

## **Grays Harbor College Board of Trustees Regular Meeting**

**Board Meeting:** The Board meeting was convened on February 11, 2025, at 10:07 AM.

**Members Present:** Dr. Paula Akerlund, Dr. Harry Carthum, Jim Sayce

**Members Present on Zoom:** Aliza Esty

**Others Present:** Derek Edens, Heidi Wood, Kristy Anderson, Dr. Carli Schiffner, Ja'Shonae Cooks, Dr. Aaron Coby, Erin Tofte, Julie Randall, Jared Stratton, Jeb Thornton, CJ Berndt, Isaac Humiston, Laurie Franklin, Sydney Yager, Floyd Plemmons, Johnny Alavez, Clara Gillies, Hannah Tupper, Jax Bonifer, Lori Christmas

**Others Present on Zoom:** Alana Bertot, Annalee Atwell-Tobar, Ariel Finfrock, Ashley Bowie-Gallegos, Barb Dyer, Bruce Marvin, Cassandra Smith, Cheyenna Carroll, Crystal Bagby, Haley Adair, Holly Duffy, Jackie Blumberg, Janet Parker, Jeremy Winn, Kenji Seta, Lizbeth Sanchez, Matt Holder, Nancy DeVerse, Paige Pierog, Sarah Dalrymple, Sarina Tung, Shelly Hoffman

A study session was provided at 9:00 a.m. featuring a tour of the Nursing program provided by Carol O'Neal.

### **I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called the meeting to order at 10:07 AM. Roll call was taken by Ja'Shonae Cooks.

### **II. Safety statement**

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund read the safety statement.

### **III. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **IV. Land Acknowledgment**

Jim Sayce read the Land Acknowledgment. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund thanked him for doing so.

### **V. Agenda Adoption**

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to adopt the agenda. Jim Sayce moved to approve the agenda, and Dr. Harry Carthum seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### **VI. Public Comments**

Jeb Thornton, a staff member at Grays Harbor College, provided public comment on areas for improvement.

### **VII. Celebration**

Dr. Carli Schiffner recognized the successful outreach efforts that contributed to increased Winter Quarter enrollment. She commended Johnny Alavez, Hannah Tupper, and Jenny Crawford for their dedication to expanding outreach and engaging the community. Additionally, she commended Lori

Christmas and Cassie Smith for their efforts in K-12 and dual enrollment initiatives. The Advising, Placement, Enrollment, and Admissions teams were also recognized for their collective efforts in advancing enrollment and raising awareness within the community.

Johnny Alavez expressed his gratitude to Hannah Tupper and Jenny Crawford, who joined his team in Fall Quarter, highlighting their contributions in building connections and fostering community engagement. He also extended his appreciation to Lori Christmas and Cassie Smith for their groundwork in high schools. He noted that his team's bilingual skills and their financial aid office hours in the high schools have been instrumental in supporting students.

Dr. Carli Schiffner also extended thanks to all those involved in All College Day, including Campus Operations, presenters, and staff who contributed to organizing the event. She acknowledged the full day of training and noted that Cabinet will review the feedback from the event.

## **VIII & IX. Action Items & Standing Reports**

### **Action Items**

1. Approval of January 14, 2025 Minutes
  - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the January 14, 2025 meeting minutes. Jim Sayce moved to approve the minutes, and Dr. Harry Carthum seconded the motion. The motion carried.
2. Second Reading – Operational Policy 902, Media Relations
  - a. Kristy Anderson reintroduced Operational Policy 902, Media Relations. No additional questions were raised.
  - b. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to adopt Operational Policy 902, Media Relations. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to adopt the policy, and Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.
3. Approval of Operational Policy 209, Immigrant Rights and Non-Discrimination
  - a. Erin Tofte introduced Operational Policy 209, Immigrant Rights and Non-Discrimination. The policy is being presented for adoption without a second reading to ensure compliance with Keep Washington Working Act (KWW). It was confirmed with the Assistant Attorney General (AAG) that this approach was permissible.
  - b. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund noted that the Board has the latitude to proceed with adoption in this manner.
  - c. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to adopt Operational Policy 209, Immigrant Rights and Non-Discrimination. Jim Sayce moved to adopt the policy, and Dr. Harry Carthum seconded the motion. The motion carried.
4. Review and Adoption of Title IX Updates for Permanent Implementation
  - a. Laurie Franklin provided context regarding the emergency approval of the Title IX updates, which was granted on July 29, 2024. The College had been in the process of making these rules permanent; however, on January 29, 2025, the 2024 Title IX regulations were rescinded. During the implementation of the 2024 rules, the College also updated its hazing policies and code of conduct to align with current law. Laurie requested approval of these updates, with the 2024 Title IX rule changes struck through.

