

MINUTES OF REGUALR MEETING  
THE BOARD REGIONAL UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF OKLAHOMA BOARD OF REGENTS  
JANUARY 24, 2025

A regular meeting of the Board of Regents governing East Central University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Northeastern State University, Northwestern Oklahoma State University and the University of Central Oklahoma was called to order at Southwestern Oklahoma State University, Skyview Suite, Pioneer Events Center at 9:00 a.m., on January 24, 2025.

The following Regents were present for all or parts of the meeting: Jane McDermott, Chair of the Board, presiding; Regents Susan Winchester, Chris VanDenhende, Lake Carpenter, Chuck Perry, Connie Reilly, and Thomas Kupiec. Regents Amy Anne Ford and Ryan Walters were absent.

Notice of the time, date and place of this meeting was submitted to the Secretary of State, and the agenda was posted on the RUSO website and on the door of the meeting room on or before 9:00 a.m. on January 23, 2025, both as required by 25 O.S., Sections 301-314.

I. ANNOUNCEMENT OF FILING MEETING NOTICE AND POSTING OF THE AGENDA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OPEN MEETING ACT

Official action can only be taken on items which appear on the agenda. The RUSO Board of Regents may adopt, approve, ratify, deny, defer, recommend, amend, strike, or continue any agenda item. When more information is needed to act on an item, the Regents may refer the matter to the Chief Executive Officer or Legal Counsel. The Regents may also refer items to staff or committees for additional study. Under certain circumstances, items are deferred to a specific later date or stricken from the agenda entirely.

II. CALL TO ORDER AND REGENTS' ROLL CALL

Regent McDermott called the meeting to order and announced that the meeting notice was filed and the agenda was posted in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Dr. Tatum called role for the meeting.

A. (Action) Discussion and possible action excusing absent Regents.

Regent McDermott noted that Regent Ford requested an excused absence. Regent McDermott made the motion to approve Regent Ford's absence today. Regent VanDenhende seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents Carpenter, Perry, McDermott, Reilly, Kupiec, VanDenhende and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

III. Presentation by Regent Jane McDermott regarding the Chairman's Report.

Regent McDermott gave the Chair's report.

She acknowledged the beginning of a new semester, expressing enthusiasm for the success of the previous semester across all institutions and excitement regarding the enrollment growth at the universities.

Chancellor Burrage was recognized in the audience with a note of appreciation for his contributions. It was mentioned that he would be formally acknowledged later, but appreciation was expressed for his return to the system. His past leadership at Southeastern as president was commended, and it was stated that he is still considered an integral part of the community.

IV. (Action) Discussion and possible action regarding the Consent Docket consisting of previous minutes and academic program modifications.

Regent McDermott moved to approve the consent docket. Regent Kupiec seconded the motion.

The consent docket required a roll call vote. Voting for the motion: Carpenter, Perry, McDermott, Reilly, Kupiec, Van Denhende and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

A. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. Approval of Facilities Tour Meeting Minutes of Special Meeting, November 7, 2024
2. Approval of Minutes of Regular Meeting, November 8, 2024

B. ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

1. East Central University

**New Program Proposals:**

- MS in Applied Psychology
- MS in Sport Psychology

## 2. Northeastern State University

### **New Programs:**

- Bachelor of Science in Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics
- Bachelor of Science in Military Science
- Community Based Leadership, EdD. (CIP 130401)

### **Program Modifications and New Certificates:**

- Accounting, B.B.A. (001)
- Business Administration, M.B.A. (012)
- Communication Studies, B.A. (090)
- Counseling, M.S. (019)
- Drama, B.A. (128)
- Finance, B.B.A. (030)
- Health and Human Performance, B.S. (040)
- History, B.A. (042)
- Health and Sport Science, M.S. (142)
- Physics, B.S. (159)
- Social Work, B.S.W. (102)
- Technology, B.T. (133)
- Digital Audio Engineering (CIP 500903)
- Law and Paralegalism I (CIP 220302)
- Law and Paralegalism II (CIP 220302)
- Sport Analytics (CIP 310501)
- Sport Leadership and Management (CIP 310501)

### **New Minors:**

- Jazz Studies (CIP: 500903)
- Music Production (CIP: 500903)

### **Certificate Modifications:**

- Event Management (179)
- Project Management Certificate (OSRHE: 191)

### **Minor Modifications:**

- Business Minor (for non-Business Majors) (NSU Code: 1104)

## 3. Northwestern Oklahoma State University

### **Program Modifications and New Certificates:**

- Bachelor of Science in Mass Communication (052) – program requirement change, no change in total hours for degree, and program name change to Bachelor of Science in Media and Communication.
- Bachelor of Arts in Visual Arts (085) – program requirement change, no change in total hours for degree
- New Certificate (Undergraduate) request – Trauma Informed Certificate (089)
- New Certificate (Graduate) request – Trauma Informed Certificate

(090)

4. Southeastern Oklahoma State University

**Program Modifications and New Certificates:**

- Bachelor of Science in Liberal & Applied Studies (102)  
Change program outcome #4, change in elective hours. No change in total hours.
- Bachelor of Science in Aviation -Professional Pilot (005) change in courses, no change in total hours.
- Certificate in Nation Building (137) – Embedded certificate, 6 total hours.
- Certificate in Program and Project Management (138) – Embedded certificate, 6 total hours.
- Certificate in Hospitality Management and Tourism (139) – Embedded certificate, 6 total hours.
- Certificate in Cultural Resource Management (140) – Embedded certificate, 6 total hours.
- Certificate in Health Information Systems (141) – Embedded certificate, 6 total hours.
- Certificate in Community Health (142) – Embedded certificate, 6 total hours.
- Master of Business Administration (075) add degree requirement. No change in total hours.

