

**PENNSYLVANIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
February 18, 2025 – 4:30 PM  
BOARD ROOM and via Zoom  
Minutes**

The Board of Trustees of Pennsylvania Highlands Community College held a regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, February 18, 2025, via Zoom teleconferencing with some members present at the Richland campus in the Holzman Board Room.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Janet Grady, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM. Roll call was taken by Mr. Greg Winger, Secretary and Treasurer of the Board of Trustees, and a quorum was established.

**TRUSTEES PRESENT**

Ms. Jennifer Anderson  
Mr. Carl DeYulis  
Ms. Adelyn Dull  
Rev. Reginal Floyd  
Dr. Janet Grady  
Mr. Joseph Hurd  
Ms. Lladel Lichty  
Ms. Jennifer Mitchell  
Mr. Mike Puruczky  
Ms. Brett Smith  
Mr. Ralph Stewart  
Ms. Carissa Westrick  
Ms. Greg Winger

**TRUSTEES ABSENT**

Mr. John Augustine  
Dr. Leah Spangler  
Ms. Linda Thomson  
Ms. Jackie Kulback

**ALSO PRESENT**

Dr. Steve Nunez, President  
Dr. Cynthia Doherty, Vice President  
Academic Affairs  
Ms. Trish Corle, Vice President of Student Services  
Ms. Susan Fisher, Associate Vice President of Administration  
Mr. Gary Boast, Associate Vice President of Technology and Analytics  
Dr. Barb Zaborowski, Dean of Library Services & Special Projects  
Ms. Carole VanMeter, Director of the Foundation  
Mr. Ray Weible, Jr., Executive Director of Marketing Communications  
Ms. Olivia Cavallo, Ms. Gina Pettenati, Ms. Sydney Scott, and Ms. Lily Schrock, Students  
Ms. Sonya Augustine, Executive Assistant to Administrative Operations, Recorder

Dr. Janet Grady, Chairperson welcomed all Board members present online and in person.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

**GUESTS & SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

Dr. Nunez welcomed everyone and thanked them for joining the meeting. He greeted the students and explained that the Board Scholars Program has transitioned in name to the Supporting Scholars program. The Board Scholars Program Policy dictates that the Board will provide scholarships to high school students who meet three critical criteria: they excel academically, demonstrate leadership skills, and are community oriented. He expressed his pride in the students that this scholarship attracts and highlighted that the Supporting Scholars program promotes student access, success, and leadership at the College, benefiting the

institution as a whole. Ms. Trish Corle then welcomed the Supporting Scholars: Ms. Olivia Cavallo, Ms. Gina Pettenati, Ms. Sydney Scott, Ms. Adelyn Dull, and Ms. Lily Schrock, and asked them to introduce themselves.

Olivia Cavallo introduced herself, stating that she is from Northern Cambria and has lived in the area her whole life. She graduated from Northern Cambria High School in 2023. Olivia will be graduating from Penn Highlands in May with a degree in early childhood education and plans to further her education by pursuing a bachelor's degree at IUP. She has served as President of the Caring for Cubs Education Club, is a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and the National Honor Society of Leadership and Success. Olivia stated that the Supporting Scholars scholarship has allowed her to focus more on academics without the burden of financial worries, enabling her to be actively involved in both her community and the College.

Gina Pettenati introduced herself, stating that she is a graduate of Penn Cambria High School and a first-year Scholar at Penn Highlands. She is majoring in business management through the 3+1 Program with Saint Francis. She stated that the Supporting Scholars program has been incredibly beneficial. She has made many new friends within the program and through various projects, allowing her to volunteer and engage with the college community. The scholarship has eased her financial worries, giving her more time to focus on her studies, life, and family. As a result, she feels happier, less stressed, and able to fully enjoy her college experience.

Sydney Scott introduced herself, stating that she is a graduate of North Star High School and is majoring in the Business Management Program. She is a member of the Caring for Cubs Club and plans to open her own floral shop after graduating from the College. She stated that the scholarship has greatly helped her branch out and meet new people through various volunteer opportunities. Additionally, the scholarship program has been a fantastic opportunity that will allow her to graduate debt-free.

