

**PENNSYLVANIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
October 21, 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, October 21, 2025, via Zoom teleconferencing with some members present at the Richland campus in the Holzman Boardroom.

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

Dr. Jennifer Anderson
Mr. Carl DeYulis
Mr. Benjamin Estell
Rev. Reginal Floyd
Dr. Janet Grady
Mr. Joseph Hurd
Ms. Jackie Kulback
Mr. Brian Lanham
Ms. Lladel Lichty
Dr. Jennifer Mitchell
Mr. Brett Smith
Dr. Leah Spangler
Ms. Linda Thomson
Mr. Greg Winger

TRUSTEES ABSENT

Mr. John Augustine
Ms. Carissa Westrick
Mr. Mike Puruczky

ALSO PRESENT

Dr. Steve Nunez, President
Ms. Trish Corle, Senior VP of Strategic Initiatives
Dr. Sara Conroy, Vice President of Academic Affairs & Student Services
Ms. Susan Fisher, Associate Vice President of Administration
Mr. Omar Strohm, Associate Vice President of Finance
Ms. Carl VanMeter, Director of the Foundation
Dr. Barb Zaborowski, Dean of Library Services & Special Projects
Mr. Gary Boast, Associate VP of Technology and Analytics
Mr. Matthew Bodenschatz, Executive Director of Recruiting & Admissions
Mr. Ray Weible, Jr., Executive Director of Marketing & Communications
Ms. Suzanne Brugh, Director of Student Activities and Athletics
Ms. Kay-Leigh Davis, Dean of Academic Affairs
Mr. Jeffrey Wood, President of the Foundation
Anisha Barnette and Emmanuel Brannon, Student Trustees

Ms. Sonya Augustine, Executive Assistant to Administrative Operations, Recorder

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

GUESTS & SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Dr. Grady welcomed the newest Board member, Benjamin Estell. Mr. Estell stated that he is the Executive Director for the Centre Regional Council of Governments with 20 years of municipal management experience. He shared that his professional journey began in education as a French teacher, and he holds a bachelor's degree in French language and culture from Ohio State University and an MBA from the University of North Carolina.

Dr. Grady introduced Ms. Meghan Freidhof from Wessel and Company, who was present to deliver their annual audit report. Ms. Freidhof provided an overview of the Financial Audit for FY 2024-2025, noting that Wessel and Company issued an unmodified audit opinion. She thanked the staff of the fiscal department for their assistance in preparing the audit.

Ms. Trish Corle introduced Mr. Matthew Bodenschatz, who was recently promoted to Executive Director of Recruiting & Admissions. She stated that Matt was hired in 2021 as the Director of Recruiting & Admissions. He came to Penn Highlands with 13 years of experience in the Office of Undergraduate and Graduate Admissions at Mount Aloysius. He holds a bachelor's degree from UPJ and a master's in education leadership from the University of South Dakota. Mr. Bodenschatz expressed enthusiasm about stepping into his new role, where he will oversee the directors of the regional centers and collaborate with Dr. Sara Conroy to explore innovative strategies for boosting enrollment. Dr. Nunez stated that, in light of Trish Corle's retirement and Dr. Conroy's transition into her role, the College is undergoing a strategic reorganization to realign talent. As part of this effort, Matt will assume responsibility for managing center operations.

Dr. Sara Conroy introduced Kay-Leigh Davis, who has been promoted to Dean of Academic Affairs. Kay-Leigh holds a master's degree in Alternative Education and a bachelor's degree in Secondary Education with a concentration in Social Studies from Clarion University. She joined Penn Highlands in January 2016, working in partnerships, and has since served as Associate Dean of School Partnerships, followed by Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. In her current role, Kay-Leigh is actively leading adjunct faculty and the dual enrollment program. Additionally, she represents two-year institutions on the Board of Directors for NACEP, the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships. Penn Highlands is proud to be one of only two NACEP-accredited institutions in Pennsylvania. Kay-Leigh stated that she is excited to expand her role in academic affairs. She stated that she truly enjoys the dual enrollment program and the opportunity to work with high school students. She also noted her excitement about being able to contribute more broadly across various areas of academic affairs and working with adjunct faculty. She also manages the \$1 million PDE Grant, which supports increased college access for low-income, first-generation students, students with IEPs, and those from rural areas. In addition to dual enrollment scholarships, the grant funds will be used for several initiatives, including support for cybersecurity students, the expansion of online programs in Huntingdon, and the launch of the Black Bear Academy, a program that will be introduced to school districts in November.

