



## **TSET Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust Fund

Friday, February 20, 2026 at 9:00 AM CST

State of Oklahoma: DOT Training Center, 5307 NE 122nd Street, Buffalo Room North, Oklahoma City, OK 73131

**I. Open Meeting Act Announcement and Call to Order** – Chairman Rowe called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. and announced that all requirements of the Open Meeting Act had been met.

TSET Board Members present were Ken Rowe, Jennifer Needham, Joe Hill, and Runako Whittaker. Marshall Snipes, Jack Allen, and Aaron Harmon were absent.

TSET staff members present were Julie Bisbee, Susan Yingling, Jonas Mata, Sam Carrillo, Taylor Verkler, Dylan Jasna, Kelly Parker, Megan Meers, Thomas Larson, Tonia Lowrey, Lance Thomas, and Sjonna Paulson. Also present were Niki Batt and Jillian Welch from the Oklahoma Attorney General's Office as legal counsel to the TSET Board.

### **II. Governance Committee Report -**

**A. Discussion and possible action regarding TSET Board Officer elections** – Rowe asked if there were any nominations for vice-chair and chair. Hill moved to nominate Ken Rowe as Chair and Jennifer Needham and Vice-Chair. Whittaker provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker***

**B. Discussion and possible action regarding TSET Board Committee assignments** – Bisbee said that Governance Chair, Jennifer Needham, had asked members if they had any interest in changing committees, but no requests were made. Chairman Rowe moved to leave the current committee membership in place with Jack Allen as Chair and Runako Whittaker as member of the Program Committee; Jennifer Needham as Chair and Marshall Snipes as member of the Governance Committee; Aaron Harmon as Chair and Joe Hill as member of the Public Information Outreach Committee; and Marshall Snipes as Chair and Aaron Harmon as member of the Agency Operations Committee with the TSET Board Chair serving as an ad hoc member on all committees. Needham provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker***

**III. Possible discussion, revision, and vote to approve the Minutes of the November 20, 2025 Regular Board Meeting** – Chairman Rowe asked if there were any changes or edits to the meeting minutes from the November 20, 2025 Regular Board meeting. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Needham moved approval of the November 20, 2025 meeting minutes. Chairman Rowe provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker***

#### **IV. Executive Director's Report**

**A. Presentation of FY25 Annual Report** – Bisbee recognized Dylan Jasna to present the FY25 TSET Annual Report on behalf of Sarah Carson who was unable to attend the meeting due to illness. Jasna presented a high-level overview of the FY25 TSET Annual Report. He said the theme of the report was “Past, Present, and Future” and was modeled after the TSET 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event and booklet. He said most of the report covered the FY25 results, but it also included the full timeline of the 25 years of TSET’s existence. Major milestones were that the smoking rate had decreased by more than half since TSET’s inception, going from 28% in 2001 to 14% in 2024, as well as the release of the book *The Battle Against Big Tobacco and the Birth of TSET* to commemorate TSET’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Health education was another big focus of FY25 for TSET and highlighted the *Tobacco Stops With Me* and *Shape Your Future* campaigns. Jasna also reported on the Healthy Living Program’s continued community-based work in Oklahoma. He concluded with an overview of TSET’s involvement in the advancement of research and support of physicians in rural and underserved areas. The report would be posted on TSET’s website after it was accepted by the Board, distributed to appointing authorities

**1. Discussion and possible action to accept TSET FY25 Annual Report** – Whittaker moved to accept the TSET FY25 Annual Report. Needham provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

**Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker**

**B. Legislative Update** – Bisbee recognized TSET Director of Public Information & Government Affairs to present the update on the current legislative session. Larson referred the Board to a handout he had distributed to them that listed many of the bills that TSET was currently tracking. He said the list would be much shorter after the March 5<sup>th</sup> deadline because several bills would not move forward. Larson presented a high-level overview of the TSET-related bills and joint resolutions. There were no questions and there was no discussion. No action was needed.

