



**MINUTES OF THE
TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY BOARD OF REGENTS
STANDING COMMITTEE AND REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Thursday, October 16, 2025**

I. Call to Order

The Board of Regents of Texas Southern University held a Standing Committee and Regular Board meeting on Thursday, October 16, 2025. Mr. Brandon L. Simmons, Chairman of the Board, called the meeting to order at 8:56 A.M. The meeting convened at Texas Southern University, Library Learning Center, 3100 Cleburne Street, Houston, Texas 77004.

II. Roll Call

The following Board Members were in attendance and constituted a quorum:

Mr. Brandon L. Simmons, Chairman
Mr. James M. Benham, Vice Chair
Ms. Marilyn A. Rose, Secretary
Mr. Lauren A. Gore
Ms. Caroline Baker Hurley
Dr. Richard A. Johnson
Mr. Benjamin C. Kohlmann
Mr. Benjamin H. Proler
Ms. Alithea Sullivan
Mr. Kohl E. Crawford, Student Regent, *nonvoting* (virtual)

Other Attendees: President J.W. Crawford III, Arianna Armstrong, C.D. Bolden, Bobby Brown, Darlene Brown, Cynthia Buckley, Shelly Butler, Willie Butler, Charlie Coleman, Rajanel Crockem, Carl Goodman, Ben Green, Taylar Hall, Victor Ihezukwu, Melanie Jackson, Michelle John, Ron McFarlane, Jason Nwaneti, John Pittman, Ben Perry, Georgia Provost, Faith Ruiz, James White, Brandy Williams

III. Prayer

Chairman Simmons invited Ms. Georgia Provost to introduce Bishop C.D. Bolden to deliver a prayer. Bishop C.D. Bolden introduced himself, then proceeded to pray.

IV. Open Forum

Chairman Simmons opened the floor to individuals who signed up to participate in Open Forum. Chairman Simmons reminded speakers of the Open Forum rules and procedures, which are in accordance with state law and the Board's Bylaws. He also reiterated the significance of being respectful.

The following individuals participated in the Open Forum:



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- Victor Ihezukwu, Chair of Staff Council
 - Mr. Victor Ihezukwu applauded the staff council for all their work throughout the 2024-2025 school year. Mr. Ihezukwu shared that he has been re-elected chair of the staff council and introduced the council members, highlighting their initiatives for the upcoming fiscal year, emphasizing continuous improvement.
- Dr. Brandy Williams
 - Dr. Brandy Williams, an alumna and donor, expressed concerns about the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences' outdated facilities and enrollment challenges, advocating for prioritization and modernization.
- Shelly Butler
 - Ms. Butler raised issues regarding her job title and salary, requesting a meeting with HR to address discrepancies.
- Ron McFarlane
 - Mr. McFarlane shared that in November 2024, with the help of Melanie Jackson and Dr. Cherise Smith, the campus garden was returned to the community through the creation of the TSU Community Farm. In less than a year, the once weed-infested lot has become a thriving agricultural hub in the Third Ward, thanks to community partners, Master Gardeners, Sanctuary Gardens, and TSU students who have donated thousands of volunteer hours. He expressed appreciation to all who contributed to the project's success.
- Jason Nwaneti
 - Mr. Nwaneti, from Sanctuary Gardens, addressed the Board to share that their group has transformed the TSU Farm into a thriving community hub that brings together individuals of all ages to learn, grow, and connect. Mr. Nwaneti noted that Sanctuary Gardens is expanding beyond a single garden to serve as a platform for nutrition, urban planning, and innovation.
- Arianna Armstrong, Student Bar Association Vice President, Thurgood Marshall School of Law
 - Ms. Armstrong addressed the need for a four-day academic schedule at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law, citing improved student performance and requesting its reinstatement or a transparent explanation for its discontinuation.
- Willie Butler, Student Bar Association President, Thurgood Marshall School of Law
 - Mr. Butler addressed the need for a permanent Dean at the Thurgood Marshall School of Law and requested that students be included in the process.