Dr. Nunez introduced Mr. Jeffrey Wood, President of the Foundation Board, who provided an overview of the Foundation's mission and recent achievements. Established in 1995, the Foundation continues to support the College through scholarships and strategic initiatives. Key milestones include receiving a \$1.1 million endowment that led to a 50% asset increase to over \$3 million for the Foundation. Significant developments include the Supporting Scholars initiative, the revival of the Chef Auction, and strong investment performance. Looking ahead, the Foundations' priorities include expanding the Alumni Association and building a sustainable endowment, supported by a \$100,000 matching fund.

CONSENT AGENDA

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Linda Thomson, seconded by Mr. Brett Smith, and unanimously carried by voice vote, it was:

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

- Approval of Minutes from August 19 Board of Trustees Meeting
- Approval of Title IX Policy Revision (EXEC 1014-2025)

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Dr. Grady introduced and welcomed the 2025-2026 Student Trustees, Brian Lanham and Anisha Barnette. Mr. Lanham stated that he is currently working toward an associate degree in business management and plans to continue his education by pursuing a bachelor's degree after graduating from Penn Highlands. Anisha Barnette, the Student Trustee Secretary, stated that she is majoring in communications.

Dr. Grady stated that four board member terms are expiring at the end of the calendar year. The Cambria County Commissioners will make appointments filling those vacancies.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Accreditation Update – Dr. Barb Zaborowski announced that a draft of the Self-Study Report was submitted to Dr. Will Austin last Friday. Dr. Austin, from Warren County Community College in New Jersey, will serve as our team chair and is scheduled to visit next Wednesday, October 29, 2025. All Trustees should have received the schedule and are encouraged to attend the dinner meeting with him, as it will help set the tone for his return visit in the spring with the full evaluation team. Additionally, the College has been informed this week of a change in our Middle States liaison. Dr. Terrence Peavy has been replaced by Suzan Harkness. This change does not impact the report or the upcoming visit; it simply introduces a new point of contact.

PACCC Annual Meeting – Dr. Nunez stated that the PACCC Annual Meeting is scheduled virtually on November 17 at 6:00 PM. Board members are encouraged to attend if they are interested in gaining insight into the PA Community College Commission and its influence at both the state and federal levels.

Strategic Planning Update – Dr. Nunez stated that the current Strategic Plan is expiring in December. He stated that he is very happy with the progress made, noting that many components of the current plan have been successfully completed. A full update will be provided at the December board meeting.

The College is now shifting its focus to the creation of a new strategic plan that will be linked to future budgets. To guide planning over the next one to three years, it is actively involving employees, students, and other stakeholders through surveys, listening sessions, and collaborative efforts.

Student Satisfaction Survey- The Student Satisfaction Survey was developed to determine student satisfaction during their college "onboarding" process. Areas reviewed included Admissions/Recruiting, Financial Aid, Foundation, Academic Advising, Registration, Student Accounts, and IT/Help Desk. The survey asks students to rate services on a scale from 1 to 7, with 7 being the highest. This year, the College received over 300 responses. Overall, area ratings were all very good and ranged from 6.2 (B+) to 6.6 (A). While there's always room for improvement, the feedback was overwhelmingly positive. The most valuable insights came from the student comments, which were shared with Cabinet members and discussed with their respective teams. These discussions are helping to identify areas for growth and continue

improving. This isn't the first time the College has received strong scores, and it's another encouraging indicator of the positive impact our services are having on students.

Reminder: Chef Auction: October 22 at 5:00PM – The Chef Auction is tomorrow.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Report from Committee Chair – Dr. Grady reported that the minutes are included in the packet from October 14, 2025.

Dr. Grady thanked Ray Weible for putting together marketing material packets for the board to review. She stated that the marketing efforts, parent outreach, and promotion of college programs are truly impressive. The community report itself is exceptional, clearly and systematically presenting the behind-the-scenes work with engaging visuals and photos. It's thoughtfully assembled and well worth sharing. Board members not attending in person will have the packets mailed to them.