**V. Discussion and possible action on Legacy Grant agreements** – Bisbee recognized TSET Director of Grants Management, Kelly Parker, to give a high-level overview of the status of the Legacy Grant agreements. Parker said that TSET had received 10 of the 14 Legacy Grant Cooperative Agreements that had been vetted and were ready for the Board to take action on. Parker said there were still 4 grantees TSET was working with to get their agreements finalized including the City of Tulsa, OU Health Sciences Center for the Stephenson Cancer Center in Tulsa, OSU Medical Center, and Rogers State University. Parker said that she expected to have everyone except Rogers State University completed by the March meeting and explained that Rogers State University had more complex information that had to be finalized before it would be ready to move forward. After a brief discussion, Needham moved to approve the 10 Legacy Grant Cooperative Agreements as presented. Whittaker provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

**Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker**

Organization	Project Title	Total Funding Awarded
Chickasaw Foundation	Graduate Medical Education	\$6,778,000
Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma	FEEDOK Initiative	\$9,429,000
Community Health Connection	Maternal and Child Clinic	\$4,400,000
Durant Family Medicine, Inc.	Durant Health Access & Innovation Initiative (DHAI)	\$3,000,000
East Central University	STEM Center/School of Nursing Project	\$13,147,000
Healthy Minds Policy Initiative	Oklahoma Integrated Care Resource Center	\$5,570,000
Oklahoma Hospital Association	Healthy Oklahoma Communities Initiative	\$3,219,999
Oklahoma Hospital Association	HOPE Helping Oklahomans with Prevention and Early Detection	\$18,690,000
Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation	TSET Institute for a Healthier Oklahoma (TIHO) at OMRF	\$9,878,000
Youth Medical Mentorship	Home Grown Health Professional Pipeline	\$500,000

## VI. Evaluation and performance reporting

**A. Overview of the FY25 Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline Evaluation Report** – Bisbee introduced external evaluator, Laura A. Beebe, PhD, Professor, Dept. of Biostatistics & Epidemiology, The University of Oklahoma Health Campus, to give a presentation regarding the FY25 Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline Evaluation Report. Dr. Beebe gave a brief overview of the rate of smoking and the quit rates in Oklahoma as well as the utilization and reach of the Helpline. She reported that the Helpline saw a rise in registrations during the LimitedTime Offer specials where registrants were able to get twice the amount of cessation resources during a set time. She said registrations continued to come from all 77 counties in Oklahoma. She highlighted the high satisfaction rate of over 95% of people being satisfied with the Helpline and being willing to recommend the Helpline to friends. She said one new thing the Helpline encountered was the use of nicotine pouches by registrants. She said the Helpline would continue to evaluate emerging products and how to best serve clients. She concluded by reporting that for every \$1 spent on the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline, the state saved about \$3.20 in health care costs each year. After a brief discussion, Bisbee reminded the Board that the annual report is on TSET’s website for viewing. No action was needed.

**B. Legacy Grants Progress Report** – Bisbee said the Legacy Grants Progress Report would be a standing item given at every meeting based on various milestones such as grantee

agreement status, grantee project budget, and trainings and grantee meetings. There were no questions and no action was needed.

Bisbee said there was a need to revisit Item 5, Discussion and possible action on Legacy Grant Agreements, to separate the items out so Joe Hill could recuse himself from the vote regarding one of the applicants. Board Counsel Batt advised the board needed to have a a motion to reconsider the vote on Item 5.

Whittaker moved to reconsider the vote on Item 5. Needham provided the second.

Bisbee asked if Hill wished to recuse himself for the vote on the Chickasaw Foundation. Hill answered in the affirmative. Bisbee asked for a motion to approve the slate of Legacy Grant agreements except for Chickasaw Foundation.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Total Funding Awarded</b>
<b>Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma</b>	FEEDOK Initiative	<b>\$9,429,000</b>
<b>Community Health Connection</b>	Maternal and Child Clinic	<b>\$4,400,000</b>
<b>Durant Family Medicine, Inc.</b>	Durant Health Access & Innovation Initiative (DHAI)	<b>\$3,000,000</b>
<b>East Central University</b>	STEM Center/School of Nursing Project	<b>\$13,147,000</b>
<b>Healthy Minds Policy Initiative</b>	Oklahoma Integrated Care Resource Center	<b>\$5,570,000</b>
<b>Oklahoma Hospital Association</b>	Healthy Oklahoma Communities Initiative	<b>\$3,219,999</b>
<b>Oklahoma Hospital Association</b>	HOPE Helping Oklahomans with Prevention and Early Detection	<b>\$18,690,000</b>
<b>Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation</b>	TSET Institute for a Healthier Oklahoma (TIHO) at OMRF	<b>\$9,878,000</b>
<b>Youth Medical Mentorship</b>	Home Grown Health Professional Pipeline	<b>\$500,000</b>

