

**Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Regents
Murray State University
Friday, July 18, 2025**

Call to Order/Roll Call

The Murray State University (MSU) Board of Regents met on Friday, July 18, 2025, in Special Session in Room 118, Wells Hall on the Murray State University campus. Chair Robbie Fitch called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed those joining the meeting, in particular new Faculty Regent Dr. Gary ZeRuth and new Student Regent Ali Khatib. Chair Fitch also welcomed Dr. Ron Patterson as the new President of Murray State University. Dr. Patterson indicated he is glad to be at Murray State and thanked the Board for this day and this opportunity. He has been looking forward to this day for a very long time. President Patterson also welcomed Regents ZeRuth and Khatib to the Board and indicated he looks forward to working with both of them.

Secretary Jill Hunt called the roll and the following Board members were present: Andy Belcher, Robbie Fitch, Ali Khatib, David Meinschein, G. L. Ovey, Leon Owens, Matthew Price, Emily Roark, David Wilson and Gary ZeRuth. Absent: Tom Waldrop.

Participants in the meeting were: Ron K. Patterson, President; Jill Hunt, Senior Executive Coordinator for the President, Coordinator for Board Relations and Secretary to the Board; Tim Todd, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Jackie Dudley, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services and Treasurer to the Board; Don Robertson, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management; Robert Miller, General Counsel; other administrators and members of the University community; Information Technology staff and members of the general public.

AGENDA

<u>Call to Order</u>	Chair Fitch
<u>Roll Call</u>	Secretary Hunt
<u>Swearing-In Ceremony – Faculty Regent Dr. Gary ZeRuth and Student Regent Ali Khatib*</u>	Judge-Executive Kenny Imes
<u>Election of Officers – Vice Chair and Secretary*</u>	Chair Fitch
<u>Committee Reports/Recommendations</u>	
A. Athletics Committee	Chair Fitch
1) Personnel Changes	
a. Contract of Employment – Director of Athletics Nico Yantko*	
b. Contract of Employment Extension – Head Baseball Coach Dan Skirka*	
2) Resolution of Appreciation – Coach Dan Skirka and the Baseball Team*	
<u>Senior Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services Search Process (For Information Only)</u>	
<u>Adjournment</u>	
(*Requires Board of Regents Action)	
<u>Swearing-In Ceremony – Faculty Regent Dr. Gary ZeRuth and Student Regent Ali Khatib, conducted</u>	

Chair Fitch expressed appreciation to Calloway County Judge-Executive Kenny Imes for his presence today. Judge Imes is a major supporter of Murray State and anytime the University needs anything from the county, Judge Imes answers the call. Without legislative leadership provided by his wife – Representative Mary Beth Imes – Murray State would not have made the progress it has toward a School of Veterinary Medicine on campus and all are very appreciative

in this regard. Congratulations was expressed to the Imes Family. Judge Imes' grandson, Will, is a Presidential Scholar and will start college at Murray State in August.

Calloway County Judge-Executive Kenny Imes administered the Oath of Office to newly-elected Faculty Regent Dr. Gary ZeRuth and Student Regent Ali Khatib. Having being duly sworn, Regents ZeRuth and Khatib were welcomed to the Board. Chair Fitch indicated that all look forward to working with these individuals throughout their tenure on the Board and they received a round of applause.

Board of Regents Organizational Materials

Election of Board of Regents Officers – Vice Chair and Secretary, conducted

Chair Fitch stated that in accordance with the *Bylaws* of the Board of Regents, all officers are elected annually at the Spring Quarterly Meeting and shall serve for one year, commencing July 1 following their election. A separate election shall be conducted by the Board for each of the officers: Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. The Board elected officers and reaffirmed the appointment of the Treasurer during the June 6, 2025, Quarterly Meeting. Per the Board of Regents *Bylaws* and Kentucky Revised Statute (KRS) 164.330, an election for Vice Chair and Secretary shall be held at the organizational meeting required within 30 days of appointment of a new member and this action is required today.

Chair Fitch declared that nominations were in order for Vice Chair of the Board of Regents. Secretary Hunt called the roll and Regent Belcher nominated David Meinschein. All other Regents passed. Chair Fitch indicated there being only one nomination, David Meinschein is unanimously elected as Vice Chair of the Board of Regents through June 30, 2026, according to the *Bylaws* of the Murray State University Board of Regents and KRS 164.330. Regent Meinschein received a round of applause.

