

**NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
June 9, 2025 – 4:30 PM – Washington County Campus, Room 210**

Call to Order

☐ Action ☒ Information

Recognition, Awards, and Information Items

- Recognition of New Trustee, Ashley Pointer

☒ Action ☐ Information

Attendance

☒ Action ☐ Information

Approval of Minutes

- Regular Board Meeting – May 12, 2025

☒ Action ☐ Information

ENDS Monitoring Report

- E-105: Soft Phones (*Mr. Eddie Mahar*)

☒ Action ☐ Information

Executive Limitations Monitoring Report

- EL-208: Budgeting

☒ Action ☐ Information

Committee Reports

- Land Use Committee (*Ms. Lori Frank*)
 - Approval of Fitness Court

☐ Action ☒ Information

Presidential Report

- Recap of ACCT President Advisory Committee AI Training Session at Sky Song

☐ Action ☒ Information

Chair Report

- ACCT Conference in October (See events sheet; deadline June 9th to let Sammantha know if interested)
- Board Retreat/August Board Meeting Combined (August 4th)

☐ 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, May 12, 2025

MINUTES

Chair Todd Schwartz called the Board of Trustees of NorthWest Arkansas Community College meeting to order on Monday, May 12, at 4:30 pm in the Burns Hall 3rd Floor Board Room.

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

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

MINUTES

March Regular Board Meeting

Dr. Reeves motioned, and Mrs. Latimer seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on April 14, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

RECOGNITION

Recognition of Outgoing Student Trustee, Taryn Settle

Dr. Rittle recognized Taryn and thanked him for his service to the Board. Taryn thanked everyone and expressed gratitude for the experience.

Recognition of Outgoing Trustee, Dr. Carolyn Reeves

Mr. Schwartz commended Dr. Reeves on her service to NWACC during her tenure on the Board. He recognized her accomplishments and her family's support. Dr. Reeves thanked everyone for the opportunity and expressed gratitude for the experience.

Dr. Rittle awarded Dr. Reeves with a plaque.

ENDS MONITORING REPORT

E-104: Partnerships

Jessica Chronister shared that NWACC works to achieve E-104 by developing, expanding, and enhancing collaborative partnerships with local K-12 and university partnerships. She highlighted the work being done by Drs. Gary and LaShall Bates to secure the NSF EPIIC grant, NSF START grant, and the Upward Bound Mentorship for Summer Research. These

have secured funding for NWACC students to work with Canisius University, Albion College, Roanoke College, and University of Arkansas Fayetteville.

She further explained more information about the Transitions Academic Program (TAP) partnership between NWACC and U of A Fayetteville which allows students take classes at both campuses and receive academic support from both colleges.

Mrs. Chronister continued by elaborating on the multiple events and visits NWACC does with surrounding K-12 institutions such as visiting Elementary and Middle School students and hosting a Summer Camp with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. NWACC also puts on numerous events for High School Students including college and career Fairs, presentations, application and scholarship help sessions, campus tours, VIP Registration, LIFE mentorship, and Padres events.

A question from the Board was asked about any anticipated cuts in the science programs, referencing the NSF grants mentioned towards the beginning of the presentation. Dr. Diana Johnson answered stating that NWACC has not been notified of any potential funding cuts.

Approval of E-104 Monitoring Reports

Mr. Spivey motioned, and Dr. Reeves seconded the motion to approve the ENDS-104 Monitoring Reports. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS MONITORING REPORT

EL-201: Financial Conditions

Dr. Rittle stated that 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. Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not fail to monitor the College's revenues and expenses to ensure responsible fiscal stewardship, fail to ensure that the College is not indebted beyond trade payables in the normal course of business, fail to maintain adequate Board approved cash reserves, fail to conduct interfund transfers consistent with the fund accounting principles and Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) standards, fail to settle financial obligations in timely manner, fail to ensure that tax payments or other government-ordered payments or filings are timely and accurately filed, or fail to aggressively pursue receivables after a reasonable grace period.

Approval of EL-201 Monitoring Report

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee Report

Mrs. Latimer informed the Board that the Finance Committee met to review the Budget as presented by Anya Petersen-Frey during the April 30th Budget Work Session.

Approval of FY2026 Budget Request

The Finance Committee recommended the approval of the FY2026 Budget Request as presented by Mrs. Latimer, and Mr. Branscum seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Rittle informed the Board that summer enrollment is up by 2.9% in headcount and 8% in SSCH. So far, NWACC has reached approximately 30% of the summer enrollment goal and 26.9% of the fall enrollment goal. NWACC anticipates approximately 7% of growth for the upcoming fall enrollment.

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

Dr. Rittle commended the NWACC Foundation Team for raising over \$125,000 during their Plant A Seed event earlier this month.

Dr. Rittle passed to Mat Mozzoni and Liz Anderson, who shared that the Foundation Board met to discuss Campus Master Planning and supports the Board's direction. Mrs. Anderson requested that the Board consider a feasibility study to explore the Commons as a potential first project for the Campus Master Plan. She offered a couple of other project recommendations, including a workforce nursing expansion and residential housing.

A question from the Board was asked about the capacity left for the Nursing Program. Dr. Diana Johnson answered, saying that if Health Professions starts any other programs, NWACC will need new space.