**Department Modifications:**

- We are also requesting approval to split the Behavioral Sciences Department into two departments.

5. Southwestern Oklahoma State University

**Program Modifications:**

- BA English
- BAEd English Ed
- MS Health Information Management
- Doctorate of Pharmacy
- BS Microbiology
- BS Biology
- BA Interdisciplinary Studies

**New Minor:**

- Musical Theater Minor

6. University of Central Oklahoma

**New Program**

- Doctor of Education, Transformative Leadership and Learning

**Program Modifications**

- Associate in Applied Science, Contemporary Music Performance

- Bachelor of Arts, Arts Administration
- Bachelor of Arts, Music
- Bachelor of Arts in Education, History Education
- Bachelor of Arts, Sociology – Human Services
- Bachelor of Arts – Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
- Bachelor of Music, Music – Jazz Performance
- Bachelor of Music, Music – Instrumental Performance
- Bachelor of Music, Music – Vocal Performance
- Bachelor of Music in Education, Music Education
- Bachelor of Science, Biology – Biology
- Bachelor of Science, Biology – Biomedical Sciences
- Bachelor of Science, Biology – Medical Laboratory Science
- Bachelor of Science, Computer Science – Computer Science
- Bachelor of Science, Computer Science – Applied
- Bachelor of Science, Computer Science – Information Science
- Bachelor of Science, Biomedical Engineering – Biomedical Engineering
- Bachelor of Science, Computer Engineering – Computer Engineering
- Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering – Electrical Engineering
- Bachelor of Science, Engineering Physics
- Bachelor of Science, Mechanical Engineering
- Bachelor of Science, Software Engineering
- Bachelor of Science in Education, Science Education – Biology
- Bachelor of Science in Education, Science Education – General Science

V. REPORT OF RUSO COMMITTEE PROCEEDINGS

A. FACILITIES STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Regent McDermott moved to the next agenda item, the Facilities Committee Report.

Regent Carpenter presented the Facilities Stewardship Committee Report. He discussed that the committee had a great tour of Parker Hall and the new Pharmacy Center.

Regent Carpenter acknowledged the Facilities committee meeting was held on Tuesday, January 21st and Regents Ford, Lake, McDermott, and Perry were in attendance. The committee discussed a few topics:

- A brief discussion each university’s deferred maintenance projects and requested everyone get those turned in to the RUSO office.
- A discussion and review of each university’s request for facilities approvals.

1. Presentation regarding deferred maintenance across the system and review of each university's request for facilities approvals.
2. Northeastern State University

- a. (Action) Discussion and possible action regarding facilities approvals for Northeastern State University.

**Project #485-0073 – General Facilities Repairs and Maintenance**

Project Description: This project was originally approved in September 2024 board meeting for \$250,000. We are requesting an additional \$250,000.

General repairs, maintenance, and service agreements for facilities structures and equipment. This will bring the total project to \$500,000.

Requested Funding Approval:

\$250,000 Budget Breakdown:

Renovation/Repairs

Revenue Source(s): 751 Fund-Infrastructure Fee

First approval needed was for Northeastern State University. They had

a project that was originally approved at the September 2024 board meeting for \$250,000. They are now requesting an additional \$250,000 for general repairs, maintenance, and service agreements for facilities structures and equipment. This will bring the total project to \$500,000.

Regent Carpenter made the motion to approve an additional \$250,000 for general repairs, maintenance, and service agreements for facility structures and equipment.

Regent Winchester seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents Carpenter, Winchester, Perry, Reilly, McDermott, Kupiec and Van Denhende. Voting against the motion: none.

3. Southeastern Oklahoma State University

- a. (Action) Discussion and possible action regarding facilities approvals for Southeastern Oklahoma State University.

**Project Name: Biology Flat Roofs**

Project Description: The flat roof is an original tar and gravel roof that had a membrane roofing system with a brick wall around perimeter, multiple drainage areas as well as flashing points. We request approval to bid and award a contract to remove existing roof and install new Thermoplastic polyolefin "TPO System."

Project Number(s): 660-0801

Amount: \$250,000 Estimated

Source of Funds: Fund 295, State Regents Deferred

Maintenance Vendor: To Be Determined

SEOSU have a flat roof on the biology building that is an original

tar and gravel roof that had a membrane roofing system with a brick wall around perimeter, multiple drainage areas as well as flashing points. They requested approval to bid and award a contract to remove existing roof and install new Thermoplastic polyolefin "TPO System."

Regent Carpenter made the motion to allow Southeastern to bid and award a contract not to exceed \$250,000 to remove the existing roof and install a new Thermoplastic polyolefin "TPO System."

