

Minutes from Fall 2024 meeting (draft) 11-23-2024 9-12:30 p.m.
Submitted by Josie McQuail, secretary (volunteer, now elected)

Professor Troy Smith (TTU), 2nd vice president of 4 year public universities, sent regrets; Professor Máté Wierdl, U of Memphis was on sabbatical but attended and co-chaired the meeting. Josephine McQuail (retired, TTU) volunteered as secretary for the meeting and co-chaired. The meeting was recorded but due to some sensitive information that was shared, that recording cannot be posted on our webpage.

Attendees: To the best of my recollection, besides myself (Josie McQuail), Julia Gruber, Dora Estes, David Lee, Máté Wierdl, Linda White, Alfred Lutz. Ann Langendorfer, and Fred Jordan [perhaps never actually connected up but tried!] attended the meeting. Please remind me of others who may have attended. The general meeting was followed by a brief business meeting during which mainly the Foundation of the Tennessee Conference was discussed. We need to be sure to begin with introductions with brief descriptions and institutional affiliations.

Máté Wierdl briefly discussed the topic of public higher ed after 2024 election. Máté brought up Project 2025 and Hungary. Linda White brought up lack of shared governance at LeMoyne Owen and their continued efforts to assert faculty rights.

Member input -- we discussed foreign students, our fears about admissions of foreign students in graduate programs and funding for students. We also discussed the idea of having a lobbyist to replace Coley McGinnis, who served as our “legislative liaison” for many years. The notion of finding a student intern to serve as our lobbyist was considered and recommended by Josie McQuail, but with good points made by Alfred Lutz about the need for any lobbyist for higher ed faculty to be effective that person would have to be either an active faculty member or a retired faculty member. Technically, to be considered an “active” conference we need a legislative liaison.

Members spoke about their respective universities (TTU, MTSU, University of Memphis, TSU, LeMoyne Owen). On behalf of Cynthia George, Josie McQuail spoke a little about TSU and the initiatives Cynthia was promoting there with others (see taaup.org)

Members were told of our intention to apply for a Conference Development grant, which is one of the only ways for a state conference to receive funds. \$8,439.00 was requested in a proposal described as a “Communications Enhancement/Recruiting Proposal.” Besides recruiting members through speaker and other events, the proposal suggested working on our webpage, TAAUP.org.

Treasurer’s report: Dora Estes had just expressed willingness to stand as candidate for treasurer and serve again. Josie McQuail (acting treasurer) gave the treasurer’s report

Dora Estes and Josie McQuail in Fall 2024 re-started a CD from our Regions account to get a better interest rate – the previous CD had stopped accruing much interest.

Checking:	\$26,470.34
16 month CD (matures 2/22/2026)	\$31,373.50
Total as of 10/30/2024	\$65,782.84

At the end of the general meeting, we held a vote for officers. AT the meeting, pending a vote via mail by members not able to be present, by acclamation, Máté Wierdl was re-elected as President of the Tennessee Conference of the AAUP, Dora Estes as Treasurer, Josie McQuail as secretary, Cynthia George as Vice President of Four Year Public Universities, David R. Johnson as Vice President of Two Year Public Universities; unfortunately, the VP of Private Universities is vacant, and so is a new VP position we created a few years ago, VP for Contingent Faculty. If you would like to volunteer for this position or if you know anyone who you think would be effective and is willing to serve, please let us know. Descriptions of the roles can be found under the heading of “Constitution” on the TAAAP.org page.

For members who could not be present, a mail-in ballot was created which conformed to national AAUP criteria. Instructions were e-mailed to members and posted on the taaup.org page. No mailed in ballots were received.

The Business meeting which followed the general meeting dwelt mainly on the Tennessee Foundation, and members of the Tennessee Foundation (David Lee, Josie McQuail, and Dora Estes discussed updating the application form and how funds could be spent besides helping with “seed money” to aid faculty members in filing a lawsuit if victims of employment discrimination by their university or college or the like. The Tennessee Foundation had \$20,140.31 as of Oct. 2024.