Needham provided the motion to approve the slate of Legacy Grant agreements sans Chickasaw Foundation. Whittaker provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker***

Then Bisbee asked for a motion to approve the Chickasaw Foundation Legacy Grant Agreement.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Total Funding Awarded</b>
<b>Chickasaw Foundation</b>	Graduate Medical Education	<b>\$6,778,000</b>

Needham moved approval. Whittaker provided the second. The motion passed.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Whittaker***

*Recused: Hill*

**VII. Agency Operations Committee Report - Marshall Snipes, Aaron Harmon, Ken Rowe; ad hoc member**

**A. Financial Reports** – Bisbee recognized Director of Finance, Megan Meers, who gave a high-level overview of the TSET Financial Reports including the **FY25/FY26 Budget to Actual – Operating, FY25/FY26 Budget to Actual – Programs, and Estimated Earnings** as of December 31, 2025. No action was needed.

**B. Executive Director Authority Contract Amendment Advisement Report** – Bisbee referred the Board to their meeting packet materials for the Executive Director Authority Contract Amendment Advisement Report. She said the standing item provided a list of all contracts approved by the Executive Director through January 31, 2026. No action was needed.

**C. Discussion and possible action regarding staff compensation (all positions)** – Bisbee said that OMES had recently released a report showing that State of Oklahoma employees were paid an average of 46% of the private sector. She said the state’s goal was for state employees to be at 90% of the private sector salaries. She said staff would be analyzing the data internally and working through the committee process regarding any steps needed to close the pay gap. She said no action was necessary but wanted to make the Board aware of the report.

**VIII. Program Committee Report –**

**A. Discussion and possible action regarding the Built Environment for Projects Related to Nutrition Awards** - Whittaker moved to approve the Built Environment for Projects Related to Nutrition awards as presented. Needham provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker***

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Project Summary</b>	<b>Total Funding Recommendation</b>
<b>Calera Public School District</b>	Improving cafeterias at elementary school and middle school to support healthy choices.	<b>\$400,000</b>
<b>Community Resourcing, Inc. DBA Our Daily Bread Food &amp; Resource Center</b>	Renovations to a satellite food pantry in Cushing to allow for more patrons to be served and increased space for fruits and vegetables.	<b>\$194,900</b>
<b>Earlsboro Public Schools</b>	Upgrades to the district’s cafeteria equipment	<b>\$194,123</b>
<b>First Americans Museum Foundation</b>	Enhance the built environment of its public Night Market, an established incubator market featuring	<b>\$91,457</b>

	Indigenous farmers, food producers, artists, and foodways educators.	
<b>Tahlequah High School</b>	High school cafeteria kitchen renovation	<b>\$365,092</b>
<b>Washington Public Schools</b>	Cafeteria improvements to increase healthy options	<b>\$254,428</b>

**B. Discussion and possible action regarding Healthy Incentive Grants for Communities Awards** – Whittaker moved to approve the Healthy Incentive Grants for Communities awards as presented. Chairman Rowe provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker***

<b>Organization</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Intended Use of Funds</b>	<b>Recommended Amount</b>
<b>City of Chickasha</b>	Grady	Construction of a multi-use pavilion structure that will serve as a dedicated space for the local farmers' market and centralized community hub	<b>\$100,000</b>
<b>Town of Kremlin</b>	Garfield	Infrastructure improvements at the local baseball field	<b>\$60,000</b>
<b>Town of Luther</b>	Oklahoma	Playground areas at Booker T. Washington Park and Wildhorse Park	<b>\$50,982</b>
<b>Town of Marble City</b>	Sequoyah	Safe and accessible crosswalks in front of the new Wellness and Activity Center	<b>\$60,000</b>

