

President's Cabinet Meeting Minutes

January 5, 2026

1. Travel Claim Update: Levi Melton came to Cabinet to explain rules regarding claiming commute miles based on new TBR policy. Since there was some confusion regarding interpretation of the policy, Dr. Whaley asked Marsha Mathews to reach out to Alicia Fox at TBR for clarification. Marsha was able to quickly get an update from TBR: *Alisha Fox (TBR) responded that commuter miles are always non-reimbursable, and mileage should be calculated using the lesser of the two routes (home or official workstation), regardless of day of the week. Levi was giving leniency on the weekends and allowing full requests to be claimed, but per TBR's response it should always be the lesser of the two regardless of which day of the week. Levi has been instructed to follow as TBR interprets from this point forward.* Marsha will give an update on this at the next Administrative Council meeting.
2. New Knox Campus/Financial Aid (including Veterans): Robin Townson reported that there are more financial aid requirements since we are keeping both facilities. Since we are not offering 50%+ of any program this spring, these reporting requirements will not be necessary until fall semester. Veteran's Affairs, however, are much stricter. If a student can take any single credit course at a specific location, that facility must be registered and certified with the VA. Kat Baker and Lynzee Patrick will determine if there are any students registered for spring semester that would be impacted. Typically, both the Department of Education and Veteran's Affairs need evidence of SACSCOC approval to certify new teaching locations. Karen Brunner pointed out that this issue is now complicated by the new changes to the SACSCOC substantive change policy, that would make approval and/or notification about new or relocated off-campus locations unnecessary for institutions, including RSCC, that are not on substantive change restriction.
3. Welcome Back Event Update: The Welcome Back Event for students at the new Knox Campus is scheduled for January 20th from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Covenant Health will be providing lunch. There will also be free coffee, tables set up with information about different programs, Simulation Center tours, and Covenant will hold a mini-job fair. Quita Zerr and Jennifer Fugate are arranging for lots of swag. TCAT students are also invited. The only "formal" activity will be the "Push-In" ceremony for the new ambulance. Area EMS services will be notified of the ceremony. When the Sim Center is more fully equipped, a more formal Open House for Regents, legislators, and donors will be planned.

4. Employee Assistance Fund: At the urging of Faculty Senate, led by David Blevins, Marsha Mathews has been working on establishing a fund that could assist employees facing hardship/emergencies. This fund will be governed by donations to the Roane State Foundation. Human Resources will coordinate distribution with the assistance of a committee made up of a representative from Faculty Senate, Support Staff Council, the Foundation, site directors, and administrative staff. Employees must complete an application for non-recurring funds, with a maximum amount of \$1,000.
5. Volunteer Registration Process Update: There is a new online volunteer registration form. The form needs to be filled out online so Human Resources can submit the form to the state for insurance coverage purposes.
6. Enrollment Update: Doug Wallace reported that overall spring headcount is up 1%; FTE up 6%. Dual enrollment is still lagging, and success coaches have 340 appointments logged. Fifty percent of these students have not yet registered. Doug also reported that applications for fall semester are up 6%. Recruitment will begin a new dual enrollment matriculation initiative to increase our 3-yr average “capture” rate of 26%. He also noted that the office is now fully staffed with part-time admissions counselors/callers.
7. Policy Updates: The following policy revisions/reviews were approved:
 - a. BA-07-02 Business Meals – revisions included funds for retirement receptions. \$100 is allotted for department receptions per retiree; \$200 if the reception is open to the institution. A maximum of \$500 is allocated for a reception for multiple retirees.
 - b. PA-04-02 Direct Deposit of Payroll – the policy was reviewed, no changes necessary.
8. Convocation Update: Diane Ward reported that faculty report back on January 12th. Convocation is scheduled for January 13th in the Vann Student Center beginning at 10:00 a.m. Lunch will be provided instead of breakfast. TBR Legal Counsel and Chief Wright will present. The deans will hold assessment training in the afternoon and division meetings are on January 14th, with the exception of Math/Science on January 12th at 1:00 p.m. January 15th is a Faculty Office/Faculty Professional Development Day, and January 16th is New Faculty Academy.
9. Other:
 - a. RSCC alumna Deborah Porter is working part-time to help Workforce in the transition to Sonya Parker’s retirement. Teresa Duncan reported that Sonya was able to get the Handshake job-matching system up and running.
 - b. The Roane County Fair will be at the RSCC Expo Center in May 2026, probably the week following Commencement.

- c. The current Fentress campus lease will be extended month-to-month from February until May 2026.