimous.

Policy 6.5 Undergraduate Admissions [Tab E](#)

Provost Shauna Mendini reported that the revisions to this policy are a result of HB 261 and is a simple language update to make the policy into compliance with the new law.

Motion to approve both Policy 6.5 & 13.26 made by Trustee Colter Bennett, seconded by Trustee Sydney Nakken. Vote unanimous.

Policy 13.26 SUU APEX Committee [Tab F](#)

Provost Shauna Mendini reported that the revisions to this policy are a result of HB 261 and is a simple language update to make the policy into compliance with the new law.

Motion to approve both Policy 6.5 & 13.26 made by Trustee Colter Bennett, seconded by Trustee Sydney Nakken. Vote unanimous.

NOTE: Trustee Michael Wankier asked how do we as an institution coordinate the changes that have affected several policies due to new legislation (ie HB 261) to ensure that SUU is being consistent with other universities and governing bodies that must comply, how is that administered? SUU is following the uniformed guidelines as directed by USHE as well as consultation of our legal department to apply the updates appropriately.

Policy 5.3 Equal Employment Opportunity & Affirmative Action [Tab G](#)

VP Mary Pearson presented changes made to align the policy with the expectations set forth in HB 261. In section IV.A. remove the term "diversity" and in Section IV.D. emphasize the commitment to equal opportunity through the use of data to inform, outreach and recruit when so required by federal law.

See Policy 7.7 for motion and vote.

Policy 5.9 Drug-Free Workplace [Tab H](#)

VP Mary Pearson shared that the revisions to this policy were made to elevate the safety standards due to operation of vehicles, aircraft, machinery and equipment. Outlines the procedures for drug and alcohol testing and unpaid leave for the detoxification process, as needed.

See Policy 7.7 for motion and vote.

Policy 5.20 Political Activity [Tab I](#)

VP Mary Pearson reported that the adjustments to this policy are proposed to align our narrative with the USHE Resolution on Free Express, political neutrality and state law. The policy is basically a new and complete revision to the former policy. It is made to clarify rights and responsibilities of employees, students and others acting on behalf of and/or

representing the University. It also outlines the use of University resources as it relates to political activity.

See Policy 7.7 for motion and vote.

Policy 7.6 University Property [Tab J](#)

VP Mary Pearson noted that the updates include language regarding assigned offices and workspace and that these spaces must be well maintained and kept in good order for conducting University business.

See Policy 7.7 for motion and vote.

Policy 7.7 University Contracts [Tab K](#)

VP Mary Pearson reported that the changes to the University Contracts policy is made to clarify and streamline the contract process and emphasized that one university employee is responsible for contracts.

A motion was made by Trustee Michael Wankier, seconded by Trustee Marilee Eyre, to approve the updates to the policies as presented by VP Mary Pearson for:

Policy 5.3 *Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action*

Policy 5.9 *Drug-Free Workplace*

Policy 5.20 *Political Activity*

Policy 7.6 *University Property*

Policy 7.7 *University Contracts*

The vote was unanimous.

Policy 5.1 Free Speech and Expression on Campus [Tab L](#)

President Mindy Benson summarized the updates to Policy 5.1 Free Speech and Expression on Campus to ensure that the policy aligns with USHE resolution on Free Expression and Political Neutrality. The changes to the policy clarify provisions related to employee speech and makes the policy more compatible with Policy 5.20 *Political Activity*. The addition of two sections to the policy includes narrative on Institutional Neutrality and Employee Speech.

Lucia Maloy noted that USHE passed the Free Speech Resolution; there is a USHE guideline on how that would affect each university's policies and how to stay within the system guidelines. This policy has been vetted with all campus groups and received lots of

feedback. Acknowledge all the time (over 100 hours) and effort to ensure the best policy possible.

Motion to approve Policy 5.1 Free Speech and Expression on Campus as presented was made by Trustee Michael Wankier, second by Trustee Sydney Nakken. The vote was unanimous.

Policy 5.26 Residency Status [Tab M](#)

VP Stuart Jones asked the board to table this policy review due to a need for further assessment and evaluation.

This item is tabled and will be returned to the trustees at a later date.

Policy 13.20 Sustainability Committee [Tab N](#)

VP Tiger Funk introduced this new policy - an initiative that promotes and expands participation in sustainability efforts while encouraging responsible use of resources on campus. This policy aligns SUU with standards at many institutions across the USA, including all seven other USHE institutions. This policy defines the committee's scope as well as the makeup of the committee and ensures that the University will be responsible for preservation of financial, natural and human-made resources.