Regent Kupiec seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents Carpenter, Kupiec, Perry, McDermott, Reilly, Van Denhende, and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none

#### 4. Southwestern Oklahoma State University

- a. (Action) Discussion and possible action regarding facilities approvals for the SWOSU.

In the October meeting the RUSO regents approved the following.

##### **Fine Arts Center**

Project Description: Southwestern requests permission to bid and award a contract(s) to modify and upgrade the house lighting in the Fine Arts Center. The upgrade would replace all lights with LED. This request is required due to low levels of light becoming a hazard for guests.

Requested Funding Approval: Not to exceed \$70,000 Congruent with Facilities Master Plan or

Strategic Plan: Yes Revenue Source: Fund 290

Southwestern is requesting to amend the request to the following:

##### **Fine Arts Center**

Project Description: Southwestern requests permission to bid and award a contract(s) to modify and upgrade the house lighting in the Fine Arts Center. The upgrade would replace all lights with LED. This request is required due to low levels of light becoming a hazard for guests.

Requested Funding Approval: Not to exceed \$97,000 Congruent with Facilities Master Plan or

Strategic Plan: Yes Revenue Source: Fund 290

In the October meeting the regents approved to bid and award a contract to modify and upgrade the house lighting in the Fine Arts Center. The upgrade would have replaced all lights with LED. The approval was that this project would not exceed \$70,000. However, their bids have come back higher than that so they are requesting an amendment.

Regen Carpenter made the motion to allow Southwestern to bid

and award a contract(s) to modify and upgrade the house lighting in the Fine Arts Center, not to exceed \$97,000.

Regent Winchester seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents Carpenter, Winchester, Perry, McDermott, Reilly, Kupiec, and Van Denhende. Voting against the motion: none.

5. University of Central Oklahoma

- a. (Action) Discussion and possible action regarding facilities approvals for the University of Central Oklahoma.

**Project # 120-0027 Major Repairs and Deferred Maintenance**

Project Description: Request approval to award a contract to Lippert Bros. Construction in an amount not to exceed \$140,000 for the purpose of replacing 26 exterior windows at Mitchell Hall Theater. Current windows are single pane and predate any of our existing building records. Window replacements will eliminate water intrusion and increase energy efficiency. Lippert Bros. Construction has an on-call construction manager contract. (June 2024 RUSO)

Requested Funding Approval:

\$140,000 Budget Breakdown:

\$140,000 construction Vendors:

Lippert Bros. Construction

Congruent with Facility Master Plan or Strategic

Plan: Yes Fund Source(s): Section 13 Offset

UCO requested to award a contract to Lippert Bros.

Construction in an amount not to exceed \$140,000 for the purpose of replacing 26 exterior windows at Mitchell Hall Theater. Current windows are single-pane and predate any of our existing building records. Window replacements will eliminate water intrusion and increase energy efficiency.

Lippert Bros. Construction has an on-call construction manager contract.

Regent Carpenter made the motion to approve the contract for \$140,000 with Lippert Bros. Construction for for the purpose of replacing 26 exterior windows at Mitchell Hall Theater.

Regent Kupiec seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents Carpenter, Kupiec, Perry, McDermott, Reilly, Van Denhende and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.



b. Informational Items:

**Project # 120-0033 Existing Building Renovations and Additions**

Project Description: Issued contract in the amount of \$68,382 to Trinity Builds Construction for the renovation of Liberal Arts Rm 145. The space, which is 505 SF, will serve as a new space for the Journalism Hall of Fame. Trinity Builds Construction has an on-call construction manager contract. (June 2024 RUSO)

Fund Source: Foundation Funds / Private Donations

**Project # 120-0033 Existing Building Renovations and Additions**

Project Description: Issued contract in the amount of \$67,370 to Trinity Builds Construction for the renovation of Education Rms 210/212 which allows the Athletic Training program a larger space to accommodate programmatic needs and equipment as recommended by their accrediting organization.

Work includes electrical, plumbing, paint, and millwork. Trinity Builds Construction has an on-call construction manager contract. (June 2024 RUSO) Fund Source: College of Education & Professional Studies Course Fees

**Project # 120-1010 University Center Renovation & Improvements**

Project Description: Issued change order in the amount of \$25,700 for the Nigh University Center partial roof replacement project (June 2024 approval). The cost increase is related to the fact that the new insulation needed to be fully adhered to avoid damaging existing conduit. The vendor, Next Level Roofing, was selected through the competitive bidding process.

Fund Source: Section 13 Funds

c. (Action) Discussion and possible action regarding the emergency ratification for UCO.

Request ratification of emergency approval granted by Regent and Board Chair McDermott on December 5, 2024 in consultation with Regent and Facilities Stewardship Committee Chair Ford to award contracts to multiple vendors for remediation and repairs related to a burst pipe in Thatcher Hall. **Project # 120-0027 Major Repairs and Deferred Maintenance**

Project Description: Requested approval to award contracts to multiple vendors in a total amount not to exceed \$320,000 for the purpose of remediation and repairs related to a burst pipe that caused excessive water damage to the 1st-3rd floors of the west wing of Thatcher Hall. The affected spaces include approximately 11,000 SF of office spaces, one classroom, and ROTC multipurpose rooms. Repairs include immediate

remediation, asbestos abatement, and replacement of carpet, light fixtures, and ceiling tiles. Lingo Construction has an on-call construction manager contract. (June 2024 RUSO). Certified Commercial Restoration (CCR), Patco Electrical, and Environmental Action are on UCO contract. Interface Americas is on E&I contract. Foundation Building Materials was selected through a competitive bid, beating Grainger who is on state contract.