Lily Schrock introduced herself, stating that she is a graduate of North Star High School. She is majoring in the Liberal Arts and Sciences Program and plans to attend Penn West for Speech Therapy next year. She stated that the Supporting Scholars Program has enabled her to participate in many volunteer opportunities both within and outside of the College giving her the opportunity to meet many new people, making her college experience very enjoyable.

Adelyn Dull introduced herself, stating that she is a graduate of Conemaugh Township High School and is studying Criminal Justice. She plans to further her education by pursuing a bachelor's degree in criminal justice at Saint Francis. She is the Student Senate President and a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Sigma Alpha Pi Honor Society. She is the founder of the Criminal Justice Club and is also involved in multiple other clubs at the College. She stated that the Supporting Scholars Program has greatly enhanced her experience at the College, allowing her to do amazing things she never thought possible and providing significant financial support. Dr. Nunez stated that that Adelyn will be speaking at this year's graduation.

Dr. Nunez stated the College strives to recruit the top high school students, which explains their outstanding academic performance. An annual data analysis shows that supporting scholars maintain high GPAs, graduate successfully, and transition smoothly into the workforce or further education, demonstrating the program's success.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Lladel Lichty, seconded by Ms. Jennifer Mitchell, and unanimously carried by voice vote, it was:**

**MOVED:** The Board of Trustees approves the Consent Agenda as presented.

- Approval of Minutes from December 17 Board of Trustees Meeting
- Family Medical Leave Act Policy – Revision (EXEC 1001-2025)
- Mandatory Reporting Policy – Revision (EXEC 1002-2025)
- Part-Time Teaching by Administrative Staff Policy – Revision (EXEC 1003-2025)
- Professional Development and Continuing Service Requirement Policy – Revision (EXEC 1004-2025)
- Third Party Provider Policy -- New (EXEC 1005-2025)
- Richland Campus Parking Policy – Revision (FF 1002-2025)
- Marketing Management Program Review (AASS 1000-2025)
- Preferred Campus name for Students Policy - New (AASS 1001-2025)

### **CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT**

#### **Annual items to be completed by the Board of Trustees**

- **Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest and Statement of Financial Interest forms**– Dr. Grady reminded any Trustee that has not completed these forms to please do so as soon as possible.
- **Annual Board of Trustees Evaluation** – Dr. Grady reminded all Trustees to complete this evaluation that will be sent out next month. The anonymous survey results will be aggregated for the Board of Trustees to assess their collective effectiveness.
- **PACCC Annual Meeting in Harrisburg (April 8)** - Dr. Nunez stated that all Board members are encouraged to attend via zoom or in person.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**Accreditation Update** – Ms. Barb Zaborowski stated that the steering committee has been meeting and the College has completed the first draft of the self-study report. Each standard was reviewed, and suggestions were provided for updates. The second draft is currently being worked on and is due on February 28. After that, a writing team will compile the final draft. Faculty will not be involved over the summer, but when they return in September, the third and final draft should be nearly complete. In April, Dr. Nunez will receive communication from Middle States about the selected team chair for the visiting team.

A discussion was held about any areas of focus or changes to Middle States accreditation. Ms. Zaborowski stated that the standards were recently revised, and there is now a stronger focus on DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) initiatives. However, it is unknown whether Middle States will take any action based on the recent changes at the federal level eliminating DEI initiatives.

**Governor's Proposed Budget and Legislative Visits** – Dr. Nunez stated that Governor Shapiro's proposed budget was presented a few weeks ago. It includes a 4.7% increase in appropriations for community colleges but no increase in capital funding. To clarify, there are two types of funding: appropriations, which the college can use as needed, and capital funding, which is designated for projects like leases and renovations. The 4.7% increase is significant compared to previous years, where increases were often flat or around 1-2.5%. However, it is still the lowest proposed increase for any higher education sector in Pennsylvania. Last year, the Governor had proposed a 15% increase for community colleges, so this year's lower appropriation is disappointing. However, Dr. Nunez remains optimistic and plans to work with legislative allies to advocate for an increase the community college appropriations.

