



MINUTES  
BOARD OF REGENTS REGULAR MEETING  
February 21, 2025, 10:30 am.

The Board of Regents for Eastern Oklahoma State College met for the regularly scheduled meeting at 10:30 am, in the Board of Regents Conference Room, Second Floor of the Bill H. Hill Library Building, 1301 W. Main Street, Wilburton, Oklahoma 74578

Members of the Board present:

Leland Walker, Chair  
Latt Jeffrey, Vice-Chair  
Larry Spradley, Secretary  
Brian Lott, Member  
Cara Bland, Member  
Eric Bilderback, Member  
Jerry Hamilton, Member

Members absent: None

Others present:

Dr. Janet Wansick, President  
Trisha White, Vice President of Business Affairs  
Dr. Randy Harp, Vice President of Academics & Development  
Anne Brooks, Asst. Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Stephanie Giacomo, Institutional Advancement Director  
Dr. Cathy Cogburn, Faculty Council Chair  
Colby Carpenter, Staff Council Chair  
Candace Raney, Executive Assistant to the President & Assistant to the Board  
Hannah Truitt, Director of Retention & Recruitment  
Lucas Hedgecock, Housing & Project Management Coordinator  
Jacob Sitton, Marketing Director  
Maebrey Wallace, Student Government Vice-President

I. Regent Walker called the meeting to order at 10:30 am.

II. Candace Raney took roll and declared a quorum present.

**III. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS:**

Regent Walker, the Chairman of the Board, asked President Wansick to introduce the guests. President Wansick began by introducing the attendees for the meeting. She noted that the usual staff were present, with a few additions. Colby Carpenter, the Staff Council Chairperson, and Dr. Cathy Cogburn, the Faculty Council Chairperson, were introduced. President Wansick also introduced Maebrey Wallace, a student worker in the President's office, who is



representing Eastern's Student Government Association. Maebrey is assisting with technical issues for the day and helps with various other responsibilities around campus.

**IV. ACTION**

**1. Board Minutes of the Meeting held January 17, 2025.**

Regent Spradley moved, and Regent Hamilton seconded to approve the board minutes as presented.

Those voting aye: Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, Regent Lott, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker      No: None      Abstentions: Regent Bilderback  
Absent: None

The motion carried.

**2. Finance Committee Report**

The payroll and claims report was presented and discussed during the Finance Committee meeting, with all items reviewed and recommended for approval by the committee. It was also noted that all board members had been provided with the meeting materials for review, but only committee members attended the meeting. Board members with any questions or concerns were encouraged to reach out to one of the committee members prior to the meeting for clarification.

Regent Jeffrey moved, and Regent Spradley seconded to approve the Finance Committee Report as presented.

Those voting aye: Regent Bilderback, Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, Regent Lott, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker      No: None      Abstentions: None  
Absent: None

The motion carried.

**A. Payroll & Claims**

Regent Bland moved, and Regent Hamilton seconded to approve the payroll and claims as presented.

Those voting aye: Regent Bilderback, Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, Regent Lott, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker      No: None      Abstentions: None  
Absent: None

The motion carried.



**B. RFP 25-15 Retrofit Lighting Proposal**

The Finance committee recommended to the board the approval of the lighting retrofit proposal for Johnson Hall, which was highlighted as the facility to receive the retrofit. The grant, totaling \$86,500, was aimed at improving energy efficiency, and it was suggested that Johnson Hall be the primary focus for the lighting upgrades. Ms. White explained that Johnson Hall was chosen due to the extended hours the lights are on, resulting in greater potential savings for the college. Due to funding limitations, it was noted that only one building would be retrofitted at this time.

Regent Bland moved to accept Entegrity's bid, which totaled \$71,917.00 for the lighting retrofit in Johnson Hall, with Regent Jeffrey seconding the motion.

Those voting aye: Regent Bilderback, Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, Regent Lott, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker      No: None      Abstentions: None  
Absent: None

The motion carried.

