

**NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
May 12, 2025 – 4:30 PM – BH 3rd Floor Boardroom**

Call to Order

 Action X Information

Recognition, Awards, and Information Items

- Recognition of Outgoing Student Trustee, Taryn Settle (*Dr. Rittle*)
- Recognition of Outgoing Trustee, Dr. Carolyn Reeves (*Chair Schwartz*)

 X Action Information

Attendance

 X Action Information

Approval of Minutes

- Regular Board Meeting – April 14, 2025

 X Action Information

ENDS Monitoring Report

- E-104: Partnerships (*Mrs. Jessica Chronister*)

 X Action Information

Executive Limitations Monitoring Report

- EL-201: Financial Conditions

 X Action Information

Committee Reports

- Finance Committee (*Mrs. Amber Latimer*)
 - Approval of FY2026 Budget Request

 Action X Information

Presidential Report

- Enrollment Update
- NWACC Commencement – May 14, 2025 at 10:00 am
- Campus Master Plan – Feasibility Study

 X Action Information

 Action X Information

Chair Report

- ACCT Conference in October (See events sheet; deadline June 9th to let Sammantha know if interested)
- NWACC Grad Ceremonies (see events sheet; please let Sammantha know today if attending)
- Identify Trustee to Attend the Foundation Board Meeting on 5/15 at 11:30 am in the Peterson Auditorium
- Professional Conferences for Board of Trustees

 X Action Information

 Action Information

Other Board Action Items and Considerations

- None

Adjourn

Please see the Board of Trustees Calendar of Upcoming Events document in the binder's front pocket for Upcoming events.

NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING
Monday, April 14, 2025

MINUTES

Chair Todd Schwartz called the Board of Trustees of NorthWest Arkansas Community College meeting to order on Monday, April 14, at 4:31 pm in the Burns Hall 3rd Floor Board Room.

Members Present: Todd Schwartz (Chair), Rachel Harris (Vice Chair), Amber Latimer (Secretary), Carolyn Reeves, Ron Branscum, Mark Scott, and Joe Spivey

Also in Attendance: Dr. Dennis C. Rittle and Student Trustee, Taryn Settle

Members Absent: Lori Frank, Mary Schneider

MINUTES

March Regular Board Meeting

Mr. Spivey motioned, and Dr. Reeves seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on March 17, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

RECOGNITION

Introduce Dr. Lois Chun, Dean of Science and Math

Dr. Rittle introduced Dr. Lois Chun and turned to Dr. Jennifer Swartout. Dr. Swartout gave a brief background of Dr. Chun. Dr. Chun expressed her gratitude to NWACC for the opportunity.

Employee Satisfaction Survey Results

Kim Purdy shared the results of the most recent Ruffalo Noel Levitz College Employee Satisfaction Survey. She highlighted that the college's strengths are employees taking pride in their work and enjoying their jobs and the challenges are receiving proper information, pay, and budgeting hurdles. NWACC received an overall satisfaction rating of 3.79, which is higher than the previous survey results of 3.41. She concluded by sharing with the Board that College Leadership has identified the next steps to overcome the challenges listed by assessing campus-wide communication, continuing to make progress on the Compensation Study, creating campus-wide budget workshops and new reports, and increasing student opportunities to serve on committees.

ENDS MONITORING REPORT

E-102: Workforce

Starlinda presented the Board with information about the Workforce Programs that NWACC offers. She told the Board that Adult Education offers programs to help adults with the GED, Career Education, and English for Language Learners. They served 1,962 people in 2023-2024 and 1,817 in 2024-2025.

Eve Aldridge presented some information on the Certified Retail Analyst, Commercial Delivery License, Institute of Corporate and Public Safety, and Contract Training and Community Development programs. The Board asked about the pay for the Certified Retail Analyst and the Commercial Delivery License programs. Eve replied that the average starting pay for a Certified Retail Analyst is \$19-\$20 per hour, and the Commercial Delivery License average starting pay is \$58,000-\$70,000.

Chris Lynch shared some recent milestones for Advanced Technologies. These include launching AI in the Workplace Workshop, developing the Associate of Applied Science in Electronics Technology and Automation, creating the Certificate of Proficiency in Artificial Intelligence, and establishing an Industry-Led Advanced Technology Advisory Committee.

Starlinda shared the biggest highlights from Brightwater. He explained that Brightwater opened the Butcher's Larder in February, hosted the World Food Championships and won the Arkansas Hospitality Association in March, and hosted MAGIC Day event to mentor girls in the culinary arts and the Skill AR Competition in April.

Starlinda shared that the Health Professions program's pass rates average 10%-20% above state and national first-time pass rates. The Physical Therapy Program maintained their 100% pass rate for 27 years in a row. In Fall 2025, Health Professions will be starting Certification Courses in Medical Assisting and Pharmacy Technician and developing an AAS program in Medical Laboratory Technician.