Requested Funding Approval: \$320,000

Budget Breakdown: \$100,000 for initial response/CCR, \$100,000 for construction/Lingo, \$120,000 for materials.

Vendors: Lingo Construction, Certified Commercial Restoration (CCR), Environmental Action Inc., and Patco Electrical.

Congruent with Facility Master Plan or Strategic

Plan: Yes Fund Source(s): Section 13 Offset

Lastly, Regent Carpenter explained that UCO has requested ratification of emergency approval granted by Regent and Board Chair McDermott on December 5, 2024, in consultation with Regent and Facilities Stewardship Committee Chair Ford to award contracts to multiple vendors for remediation and repairs related to a burst pipe in Thatcher Hall.

UCO had a burst pipe that caused excessive water damage to the 1st-3rd floors of the west wing of Thatcher Hall. The affected spaces include approximately 11,000 SF of office spaces, one classroom, and ROTC multipurpose rooms. Repairs include immediate remediation, asbestos abatement, and replacement of carpet, light fixtures, and ceiling tiles. Lingo Construction has an on-call construction manager contract. (June 2024 RUSO). Certified Commercial Restoration (CCR), Patco Electrical, and Environmental Action are on the UCO contract. Interface Americas is on an E&I contract. Foundation Building Materials was selected through a competitive bid. Regent Carpenter made the motion to approve ratification of the emergency approval granted by Regent and Board Chair McDermott on December 5, 2024, in consultation with Regent and Facilities Stewardship Committee Chair Ford to award contracts to multiple vendors for remediation and repairs related to a burst pipe in Thatcher Hall not to exceed \$320,000. Regent Kupiec seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents Carpenter, Kupiec, Perry, McDermott, Reilly, Van Denhende and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

B. AUDIT AND FINANCE COMMITTEE- Regent Chris VanDenhende

Regent McDermott moved to the next agenda item, the Audit and Finance Committee report. Regent VanDenhende presented the Audit and Finance Committee Report.

Regent VanDenhende explained that the committee meeting was held on Tuesday, January 21st, 2025, and Regents VanDenhende, Ford, McDermott, and Perry all attended the virtual meeting.

He summarized the topics that were discussed. First, a discussion was had on the timing and timeline of audits. Prior to the Nov 1st submission, the audit committee met with Forvis and has done their due diligence on the audit review. We have seen the audits, and they have unqualified opinions. The universities are addressing minor changes. The audits have been submitted to the state as required by law. The universities have all received these financial statements but are still awaiting their single audits. Those should be all done by the end of January.

Regent VanDenhende reminded all presidents that he would like to see a audit of all degrees before the submission of their tuition requests.

1. Presentation regarding system data reported by universities.

The committee reviewed financial data indicators for each university. Regent VanDenhende recognized the appreciation of all the business officers who worked to compile the data for the committee.

2. Southeastern Oklahoma State University

- a. (Action) Presentation and possible action regarding Board policy 2.3.4, Purchases exceeding \$150,000, Southeastern Oklahoma State University is requesting approval to purchase the following items:

**Project Number(s): 660-0901**

Item: Network Infrastructure Upgrades

Description: Request permission to solicit bids and award contract for the demolition of outdated network infrastructure and installation of new network cable infrastructure for several buildings across campus including: Aviation Sciences Institute, Biology, and Science Buildings. Areas may be added or removed depending project scope modifications and cost. The cable manufacturer, CommScope, will certify and provide a 25-year warranty on both cabling and installation. Due to other construction schedules in these buildings, multiple bids may have to be solicited.

Amount: Not to exceed \$500,000

Source of Funds: Fund 295, 2024 Master Lease Deferred Maintenance

Vendor: To Be Determined

Regent VanDenhende explained that SEOSU has requested permission to solicit bids and award a contract for the demolition of outdated network infrastructure and installation of new network cable infrastructure for several buildings across campus including: Aviation Sciences Institute, Biology, and Science Buildings. Areas may be added or removed depending project scope modifications and cost. The cable manufacturer, CommScope, will certify and provide a 25-year warranty on both cabling and installation. Due to other construction schedules in these buildings, multiple bids may have to be solicited. Regent VanDenhende made the motion to allow Southeastern to solicit bids and award a contract for not to exceed \$500,000 for the demolition of outdated network infrastructure and installation of new network cable infrastructure for several buildings across campus including: Aviation Sciences Institute, Biology, and Science Buildings. Regent Kupiec seconded the motion. Voting for the motion: Regents VanDenhende, Kupiec, Perry, McDermott, Reilly, Carpenter and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

3. University of Central Oklahoma

- a. (Action) Presentation and possible action regarding Board policy 2.3.4, Purchases exceeding \$150,000, UCO is requesting approval to purchase the following items:

We request permission to amend and extend its Software License and Maintenance Agreement with StarRez Inc., for an additional 3 years at \$74,044 per year. StarRez is UCO's software for managing and booking its residential and meal plan activities.