V. Conflict of Interest



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Chairman Simmons addressed the matter of conflict of interest with the Board members, inquiring if any member had a conflict of interest to disclose regarding the items on today's agenda. Observing no such disclosures, he proceeded with the agenda.

VI. Chairman's Comments and Recognitions

- Chairman Simmons acknowledged and celebrated Homecoming Week at Texas Southern University, expressing enthusiasm for the "Road to 100" apparel being distributed in recognition of the University's upcoming centennial celebration. He shared his excitement for the week's festivities and the continued journey toward 100 years of excellence.
- Chairman Simmons then yielded the floor to Regent Johnson, who highlighted a new partnership between Texas Southern University and West Texas A&M University that resulted in a grant award from the U.S. Department of Education. Through this initiative, both universities will collaborate to design and implement innovative, evidence-based seminars commemorating the 250th anniversary of the United States of America.

VII. Board Business

- Request Approval of Past Board of Regents Meetings Minutes
Action Requested: Approval

Approval of the August 28, 2025, Regular Board Meeting Minutes and the September 22, 2025, Virtual Special Called Board Meeting Minutes was requested.

*[Motion to approve this item by Chairman Simmons; 2nd by Regent Benham.
Motion approved unanimously.]*

- Nomination and Election of Board Officers

Chairman Simmons announced that he will not seek re-election as Chairman of the Board, as he has accepted a new leadership role in higher education that will require his resignation as a member of the Board of Regents.

Nominations for Chairman:

Regent Marilyn Rose nominated Regent Richard Johnson for the position of Chairman.

Regent Lauren Gore nominated Regent James Benham for the position of Chairman.



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Vote for Chairman:

Chairman Simmons first called for a vote for Regent Johnson as he was the first person nominated. The vote was two in favor of Regent Johnson and seven against.

Chairman Simmons next called for a vote for Regent Benham, the second and final person nominated for the position of Chairman. The vote was seven in favor of Regent Benham and two against.

[Regent James Benham is elected Chair of the Texas Southern Board of Regents]

Nominations for Vice Chair:

Regent Benham nominated Regent Gore for the position of Vice Chair. There were no additional nominations for Vice Chair.

Vote for Vice Chair:

Chairman Benham called for a vote. It was noted that there were no nays recorded for Regent Lauren Gore for the position of Vice Chair.

[Regent Gore is unanimously elected Vice Chair of the Texas Southern Board of Regents]

Nominations for Second Vice Chair:

Regent Lauren Gore nominated Regent Richard Johnson for the position of Second Vice Chair. There were no additional nominations for Second Vice Chair.

Vote for Second Vice Chair:

Chairman Benham called for a vote. It was noted that there were no nays recorded for Regent Richard Johnson for the position of 2nd Vice Chair.

[Regent Richard Johnson is unanimously elected 2nd Vice Chair of the Texas Southern University Board of Regents.]

Nominations for Secretary:

Regent Brandon Simmons nominated Regent Marilyn Rose for the position of Secretary. There were no additional nominations for Secretary.

Vote for Secretary:

Chairman Benham called for a vote. It was noted that there were no nays recorded for Regent Marilyn A. Rose for the position of Secretary.

[Regent Marilyn Rose is unanimously elected Secretary of the Texas Southern Board of Regents]

The board took a brief recess immediately following the nominations and election of board officers. The meeting resumed after the recess with Board Business items.

VIII. Administration and Finance Committee- Mr. James Benham



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Mr. John Pittman, Interim Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Business & Administration presented the following items for approval:

- Item 1: Request Approval to Negotiate and Execute Insurance Policies

The Administration requests approval to negotiate and execute insurance policies for fiscal year 2026.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham, 2nd by Regent Baker Hurley. Motion approved unanimously.]

- Item 2: Request Approval to Amend the Existing Contract for Shuttle Bus Services

The Administration requests approval to amend the existing contract for shuttle bus services to and from campus. The proposed amendment establishes regular, scheduled shuttle bus services connecting specified TSU off-campus housing with the University's main campus.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham, 2nd by Regent Gore. Motion approved unanimously.]