**C. Weapons on Campus Legislation**

President Wansick presented a resolution which was brought forward in response to a request from the Oklahoma State Regents office, as several gun-related bills have been filed for the 2025 legislative session that may impact the current law on weapons on campus. The resolution encourages the legislature not to pass a law allowing concealed carry-on campus and supports maintaining the current law.

The resolution emphasizes that the current law provides college or university presidents, including Dr. Wansick, the discretion to grant individuals the right to carry a weapon on campus, but otherwise limits weapons to law. It was noted that exceptions are rare and typically involve faculty and staff members, with no students having ever requested an exception.

The discussion highlighted the importance of knowing who is carrying weapons on campus to help law enforcement identify potential threats in case of a security situation. The resolution reflects the belief that the existing law is effective in ensuring safety and should remain in place

The resolution was moved to be approved by Regent Bland and seconded by Regent Spradley

Those voting aye: Regent Bilderback, Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, Regent Lott, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker      No: None      Abstentions: None  
Absent: None

The motion carried

### **3. Governance Committee Report**

The board discussed the timeline for selecting a new president. It was noted that there were differences between the timeline presented by the Governance Committee and the one provided by a subcommittee, consisting of Regent Spradley and Regent Hamilton, tasked with reviewing it. The goal of speeding up the process was to ensure the new president could be involved in the budgeting process.

The timeline from the Governance Committee, which was patterned after the sample included in the packet provided by the Chairman during the January Board meeting, lacked specific dates for when certain actions would be completed, particularly with regard to the interviews. The subcommittee's timeline, however, included a more aggressive approach, aiming to expedite the process without rushing. The key difference between the two timelines was the timing of the special board meeting, with the Governance Committee's timeline suggesting May 9th and the subcommittee's suggesting April 29th. Both timelines still aim for the final selection to be made by May 16th, with hopes for the new President to begin shortly thereafter.

There was some confusion about an email that was sent but never received by the chairman, which contributed to the discrepancies between the two timelines. The subcommittee's timeline allowed for background checks and contract approvals to be completed by May 16th, ensuring that the announcement of the new president could be made officially. After a brief discussion, the board agreed to approve the subcommittee's timeline, which was seen as the most practical solution to meet the deadlines and ensure a smooth transition for the incoming president.

Regent Bilderback made the motion and Regent Jeffrey seconded

Those voting aye: Regent Bilderback, Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, Regent Lott, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker      No: None      Abstentions: None  
Absent: None

The motion carried

### **4. Job Description-President**

The board discussed the job description that President Wansick, Regent Bland, and Regent Jeffrey worked on and submitted to the board members a couple of weeks ago. During the committee meeting, a few changes were made, including a modification to the responsibilities regarding policy and governance, which is highlighted in yellow in the provided document. Additionally, the application deadline was adjusted based on the timeline, and it was agreed that the application deadline should be set to March 24th.

Regent Jeffrey made the motion and Regent Bland seconded to approve the job description with the necessary changes, including the vocabulary adjustment and the revised application deadline



Those voting aye: Regent Bilderback, Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, Regent Lott, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker      No: None      Abstentions: None  
Absent: None

The motion carried

### **5. Academic Affairs Committee Report**

The Academic Affairs Committee reported on recent proposals for new degrees and certificates. The process for advancing these proposals begins with faculty working with their dean to propose a new program, which is then reviewed by the academic affairs office. If approved, the proposal moves to the Committee on Curriculum and Academic Policy (CCAP). After CCAP's approval, the proposal is sent to the Academic Affairs Committee, and once they approve it, it goes to the full board for final approval. If the board approves, the proposal is then forwarded to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. If approved by the state, the changes are submitted to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the Department of Education.

The proposals presented to the board include:

1. Certificate in Athletic Coaching
2. Native American Studies, AA and Certificate
3. Program modification: Pre-Elementary Education, AA
4. Program modification: Horticulture

Regent Hamilton moved to accept the report and recommendations from the Academic Affairs Committee, and Regent Bilderback seconded the motion.