Source: Auxiliary... .....\$222,132

For UCO, Regent VanDenhende explained that UCO requested permission to amend and extend its Software License and Maintenance Agreement with StarRez Inc.

Regent VanDenhende made the motion to allow UCO to amend and extend its Software License and Maintenance Agreement with StarRez Inc., for an additional 3 years at \$74,044 per year for a total of \$222,132.

Regent Kupiec seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents VanDenhende, Kupiec, Carpenter, Perry, McDermott, Reilly and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

4. (Action) Discussion and possible action regarding a request for Emergency Ratification

Request ratification of emergency approval granted by Regent and Board Chair McDermott on January 7, 2025 in consultation with Regent and Audit and Finance Committee Chair VanDenhende to approve the internal audit categories.

Regent VanDenhende requested approval for an emergency ratifications for the internal audit categories. These are encumbrance and pre-audit systems, HR and payroll, assessment and billing of tuition and fees, Title 61-public construction, and a follow-up on the prior year audit.

He made the motion to approve the emergency ratification granted by Regent and Board Chair McDermott on January 7, 2025 for the internal audit categories.

Regent Carpenter seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents VanDenhende, Carpenter, Kupiec, Perry, McDermott, Reilly and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

C. EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE- Regent Connie Reilly

1. Presentation regarding NSU offering lower-level courses on the Broken Arrow Campus.

Regent McDermott moved to the Excellence in Education Committee report. Regent Reilly updated everyone on the request from Northeastern State University.

NSU has submitted to the Excellence in Education committee a proposal to create growth on their Broken Arrow Campus. The City of Broken Arrow partnered with NSU to become a public four-year institution of higher education in Broken Arrow. The City of BA has invested \$43 million in the NSU-BA campus with the understanding that it would be a four-year university. BA's population has increased by 50,000 since the 1990s and is expected to double by 2060. It is on track to be the third-largest city in OK. In the last year alone, 1,000 new jobs were added to the workforce, and \$100 million in new capital investments were made. This growing economy requires an educated workforce. High school graduates in the city of BA lack a choice for a traditional four-year public university. In addition, 7,000 BA students are ineligible for Tulsa Achieves. Only students who live in Tulsa County are eligible for Tulsa Achieves. This scholarship program pays up to 100% of tuition and fees for graduating high school seniors attending Tulsa Community College. Regent Reilly explained that the Excellence in Education committee is reviewing the 10-year plan submitted by NSU. She thanked Dr. Hanley

and his team for all the time they have put into this and thinks they are doing a tremendous job.

D. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE- Regent Jane McDermott

Regent McDermott then presented the executive committee report. Regents Reilly, VanDenhende, and herself met on Wednesday, January 15th, to discuss the Affordability Framework.

1. (Action) Discussion and Possible Action regarding the RUSO Affordability and Transparency Framework

The Affordability Framework is recognized as a critical document for the system, setting the tone for the state's mission and commitment to the affordability of higher education.

The RUSO system was established to provide high-quality, four-year degrees that are accessible to all Oklahomans. To reinforce this commitment to affordability, the RUSO Board of Regents is implementing a bold initiative requiring each university to develop a three-year affordability plan. These plans will encourage universities to explore innovative approaches to reducing the cost of a degree while maintaining academic excellence and personalized student support, which are hallmarks of the system.

It is expected that universities will rise to this challenge. Affordability is not solely about maintaining low tuition rates; it involves rethinking every aspect of the higher education experience. Some universities may opt to freeze tuition and fees, while others might prioritize increasing scholarships, developing accelerated degree pathways, or expanding concurrent enrollment opportunities for high school students.

Additional strategies may include forming industry partnerships to offset costs or streamlining operations to reduce expenses.

The Affordability Framework created by RUSO does not impose a uniform approach but instead empowers each university to tailor its strategies to its unique mission and student population. This framework establishes clear guidelines to ensure financial responsibility and effectiveness. The board anticipates reviewing the proposed solutions from each university at the April meeting.

Regent McDermott made a motion to approve the Affordability and Transparency Framework, which mandates that each university develop a three-year strategic plan for affordability to be presented by the April RUSO Regent meeting.

Regent Reilly seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents McDermott, Reilly, Carpenter, Perry, Carpenter, Kupiec, Van Denhende and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

VI. Presentation by Chancellor Sean Burrage

Next on the agenda was a presentation by Sean Burrage, the Chancellor of Oklahoma Higher Education. Chair McDermott welcomed Chancellor Burrage, who expressed appreciation for the board's support of Oklahoma's regional universities and provided updates on key initiatives.

**Value of Regional Universities**

RUSO institutions serve nearly 30,000 students annually, many first-generation or from rural areas. Graduates contribute to the workforce in critical sectors, with 96% employed in Oklahoma within a year of graduation and 88% remaining after five years. RUSO institutions significantly impact local economies and workforce retention.

**Chancellor Priorities**

The Chancellor emphasized increasing degree attainment in Oklahoma, currently at 28% compared to the national average of 36%. Aligning academic programs with workforce needs in STEM, healthcare, and education remains a focus, along with maintaining affordability and access through innovative cost- saving initiatives.

