

OKLAHOMA STATE REGENTS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
655 Research Parkway, Suite 200, Oklahoma City, OK 73104

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE**
Wednesday, December 4, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

Chair Dennis Casey, Presiding

1. **ANNOUNCEMENT OF FILING OF MEETING NOTICE AND POSTING OF THE AGENDA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN MEETING ACT.** The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education held a special meeting at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 4, 2024 at the State Regents Office in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Notice of the meeting had been filed with the Secretary of State on Friday, November 22, 2024. A copy of the agenda for the meeting had been posted in accordance with the Open Meeting Act.
2. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chair Dennis Casey called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and presided. Present for the meeting were State Regents Jack Sherry, Dennis Casey, Steven W. Taylor, Michael C. Turpen, Ken Levit, Courtney Warmington, and Phillip Mitchell “Mitch” Adwon. Regent Dustin J. Hilliary entered the meeting at 1:09 p.m. Regent Jeffrey W. Hickman entered the meeting at 1:30 p.m.
3. **STATE SYSTEM INSTITUTIONAL UPDATE.** Update on institutional activities at the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma. President Kayla Hale presented the Regents with a comprehensive update on USAO’s strategic plan, specifically how they are producing workforce-ready graduates, growing the student pipeline, focusing on student success, and improving system efficiency. She reported that concurrent enrollment grew by 90 percent with Chickasha Public Schools alone. USAO assisted 17 teachers from Chickasha and Tuttle Public Schools in receiving state certification transition from emergency certification through the GEER II funding. As a result of a first-time collaboration with Canadian Valley Technology Center, USAO has two pre-engineering opportunities there in Calculous and Chemistry. The Division of Professional Studies was established, which includes the Center for Career and Workforce Development that focuses on expanding concurrent enrollment. President Hale announced to the Regents that USAO distributed all the GEER II funding and was able to help 36 students complete their degree. USAO launched a partnership with Oklahoma City Community College to offer USAO programs on the OCCC campus. Advisory boards were established across the academy. In growing the student pipeline, President Hale reported that since last year, student headcount increased by 12 percent and full-time equivalency increased by 8 percent. She stated that to improve system efficiency, they are making data driven decisions to strengthen university operations.
4. **REGIONAL UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF OKLAHOMA.** Update on Regional University System of Oklahoma’s strategic priorities. RUSO CEO Dr. Brandon Tatum gave a comprehensive update on the RUSO system. Across the RUSO campuses, there are 22,368 full-time undergraduate students. The Oklahoma employment retention rate is 80 percent. There was a total of 9,153 graduates in 2023 as a system, which included 526 nurses and 410 teachers. Dr. Tatum informed the Regents that each institution will draft a strategic plan on affordability and transparency. He explained a few ways that universities can be affordable, including offering more scholarships, cost clarity, free pathways, efficient operations, seamless transfers, faster degrees, experience credits, and industry partnerships.

5. **BLUEPRINT 2030.** Update on expansion of STEM exploration opportunities for middle and high school students (Strategy #1A). Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs Dr. Stephanie Beauchamp gave an update on Summer Academies and the pilot project OSRHE started in 2024 called Full STEM Ahead. There are 17 different Summer Academies across the state. In 2024, there was just over \$66,000 and a maximum of \$6,000 each was awarded to 12 different institutions. These academies took place spring of 2024 and served over 500 students in sixth through eighth grades. Out of the 12 institutions, 11 will continue with the partnership after the grant is completed. This year, OSRHE is emphasizing a daily after school program. There are four recipients with a total of a little over \$128,000.
6. **DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD.** Presentation of Higher Education Distinguished Service Awards to Senator Greg McCortney, Representative Kevin Wallace and Representative Mark McBride. Vice Chancellor for Government Relations Dr. Jarrett Jobe commended the recipients for advocating for deferred maintenance and their service to Oklahoma and higher education.
7. **BUDGET REPORT AND REVENUE UPDATE.** Report on the State budget and revenue. Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance Mark Tygret presented the Regents with a brief budget and revenue update. He reported that revenue from oil is down along with other revenues, such as income tax withholdings. The sales tax back in November 2024 was six percent below the prior year.
8. **LEGISLATIVE UPDATE.** Update on legislative activity. Dr. Jobe gave a brief update to the Regents on the success of the Western Oklahoma Legislative Tour the previous day at Southwestern Oklahoma State University. He also announced that this year's budget is being well received by legislators and he has heard positive comments on the presentation of the budget. Dr. Jobe discussed upcoming bills to be filed.
9. **PROPOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION.** Mr. Matt Stangl, General Counsel for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, advised State Regents that an executive session was needed at this time pursuant to Pursuant to 25 O.S. § 307(B)(1) to discuss the routine, periodic review and/or consideration and adoption, modification, or other action related to employment, including terms and conditions, of the Chancellor. Regent Hickman moved, seconded by Regent Taylor to enter executive session. Voting for the motion were Regents Sherry, Warmington, Hilliary, Adwon, Levit, Casey, Hickman, Turpen and Taylor. Voting against the motion were none. Regents entered executive session. Regent Levit and Regent Adwon left the meeting at 3:15 p.m. Regent Hickman moved, seconded by Regent Turpen, to exit executive session. Voting for the motion were Regents Sherry, Warmington, Hilliary, Casey, Hickman, Turpen, and Taylor. Voting against the motion were none. Regents Levit and Adwon were absent.
8. **"BEST OF HIGHER EDUCATION."** Report on system-wide activities. Regents received the update on institutional activities via e-mail on September 3, 2024.
10. **CALENDAR OF EVENTS.** Update on upcoming events. The calendar of events was distributed in written form to the Regents.
11. **ADJOURNMENT.** With no other items to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:



Dennis Casey, Chair



Steven W. Taylor, Secretary