Advisory Board Meeting
Minutes

DATE:	MAY 09, 2025	Mooney Library
DAY:	FRIDAY	875 Monroe Avenue
TIME:	11:OO AM	Memphis, TN

Present:

Board Members:	Staff:	Deans:
Randall Davis (Chairman)	Peter Buckley	Don Thomason
Jillian McCarthy	Raaj Kurapati	Reggie Frye
Margaret Bohm		Jon Ryder (on behalf of Dean Tilashalski)
Natalie Tate (Zoom)		Nick Verne
Rick Spell (Zoom)		Ashley Harkrider (Zoom)
		Wendy Likes

Guests: Members of the Health Science Center community and the public were invited to participate either in person or via webcast.

Secretary and Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer, Raaj Kurapati introduced new Advisory Board member, Mr. Rick Spell, who joined the meeting via Zoom. Mr. Spell provided brief remarks on his background.

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call**

   Chairman Randy Davis called the meeting to order at 11:03 am.

2. **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

   The motion for approval of the February 7, 2025, meeting minutes was made by board member Dr. Natalie Tate and seconded by board member Dr. Jillian McCarthy.

3. **Recognition of Ascension Saint Thomas**

   Chancellor Peter Buckley thanked both Chairman Davis for accepting the role as Chair and Mr. Spell for his remarks, and acknowledged the graduation of student representative, Margaret Bohm. He then welcomed Ascension Saint Thomas colleagues, CEO Dr. Fahad Tahir and CMO Dr. Brian Wilcox, who both joined virtually via Zoom. Ascension was honored for their ten-year partnership with UT Health Science Center. Chancellor Buckley spoke on the hospital system and offered the floor to Dr. Tahir and Dr. Wilcox. Both gave appreciation for leadership at UT Health Science Center, made remarks on the relationship and their roles in it, and the future of the partnership.

4. **Chancellor's Update**

Chancellor Buckley began by announcing two new roles as former Advisory Board Chair, Dr. Phil Wenk has accepted a volunteer role as special advisor to the Chancellor, and Dean Wendy Likes as Executive Director and Special Advisor in Rural Health.

Gratitude was given to Interim Executive Dean of Medicine, Dr. Nick Verne, who has served in this role for two years while also being a national leader in gastroenterology.

Acknowledgement was given to Vice Chancellor of Advancement, Brigitte Grant and Le Bonheur Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Maureen O'Conner for their efforts in co-chairing the search for Vice Chancellor Strategic Communications and Marketing and named the new appointment, Karla Leeper, who begins July 7, 2025. Appreciation was offered for Giving Day, which exceeded the goal of 1200 donors.

5. **College of Graduation Health Presentation**

Dean Thomason shared information on applications, various student activities – giving thanks to Ms. Bohm for her efforts in the student activities- alumni meetups, the 2025-2030 strategic plan, and continual monitoring of funding for students.

Remarks: Chair Davis spoke on positive momentum of the GHP program in the community.

6. **College of Pharmacy Presentation**

Dean Frye shared updates including the relaunch of the Pharm Forum 2025, a regional pharmaceutical sciences meeting led by students. Faculty and student achievements were highlighted, including national awards and research grants. The college also celebrated strong residency match results, ranking #1 in Tennessee and 8th nationally, with over half the class securing postgraduate residencies.

7. **College of Dentistry**

Executive Associate Dean, Dr. Jon Ryder spoke in place of Dean Tilashalski and shared updates including preparations for an upcoming accreditation visit, curriculum improvements, updated faculty bylaws, and expansion efforts in Kingsport, TN.

8. **College of Health Professions**

Interim Dean Harkrider joined via Zoom to share updates from over the past quarter including rural community services, program updates, and renovated facilities.

Remarks: Dr. Tate asked for a brief rundown of the Path A program which Dr. Harkrider explained as a program which teaches individuals how to identify cancer.

9. **College of Nursing**

Dean Likes reported on two new grants which will provide a second nursing mobile health unit and expansion of the Rural Nurse Scholars program, respectively, as well as several upcoming grants. Additionally, she spoke on recent events and the health service partnership with Southwest TN Community College.

10. College of Medicine

Interim Executive Dean Verne gave updates on questionnaires, upcoming reports to LCME - including an encouraging turnaround of pre-clinical curriculum - and positive pass rates. Other items included search updates for Chairs, and upcoming student events including the May graduation and awards banquet.

Remarks: Chair Davis added he consistently receives positive feedback about UT Health Science Center when he interacts with medical students.

11. Legislative Update

Director of Health Sciences Government Relations and Advocacy, Mr. David Mills, joined via Zoom to present the legislative session report. He spoke on the operating budget including funds for scientific equipment, Healthy Smiles, and College of Medicine & Interdisciplinary Building planning.

Scientific updates include psychotropic drug analysis in which Dean Frye provided leadership in working with legislature, student training issues in relation to IVF, changes in corporate practice employment in rural hospitals, and the redefined role of Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

12. FY2026 Budget Presentation

EVC and COO Kurapati, presented the FY26 budget proposal, emphasizing the institution's commitment to fiscal responsibility, transparency, and strategic investment amid financial challenges.

He reviewed budget strategy and goals and recognized the importance of the Planning and Budget Council (PBC) and Contingency Planning Workgroup for their guidance and decision making. Addressed were various budget actions to manage expenses, education and facility investments, and identifying revenue and funding sources including state appropriations, tuition and fee changes, and F&A/Indirect Cost Recovery to name a few.

Identified were various financial challenges such as the federal funding landscape, challenges with the DASH ERP implementation, and potential student aid program changes. Chair Davis asked if these challenges will affect the FY26 state appropriations to which EVC and COO Kurapati answered there is no immediate impact for FY26 funding; Dr. Natalie Tate asked how the institution will respond to further IDCR revenue drops to which EVC and COO Kurapati answered he believes they will be able to pivot quickly due to the work of the Contingency Planning Workgroup and actions to defer hiring and vacancy management; and Ms. Bohm asked for clarification on parking fee changes to which EVC and COO Kurapati answered there had been no changes to this fee in over a decade and minimal fee increases are needed for safety and repairs.

Action Item: Recommend and request approval of the Operating Base and Non-Recurring Budget for FY2026 of $711,261,292.

Chair Davis asked for a motion to approve the budget. Dr. McCarthy motioned to approve, and Dr. Tate seconded. Chair Davis asked the board if any were opposed and the FY25 budget was unanimously approved.

13. <u>Other Business, Feedback, and/or Discussion</u>

Chair Davis announced the next meeting is scheduled for Friday, August 15, and welcomed Mr. Spell's skillset and involvement and his commitment to helping the university move forward, and lastly, he emphasized Giving Day involvement.

14. <u>Adjournment</u>

Chair Davis adjourned the meeting at 12:30 pm.