- Item 3: Request Approval to Execute a Contract for Payment Gateway Services

The Administration requests approval to execute a contract for payment gateway services—a platform enabling secure, efficient and reliable processing of financial transactions across campus, including electronic billing and a student financial account self-service system.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham, 2nd by Regent Gore. Motion approved unanimously.]

- Item 4: Request Approval to Amend the Existing Contract for Executive Search Firm Services

The Administration requests approval to amend the existing contract with WittKieffer for executive search firm services.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham, 2nd by Regent Gore. Regent Rose Opposed. Motion approved.]

- Item 5: Request Approval to Negotiate and Execute a Contract for Microsoft Corporation Products



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The Administration requests approval to negotiate and execute a contract for Microsoft corporation products for core software, security, support and cloud infrastructure services.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham, 2nd by Regent Johnson. Motion approved unanimously.]

- Item 6: Request Approval to Negotiate and Execute the Renewal of the Cisco DNA Licensing

The Administration requests approval to negotiate and execute the renewal of the Cisco DNA Licensing that supports the University's wireless access network.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham, 2nd by Regent Johnson. Motion approved unanimously.]

- Item 7: Request Approval of a Contract Extension for IT Staff Augmentation Services

The Administration requests approval of a contract extension with Columbia Advisory Group for IT Staff Augmentation Services under the IT Managed Services and Governance, Risk, and Compliance (GRC) Scope of Work agreements.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham, 2nd by Regent Johnson. Regent Rose Opposed. Motion approved.]

- Item 8: Request Approval to Extend the Contract for Unarmed Security Officers

The Administration requests approval to extend the contract for unarmed security officers assigned to the University's on-campus and off-campus residential facilities.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham, 2nd by Regent Johnson. Motion approved unanimously.]

- Item 9: Request Approval to Negotiate and Execute a Contract to Purchase SUVs for the Department of Public Safety

The Administration requests approval to negotiate and execute a contract of purchase SUVs for the Department of Public Safety through the Sheriffs' Association of Texas Cooperative Vehicle Program Contract No. 25-06-1010.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham; 2nd by Regent Gore. Motion approved unanimously.]

**Regent Benham noted that he would like tracking on all assets at all times.*



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- Item 10: Request Approval for the Issuance of Revenue Financing System (RFS) Bonds

The Administration requests approval for the issuance of Revenue Financing System (RFS) Bonds through the Texas Public Finance Authority to advance the University's student housing modernization initiative.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham; 2nd by Regent Baker Hurley. Motion approved unanimously.]

- Item 11: Approval to Amend FY26 Operating Budget

The Administration requests approval to amend the Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Benham, 2nd by Regent Gore. Motion approved unanimously.]

**Regent Gore noted that the University's recent operational improvements have significantly strengthened the admissions process and contributed to increased student enrollment and revenue. A task force worked to streamline systems, resulting in a 74% improvement in admissions application processing compared to Spring 2025 and a 56% improvement over the five-year average. These enhancements reflect the University's progress in efficiently admitting and supporting students, leading to over 400 additional students being enrolled.*

- Item 12: Annual Review of the Endowed and Non-Endowed Investment Policies

[Regents received the annual review of TSU's endowed and non-endowed investment policies, including comparative information on policies from other universities and peer institutions. No changes or amendments to the policies were recommended or made.]

- Item 13: Annual Review of the Debt Policy

[The administration presented the debt policy for annual review by the Board as policy dictates. No changes were recommended or made.]

- Item 14: Endowment Performance Update

[Mr. Chris Wilson presented an endowment performance update and reported an increase in the university endowment. Texas Southern currently has the 8th largest endowment across the 103 Historically Black Colleges and Universities]



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- Item 15: Administration & Finance Information Updates

[Mr. Pittman gave an update on the university's financial statements. Mr. Pittman reported a positive increase to the University's net balance for the fiscal year.]

