



**PLANNING & BUDGET COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** March 31, 2026

**Time:** 3:00PM

Voting Members	Title	Present?
Raaj Kurapati	Executive Vice Chancellor and COO	Yes
Dr. Ashley Harkrider	Dean - College of Health Professions	Yes
Dr. Cindy Russell	VC for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs	Yes
Dr. Jessica Snowden	VC for Research	No
Dr. Wendy Likes	Dean - Nursing	No
Dr. Mike Hocker	Dean - Medicine	No
Dr. Reginald Frye	Dean - Pharmacy	Yes
Peggy Reisser	Staff Senate President	Yes
Dr. Karen Derefinko	Faculty Senate President	Yes
Dr. Ken Tilashalski	Dean - Dentistry	Yes
Dr. Charles Snyder	VC for Student Success	Yes
Dr. Karla Leeper	VC for Communications and Marketing	Yes
Non-Voting Members	Title	Present?
Michael Ebbs	AVC, Financial Strategy	Yes
George Ninan	AVC, Financial Operations	Yes
Melissa Moore	Associate General Counsel	No
Benjie Harmon	AVC Financial Planning and Budget	Yes

\*Dr. Wesley Byerly attended in representation of Research

\*William Hampton attended in representation of General Counsel

**Approve Agenda & Minutes from Prior Meetings**

- **AGENDA:** The agenda was reviewed by Mr. Raaj Kurapati.



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**TENNESSEE**  
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER.

- **MINUTES:** Minutes from the February 25, 2026 meeting were reviewed by Mr. Raaj Kurapati, and then he called for a motion to accept. The motion was made by Dr. Karla Leeper, with Dr. Ashley Harkrider seconding the motion. The minutes were approved with no additions.

#### **General Update - Raaj**

- Mr. Kurapati gave a brief update before moving to the primary agenda items surrounding the strategic budget requests and discussions thereof. Mr. Kurapati reiterated the budget constraints we were facing this year and gave his thoughts on compensation, based on the current funding provided in the governor's budget, and acknowledged that THEC is working with us and the other non-formula units to seek amendments through the legislative process.

#### **Strategic Budget Discussions**

- Raaj led the group discussion as we provided final rankings and provided a list by rank of both the recurring and non-recurring items, noting that the amount of funds were already limited and could be limited even more depending on the outcome of the final legislative approved budget, specifically surrounding the needs of compensation and how the expected increase in tuition revenue would need to be used.

#### **Closing Statements**

- Raaj Kurapati ended the meeting at approximately 4:00PM