Those voting aye: Regent Bilderback, Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey, Regent Lott, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker      No: None      Abstentions: None  
Absent: None

The motion carried

### **NEW BUSINESS UNFORESEEN AT THE TIME AGENDA WAS POSTED**

None

### **V. GENERAL INFORMATION/REPORTS REQUIRING NO ACTION BY THE BOARD**

#### **President's Report-Dr. Janet Wansick**

##### **Marketing and Community Outreach:**

President Wansick updated the board on the new initiative to promote Eastern through banners in local newspapers, specifically in Clayton and Talihina, advertising degree



completion and enrollment. She mentioned that the banners are strategically placed to maximize visibility and will be updated as needed.

**Community College Data:**

The board reviewed data compiled by the Oklahoma Association of Community Colleges (OACC) that highlights the significant contributions of community colleges. Key points included community colleges handling 77% of concurrent classes and serving 77,000 students statewide. Community colleges are also noted for their affordability. This data is shared with legislators to advocate for community colleges, particularly during meetings with the Rural Community College Caucus. President Wansick discussed the importance of expanding the reach of this information, suggesting that it be shared through community organizations such as Lions Clubs and Rotary Clubs.

**Deferred Maintenance and Funding:**

President Wansick highlighted the ongoing discussions with legislators regarding deferred maintenance funds. She noted that while these funds are allocated for the next three years, the push is to receive the full amount sooner to mitigate rising costs due to inflation. This will allow for faster progress on campus projects.

**Student Enrollment and Graduation Data:**

There was interest in getting more specific data about Eastern's performance compared to other colleges, particularly in areas like nursing and healthcare. It was suggested that we track and share Eastern's rankings in specific fields and areas where we perform well.

**Sapphire Ball:**

President Wansick provided an update on the upcoming Sapphire Ball scheduled for March 29th. She announced the distinguished alumni awardees: Justin Kennedy, Lucy Mueller, and the Fugitt Foundation, along with Dr. Cogburn (faculty) and Patricia Rector (staff) as awardees. The ball is Eastern's largest fundraiser for student scholarships. Board members were encouraged to attend or contribute auction items, and an email was sent to board members regarding tickets and donations.

**Denmark Student Exchange:**

She informed the board that the Denmark exchange students will be visiting Eastern from March 25th to April 1st, engaging in various activities on campus.

**Regent's Report**

**A. Land Sale Committee Update**

Regent Jeffrey provided an update on the ongoing efforts regarding the sale of the Degnan property, which has been in progress for several years. The committee has faced challenges, particularly with deeds and discussions with OMES about the sale. Initially, OMES wanted to manage the sale process without proper authorization, which was stopped.



The next steps involve gathering information and presenting it to the board for approval. Once the board identifies which pieces of property are to be sold, an RFP for a realtor will be issued. The focus is on finalizing which parcels will be marketed and how they will be handled.

A specific issue discussed was the piece of property tied up with the Department of the Interior. This is related to the Degnan property, which includes the land Wilburton Public Schools mistakenly sold, not realizing it was under Eastern's ownership. The committee is considering various options for this land, including potential trade or sale. However, they are still waiting for further information from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) on how to proceed.

Regent Jeffrey clarified that the board has the authority to manage this process and can decide how to move forward, whether through sale, trade, or another option.

#### **B. Community Roundtable Update:**

Regent Jeffrey provided an update on the Community Roundtable, which was established to bring together community leaders from Wilburton to discuss various projects that involve Eastern Oklahoma State College, particularly those that require land easements. One of the significant ongoing projects discussed was the city's trail system, which would need an easement on Eastern's land. This project, which was originally denied funding, is now back in progress and is seeking approval again.

Additionally, representatives from KEDDO attended the meeting and provided updates on funding opportunities for various community projects. One notable discussion was the possibility of partnering with Eastern for the creation of an AgriPlex, an expo center designed to bring in events, tourism, and increased sales tax revenue to the area. Although Eastern would not be responsible for funding the project, they could potentially contribute real estate for the project's development.