Chair Fitch declared that nominations were in order for Secretary to the Board of Regents. Secretary Hunt called the roll and Regent Belcher nominated Jill Hunt. All other Regents passed. Chair Fitch indicated there being only one nomination, Jill Hunt is unanimously elected as Secretary to the Board of Regents through June 30, 2026, according to the *Bylaws* of the Murray State University Board of Regents and KRS 164.330. Secretary Hunt received a round of applause.

Committee Reports/Recommendations

Athletics Committee

Robbie Fitch – Chair
David Meinschein
Leon Owens
Matthew Price
Emily Roark

Athletics Chair Fitch called the Committee to order at 8:38 a.m. and reported all other members were present.

Personnel Changes – Contracts of Employment

Contract of Employment – Director of Athletics Nico Yantko, approved

Chair Fitch reported that Murray State University executed a Contract of Employment to employ Nicholas “Nico” Yantko as Director of Athletics on August 16, 2022. A new Contract of Employment for Director of Athletics Nico Yantko is effective July 1, 2025, and is provided for Board approval. Director Yantko has helped ensure the University's commitment to the academic and athletic success of Murray State student-athletes. He has provided valuable leadership to the Department of Athletics which plays an integral role in the University's pursuit of excellence. Director Yantko is a capable and experienced leader committed to the growth and success of student-athletes and Murray State athletic programs. He has led the Department of Athletics with great energy and has created tremendous excitement and enthusiasm for

University sports programs. All are very appreciative of Director Yantko's commitment to Murray State University.

On behalf of the Athletics Committee, Regent Owens moved that the Board of Regents, upon the recommendation of the President of the University, approve the Contract of Employment extension for Mr. Nico Yantko, Director of Athletics, effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029, as submitted.

Regent Wilson asked how this contract stacks up against others in the Missouri Valley Conference (MVC). President Patterson reported that as of right now it puts Murray State University's Director of Athletics in the top half. Regent Wilson indicated staff are always told that raises have to be within a certain parameter relative to other universities and this is why he asked the question. He has no issues with the contract being presented for approval and just wants to be able to explain the salary increase to staff when asked.

Regent Roark indicated that Director Yantko is not like any other Director of Athletics in the MVC. He is well beyond and has done things for this University that are significant. The Athletics' profile has been greatly elevated since his arrival and that is true across all sport programs. The money he has raised for Athletics is phenomenal and the support he has given in terms of Grade Point Average, facilities, etc., representing probably one of the best performances in the Missouri Valley Conference. He is one of the best Athletic Directors in the country – not just in the Missouri Valley Conference. This salary increase is well deserved and should have happened years ago.

Vice Chair Meinschein indicated that Murray State Athletics' exposure has also increased exponentially due to the leadership of Director Yantko and his team. A University of Georgia fan asked him how Murray State's exposure is greater than theirs and it is because of Director Yantko and his team, along with wonderful student-athletes, and this represents the perfect mix.

Regent Owens indicated that if one looks at the trajectory of Murray State Athletics and where the University aspires to be, Director Yantko – at this time and at this place – is propelling the institution in that direction. The Head Coach hirings, staff professional development and many other initiatives are invaluable moving forward. Chair Fitch indicated he couldn't agree more.

Vice Chair Meinschein seconded and the motion carried.

Full Board Action – Contract of Employment – Director of Athletics Nico Yantko, approved

On behalf of the Athletics Committee, Regent Fitch moved that the Board of Regents, upon the recommendation of the President of the University, approve the attached Contract of Employment extension for Mr. Nico Yantko, Director of Athletics, effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029. Regent Ovey seconded and the roll was called with the following voting: Mr. Belcher, yes; Mr. Khatib, yes; Dr. Meinschein, yes; Mr. Ovey, yes; Mr. Owens, yes; Dr. Price, yes; Mrs. Roark, yes; Dr. Wilson, yes; Dr. ZeRuth, yes and Dr. Fitch, yes. The motion carried unanimously.

(See Attachment #1)

Chair Fitch expressed congratulations to Director Yantko who received a round of applause.

Contract of Employment – Head Baseball Coach Dan Skirka, approved

Chair Fitch reported that during the Spring 2024 Commencement ceremony, 11 Baseball players walked across the stage. He thought the following year would be a rebuilding one but instead the team ended up in Omaha, Nebraska, competing at the College World Series (CWS). The program has done an excellent job of coaching and recruiting and he is very proud of the team.