- b. Assistant Attorney General (AAG) Bruce Marvin recommended tabling the discussion to allow time for a thorough review and identification of specific changes. He then walked through the sections of the 2024 rules that would be removed. Laurie Franklin supported the recommendation to table the item.
  - c. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to table the review and adoption of Title IX updates for permanent implementation. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to table the item, and Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.
5. TIAA Investment Fund Decision
- a. Dr. Harry Carthum provided an overview of the Board's investment fund management. TIAA currently manages the fund, which is valued at approximately \$6 million. Recently, the Board decided to periodically review the fund management. As part of this process, a request for proposals was issued, and three interested parties responded. Following the review, the recommendation was to continue with TIAA, as they have agreed to reduce management fees. Dr. Carthum suggested that the Board review the fund management every three years moving forward.
  - b. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to reappoint TIAA as the investment fund manager. Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### **Standing Reports**

1. **Student Government Report** (Isaac Humiston)

Isaac Humiston presented the written report for Student Government. No updates outside of the written report were shared.

2. **Classified Staff Report** (Jared Stratton)

Jared Stratton presented an updated written report handout to the Board. He started by sharing updates from his original written report. The updates from the handout included concerns about the inability to assist students with understanding their rights, as it was identified that doing so could be interpreted as providing legal counsel. He also noted that Classified Staff are wearing many hats. Jared reminded and encouraged the Board to keep in mind the individuals who are struggling within the College community. He also expressed willingness to speak with management to provide further insights.

3. **Represented Exempt Staff Report** (Deanna Shedley)

Shelly Hoffman gave a welcome as the new representative.

4. **Faculty report** (Tom Kuester)

No report was submitted.

5. **Administrative Services Report** (Dr. Carli Schiffner)

Dr. Carli Schiffner provided an update. Zach Queen submitted a written report but was unable to attend due to a family emergency. Additional details on the two proposals moving forward are included in the meeting packet, with a final decision expected at the March meeting.

Sydni Yager provided an update on the Quarter 2 budgeted revenues and expenses, comparing them to the actuals as of December 21, 2024. Salaries and benefits appear on target, while Running Start revenue is trending 15% above target. A board member asked if there were any concerns; Sydni noted that a deeper budget review is in progress and that she could not provide a definitive answer without further data. A question was also raised about whether the College has a Winter Quarter budget. Sydni explained that the College operates on an annual budget and has not prepared a separate Winter Quarter budget in the past. Dr. Carli Schiffner noted that a process for this is in the works.

**6. Human Resources Report (Erin Tofte)**

Erin Tofte welcomed new hires by name and title, and acknowledged individuals who experienced changes in employment status. She also noted that details regarding active searches and their respective progress are included in the written report. Additionally, an offer has been extended to Ava Garcia for the position of Director of Enrollment Services. Erin also shared that three candidates for the Vice President of Administrative Services (VPAS) position will be visiting campus to interview.

**7. Instruction Report (Dr. Aaron Coby)**

Dr. Aaron Coby provided additional updates beyond the written report. He highlighted a student-initiated project at SCCC, a lecture series featuring faculty members from across campus, focusing on topics that faculty are passionate about or that students have expressed interest in. Dr. Coby also shared that he will be traveling to Ilwaco to meet with staff and discuss reinvigorating the Community Education program. Additionally, the Instruction Management Team is currently working on the 300-series policies, which will be presented to the Board in the near future. Dr. Harry Carthum inquired about Board invitations to SCCC graduation ceremonies.

**8. Student Services Report (Laurie Franklin)**

Laurie Franklin provided the Board with a printed update of the latest enrollment data, noting that enrollment is increasing. Updates beyond the written report included ongoing meetings with students to discuss food services. Additionally, current GHC student, Madeline Shaffer, was accepted into the U.S. Air Force Academy, and Rebekah Stone, a Running Start student, was accepted at WestPoint. Dr. Harry Carthum requested a breakdown of Running Start enrollment by high school. Laurie Franklin and Lori Christmas will work to include this information in March's report.