Motion to approve Policy 13.20 Sustainability Committee as presented was made by Trustee Caytee Wankier, second by Trustee Marilee Eyre. The vote was unanimous.

Utah Center for Rural Health Commercial Lease Agreement [Tab O](#)

VP Daneka Souberbielle shared that the Utah Center for Rural Health has had substantial success in meeting regional needs over the last five years resulting in a growing team of six to twenty-five staff members. Due to growth, there is a need to lease office space off-campus for staff members that are non-student facing, while those that are student-facing will remain on-campus in the Science building offices. The lease agreement is meant to be a temporary solution as university leadership works to develop a long-term space utilization plan for UCRH and other departments. There has been an update since the lease was published regarding insurance. Rental rate is the same for three years. Start in January 2025 instead of December 2024.

Motion to approve the Utah Center for Rural Health Commercial Lease Agreement as presented was made by Trustee Beverly Burgess, second by Trustee Michael Wankier. The vote was unanimous.

CONSENT ITEMS

Investment Reports: September & October [Tab P](#) & [Tab Q](#)

VP Mary Pearson reviewed the investment reports for September and October. We are on track to reach our goal of \$5M; most of the funding goes towards scholarships.

See motion below in Recommended for Sabbatical Leaves for AY 2025-2026 section.

Recommendations for Appointment [Tab R](#)

Three individuals are being recommended for appointment:

1. Farah LeFevre to be a Lecturer of Engineering Technology; this is an emergency hire.
 2. Trenton Call be appointed Director of Marriage and Family Therapy Program within the College of Education. This is a new position.
 3. Dr. Chandra Davis was appointed Assistant Professor of Public Administration within the department of Political Science and Criminal Justice. This is a new position.
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Recommended Sabbatical Leaves for AY 2025-2026 [Tab S](#)

Sabbatical recommendations for academic year 2025-2026 including the following faculty members:

- Dr. Lisa Arter
- Dr. John Belk
- Dr. Rachel Bolus
- Dr. Brianne Kramer
- Dr. John Taylor
- Dr. Julie Taylor

After a brief review and discussion a motion was made by Trustee Caytee Wankier, to approve the Investment Reports for September & October, Recommendations by Appointment and the Recommended Sabbatical Leaves for AY 2025-26 as presented. The motion was seconded by Trustee Michael Wankier. The vote was unanimous.

INFORMATION ITEMS

REPORTS**Trustee Report: Beverly Burgess (STECH)** [Link Handout](#)

Trustee Beverly Burgess reported on Southwest Tech and shared a handout. She also shared that President Brennan Wood expressed his appreciation for the continued partnership with SUU. This partnership brings a lot of students to Southwest Tech that would never have been possible without the connection between SUU and STECH

Trustee Burgess highlighted the following items:

- Completion rate is up in every area as noted on the handout. STECH data shows that they are up in every area including completion, placement, head count and graduation rates.
 - STECH is set up to service Beaver, Iron, Garfield and Kane counties and reach all but five counties within Utah and also serve 19 states.
 - STECH will be launching a new Master Esthetician program in 2025.
 - STECH is working with the Utah National Guard to become an official training partner.
 - Life skills training will begin in 2025. It is a 10-course training program for everyday life skills. Topics include basic auto and home maintenance, personal finance, emergency preparedness, CPR, first aid, cooking and nutrition, etc. A scholarship is available for daycare with lunch provided. The Burgess family is helping to sponsor this opportunity for community members who may need it.
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Trustee Report: Jodi Hart Wilson (College of Health Sciences)

Chair Jodi Hart Wilson combined the discussion of the Discontinuance of the Master of Athletic Training and Dean Tony Oliver sharing an update for the College of Health Sciences for her report. The College of Health Sciences is excited for the beginning of the Family Nurse Practitioner program that will start in 2025; all 15 slots are filled for the inaugural year of this program. The Masters of Nutrition program is also reported to be taking off and generating significant interest. The College is doing well and has much to offer our students who have focus and majors within this college.