Coach Dan Skirka guided the Murray State University Baseball Team to unprecedented success by leading the team to the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Men's College World Series. On their way to the CWS, the team won the Missouri Valley Conference Tournament, the Oxford Regional and the Durham Super Regional. Since the NCAA Division I Baseball Tournament was expanded to 64 teams in 1999, Murray State was just the fourth

regional No. 4 seed to make it to Omaha, Nebraska. The Racers set all-time season records for at-bats, runs, hits, doubles, triples, RBIs, games and wins. All are very pleased with Coach Skirka's commitment to the Baseball Program and to Murray State University.

Regent Roark indicated everything Chair Fitch just said is so true but the character of the Baseball players was also amazing. Her 14-year-old son travelled with her to Omaha and even after they lost the game, when he was sticking the ball in their face for autographs, the players were so gracious and kind. It takes a great Coach and coaching staff to build this kind of character.

On behalf of the Athletics Committee, Regent Owens moved that the Board of Regents, upon the recommendation of the President of the University, approve the Contract of Employment extension for Mr. Dan Skirka, Head Baseball Coach, for the term July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029, as submitted. Vice Chair Meinschein seconded.

Regent Owens echoed what Regent Roark said and reported he had the opportunity to travel to Oxford, Durham and Omaha. Even amidst what may have been less than favorable circumstances, Coach Skirka, the staff and the young men performed. They represented themselves and the University at the highest level and that is not something you see every day. Director Yantko did not get phone calls on the weekends relative to any of the student-athletes and this truly represented a great group. Coach Skirka deserves all the credit for what he has done and continues to do. It is very much appreciated.

Regent Wilson reported from a housing standpoint that he had no issues with the student-athletes living in on-campus housing. This is unprecedented in his 43 years in housing. The entire program is top notch which is very much appreciated.

The motion carried.

Full Board Action – Contract of Employment – Head Baseball Coach Dan Skirka, approved

On behalf of the Athletics Committee, Chair Fitch moved that the Board of Regents, upon the recommendation of the President of the University, approve the attached Contract of Employment extension for Mr. Dan Skirka, Head Baseball Coach, for the term July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029. Regent Owens seconded and the roll was called with the following voting: Mr. Belcher, yes; Mr. Khatib, yes; Dr. Meinschein, yes; Mr. Ovey, yes; Mr. Owens, yes; Dr. Price, yes; Mrs. Roark, yes; Dr. Wilson, yes; Dr. ZeRuth, yes and Dr. Fitch, yes. The motion carried unanimously.

Coach Skirka received a round of applause.

(See Attachment #2)

Resolution of Acknowledgment and Appreciation – Coach Dan Skirka and the Baseball Team, approved

Chair Fitch read aloud the following:

***MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF REGENTS
RESOLUTION OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND APPRECIATION
COACH DAN SKIRKA AND THE BASEBALL TEAM***

2025 Season

WHEREAS, Coach Dan Skirka has faithfully served since being named as the Head Baseball Coach at Murray State University in 2019; and

WHEREAS, the Baseball team finished the 2025 season as the regular season champions and tournament champions of the Missouri Valley Conference; and

WHEREAS, the Racers were selected to compete in the NCAA Tournament Oxford Regional, the program's first appearance in the NCAA Tournament since 2003; and

WHEREAS, the Baseball team won the Oxford Regional by defeating Ole Miss two times and Georgia Tech once, advancing to the team’s first-ever Super Regional in Durham, North Carolina, against Duke; and


WHEREAS, the team defeated Duke two times in the Durham Super Regional to advance to the 2025 College World Series, advancing to the national championship event for the first time in program history; and

WHEREAS, Murray State faced off against UCLA and Arkansas, rallying the country around “America’s Team” and bringing unprecedented exposure to the University with 44.3 billion impressions and \$406 million in Advertising Value Equivalency; and

WHEREAS, the success saw Coach Skirka be named the 2025 National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association Mike Martin National Coach of the Year and the Missouri Valley Conference Coach of the Year.

NOW, THEREFORE, ON THIS EIGHTEENTH DAY OF JULY, TWO THOUSAND AND TWENTY-FIVE, BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Murray State University Board of Regents unanimously express their appreciation for the achievements and service of Coach Skirka and the Baseball Team;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Murray State University Board of Regents that this recognition of the contributions and dedication of Coach Skirka and the Baseball team be preserved in the minutes of the Board after having been read aloud and passed unanimously by the Board on this, the 18th day of July 2025.


