



# MINUTES

of the

**February 7, 2025, Special Meeting**

of the

**Board of Regents *for the***

**Oklahoma Agricultural & Mechanical Colleges**



**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS**  
**FOR THE OKLAHOMA AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGES**  
**FEBRUARY 7, 2025**

*Notice of this meeting was filed with the Oklahoma Secretary of State on February 5, 2025.*

The Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges met in the Regency Room, 460 Student Union, on the campus of Oklahoma State University in Stillwater Oklahoma, on February 7, 2025.

Board members in attendance: Mr. Jimmy Harrel, Chair; Mr. Rick Walker, Vice Chair; Mrs. Blayne Arthur; Mr. Cary Baetz; Mr. Chris Franklin; Mr. Joe D. Hall; and Mr. Billy G. Taylor.

Absent: None

Others in attendance: Mr. Jason Ramsey, Chief Executive Officer; Dr. Jeanette Mendez, Provost and Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs, Oklahoma State University (OSU); Dr. Johnny Stephens, President, OSU-Center for Health Sciences (OSU-CHS)/Interim President, OSU-Tulsa; Mr. Chad Weiberg, Director of Athletics; Mr. Kyle Wray, Senior Vice President, System Affairs, OSU; Mr. Jerome Loughridge, Senior Vice President/Chief of Staff, OSU; Mr. Eric Polak, Interim Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance, OSU; Ms. Megan Horton, Associate Vice President of Brand Management, OSU; Dr. Jim Hess, Vice Provost/Professor, OSU-CHS; Ms. Michelle Finley, Chief Audit Executive; Mr. Steve Stephens, General Counsel; Mr. Steve Thompson, Director of Public Policy; Ms. Karlee Belle Gholson, Deputy Director of Public Policy; and Mrs. Nicole Nixon, Executive Administrative Assistant.

Chair Harrel called the meeting to order at approximately 9:01 a.m.

**I. BOARD OF REGENTS' BUSINESS**

A. Approval of Agenda

Regent Taylor moved and Regent Hall seconded to approve the Agenda.

Those voting Aye: Board Members Arthur, Baetz, Callahan, Franklin, Hall, Harrel, Taylor, Walker. No: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: None. The motion carried.

(The Agenda is identified as ATTACHMENT A and attached to these minutes.)

B. Proposed executive session, if approved by the required number of Board members present, for the following purpose(s):

a. Discussion regarding an interim appointment to fill the position of President of Oklahoma State University and the OSU System (Oklahoma Open Meeting Act §307(B)(1).)

At approximately 9:02 a.m., Regent Franklin moved and Regent Walker seconded that the Board convene in Executive Session for the stated purpose.

Those voting Aye: Board Members Arthur, Baetz, Callahan, Franklin, Hall, Harrel, Taylor, Walker. No: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: None. The motion carried.

Open Session

At approximately 10:07 a.m., Regent Taylor moved and Regent Franklin seconded that the Board reconvene in Open Session.

Those voting Aye: Board Members Arthur, Baetz, Callahan, Franklin, Hall, Harrel, Taylor, Walker. No: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: None. The motion carried.

C. Consider or take any action with reference to the matters contained in the immediately preceding item

Regent Arthur said this week's events have come as a surprise to many, and she knows and understands there is a range of emotions across OSU's students, faculty, staff, and alumni. During times of transition, it is natural to feel uncertainty; however, as an alum, a local in Stillwater, and a fellow Regent, she believes she can speak for her colleagues in the room by saying this Board is committed to ensuring the strength, stability, and success of the OSU System. She said OSU has a proud history of resilience and excellence and will continue to build on this legacy moving forward. There is no one better to help ensure this than Dr. Jim Hess.

Regent Arthur said the Board is grateful Dr. Hess is willing to step forward in this time to lead the incredible university. Not only is he an administrator, but he also has a tenured career as a teacher, researcher, and honorable public servant. Regent Arthur expressed her appreciation to Dr. Jeanette Mendez for her service as acting president. She also thanked the community's patience as the Board navigated through sensitive issues this past week with care and discretion.

Regent Arthur moved and Regent Walker seconded to appoint Dr. Jim Hess as Interim President of Oklahoma State University and the OSU System.

Those voting Aye: Board Members Arthur, Baetz, Callahan, Franklin, Hall, Harrel, Taylor, Walker. No: None. Abstentions: None. Absent: None. The motion carried.

Chair Harrel thanked Regent Arthur and all the Board members who have worked throughout the week on this matter.

Dr. Hess came before the Board and said he is excited and honored to accept the role of Interim President of OSU. Having served at OSU-CHS, he has witnessed firsthand the transformative power of OSU's impact across Oklahoma. His commitment is to always put students first; they are

the heart and soul of the University, and he is excited to meet so many of them in coming weeks and months, whether in Stillwater, Tulsa, Okmulgee, or Oklahoma City. Simply put, the students' success is the University's success, and they represent the best of what OSU has to offer.

Dr. Hess also thanked the University's amazing alumni, donors, and friends. Their support provides life-changing opportunities for OSU's students and expands OSU's impact across Oklahoma and beyond. He said he looks forward to working with the teams at the OSU Alumni Association and the OSU Foundation to advance the University's land-grant mission and to create even more opportunities for OSU's students to succeed in their lives ahead.

Dr. Hess said it really is true that the strength of the Cowboy family lies within all of us, no matter where we are. He said he will take this strength with him as we move OSU forward.

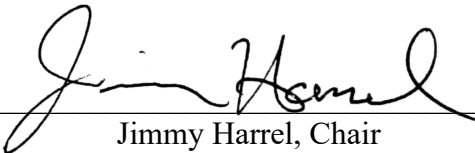
Chair Harrel said Dr. Hess has been the driving force behind improving OSU's College of Veterinary Medicine program and conducted a lot of work in Tulsa when OSU-CHS needed help. He said the Board is very proud to have Dr. Hess as the interim president. Dr. Hess thanked Chair Harrel for his comments.

Chair Harrel thanked those in attendance for their interest in OSU.

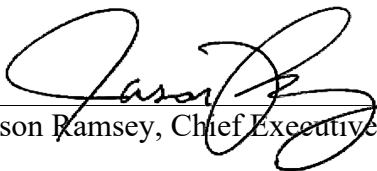
E. Meeting adjournment

Chair Hall adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:13 a.m.

BOARD OF REGENTS FOR THE OKLAHOMA  
AGRICULTURAL AND MECHANICAL COLLEGES

  
Jimmy Harrel, Chair

ATTEST:

  
Jason Ramsey, Chief Executive Officer

Certified correct minutes subject to the approval of the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges on March 7, 2025.

  
Nicole Nixon, Executive Administrative Assistant



**AGENDA**  
**OSU/A&M Board of Regents**  
**Special Board Meeting**

**February 7, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Oklahoma State University**  
**Regency Room, 460 Student Union**  
**Stillwater, Oklahoma**

*Notice of this meeting was filed with the Secretary of State on February 5, 2025.*

**I. BOARD OF REGENTS' BUSINESS:**

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. Proposed executive session, if approved by the required number of Board members present, for the following purpose(s):
  - a. Discussions regarding an interim appointment to fill the position of President of Oklahoma State University and the OSU System.  
*See 25 O.S. § 307(B)(1).*
- C. Consider or take any action with reference to the matters contained in the immediately preceding item
- D. New business unforeseen at time agenda was posted
- E. Meeting adjournment