**Strategic Plan Updates** – Dr. Nunez presented information about the dual enrollment program on the dashboard, highlighting its immense success and attributing it to the dedication of the staff involved. He stated that the College is committed to maintaining a high-quality program, and

our partners are very pleased and eager to continue working with us. The dashboard highlights metrics in two key areas: the number of high school partners the College works with and the number of credits sold to high school students. The goal was to establish 53 partnerships and sell 7,300 credits. The College has done exceptionally well, having already reached the high school partnership target. This year, 8,362 credits have been sold, significantly surpassing our original goal set four years ago. The program continues to grow, with several new partnerships added this year.

**Dual Enrollment Innovation Grant** – Dr. Nunez stated the College has applied for a Dual Enrollment Innovation Grant. A total of \$14 million was available in this competitive grant, with a maximum award of \$1 million. The College submitted our grant application last week, requesting \$1 million to be distributed over two years to support our dual enrollment program. The objective of the grant is to assist students who face challenges accessing dual enrollment, often due to economic constraints. If awarded the funding will help economically disadvantaged students afford dual enrollment classes. The grant is currently being reviewed with awards expected in March.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Report from Committee Chair** – Dr. Janet Grady reported the minutes are included in the packet and the committee had five action items on the consent agenda.

### **FINANCE & FACILITIES COMMITTEE**

**Report from Committee Chair** – Mr. Greg Winger stated that the minutes are included in the packet.

**Financial Statements ending December 31, 2024 (FF 1001-2025)** – Mr. Greg Winger introduced the motion to approve the Financial Statements ending December 31, 2024 (FF 1001-2025) action item for approval. Mr. Omar Strohm presented an overview of the financial statements. He stated that asset depreciation was primarily responsible for producing a negative change in net position in the income statement. However, revenues from ACE Dual Enrollment, PA Department of Education operations contributions and investment returns, combined with limited increases in personnel operating expenses, led to a generally positive budget result through December of last year when compared to budget.

**Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Joseph Hurd, seconded by Rev. Regional Floyd, and unanimously carried by voice vote, it was:**

**MOVED:** The Board of Trustees approves the Financial Statements ending December 31, 2024 (FF 1001-2025).

**Report from the Associate Vice President of Administration** – Ms. Susan Fisher stated that the weather has kept the facilities staff busy over the past couple of months. They have been dealing with snow and ice removal, as well as the freezing and thawing that has led to roof leaks in Blair, Ebensburg, and now Richland. The team is addressing these issues as they arise.

Work continues on the athletic side of the building at the Richland Campus. Facilities is currently setting up an athletic trainer's room, complete with a washer and dryer, ice machine, sink, and other necessary equipment. The room is being repainted and fixed up for use by an athletic trainer.

East Hills Recreation Facility Use Agreement – Ms. Fisher stated that there has been an extension of the usage agreement with East Hills Recreation. This agreement has been extended for another year, allowing them to use the College's gymnasiums for their programs.

**Report from the Associate Vice President of Technology and Analytics** – Mr. Gary Boast stated a detailed report is available in the packet. He updated the committee on the governmental compliance work performed at the College. Specifically, the College has now confirmed compliance with the Federal Department of Education's financial transparency and gainful employment regulations. The College is working towards compliance with Pennsylvania Act 69, which focuses on accountability and transparency regarding tuition and fees, financial exit, and future cost estimation for students. These regulations ensure that consumers are aware of what they are getting into when they engage with the college. Mr. Boast also mentioned that his department worked over the holiday break to meet the January 15 federal regulation deadline which have now been extended to September, putting the College nine months ahead of schedule.

**Report from the Associate Vice President of Finance** – Mr. Strohm stated that the 2024-2025 budget process is underway, and cost center managers have received their individual forms to fill out. Once completed, these forms will be submitted to cabinet members. Then, he will work with Dr. Nunez to put together a draft budget. This draft budget will go through the committee structure and be presented to the Board of Trustees in April, along with any recommendations related to possible tuition and fee increases. Based on the feedback received during this process, he will modify the draft budget and present the final recommended budget to the Board of Trustees in June.