Ron K. Patterson, Ed.D.
President


Robbie Fitch
Chair – Board of Regents

A framed Resolution was presented to Coach Skirka and he received a round of applause.

On behalf of the Athletics Committee, Regent Ovey moved that the Board of Regents approve the Resolution of Acknowledgment and Appreciation just read aloud. Regent Owens seconded and the motion carried.

Full Board Action – Resolution of Appreciation – Coach Dan Skirka and the Baseball Team, approved

On behalf of the Athletics Committee, Chair Fitch moved that the Board of Regents approve the Resolution of Acknowledgment and Appreciation as presented. Regent Wilson seconded and the motion carried.

Director Yantko presented a framed, official Murray State #1 jersey to President Ron K. Patterson for his excitement and leadership and to officially welcome him to Murray State University on behalf of Athletics and Racer Nation.

Adjournment

The Athletics Committee adjourned at 8:52 a.m.

Senior Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services Search Process Update, received

President Patterson thanked his colleague Senior Vice President Dudley for her resounding service to Murray State University, the community of Murray, western Kentucky and throughout the Commonwealth. Senior Vice President Dudley was asked to stand and be recognized. Her commitment to Murray State students, faculty and staff are appreciated and she received a round of applause and a standing ovation. Senior Vice President Dudley has provided more than three decades of service to Murray State University which is very much appreciated.

President Patterson provided an update to the Board regarding the search process which will be utilized to identify a successor for Senior Vice President Dudley upon her retirement announcement. She will continue to assist in a consultant role as the transition moves forward. It is hoped that within the next few weeks an executive search firm will be identified. Information was provided on the two vendors currently on retainer with the University to undertake this important work and ensure access to critical services that support institutional operations and strategic initiatives. These agreements provide a high level of expertise and responsiveness in key areas in senior-level administrative positions (e.g., President, Provost, Vice President, etc.). The executive search firms are listed below:

- Academic Search

For nearly five decades, Academic Search has been a mission-driven organization dedicated to expanding leadership capacity at higher education institutions. They strengthen colleges and universities through the identification, recruitment, and development of leaders. Academic Search has offered executive search services to higher education institutions, associations, and related organizations. Academic Search was founded by higher education leaders on the principle that they provide the most value to partner institutions by combining best practices with the deep knowledge and experience they possess. Their mission today is to enhance institutional capacity by providing outstanding executive recruitment services, executive coaching, and transition support, in partnership with their parent organization, the American Academic Leadership Institute.

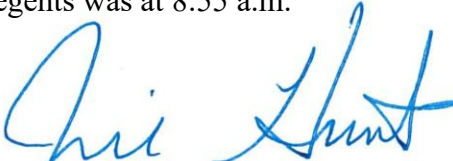
- Greenwood Asher & Associates

Greenwood Asher & Associates (GA&A) is a full-service, retained, executive search firm founded in 2004 by Dr. Jan Greenwood and Dr. Betty Asher, who both served as tenured Professors and University Presidents. Their pioneering spirits and visionary approach to executive search defined GA&A's commitment to elevating "next generation" leaders in higher education to have a lasting, positive impact on the global society. GA&A believes that successful searches are accomplished by building trusting relationships with both clients and candidates and offering comprehensive and customizable search processes that deliver effective outcomes. As a result, GA&A has a notable repeat client rate – a testament to their acuity, expertise, and longevity. GA&A is now one of the premier education-focused executive search firms within the United States. Their results-driven team, comprised of full-time, executive search professionals, possesses the specialized skillsets to both recruit exceptional leaders and deliver prompt, clear communications to clients and stakeholders. In 2020, GA&A joined forces with Kelly® Education. They now leverage the strength of their parent company to offer strategic search partnerships throughout the continuum of education.

President Patterson indicated one search firm will be chosen based on associated cost and other considerations. A Search Committee will be comprised to undertake this work and membership will include the Board Chair and Vice Chair.

Adjournment

Chair Fitch indicated there being no further business to come before the Board, he would entertain a motion that the Special Meeting adjourn. Regent Owens so moved, seconded by Regent Wilson, and the motion carried. Adjournment of the Special Meeting of the Board of Regents was at 8:55 a.m.



Jill Hunt
Secretary – Board of Regents

Robbie Fitch
Chair – Board of Regents

(The remainder of this page intentionally left blank to allow for inclusion of attachments.)