IX. Academic Affairs, Research and Student Life Committee - Ms. Marilyn Rose

Dr. Carl Goodman, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, presented the following items for approval and/or information:

- Item 1: Request Approval to Renew Contracts for Legal Research and Academic Support Services

The Administration requests approval to renew contracts for the following academic support services: the University's LexisNexis subscription (legal research tool) and the University's BARBRI (bar exam preparation) contract.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Rose; 2nd by Regent Caroline Baker Hurley; Motion approved unanimously.]

Regent Proler acknowledged and recognized Ms. Taylor Hall of the Board Relations Office for her recent accomplishment of passing the Texas Bar Examination.

- Item 2: Request Approval to Renew Affiliation with the Houston Academy of Medicine, Texas Medical Center

The Administration requests approval to renew the University's affiliation agreement with the Houston Academy of Medicine-Texas Medical Center Library to provide online access to medical and research databases and services for health practitioners, students, faculty, and the community.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Rose; 2nd by Chairman Benham; Motion approved unanimously.]

- Item 3: Approval to Appoint a Candidate for Tenure

Provost Goodman recommended Dr. Jane Rubin Ph.D. as a candidate for tenure. Dr. Rubin, who has 20 years of experience in higher education, was selected from 15 candidates and brings a robust scholarly output and a vision for innovation in teaching and learning. Dr. Rubin will be serving as our Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs and Community Engagement.



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[Motion to approve this item by Regent Rose; 2nd by Regent Johnson; Motion approved unanimously.]

- Item 4: University Profile Data Overview

[Dr. Rajanel Crockem informed the Regents of the University's upward trend in student enrollment as well as an uptick in the four-year graduation rate.]

X. Development and Legislative Affairs Committee - Dr. Richard Johnson

Mr. Charlie Coleman presented the following item for approval:

- Item 1: Request Approval for Naming of the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Library

The Board approved naming the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Library as the J.D. Silva Law Library for a three-year period following a \$1 million philanthropic commitment from J.D. Silva.

[Moved by Regent Johnson, 2nd by Chairman Benham. Motion approved unanimously.]

Dr. James White presented the following informational item:

- Item 2: Navy Fleet Week Brief

Dr. James White presented an update on the 2025 Houston Naval Fleet Week, scheduled for November 5-12.

XI. Physical Facilities - Mr. Ben Proler

Ms. Melanie Jackson, Interim Chief Operating Officer, presented the following item for approval:

- Item 1: Request Approval to Negotiate and Execute a Contract with the Texas Facilities Commission

The Administration requests approval to negotiate and execute a contract with Texas Facilities Commission utilizing passthrough funds appropriated to the University during the 89th Legislative Session for the purpose of conducting a study related to the Thurgood Marshall Law Center.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Proler, 2nd by Regent Baker Hurley. Motion approved unanimously.]



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- Item 2: Request Approval to Negotiate and Execute Contracts for the University Towers Renovation

The Administration requests approval to negotiate and execute contracts for the University Towers Renovation

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Proler, 2nd by Regent Baker Hurley. Motion approved unanimously.]

- Item 3: Request Approval to Negotiate and Execute Architectural/Engineering Services

The Administration requests approval to amend its existing contract with Treanor HL for the continuation of architectural/engineering services supporting various campus initiatives, including the Campus Master Plan, the Baseball/Softball Complex, and housing programming for University Towers and the proposed new residence hall.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Proler, 2nd by Regent Sullivan. Motion approved unanimously.]

XII. Audit and Compliance – Mr. Lauren Gore

- Item 1: Request Approval for the Fiscal Year 2026 Annual Internal Audit Plan. Ms. Darlene Brown presented the audit plan for next fiscal year summarizing the plans for the year ahead working closely with administration.

[Motion to approve this by Regent Gore; 2nd by Chairman Benham. Motion approved unanimously.]