Penn Highlands Board of Trustees Bylaws Revisions (EXEC 1015-2025) – Dr. Grady explained that the revisions will transfer oversight responsibilities for student recruitment and enrollment from the Academic Affairs and Student Services Committee to the External Affairs Committee. This organizational change will better align recruitment efforts with marketing and public relations reporting, providing a more comprehensive and integrated strategic perspective.

Dr. Nunez stated that as staff roles evolve, responsibilities are being realigned to better leverage individual strengths. As previously mentioned, Matthew Bodenschatz is assuming new duties, prompting a proposed adjustment to the board's reporting structure. If the bylaw revisions are approved, enrollment data will still be shared across all committees, but external affairs will take a more active role in student recruitment. This will allow Mr. Bodenschatz to lead discussions on recruiting efforts, while he and Ray Weible present side by side, highlighting both marketing strategies and student outreach initiatives.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Greg Winger, seconded by Dr. Jennifer Anderson, and unanimously carried by voice vote, it was:

MOVED: The Board of Trustees approves the revisions of the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees.

FINANCE & FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Report from Committee Chair – Mr. Greg Winger stated that the minutes from the October 9, 2025, meeting are included in the packet.

Financial Statements Audit June 30, 2025 (FF 1017-2025)- Mr. Greg Winger presented the motion to approve the Financial Audit ending June 30, 2025, as presented by Wessel & Company.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Benjamin Estell, seconded by Dr. Leah Spangler, and unanimously carried by voice vote, it was:

MOVED: The Board of Trustees accepts the College's 2024-2025 fiscal year audit ending June 30, 2025.

Financial Statements ending August 31, 2025 (FF 1018-2025)- Mr. Omar Strohm presented the Financial Statements ending August 31, 2025. He reviewed a summary of the Operating and Capital Budget, the Statement of Revenues and Expenses, and the Net Position.

A discussion was held regarding the College's funding projections if no State funding is received through year-end. Mr. Omar Strohm stated that the current balance and cash reserves are primarily held in money market accounts. The College expects to have approximately \$3.7 million in cash reserves by the end of December. The College will remain in stable financial condition, with no need to borrow funds, though reliance on cash reduces potential investment income.

He stated that the absence of State funding continues to impact revenue receipts, though operations remain unaffected. Year-over-year comparisons through August 2025 show expected increases in personnel and operating costs. Additionally, asset depreciation and the lack of State revenue has led to a significant decrease in our net position.

Dr. Nunez stated that the Pennsylvania Commission for Community Colleges has requested that all member institutions contact their State legislators for the passage of the State budget at the previously requested percentage as soon as possible. A draft letter has been provided for this purpose. The College will finalize the letter and distribute it to the Board, who may then forward it to their respective State Senators and Representatives to advocate for the approval of the State budget.

Upon a motion duly made by Ms. Linda Thomson, seconded by Rev. Reginal Floyd, and unanimously carried by voice vote, it was:

MOVED: The Board of Trustees approves the Financial Statements ending August 31, 2025.

Report from the Associate Vice President of Administration – Ms. Susan Fisher reported that the Facilities Department has been actively preparing for the upcoming winter season. Over the past several months, the department's primary focus has been on improving energy efficiency across campus. This includes replacing existing lighting with LED fixtures and exploring available rebate programs through industry conferences.

The Facilities Director estimates that approximately 75% of the lighting upgrade project has been completed. He remains committed to identifying opportunities to reduce utility costs and is working to ensure both he and his staff are well-informed on best practices for energy efficiency.

Report from the Associate Vice President of Technology and Analytics – Mr. Gary Boast reported that the IT Department continues to advance cybersecurity initiatives aligned with Objective 4.4 of the College's Strategic Plan. Cybersecurity remains a top priority, and the team leveraged October's Cybersecurity Awareness Month to engage employees through a knowledge and risk-awareness survey, as well as online training. The survey received a strong response rate, and results indicate that the College's employee base is performing significantly better than the national average among higher education institutions.