Starlinda finished by briefly touching on the Trails Trade School and Construction Technology program and outlining the many industry partners.

E-101: Student Government Association

Fernanda Sanchez informed the Board that the Student Government Association (SGA) represents the interests and perspectives of NWACC students to the college and broader community. The SGA representatives are appointed in school-wide elections and are frequently invited to sit on various committees both in and out of NWACC.

She explained the Student Senate branch of SGA are appointed by clubs and every registered student can participate. The Senate decided what money to allocate to clubs that request funding and may pass or defeat bills that modify the SGA constitution, establish SOPs, and more.

She finished by providing ways for the Board to learn more about SGA and Student Senate.

Approval of E-102 and E-101 Monitoring Reports

Mr. Branscum motioned, and Mrs. Latimer seconded the motion to approve the ENDS-102 and ENDS-101 Monitoring Reports. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS MONITORING REPORT

EL-207: Compensation and Benefits

Dr. Rittle stated that with respect to employment, compensation, and benefits to employees, consultants, contract workers and volunteers, the President shall not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image. Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not change his or her compensation and benefits, promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment, establish compensation and benefits, which deviate materially from the geographic or professional market for the skills employed unless required by law, or establish or change Defined Contribution or Defined Benefit Plans.

Approval of EL-207 Monitoring Report

Mr. Scott motioned, and Mr. Spivey seconded the motion to approve the Executive Limitations Monitoring Report. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Honorary Associate Degree Committee Report

Dr. Reeves informed the Board that the Honorary Associate Degree Committee held their final meeting to review candidates. She further explained that the Committee selected two candidates recommended for approval by the Board. She stated that Lynette Bennett is recommended for approval by the Board to be named Honorary Associate Degree Recipient for Educational Service. She also stated that Stan Dark is recommended for approval by the Board to be named Honorary Associate Degree Recipient for Community Enhancement.

Approval to Name Lynette Bennett and Stan Dark as Honorary Associate Degree Recipients

The Honorary Associate Degree Committee recommended the approval to name Lynette Bennett and Stan Dark as Honorary Associate Degree Recipients as presented by Dr. Reeves

and Mr. Branscum seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously; the Board voted for each recipient separately.

Finance Committee Report

Mrs. Latimer informed the Board that the Finance Committee met to review the FY26 Operating Budget. She emphasized the three main expense items focused on for this budget includes the Compensation Study Phase III Alignment salary and benefit changes, technology upgrades because of the Cyber Event, and maintenance & operations expenses because of the Memorial Day 2024 tornado.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Rittle informed the Board that NWACC's Summer and Fall Semester enrollment has been open for a week, and over one thousand students have already enrolled, resulting in approximately 15% increase from last year.

Dr. Rittle reminded the Board of the Budget Work Session on April 30 at 12:30 pm in the Burns Hall Third Floor Boardroom.

Dr. Rittle reminded the Board of NWACC's Commencement on May 14 at 10:00 am at the Walmart AMP.

Dr. Rittle reminded the Board of the NWACC Foundation's Plant A Seed Soiree on May 2 at 6:00 pm at the Heroncrest Event Center.

Dr. Rittle turned to Alex Vasquez, who gave the Board a Legislative Update. He highlighted the multiple bills that NWACC is monitoring to stay in compliance, a couple of bills in which NWACC employees testified on behalf of the college to promote beneficial amendments, and partnerships between NWACC employees and Legislators to advance the Bike Tech and Trails Tech programs.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Schwartz reminded the Board of the ACCT Conference in October.

Mr. Schwartz reminded the Board of the various Graduation Ceremonies at NWACC.

Mr. Schwartz proposed an amendment to the Board Manual about attending conferences that recommends a limit of three trustees to attend conferences to conserve taxpayer dollars. He asked for feedback from the Board. The Board discussed how this amendment

could hinder the continuing education legislation to which they must adhere, and that historical opportunities were much more abundant. No action was taken.

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

Approval of Provisional Position

Dr. Rittle stated that in response to the federal grant, by the US Department of Labor - Bridging Healthcare Workforce Shortage in Arkansas, awarded to NWACC, the administration recommends the authorization of one provisional position of Grants Coordinator for Health Professions.

Approval of Provisional Position

Mr. Spivey motioned, and Dr. Reeves seconded the motion to approve the presented Grants Coordinator provisional position. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board moved to executive session at 5:52 pm.

The Board returned from executive session at 7:57 pm.