Faculty Senate Report

Scott Knowles reported from the Faculty Senate:

- Shared a story about a faculty member who went above and beyond to support a student both personally and professionally. Kudos to this faculty member and all faculty members who are invested in their work and our students. Teamwork, communication (reading and speaking) are values of higher education. It is where our students are taught to be good citizens, obtain employment, etc.
 - The *Campaign of Giving Wings to T-Bird Dreams* reached its goal of 300 donations, so Scott will be making an additional \$300 donation as promised.
 - Our faculty members are very nervous about the potential budget cuts.
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Staff Association Report

Matt McKenzie reported from the Staff Association:

- The final total of staff members who helped with The *Giving Wings to T-Bird Dreams* campaign is 305 donors with a total of \$11,910 given to scholarship. Matt is also matching funding by personally donating \$300 rather than getting a tattoo.
 - Finish Strong Stations that happen the last week of class are to encourage our students to continue on to the end. We have snacks and drinks (that were provided by the Purchasing Office) to share with our students.
 - The Caught Red-Handed awards automatically place those employees for Employee of the Month.
 - The Postcards and Pies event was successful and was held on November 22.
 - Bylaws are being updated and voted upon to approve and then will be forwarded to the Board for final approval.
 - January 8 & 9, 2025, the staff will support the Super Start Station to welcome our students back for Spring semester.
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Student Association Report

SUUSA President Colter Bennett shared:

- A big “thank you” to our Faculty Senate and Staff Association for all their hard work for SUU students and for donations made for the student scholarships in the recent campaign.
- We are very excited for the creation of the new School of Aviation so that our students feel more supported.

- Belonging and Engagement Council has reached out to find a way to appeal to more socially reserved students. 300 meals given out to students last week to encourage finishing strong.
 - Shout out to the new Sustainability committee.
 - Student engagement has increased by 1,000 students this year. Very purposeful to program events that have been planned for the fall semester. Through this programming effort, there have been 21,500 involved/participated with 14 events.
 - Elections coming up in February 2025 (hoping to have more candidates and more students voting).
 - The SUU relationship with Cedar City is unique and isn't found anywhere else.
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President's Report

President Benson reported:

- Thanked the Faculty Senate, Staff Association and students for continuing to make Southern Utah University such an amazing place.
- Gala was a great success, thanks to the facilities team, Advancement office, Executive Events team and so many others who helped with this event.
- End of term enrollment 16,249 students (3.3% growth).
- Legislative concerns for the upcoming session and the rumors that are out there regarding budget cuts.
- SUU Day on the Hill will look differently this year rather than taking SUU to the capitol; we will invite and bring the capitol/legislators to SUU (much like our Fly Iron County events that were held earlier this fall).
- SUU Night at the Jazz will be held in early February in SLC.
- The President wishes all a Happy Holiday and appreciates each person for their contributions to SUU.

President turned the time over to VP Stuart Jones and Associate VP Staci Carson to review the [Comprehensive Campaign](#). Staci introduced the priorities of the campaign, including the start of the campaign beginning with the presidency of Mindy Benson (including the interim phase) in July 2022. Working target of \$115M, anticipated time frame is approximately eight years.

5 pillars of the campaign:

1. Enhance Student Success
 2. Enrich the Academic Experience
 3. Cultivate a Culture of Caring
 4. Increase Access and Affordability
 5. Expand Alumni and Community Engagement
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MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED MEETING

Motion to Go into Closed Meeting made by Trustee Michael Wankier, seconded by Trustee Colter Bennett. The vote was unanimous.

MOTION FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to go into Executive Session was made by Trustee Michael Wankier, seconded by Trustee Marilee Eyre. The vote was unanimous.

NOTE TIME: 11:58 AM

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Minutes for executive session discussion were hand written by the board secretary and will serve as record of the discussion as needed.

MOTION TO REOPEN MEETING/VOTE ON APPROVAL

Motion made by Trustee Michael Wankier to reopen the meeting and to vote on the recommendation from President Benson, seconded by Trustee Caytee Wankier. Vote unanimous.

NOTE TIME: 12:28 PM (reopen meeting)

Vice Chair Eric Schmutz shared that there is a recommendation from President Benson regarding a personnel matter, and the recommendation is that we accept the resignation from the faculty member. Individual roll call to vote is required on this recommendation for either acceptance or denial of that recommendation. Votes were:

Trustee Michael Wankier - Yes
Trustee Caytee Wankier - Yes
Trustee Colter Bennett - Yes
Trustee Eric Schmutz - Yes

Trustee Beverly Burgess - Yes
Trustee Sydney Nakken - Yes
Trustee Marilee Eyre - Yes
Trustee Jodi Hart Wilson - Yes

Vote was unanimous.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion to adjourn by Trustee Jodi Hart Wilson, seconded by Trustee Caytee Wankier. The vote was unanimous.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

Trustees Minutes approved: March 20, 2025

Signed: Dialea S. Adams