Dr. Nunez stated that the College follows a bottom-up process, where departmental managers are responsible for developing their own budgets. Meetings were held with all the budget managers a few weeks ago to emphasize the importance of thoughtful planning in budgeting. All departments were encouraged to budget for their actual needs rather than simply rolling over previous budgets. Careful and deliberate spending is key to ensuring the College remains the best institution possible. While we can't afford everything, this process helps to prioritize and make necessary revisions. With the anticipated 4.7% increase in State funding, the College has a good start, but there will likely be some tough decisions ahead as costs continue to rise.

### **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS/STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**Report from Committee Chair** – Ms. Jennifer Anderson reported that the minutes are in the packet and the committee had two action items on the consent agenda.

**Report from the Vice President of Academic Affairs** – Dr. Cindy Doherty stated that her full report is available in the packet. Mark Parfitt, an adjunct faculty member and Marketing Program Coordinator, presented an excellent review of the Marketing Program at the meeting. Mark is enthusiastic about revitalizing the program and increasing enrollments. He plans to emphasize experiential learning, develop new courses in digital media technology and analytics, incorporate open educational resources and AI technology into multiple courses, and expand dual enrollment offerings to create a pipeline from high school to Penn Highlands. Meetings are scheduled for this week and next to discuss the next steps.

Additionally, updates were provided on Academic Affairs' ongoing efforts to revise courses and programs based on faculty recommendations, program review advisory committee feedback, and assessment data. She also announced the launch of the Patient Care Technician program in Bellefonte, in partnership with Mount Nittany Health, for the fall semester. Lastly, she informed the

Board that the Police Academy will begin its third class this August under the new director, Cregg Deibert, who is introducing new ideas and improved processes to the Academy's operations.

**Report from the Vice President of Student Services** – Ms. Trish Corle reported that enrollment is 4.5% behind budget in total credits sold and the College is 6.9% behind our goal for spring. Interestingly, while the number of students remains the same as last spring, the total credits are behind by about 300. Student Services is examining the data, particularly focusing on the reduction in full-time students and analyzing the information by location to understand the loss of students from fall to spring to see why our spring enrollment did not meet or exceed last year's enrollment.

Careerfest is scheduled for March 7, March 21, and April 11, and Student Services is excited to have these events planned. School districts are already sending responses to participate. Element 451 our CRM is enhancing our communication with potential students. The College is excited that the Police Academy will start using the CRM to recruit students.

The WEDnet system has been delayed by about four or five months this year. Typically, this is finalized by August or early September, but the College is still working on getting the WEDnet Training and funding out due to the delay at the State level.

The Liberal Arts and Sciences Self-Design major has been working with guided pathways to assist students whose transfer plans don't fit existing programs. This collaboration has led to higher completion rates, with fewer students transferring out before finishing their programs, and an overall increase in student success rates.

The College is working with Windber School District to better engage with their staff, students, and parents. The College hopes to develop this further and provide that opportunity to other school districts that we serve.

Ms. Trish Corle stated that changes to the Title IX Regulations have occurred due to the new federal administration. In August, the Board approved a new policy and resolution process for the 2024 regulations implemented by the Biden administration. However, in January, the College received notice that a judge had ordered the 2024 regulations to be vacated, and the Office of Civil Rights directed us to follow this order. As a result, the College has removed all information (including Board policies) regarding the 2024 regulations from our website. Additionally, if we were in the middle of a complaint or hearing under the 2024 regulations, we must either rehear the complaint or immediately switch to the 2020 regulations and reissue all notices of investigation accordingly. This changeover has required some adjustments to ensure compliance, but the College is now fully compliant with the new requirements. A discussion was held regarding the change in definitions and how that could impact complaints.

Ms. Jennifer Anderson asked Ms. Adelyn Dull to provide the Student Trustee report.

**Report from the Student Trustee** – Ms. Adelyn Dull reported on several student activities and events including:

- Several clubs are actively planning upcoming events.
- The National Society of Leadership and Success has 53 members, with 30 new members this semester.
- Valentine's crafts were held on February 13th.
- Sophomore night for cheer, basketball, and bowling teams was held on February 14th, featuring Adelyn Dull, Christian Harding, Justin Pierre-Paul, Brady Huss, and Gabby Riffle.