The roundtable also covered the topic of deferred maintenance funding. Eastern, along with other community colleges, has been advocating for the release of deferred maintenance funds sooner than planned, allowing for more immediate action on critical campus projects. This was seen as especially important given the rising costs due to inflation and other national factors.

Regent Jeffrey emphasized Eastern's crucial role in local community development and highlighted the potential for partnerships with local municipalities and other institutions. The meeting also touched on tax initiatives, particularly a proposed tax that would benefit Eastern. Regent Jeffrey and others are exploring how the tax could be structured, with input from the county commissioners. He plans to work with attorneys to ensure that the funds from this initiative would directly benefit Eastern while also supporting local economic development.

As the discussion around the tax initiative progressed, momentum seemed to build, with efforts being made to draft a newspaper article to inform the public and generate support for the proposal. Regent Jeffrey stressed that the goal was to get the tax initiative passed to provide long-term benefits for Eastern and the surrounding community.



**Wellness Center Update by Stephanie Giacomo:**

Stephanie provided an update on the Health and Wellness Center project, which has completed its planning phase. The total cost to bring the project to life is estimated at \$11 million, which includes the first three years of operation before it becomes profitable or sustainable. The project is currently in discussions with two potential partners, though these partnerships are not public yet. These partners could provide mutual benefits for the Wellness Center's location, and the intention is to submit the project for a congressionally directed spending request through the City of Wilburton once the submission window reopens.

Additionally, Stephanie mentioned a lunch meeting with another potential partner, highlighting the progress in securing funding for the project. Although the project is "shovel-ready" and could proceed as soon as funding is secured, the team is eager to finalize partnerships before publicly announcing them.

Stephanie shared that they are in talks with a local government entity that might provide resources, and a medical provider that could serve as a tenant and assist with the center's operations. Private foundations are also being considered as potential partners.

She also discussed the availability of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds, which were initially allocated for another project that was not realized. These funds could potentially be redirected for the Wellness Center, as they are meant for public health initiatives, including medical treatment and prevention in Latimer County. The urgency of spending these funds before the December 2026 deadline adds an element of time sensitivity to the project.

Finally, the project is interconnected with other community initiatives, such as potential upgrades to the local ball fields and possibly the expansion of the rodeo arena. These discussions have led to a chain reaction of potential developments that could benefit the broader community. There is significant excitement around the project, with potential partners eagerly reaching out, and Stephanie emphasized the importance of collaboration and building relationships to ensure the project's success.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting is scheduled for March 14th, with the Finance and External Relations committees set to meet on March 7th.

**Community Event:** A reminder was given about the play production being presented by the Community Arts Council at 7:00 PM tonight, 7:00 PM Saturday, and 2:00 PM Sunday. Board members were encouraged to attend and show support for the event.

**Search Committee Update:** The members of the official search committee were confirmed, including Colby Carpenter (Staff Council Chair), Dr. Cogburn (Faculty Council Chair), and Regents Lott, Spradley, and Jeffrey. The committee will coordinate via email and share necessary information with Ms. Denny.

**Agenda Items:** A request was made to add a category for "unforeseen business" to the agenda in case something arises unexpectedly. It was confirmed that this is covered under the "New Business" section of the agenda, but it was noted that new business must adhere to the legal requirements under the Open Meetings Act.

**I. ADJOURNMENT**

Regent Lott moved, and Regent Hamilton seconded to adjourn at 11:43 pm.

Those voting aye: Regent Bilderback, Regent Bland, Regent Hamilton, Regent Jeffrey,  
Regent Lott, Regent Spradley, Regent Walker      No: None      Abstentions: None  
Absent: None  
The motion carried

**CERTIFICATE**

I, Larry Spradley, the duly appointed Secretary of the Board of Regents for Eastern Oklahoma State College, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing are true and correct copies of the minutes of this Board at a Regular Scheduled Meeting hereof, truly, and lawfully held on February 21, 2025.

  
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Leland Walker, Chair

  
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Larry Spradley, Secretary