Approval of Resolution Adopting Use of Act 1404 of 2001 Authorizing the President's Salary

Mr. Branscum motioned, and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to adopt the use of Act 1404 of 2001 authorizing the President's Salary, increase the President's annual salary by an additional \$9,000 effective August 3, 2025, and to extend the President's Contract to June 30, 2032. Mr. Schwartz, Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Latimer, Dr. Reeves, Mr. Branscum, Mr. Scott, and Mr. Spivey voted to approve the resolution adopting Act 1404 of 2001, authorizing the increase in President's salary and extending the President's Contract to June 30, 2032. Ms. Frank and Mrs. Schneider were not present for the vote.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Mr. Todd Schwartz, Chair

Mrs. Amber Latimer, Secretary

POLICY TYPE: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS EL-201

POLICY

TITLE: FINANCIAL CONDITION

Policy 201: With respect to the actual, ongoing financial condition and activities, the President shall not cause or allow the development of fiscal jeopardy, or a material deviation from the Board approved budget and priorities established in Ends policies.

Definition: Fiscal jeopardy is defined as exhibiting a pattern of overspending the Board approved annual cash reserve. The Board cash reserve is calculated exclusive of designated, auxiliary, and restricted funds. Material deviation is defined as overspending realized revenues by more than 10% and failing to comply with Board priorities established in the Ends policies.

- The Board approved cash reserve for FY2025 is 7.6% of educational and general revenues of \$39,533,660, or \$3,004,558.
- Available unrestricted cash reserves exclusive of designated, auxiliary and restricted funds as of March 31, 2025, were \$16,730,129 or 37.5% of actual March 31, 2025, revenues of \$44,613,677.
- Therefore, the President maintained adequate cash reserves and did not materially deviate from the priorities in the Board of Trustees approved FY2025 budget.

Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not:

- 1. Fail to monitor the College's revenues and expenses to ensure responsible fiscal stewardship.**

Definition: Responsible Fiscal stewardship includes monitoring expenditures on a monthly basis making sure that adequate reserves are maintained. Monthly reports of cash flows, accounts receivable, comparisons of actual expenses to budget and actual revenue to expenses will be presented at Finance and Audit Committee meetings or to the committee chair, and reported out at Board meetings.

- Periodical financial reports of actual expenses to budget and actual revenue to expenses, cash flows, and accounts receivable have been presented at Finance and Audit Committee meetings or to the committee chair and reported out at Board meetings.

- 2. Fail to ensure that the College is not indebted beyond trade payables in the normal course of business.**

POLICY TITLE: FINANCIAL CONDITION (Continued)

EL-201

Definition: Trade payables are unsecured accounts payable debt incurred to purchase maintenance and operating materials and services in the normal course of college activity.

- The College's only indebtedness at this time is normal trade payables, normal payroll liabilities and Board authorized bond issues.

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3. Fail to maintain adequate Board approved cash reserves.

Definition: Adequate cash reserves refer to the Board budgeted annual amount, generally 8-10% reserve. Cash reserves are calculated exclusive of designated, auxiliary, and restricted funds.

- The Board approved cash reserve for FY2025 is 7.6% of educational and general revenues of \$39,533,660, or \$3,004,558 and has been maintained.
- Therefore, the President maintained adequate cash reserves.

4. Fail to conduct interfund transfers consistent with the fund accounting principles and Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards.

Definition: Consistent with fund accounting principles means following GAAP and GASB standards in all accounting procedures and practices.

- All interfund transfers were consistent with GAAP and GASB standards.

5. Fail to settle financial obligations in timely manner.

Definition: A timely manner in payroll matters is defined as paying each payroll on time and meeting all payroll tax obligations according to applicable federal and state laws. A timely manner in other obligations is defined as paying all payables obligations on or before the due date, unless valid reasons exist for remitting later payments.

- During the 2023 fiscal year, there have been no material instances of failure to settle financial obligations in a timely manner.

6. Fail to ensure that tax payments or other government-ordered payments or filings are timely and accurately filed.

Definition: Government-ordered payment or filing will be made on or before the due date and contain correct and accurate information.

- The College has experienced no material interest or penalty charges for late or deficient payments or filings during this period.

POLICY TITLE: FINANCIAL CONDITION (Continued)

EL-201

7. Fail to aggressively pursue receivables after a reasonable grace period.

Definition: Aggressively pursue refers to using an in-house collection program followed, if necessary, by the use of a professional collection agency. Reasonable grace period refers to immediate contact by in-house collection personnel when the obligation is past due, and, if not successful, referral to professional collection agency within 10 days of the last contact by in-house collection personnel.

- Current student billings other than third party are emailed monthly.
- Past-due student accounts are mailed three past-due notices on scheduled dates.

- Receivables are routinely turned over to a collection agency after non-payment following three contacts and within 10 days of the last contact by in-house personnel.
- Pursuing set-off debt against income tax refunds as allowed by A.C.A. §§26-36-301 – 26-36-320.

I am reporting in compliance with Executive Limitations, Policy 201.

Dennis C. Rittle, Ph.D.

President

May 12, 2025