

**KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS**  
**MINUTES**  
June 20, 2025

The special meeting was called to order by Chair Carl Ice at 8:02 a.m. on June 20, 2025. The meeting was held at the Board Office, Curtis State Office Building, 1000 SW Jackson, Ste. 520, Topeka, Kansas. Proper notice was given according to the law.

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Carl Ice, Chair	John Dicus	Neelima Parasker
	Jon Rolph, Vice Chair	Alysia Johnston	Wint Winter
	Blake Benson	Diana Mendoza	Kathy Wolfe Moore

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 8:02 a.m., Regent Rolph moved that the Board recess into executive session to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel. The subjects of the executive session were to conduct PSU Presidential Search interviews, discuss candidates, and discuss Fiscal Year 2026 CEO compensation, and the purpose was to protect the privacy of the individual Board employees involved. The executive session would last 7 hours and 30 minutes, and would include members of the Board; PSU Presidential Search candidates, for a portion; Board President and CEO Blake Flanders, for a portion; Director of Finance and Administration Becky Pottebaum, for a portion; and PSU Presidential Search Committee Chair Rick Webb, for a portion. The open meeting of the Board would resume at 3:30 p.m. Regent Benson seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

At 3:30 p.m., the Board returned to open session. Regent Rolph moved to extend the executive session for 45 minutes to 4:15 p.m.

At 4:15 p.m., the Board returned to open session.

Regent Ice announced a change to the agenda. The Board would discuss naming the President of Pittsburg State University before any other matters.

**NAMING THE 11<sup>TH</sup> PRESIDENT OF PITTSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY**

Regent Ice stated that leadership of the state universities is incredibly important. The Board takes the university president search process very seriously. He thanked Doug Ball for serving as interim president, and the members of the search committee that was led by Chairman Rick Webb. Regent Ice said that Pittsburg State has tremendous momentum. The Building a Future Strategic Plan is in place to guide the Board's efforts.

Regent Benson stated that Dr. Thomas Newsom has more than 20 years of experience in higher education and has led several colleges and universities. He currently serves as President of Southeastern Oklahoma State University, where he helped the university set its all-time enrollment record and significantly improve retention, all while delivering an affordable education for students.

Prior to his current role, Dr. Newsom served as Vice President of Student Success and Dean of Students at Texas A&M-Commerce. There he oversaw the development of new student success initiatives and led the university's student affairs. He also served for five years as the President of Mesalands Community College in New Mexico. During his tenure there, Mesalands earned distinction as the top community college in New Mexico and was the seventh fastest growing community college in the nation.

A native of Sherman, Texas, Dr. Newsom earned a Ph.D. in Higher Education Administration from The University of North Texas, an M.S. in Higher Education from Texas A&M-Commerce, and a B.A. in Business Administration from Austin College.

He and his wife Vicky, a teacher, have three children, Will, Katie, and John.

Dr. Newsom is an excellent candidate to serve as the next leader of Pittsburg State. His track record as a proven leader who helps students reach their full potential will make him the ideal choice to lead Pittsburg State into the future.

Regent Benson moved to appoint Thomas Newsom as the 11<sup>th</sup> President of Pittsburg State University and to delegate to the Board Chair and to the Board President and CEO authority to negotiate compensation and other terms of employment, and to authorize the Board Chair to sign the letter of appointment.

Regent Mendoza seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### **BREAK**

Chair Ice called for a break at 4:21 p.m. The meeting resumed at 4:34 p.m.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

At 4:34 p.m., Regent Rolph moved that the Board recess into executive session to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel. The subject of the executive session was to discuss Fiscal Year 2026 CEO compensation, and the purpose was to protect the privacy of the individual Board employees involved. The executive session would last approximately ten minutes, and would include members of the Board, Board President and CEO Blake Flanders, and Director of Finance and Administration Becky Pottebaum. The open meeting of the Board would resume at 4:45 p.m. Regent Parasker seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

At 4:45 p.m., the Board returned to open session. Regent Rolph moved to extend the executive session for ten minutes to 4:57 p.m. Regent Wolfe Moore seconded the motion. The motion carried.

At 4:57 p.m., the Board returned to open session.

Regent Rolph moved to table the Board's discussion of Fiscal Year 2026 CEO compensation to a later meeting. Regent Benson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### **ADJOURN**

At 4:57 p.m., the meeting adjourned.

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Blake Flanders, President and CEO

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Blake Benson, Chair-Elect