**Budget & Legislative Priorities**

The FY26 budget request seeks a \$95 million increase, including:

- \$42 million for STEM and healthcare programs.
- \$9.3 million for concurrent enrollment and literacy programs.
- \$43.7 million for operational and security enhancements.

Deferred maintenance funding of \$101.3 million is requested to address infrastructure needs, with additional advocacy for scholarships and workforce development programs.

**Closing Comments**

The Chancellor thanked the board for their commitment to affordability and innovation, aligning with the Blueprint 2030 strategic plan. Collaboration with the State Regents continues to support student success and economic growth.

VII. Presentation by President Bo Hannaford regarding the President’s Council Report and possible discussion with RUSO Regents

President Hannaford discussed the RUSO policy changes and expressed that the business officers would be meeting next month. The presidents reviewed the affordability and transparency plan and discussed the profitability study that has been requested. The deferred maintenance was discussed and the desire to get the money upfront due to inflation. President Hannaford is requesting some changes to committee meetings in April due to an HLC conference that week. The presidential evaluations are starting this semester. The presidents discussed the athletic conference bill authored by Representative Moore and are supportive of working with him on that legislation. President Hannaford asked if the regents consider having three regent meetings a year on campuses and the other three in OKC to save on expenses.

VIII. (Action) Presentation and possible action regarding the RUSO University Presidents recommendations presented by leadership at each institution.

A. East Central University President's Recommendations

President Godwin presented his recommendations as reflected in the appendices. Regent McDermott made a motion to approve East Central University's President's recommendations.

Regent Reilly seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents McDermott, Reilly, Carpenter, Perry, Kupiec, Van Denhende and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

1. Personnel
2. Grants (\$0)
3. Purchases

In accordance with RUSO Board policy 2.3.3, Purchases exceeding \$50,000 but not over \$150,000, ECU presents the following as informational items.

- **Johnson Controls, Inc.**  
Replacement of two boilers in Briles Hall  
Source: Fund 650 \$148,317.00
- **Johnson Controls, Inc.**  
Boiler replacement in  
Fentem Hall Source: Fund  
650 \$99,891.90
- **TouchNet Information Systems**  
Annual subscription payment services  
Source: Fund 290 \$74,768.00
- **Fruhauf Uniforms, Inc.**  
Marching band  
uniforms Source: Fund  
730 \$70,540.49
- **Xcel Office Solutions**  
Copier and printer  
leases Source: Fund 730  
\$67,280.00
- **Lily Architects PLLC**  
Consulting services for Knight Hall  
Project Source: Fund 295  
\$65,532.00

B. East Central University President's Report

President Godwin discussed his capital campaign kick-off, and they are trying to raise \$35 million. They are up 6.5% in enrollment and the FTE are up 270 students from last year. They are proud to report growth over the Fall and



Spring. The Dan Hayes STEM Center construction has begun. \$26 million has been raised for the STEM Center. Tiger Tangles is an event that highlights students talents and it will be hosted on February 28th. President Godwin has been very intentional about sharing the RUSO system data created by Dr. Brandon Tatum.

C. Northeastern State University President's Recommendations

Next, President Hanley presented his recommendations as reflected in the appendices. Regent McDermott made a motion to approve Northeastern President's recommendations. Regent Winchester seconded the motion. Voting for the motion: Regents McDermott, Winchester, Carpenter, Perry, Reilly, Kupiec, and Van Denhende. Voting against the motion: none.

1. Personnel
2. Grants and Contracts (\$461,184)
3. Purchases
4. Informational Items  
Vehicle Acquisition... ..... (Aux) \$50,100

D. Northeastern State University President's Report

The spring semester was up by 6.4% Spring over Spring. They are seeing growth in the adult learning and international student populations. A new Chick-fil-a has been opened up on campus and the students are excited about this. 668 graduates last semester and Regent Reilly attended both graduation events. President Hanley announced a few events that are coming up on campus and invited the regents to attend. The construction on the Optometry building is going well and the grand opening will be in July. U.S. News and World Report listed NSU as number 1 in the state for online learning for veterans. They are also recognized as one of the top schools in the world for international students and best value universities.

E. Northwestern Oklahoma State University President's Recommendations

President Hannaford presented his recommendations as reflected in the appendices. Regent McDermott made a motion to approve Northwestern State University's President's recommendations.

Regent Winchester seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: McDermott, Winchester, Carpenter, Perry, Reilly, Kupiec and VanDenhende. Voting against the motion: none.

1. Personnel
2. Grants and Contracts (\$292,551.50)
3. Purchases (none at this time)

#### 4. Informational Items

##### a. Academic Calendar

Attached is the Academic Calendar for 2025-2026 for Northwestern Oklahoma State University. The calendar has been submitted for approval to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education.

##### b. Summer Hours

Northwestern will continue summer work schedule implemented in 2002. Employees will work 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Summer hours will be in effect for 11 weeks; Monday, May 19 thru Thursday, July 31, 2025.