**C. Discussion and possible action on parameters for Capacity Building RFA** – Bisbee recognized Jonas Mata, TSET Program Architect, to give the Board an overview of the proposed parameters for the Capacity Building Request for Applications (RFA). Mata reviewed the history of the reimagining of Community Grants. He reminded the Board of the approval of the single strategy grant focus. Mata presented the TSET Timeline of Next Generation Community Grants from August 2024 through FY2031. He said the goal was to expand the regional capacity building by working with nonprofits, tribal nations, schools, towns, and other public entities in 22 counties by contracting with local capacity building professionals from the areas who assist organizations in growing stronger to address local issues as well as potential applicants for future community-based TSET grants. Mata said the funding guidelines proposed were an amount up to \$2,200,000 per year for a maximum of three years with the contract start date of January 2027.

Bisbee explained that the goal was to have the Board approve the parameters so staff could develop a Request for Applications which would be opened in May 2026 and close in July 2026. She said the Board would vote on approvals at the September 2026 Board Retreat. She reminded the Board that is a pilot for the concept. After a brief discussion, Whittaker moved approval of the parameters for the Capacity Building Request for Applications (RFA). Needham provided the second. The motion passed.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Whittaker***

***Nay: Hill***

**IX. Public Information and Outreach Committee** – Bisbee said the Board would find the Youth Focus Brands and Adults Focus Brands Overview, the FY26 Sponsorship Report, the Upcoming Events and Training Overview, and the Agency Outreach Report in their packets. Rowe asked if it was time to revisit the sponsorships and asked if those had been effective. Bisbee explained that the sponsorships were small amounts around \$1,000 to \$2,000 that gave TSET the opportunity to partner with smaller groups that might not have the need for a larger grant. She also said that it gave TSET a place to reach more people by presenting at conferences, or offering resources to attendees. There were no other questions or discussion. No action was necessary.

***Chairman Rowe called for a recess at 10:47 a.m.***

***Chairman Rowe concluded recess at 10:58 a.m.***

**X. Board Education on HB 2164, Effective Nov. 1, 2025** – Bisbee recognized Deputy Attorney General, Niki Batt, to present an educational session to the TSET Board regarding the new law relating to public corruption. Batt told the board that HB 2164 became law and went into effect on November 1, 2025. She reviewed the updates to the statutes regarding Contracts and Procurement and explained that even agencies with exemptions from the Central Purchasing Act were still subject to HB 2164. Batt encouraged the Board to reach out with any questions. After a brief discussion, no action was necessary.

**XI. Proposed Executive Session.**

**A. Vote to enter Executive Session** – Needham moved to enter Executive Session pursuant to 25 O.S. §307(B)(1) and in accordance with 2006 OK AG 17 for the discussion of the employment, hiring, appointment, or promotion for the following individual positions: Program Manager, Communication Strategist, and Executive Director. Whittaker provided the second. The motion passed unanimously. The Board entered Executive Session at 11:12 a.m.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker***

**B. Vote to return to Open Session** – Chairman Rowe moved to return to Open Session. Whittaker provided the second. The motion passed unanimously. The Board returned to Open Session at 11:36 a.m.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker***

**A. Possible action on matters discussed in Executive Session, including, but not limited to:**

**1. Discussion and possible action regarding the hiring of a Program Manager** –

Needham moved to direct the Executive Director to make an offer of employment to Candidate A for the position of Program Manager at a salary of \$66,000 annually, and if Candidate A was not available, to make an offer of employment to Candidate B for the same salary. Whittaker provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker***

**2. Discussion and possible action regarding the hiring of a Communication Strategist –** Whittaker moved to direct the Executive Director to make an offer of employment to Candidate A for the position of Communication Strategist for the position of Communication Strategist at a salary of \$65,000 annually. Rowe provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.

***Aye: Rowe, Needham, Hill, Whittaker***

**3. Discussion and possible action regarding Executive Director evaluation and compensation –** No action was taken.

**XII. New Business - Any matter not known about, or which could not have been reasonably foreseen prior to the time of posting the agenda [25 O.S. Section 311 (A)(9)] –** There was no new business.

**XIII. Adjournment –** Chairman Rowe adjourned the meeting at 11:39 a.m.