Additionally, the College's web application firewall was recently upgraded in response to severe bot attacks on the website. This issue has been successfully mitigated.

Mr. Boast also informed the Board that the College is in full compliance with federal reporting requirements for the U.S. Department of Education's Gainful Employment and Financial Value

Transparency regulations. Year One and Year Two data submissions have been completed, with Year One delayed until September 30, 2025, per Department guidance. These regulations aim to ensure that career-oriented programs prepare students for employment with earnings sufficient to repay student debt, while also requiring institutions to disclose detailed program cost, financial aid, expected earnings, and debt levels. The College has submitted extensive student-level data and anticipates feedback from the Department in early 2026.

Report from the Associate Vice President of Finance – Mr. Omar Strohm expressed his appreciation for the staff in the Business Office and Student Financial Services, acknowledging their efforts and dedication in supporting the auditors. He stated that their hard work contributed to a very positive audit outcome.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS/STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Report from Committee Chair – Dr. Jennifer Anderson stated that the minutes from October 7, 2025, are in the packet.

Report from the Student Trustee and Student Senate President – Mr. Brian Lanham reported that the first half of the academic year has been both active and engaging. The Student Senate has approved the formation of a new club: The Society for Human Resource Management Club (SCHM). While national membership is typically limited to business-related majors, our chapter will remain open to all students, with a focus on professional growth, networking, and leadership development. Student clubs are meeting regularly and finalizing leadership roles, with strong participation in campus activities, including visits from food trucks.

The Caring for Cubs Club hosted a suicide awareness bake sale and bracelet fundraiser and sold butterflies to support epilepsy awareness. The College is hosting a Safe Trick-or-Treat event on October 27.

Fall sports are concluding their seasons this week, with competition recaps shared after each event. Jayvien Brumbaugh was named to the WPCC All-Conference Team for golf. Winter sports, including basketball and wrestling, are scheduled to begin competition in early November. Additionally, a bus trip to New York City on October 18 was well attended by students, employees, alumni, and guests, who enjoyed a beautiful day in the city.

The Student Senate is currently working to expand student discount opportunities through the Peak Pass program.

Ms. Susan Fisher stated that she serves on the Board of Directors for the Human Resource Association of the Alleghenies, the local chapter of SHRM (Society for Human Resource Management). For years, the organization has wanted to help a local college or university establish a student SHRM chapter. However, meeting the national requirements such as having at least eight dues-paying members has presented financial and eligibility challenges. Despite these obstacles, Penn Highlands students have successfully launched a chapter under the leadership of Matthew Knepper, an adult student who has gathered interest from approximately 14 students. With support from Carol Vanmeter, the Foundation is assisting with the financial obligations by helping cover national dues. The local SHRM chapter is also sponsoring the club.

Report for Academic Affairs – Dr. Sara Conroy stated that the College's dual enrollment program, also known as the ACE program, has seen strong growth due, in part, to the \$1 million innovation grant that provided scholarships to students in partnership with regional high schools. Enrollment goals have been exceeded for the entire academic year.

The Police Academy has also expanded significantly, with this year's cohort tripling in size compared to last year. This growth is attributed to active outreach efforts by faculty and staff at local high schools. The incoming class of 18 students will be graduating in June.

She also announced an exciting new partnership with IUP that will take students from Penn Highlands from an associate degree all the way through to a master's degree, earning three credentials along the way on an accelerated timeline. This initiative is designed to support career advancement in fields such as social services and behavioral health, leading to family-sustaining wages. Starting next year, the College will implement yearlong scheduling, allowing students to plan their full academic year in advance. This change will benefit both students and faculty and is expected to support retention by helping students stay on track toward graduation. To better serve adult learners, Penn Highlands will pilot an accelerated, fully online Cybersecurity Certificate Program in the spring. Offered in a seven-week format, it will span the spring and summer semesters. If successful, similar accelerated programs, such as the Bookkeeping Certificate, will be developed.

Academic Affairs is conducting a comprehensive review of all academic programs. Using a set of agreed-upon metrics, this analysis will help identify which programs are strong and sustainable, and which may need to be reevaluated. The review is underway this semester, more information will be provided to the Board at the December meeting.