XIII. President's Report

- President Crawford highlighted the expansion of Texas Southern University's Aviation Program, announcing the addition of 12 new state-of-the-art aircraft to the University's fleet. He noted that no other university has comparable aircraft in their programs and emphasized that TSU now operates one of the safest aviation programs in the country.
- He discussed the new partnership with Sirius, which will strengthen program growth and competitiveness in line with goals set by the Board. He commended the Executive Director, Provost, and Dean of the College of Science, Engineering, and Technology for their leadership and progress.
- President Crawford provided an update on the Thurgood Marshall School of Law Center development plan. TSU was allocated \$10 million during the 89th Legislative Session to conduct a study for the new facility. The University has been working with the Texas Facilities Commission (TFC), and the formal project kickoff occurred a



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few weeks ago. Quarterly updates will be submitted to the Legislature and shared with the Board, with the goal of entering the next legislative session ready to advocate for full funding.

- He also noted that Homecoming Week is underway, celebrating TSU's culture and tradition. The new Royal Court was crowned the previous evening, with participation from family members, guests, and the Prairie View A&M University Royal Court.
- Dr. Michelle John reported that TSU received a \$2 million congressionally mandated grant from HRSA, which funded the expansion of the campus food pantry and the opening of a new community outreach facility. The new space includes K-12 tutoring, Dr. Zuri Dale's Center for Transformative Health, a clinic, mother's room, and community event space. Dr. John noted that the facility underscores TSU's commitment to serving as a cultural and societal hub for the community.

XIV. Executive Session

The Board entered Executive Session for a discussion on specific matters as outlined in the Executive Session portion of the agenda for this meeting in accordance with the Texas Government Code, Sections 551.071 through 551.074 at 12:25 PM.

XV. Reconvene in Open Session to Consider Actions on Executive Session Items as Necessary

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 3:16 PM with a roll call.

The following Board Members were in attendance and constituted a quorum:

Mr. Brandon L. Simmons, Chairman
Mr. James M. Benham, Vice Chair
Ms. Marilyn A. Rose, Secretary
Mr. Lauren A. Gore
Ms. Caroline Baker Hurley
Dr. Richard A. Johnson III
Mr. Benjamin C. Kohlmann
Mr. Ben Proler

The following Board members were absent:

Ms. Alithea Z. Sullivan
Mr. Kohl E. Crawford, Student Regent, *nonvoting*

XVI. Personnel and Litigation Committee – Mr. Ben Kohlmann

Regent Ben C. Kohlmann & Dr. Cynthia Buckley, Interim Vice President Department of Human Resources and Payroll Services presented the following items for approval:

- Item 1: Request Approval for the Appointment of a Dean for the Barbara Jordan-Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs



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Approval is requested for the appointment of Dr. Calvin Johnson as Dean for the Barbara Jordan Mickey Leland School of Public Affairs, pursuant to Board Policy 61.10, to be effective November 3, 2025 with tenure.

Dr. Cynthia Buckley and Dr. Carl Goodman spoke on Dr. Johnson's extensive experience and qualifications for the position of Dean for the School of Public Affairs.

[Motion to approve this by Regent Kohlmann, 2nd by Regent Baker Hurley. Opposed by Regent Johnson. Motion approved.]

- Item 2: Request Approval for the Appointment of a Vice President for Marketing & Communications

Approval is requested for the appointment of Dr. Jennifer Stephens as Vice President of Marketing and Communications, pursuant to Board Policy 61.10, to be effective no later than November 3, 2025.

[Motion to approve this item by Regent Kohlmann; 2nd by Regent Proler. Motion approved unanimously.]

XVII. Adjourn

With no further business pending before the Board, a motion to adjourn was made by Chairman Benham at 3:27 P.M.; 2nd by Regent Kohlmann; Motion passed.

All supporting materials for informational and action items presented during this meeting are available on the public posting [here](#).

A video recording of this meeting is available [here](#).



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SIGNATURE OF APPROVAL

I certify that the foregoing minutes constitute a true, correct, and complete record of the Standing Committee meeting of the Board of Regents of Texas Southern University held in Houston, Texas on October 16, 2025.

Faith Ruiz
Executive Director
Board Relations Office

February 19, 2026

Date Approved by the Board

Marilyn A. Rose
Secretary
Board of Regents