#### F. Northwestern Oklahoma State University President's Report

Their recent research day was the highest participated event they had had thus far. They are up 10% in headcount, and their largest increase was in transfers. They are nearly finished with their fourth roof and will be moving on to the fifth. They had the final bid on their HVAC systems, while their last one is being finished. All other deferred maintenance projects are on track. Fundraising is going well and are wanting to do even more in the second semester. Their largest amount raised is for scholarships. Regent VanDenhende and Regent McDermott commended him on the fundraising for scholarships and how that fits into the affordability framework.

#### G. Southeastern Oklahoma State University President's Recommendations

Dennis Westman presented the SEOSU recommendations as reflected in the appendices on behalf of President Newsom.

Regent McDermott made a motion to approve Southeastern Oklahoma State University's President's recommendations.

Regent Reilly seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: McDermott, Reilly, Carpenter, Perry, Kupiec, Van Denhende and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

##### 1. Personnel

##### 2. Purchases (none at this time)

#### H. Southeastern Oklahoma State University President's Report

Dennis Westman presented for Dr. Newsom. Dr. Newsom is absent due to an illness. Their census date is today, and they are up 4.7% in credit hours and 3.4% in enrollment. They are

excited to see that most of the increase is in undergraduate enrollment. They are renovating the biology building, and the construction fencing went up last week. They have moved all the classes out of the building while the construction is happening. This is being funded with ARPA funding, and the project will last one year. The second project is the science building, the largest

project done in a long time. It is a three-story building and is a \$5.5 million dollar project that needs to be completed by 2026. This is ARPA-funded, and the bids will go out in the Spring. Lastly, they have an upcoming accreditation visit for their Doctorate of Business Administration.

I. Southwestern Oklahoma State University President's Recommendations

President Lovell presented her recommendations as reflected in the appendices. Regent McDermott made a motion to approve Southwestern Oklahoma State University's President's recommendations.

Regent Reilly seconded the motion.

Regent Carpenter asked if the position of student retention was a new position. President Lovell replied that it is not a new position but is a title change.

Voting for the motion: Regents McDermott, Reilly, Carpenter, Perry, Kupiec, Van Denhende and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

1. Personnel
2. Grants and Contracts (\$535,704)
3. Purchases

a. Informational Items

Steris Corporation, Sterilization Equipment for the Biology Department Source E&G .....\$65,116

J. Southwestern Oklahoma State University President's Report

President Lovell welcomed Regents Kupiec and Perry to their campus for the first time. She also commended Dr. Tatum for the data sheet that has been put together for the RUSO system. She discussed how impactful the ESports program and athletic tournaments on campus have an impact on local economic development with groups coming to Weatherford. They are making substantial progress in their engineering accreditation and are hoping to finalize this in two years. SWOSU has been named the #1 best-value college in Oklahoma and #2 ranked in Oklahoma for online bachelor's degrees. When the pharmacy moves out of its current space, the allied health program will move into its space. Regent Winchester is coming to speak to the President's leadership class soon. They had a great graduation and appreciated Regent Carpenter for attending. SWOSU has been working with the Oklahoma National Guard and are thrilled about their renewed partnerships. They are bringing new officers to work with the SWOSU Gold Program. President Lovell ended her comments thanking teachers for the impact they make on students' lives.

K. University of Central Oklahoma President's Recommendations

President Lamb presented his recommendations as reflected in the appendices. Regent McDermott made a motion to approve the University of Central Oklahoma's President's recommendations.

Regent Kupiec seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents McDermott, Kupiec, Carpenter, Perry, Reilly, Van Denhende and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

1. Personnel
2. Grants and Contracts
3. Purchases

a. Informational Items

Chickasaw Telcom Inc., Cisco Secure DDoS Radware. Provides advanced cybersecurity and application delivery solutions. Year 1 of 5-year agreement. Source: Technology Fee.... \$113,611  
Chickasaw Telcom Inc., Cisco Cohesity data management subscription. Source: Technology Fee...

..... \$133,129

The Professional Basketball Club LLC., UCO 2024-2025 OKC Thunder advertising.  
Source: Unrestricted Cash..... \$78,404

Overland Charters, sports team transportation.  
Source: Athletics Fee... .. \$100,000

The Lamar Companies, ACM advertising.  
Source: E&G..... \$75,400

Macco Promotions, Inc., incoming freshmen welcome boxes. Source: E&G... .. \$66,812

Waters Corporation, Xevo TQ-S mass spectrometer system for chemistry research labs and classroom usage.  
Source: Course Fees..... \$52,500

Hyland Software Inc., OnBase document management annual software maintenance renewal.  
Source: E&G..... \$69,352

Northwest Lawn Maintenance Inc., snow and ice removal, as necessary. Source: Auxiliary..... \$50,000

Regional Economic Advisers LLC., professional services to perform an economic impact study.

Source: E&G..... \$65,000

Northwest Lawn Maintenance Inc., lawn maintenance.  
Source: E&G..... \$58,200

Furniture Marketing Group Inc., furniture for Howell Hall.  
Source: E&G..... \$61,383

Embassy Suites Lake Buena Vista, TRIO training  
conference. Source: TRIO Grant...  
..... \$70,000

L. University of Central Oklahoma President's Report

UCO was the MIAA champions in football and their volleyball team were also MIAA champions and made it to the elite 8. UCO is now advertising in the Oklahoma Will Rogers Airport.