Report from the Senior VP of Strategic Initiatives – Ms. Trish Corle reported that fall core enrollment is 92% of budget. ACE enrollment is already above the annual budget without the addition of spring dual enrollment classes. Deregistration scheduled for next Friday. Due to available scholarships, minimal impact is expected. The College has sold 8,572 credits to date. Recent admissions efforts included a successful college fair on September 12 with 16 high schools and over 700 students. An open house was held on October 13, with another scheduled for November 11. School visits and counselor outreach are underway.

The Nonprofit Learning Center held a training session and partnership meeting on September 16. Quarterly sessions are planned. The College received strong marks in its annual WEDnet appropriation and has 20 active applications in the system. The Johnstown Housing Authority Workforce Readiness Program kicked off cohort #4. The Testing Center will transition from a public to a private Center that will only provide testing services to Penn Highlands students.

Dr. Anderson stated that the WEDnet program received outstanding ratings in its recent review with a 100% invoicing rate for the year, and the program is also currently above average in pending applications.

A discussion was held regarding the Police Academy, and whether the enrollment is sustainable based on the original cost-benefit analysis of the program. Dr. Nunez stated that the program has evolved over the past few years and that some costs have decreased. A detailed financial analysis of the Police Academy will be provided at the next meeting.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Report from Committee Chair – Ms. Lladel Lichty stated that the minutes from October 8, 2025, are included in the packet.

Foundation Report – Ms. Carole VanMeter stated that her full report is in the packet. Tomorrow is the Chef Auction, and the Foundation is excited to welcome eight participating restaurants including Big Spring Spirits Distillery from Bellefonte, along with first-time attendees Bedford Springs and Vita Verde. She expects over 200 guests, with 191 paid attendees, volunteers, and 13 culinary students. Sponsorships are strong: HHS secured the \$2,500 Top Chef sponsorship, along with two Master Chef tables, 14 Executive Chef tables, several Sous Chef tables, and individual supporters.

Ms. Carol VanMeter expressed appreciation for the culinary students who volunteered during their fall break, spending four hours preparing appetizers for the Chef Auction. In recognition of their efforts, the Foundation treated them to a pizza party. Each student is preparing their own appetizer, and first-year students will assist with plating and presentation. They'll also have the opportunity to enjoy the ballroom experience and connect with area chefs.

The Blair County Community Breakfast was a major success, with strong attendance and impactful presentations. Employee giving has also been strong, with over \$13,000 raised in donations and pledges for the coming year. These funds will be directed to areas of greatest need to support students.

Looking ahead, the Foundation will focus on EITC support letters and annual giving. Community reports will be distributed soon, and scholarship planning for 2026–2027 is underway. Additional highlights include new athletic banners in the gym, rally towels supporting the Alumni Association, and a Police Academy T-shirt fundraiser.

Marketing Report – Mr. Ray Weible stated that his full report is in the packet. He thanked Dr. Grady for pointing out the publications. He noted that hard copies of the community report, viewbooks, and financial planning guides are available for anyone interested. He explained that the recruitment publications are a major focus during June, July, and August, with final versions printed and delivered in September for Admissions to use in outreach. These materials go through multiple drafts to ensure alignment across departments. Links to all publications are included in the packet for review.

One of the most significant pieces produced is the community report, compiled monthly throughout the year and finalized as a comprehensive year-end summary. This year's edition includes a center spread celebrating Penn Highlands' 30th anniversary, covering the 2024–2025 cycle. Hard copies are available in the President's Office, and Carol VanMeter will be distributing them soon to legislators, donors, and other stakeholders.

He gave an overview of current and upcoming marketing campaigns, including new billboard and radio contracts. He stated that 30 billboards are scheduled to launch in the coming months. Additionally, game recaps are now being distributed after each athletic event. These are managed by Brad Rosemas, the College's Integrated Marketing and Communications Specialist, who has taken on the responsibility of preparing and sending recaps to the press. Approximately 20 were sent during the fall season, and 30 more are planned for winter sports.

REPORTS/COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

ADJOURN

With no further business to be discussed, at 6:15PM, Mr. Brian Lanham and Dr. Leah Spangler made a motion to adjourn the Board meeting which was unanimously approved by voice vote. unanimously approved by voice vote.