- Romel Hightower was named Region 20 Basketball Player of the Month for December.
- Jake Oglesby was named NJCAA Player of the Week in January, breaking records with 47 points and 13 three-pointers in a game.
- Brice Clinger rolled a perfect 300 game on January 24th. The first in the Penn Highlands history.
- Brady Huss was named Region 20 Bowler of the Month for January, with the highest average of 231.33 and a high game of 259.
- The Men's Bowling Team won the WPCC Tournament, claiming the Men's Team Championship and Men's Doubles Championship.
- The team also won the Region 20 tournament, with Brady Huss winning the All-Events Award and finishing second in men's singles.
- The team will compete in the NJCAA National Tournament in Buffalo, New York, from February 26 to March 1.
- Students have received their ID Cards.
- Student Senate is looking at ways to engage more students and explore class schedule conflicts.

### **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**Report from Committee Chair** – Ms. Ladel Lichty presented that there were no action items and minutes were posted and are in the packet.

**Foundation Report** – Ms. Carole VanMeter announced that the annual Puttapalooza event is scheduled for Friday, March 28. She is excited to share that there are only two remaining foursome spots available, teams are encouraged to register as soon as possible. She thanked Trustees Dr. Grady and Mr. Brett Smith for forming a team and joining the event. This year, Puttapalooza will celebrate the College's 30th anniversary while raising funds for the Supporting Scholars. Currently, the fund stands at \$49,000, and the foundation hopes to raise an additional \$12,000 at Puttapalooza. That in combination with annual giving the foundation can reach its annual goal of \$80,000.

On February 27 at 11:00 am at the Richland Campus the Foundation will unveil the Chief James Mock Memorial Police Academy Achievement Award. This plaque honors both Chief Mock and the cadets who will receive this award, starting this September and continuing indefinitely with the Police Academy. Local area police chiefs, the Mock family and the media are expected. This event will honor Chief Mock's dedicated service to Richland and the surrounding area for many years.

Ms. Carole VanMeter thanked community members who contributed to the annual giving campaign, which has raised over \$15,000 this year. The Supporting Scholars fund received a little over \$5,000, and the "where it is needed most" portion brought in over \$7,700.

**Marketing Report** – Mr. Weible stated that his full report is included in the packet. He stated that over the past few months the Marketing Department has been working on the redesign of the athletic graphics website. One of the big advantages of moving it back to the College's website is the cost savings for the athletics department, as they no longer have to purchase it annually. Additionally, it allows for better search engine optimization with better internal controls within our domain. This means the College can add better keywords and descriptions, track and edit it quicker, and advertise more effectively.

Another major project that Marketing worked on is the student spotlight series on social media, featuring students on LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook. Five students who have been featured so far, each with a quote and photo and want to reach ten throughout the 2024-2025 academic year.

The Marketing Department added five new campaigns: Open House, Paralegal Studies, Medical Assistant Technology, Cybersecurity, and the Police Academy that are currently running. Upcoming campaigns include one for Richland and another for summer, starting in the next week or two.

In 2024, the Marketing Department issued 80 press releases, averaging a little over six per month and plans to continue this trend throughout 2025.

#### **REPORTS/COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Dr. Grady stated that Commencement is May 16. Dr. Nunez stated that this year, before Commencement, the College will host a special dinner that all Board members are invited to attend. Dr. Barb Zaborowski will present a brief history and highlight some of the exciting developments over the past 30 years. After the dinner everyone is asked to participate in Commencement. This will be a fantastic way to show the community the Board's support, with a strong presence at the ceremony. The College looks forward to celebrating this milestone event.

The Board Retreat is scheduled on April 15 followed by Board Meeting.

Ms. Barb Zaboroski announced that the Senior Center did successfully move into the Richland Campus in January.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None.

#### **ADJOURN**

**With no further business to be discussed, Ms. Lladel Litchy moved to adjourn the Board meeting at 5:46PM. The motion was seconded by Ms. Jennifer Anderson and unanimously approved by voice vote.**