**9. President's Report (Dr. Carli Schiffner)**

Dr. Carli Schiffner reported that there continues to be frequent updates from the state and federal government, and Cabinet is working to navigate these changes effectively. She expressed

appreciation for AAG Bruce Marvin's assistance in this process. Dr. Schiffner highlighted the successful visit from Congresswoman Randall, noting that the College was included in her Top 10 list following her visit home to Washington. Dr. Schiffner also shared that the College is one of nine institutions selected to join the second cohort for the National Center for Inquiry & Improvement (NCII) Rural Pathways Project. Regarding the Vice President of Administrative Services (VPAS) search, open forums are scheduled for Friday, February 14 as well as next Wednesday, February 19 and Thursday, February 20.

Dr. Schiffner also provided legislative updates, sharing that the College is actively monitoring key bills. House Bill 1273 – A dual credit bill aimed at expanding Running Start opportunities for Career and Technical Education (CTE). Senate Bill 5663 – A proposal to establish a virtual campus for Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs). Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund inquired about the group promoting Senate Bill 5663. Dr. Schiffner will follow up with more details.

**a. Accreditation (Kristy Anderson)**

Kristy Anderson shared that the Board will be reviewing a significant number of policies in the coming months, as policy review is a major component of the accreditation process. She thanked the Board for taking the time to review these policies. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund agreed and also expressed appreciation for those working on policy updates.

**b. Student Services and Instructional Building (SSIB) (Floyd Plemmons)**

Floyd Plemmons reported that the final closeout paperwork for the SSIB is nearly complete, and work is ongoing to secure the occupancy permit. Floyd also followed up on a previous request regarding how the building would perform in an earthquake. He shared an image depicting the concrete piles supporting the structure and provided a detailed explanation of the engineering and science behind its design. The presentation was described as highly informative, leading to further discussion about the building's structure. A Board member inquired about the seismic activity rating and the expected lifespan of the building; Floyd will follow up.

**10. Board Report**

**a. Foundation Meeting Report (Astrid Aveledo & Lisa Smith)**

Lisa Smith was unable to attend, so Dr. Carli Schiffner and Dr. Paula Akerlund provided an update. They reported on a piece of property that was donated to the Foundation approximately 7–8 years ago, located on the perimeter of the College's property. The land is on a hillside, limiting its potential for development. The one potentially usable area contains a pump house, but overall, the property has limited future use. The Foundation is conducting further research before making any decisions. A Board member inquired about a tax lot number to view the property on a map. Dr. Akerlund noted that the property is approximately 7.5 acres. Additional information will be provided at the next meeting.

**b. Board Art Committee Update (Astrid Aveledo)**

A meeting is scheduled soon, as there are remaining funds available to be spent.

c. Legislative Committee Update (Jim Sayce)

Jim Sayce passed the update to Dr. Carli Schiffner. Dr. Schiffner highlighted Student Advocacy Day, noting that the Committee pivoted plans to host Congresswoman Randall instead. She also mentioned that the Committee will meet in two weeks and will continue to monitor the bills discussed earlier in the meeting.

d. Items of Interest (Dr. Paula Akerlund)

Dr. Paula Akerlund asked the Board to review the proposed dates for next academic year's meeting schedule before the March meeting. She encouraged Board members to consider their flexibility regarding meeting times, potential retreat dates, and shared consideration regarding the July meeting date.

Jim shared that he turned 70 two weeks ago.

The meeting recessed at 11:18 AM and reconvened at 11:28 AM.

**XIII. Executive Session**

The Board entered a closed executive session at 11:28 AM. under RCW 42.30.110 to consult with legal counsel regarding ongoing litigation and to review the performance of a public employee. The session was scheduled to last approximately 20 minutes. The Board reconvened in open session at 12:18 PM.

**XIV. Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session**

No actions were had as a result of the Executive Session.

**XV. Good of the Order**

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund asked if there were any items for the good of the order. No items were raised.

**XVI. Adjournment/next meeting**

There being no further business, Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund adjourned the meeting at 12:20 PM. The Board of Trustees will hold its next meeting on March 11, 2025 at 11:00 AM, at Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen and via Zoom. No study session is scheduled.

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Dr. Carli Schiffner, Secretary

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Dr. Paula Akerlund, Chair