President Lamb just got back from the PGA show and UCO is one of 16 universities that have a PGA Management program. The last update was that they have commissioned an economic impact study as it relates to Edmond and Oklahoma City.

IX. (Action) Presentation by Dr. Brandon Tatum and possible discussion with RUSO Regents regarding the CEO's report.

Dr. Tatum discussed opportunities with the Oklahoma Workforce Commission. They have recently hired a new Executive Director and are looking to create a process for entities to apply for the Workforce ARPA funding. He also discussed the guidelines they will be considering when reviewing applications.

The guidelines are as follows: 1) a partnership with another district or career tech center; 2) an initiative focused on a critical workforce area; 3) an employer willing to hire students upon graduation or completion.

Dr. Tatum also mentioned that the RUSO office has begun the process of looking into the RUSO policies and is currently waiting on the universities to provide feedback in policy changes. Chapter 1 of the policy manual has had a completed review and we are moving on to Chapter 2. The business officers at the universities are meeting soon to provide their feedback on chapter 2.

X. Regent's Comments and Announcements

There were no Regents comments or announcements.

XI. Discussion and possible action regarding New Business (not known about or which could not have been reasonably foreseen prior to the time of the agenda).

There was no new business.

- XII. (Action) Vote to enter into executive session pursuant to 25 O.S. 307(B)(4) and (8) for the purpose of discussion and possible action on the following issues:

Regent VanDenhende made a motion to go into Executive Session. Regent Carpenter seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents VanDenhende, Carpenter, Perry, McDermott, Reilly, Kupiec and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

- A. Jackson Shepherd and Mallory Scott v. Regional University System of Oklahoma County ("RUSO") et al., District Court of Oklahoma Case #CJ-2020-2383
- B. Charles E. Sneed and Tabitha Sneed v. Northeastern State University ("NSU"), Acting President Kim Cherry, and NSU Employees, E.C.A.L. [sic et al.], District Court of Cherokee County, Case #CJ-2007-840
- C. Marci D. Walkingstick Dixon v. State of Oklahoma ex rel. the Regional University System of the Oklahoma Board of Regents sic. d/b/a Northeastern State University ("NSU"), Eastern District of Oklahoma Case #CIV-19-391
- D. Tatum Robertson, Eve Brennan, and Marin Rhodes v. University of Central Oklahoma ("UCO") and Board of Regents for the Regional University System of Oklahoma ("RUSO"), Western District of Oklahoma, Case #CIV-2022-836-HE
- E. Dr. Rachel Tudor v. Marie Galindo et al. and Ezra Young and Brittany Stewart v. Dr. Rachel Tudor, Southeastern Oklahoma State University ("SE"), and Regional University System of Oklahoma ("RUSO"), Western District of Oklahoma Case #CIV-2022-480-C
- F. Noreen Swank v. State of Oklahoma ex rel. the Regional University System of Oklahoma Board of Regents d/b/a Northeastern State University ("NSU"), Eastern District of Oklahoma Case #CIV-2024-102-GLJ
- G. Terry Worcester v. East Central University ("ECU"), District Court of Pontotoc County Case #CJ-2019-37
- H. Alan Scott Asher and Nancy Asher v. Northeastern State University-Broken Arrow ("NSU"), and The Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges-Regional University System of Oklahoma ("RUSO"), District Court of Wagoner County Case #CJ-2022-309
- I. Shekhar Rathor v. University of Central Oklahoma ("UCO") EEOC Charge #564-2022-02211
- J. OCR Docket No. 07-23-2169 - Website accessibility complaint against East Central University
- K. US Department of Education Complaint by Margo McKenzie against Northeastern

State University for alleged FERPA violations

- L. MidFirst Bank v. James L. Lindsay II, Northwestern Oklahoma State University ("NWOSU") et al., District Court of Oklahoma County Case #CJ-2022-6342
- M. Northwestern Oklahoma State University Internal Revenue Service Audit
- N. Oklahoma Insurance Department Consumer Complaint against VOYA
- O. Discussion of legal opinion provided by John E. Priddy and next steps
- P. Dr. Ian Gerg v. Southeastern Oklahoma State University ("SE")
- Q. Noah Hankinson v. Sydney Youngblood-Blanton (Southeastern Oklahoma State University Golf Coach) Cause #471-09007-2024 District Court of Collin County, Texas
- R. Dorothy Phelps v. Southeastern Oklahoma State University ("SE"), District Court of Bryan County, Case #CS-24-670

XIII. (Action) Vote to exit Executive Session and return to Open Session.

Regent McDermott made a motion to exit the Executive Session and return to open session. Regent VanDenhende seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents McDermott, VanDenhende, Carpenter, Perry, Reilly, Kupiec and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.

- A. Discussion and possible action to implement matters discussed in Executive Session.

There was no required action from the executive session.

XIV. (Action) Vote to Adjourn the Board Meeting

Regent Kupiec made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Regent Winchester seconded the motion.

Voting for the motion: Regents Kupiec, Winchester, Carpenter, Perry, McDermott, Reilly, Van Denhende and Winchester. Voting against the motion: none.