Dr. Justin White addressed the Board to give context to the residential housing project. He asserted that the project would be a portion of the housing village. He also mentioned that

public and private partnerships are available to minimize out-of-pocket expenses for this project.

Mrs. Harris addressed the Board, stating that she is most excited about the Commons project and supports moving forward with a feasibility study.

The Board expressed concerns about the Alice Walton School of Medicine (AWSOM) opening a Workforce Nursing University and conflicts with NWACC. Dr. Rittle assured that it could potentially become a collaborative opportunity and could benefit NWACC students. The Board discussed a potential need for housing due to the potential for out-of-state students coming to the area to attend the AWSOM Workforce Nursing University.

The Board also expressed concerns about housing regarding who would be served with this project. Dr. Justin White assured that student athletes, international students, and all other student types will benefit from the housing project. He mentioned that the ratio of each student type served has yet to be determined. He also mentioned that this project has the lowest start-up cost to NWACC and will be a revenue generator for NWACC through food and retail spaces built in.

Approval of Campus Master Plan Feasibility Study

Mrs. Harris motioned, and Mrs. Latimer seconded the motion to approve moving forward with a feasibility study for the Commons project. The motion passed unanimously.

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 asked the Board if anyone would like to volunteer to attend the Foundation Board Meeting on May 15 at 11:30 am. Joe Spivey volunteered.

Mr. Schwartz proposed an amendment to the Board Manual regarding conference attendance, which encourages each Board Member to attend at least one conference per year, as budget allows. He asked for feedback from the Board. The Board discussed.

Approval of Professional Conferences Board Manual Update

Mr. Spivey motioned, and Dr. Reeves seconded the motion to approve the updated language for the Professional Conferences section of the Board Manual. The motion passed unanimously.

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

Mr. Todd Schwartz, Chair

Mrs. Amber Latimer, Secretary

POLICY TITLE: BUDGETING

Policy 208: **The College budget for any fiscal year or the remaining part of any fiscal year shall not deviate materially from the Board's Ends priorities, risk fiscal jeopardy, or fail to provide financial guidance for all college units.**

Definition: Deviate materially refers to creating a budget that does not follow the Board's Ends priorities in a given planning cycle. Fiscal jeopardy is defined as not having sufficient funds to cover the cost of planned expenditures. Provide financial guidance is defined as producing a comprehensive budget that is transparent and provides a roadmap for annual financial transactions.

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

1. Fail to include credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, and disclosure of planning assumption.

Definition: Credible projections is defined (1) a projection based on multi-year college trends in tuition and fee, millage, state, and other revenue and (2) a projection based on current and next year forecasts of expenditures related to priorities established by the Cabinet. Separation of capital and operational items refers to adherence to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). Planning assumptions are specific revenue and expense assumptions based on strategic plans developed by the College.

Narrative:

- NWACC's annual budget development process includes review of historical multi-years' operating revenue and expenditures, trends, financial ratios, and benchmarking analysis and analysis of changes.
- The college regularly monitors the significant revenue and expense categories to analyze the trends, financial ratios, and variances for credible, fact-based future financial planning and budgeting assumptions.
- NWACC's budgeting and accounting processes adhere to GASB and GAAP. NWACC also complies with Arkansas Legislative audit requirements of distinguishing and maintaining the separation of capital and operating revenue and expenditures.

2. Fail to ensure that the expenditure budget in any fiscal year is balanced with the revenue budget, which is based on conservative projections for the same period.

Definition: A balanced budget has revenues equal to or greater than total expenditures. Annual revenue projections should be based on prior year trends; college annual planning assumptions; enrollment projections; and local, regional, and national economic forecasts.

Narrative:

- The President presented a balanced operating budget for FY2026, and it was approved at the May 12, 2025, BOT Meeting.
- The projected expenditures in the college's unrestricted and capital funds operating budgets do not exceed the projected revenue for these funds. The FY2026 Operating Budget for educational & general (E&G), designated, and auxiliary funds total \$54,867,087 both in revenue and expenditures.
- NWACC remains an affordable option of higher education institute in NWA.
- The regional and national trends and developments that affect state, millage, grants revenue sources are analyzed.
- NWACC also plans for an increase in county millage revenue by \$501,773 and an increase in tuition/fees/other revenue by \$4,244,157 due to approved tuition and fee increase, and increased enrollment census.
- The FY2026 budget includes plans for a net increase in state revenue appropriation revenue by \$218,482.
- The FY2026 budget includes plans for increase in payments for full-time staff and full-time to market baseline per our compensation study, step raises for full time faculty, and 3% COLA for staff totaling \$2,408,667.
- NWACC budget includes an increase in employee benefits costs by \$602,167, an increase to capital expenditures by \$100,000, and an overall operating/maintenance/service increase of \$2,353,578.
- The FY2026 approved budget reflects an increase of 11% or \$54,867,087 in the overall revenue and expenditure base compared to the FY2025 budget.

3. Fail to provide sufficient funds for Board prerogatives in any fiscal year budgets as is set for in the Cost of Governance Policy.

Definition: The annual operating budget should have sufficient funds needed for Board operation under the Policy Governance.

Narrative:

The FY2026 Budget provides sufficient funds for the Board to carry out its role according to the Cost of Governance Policy.

4. Fail to propose the percent of annual BOT cash reserve to ensure 4fiscal stability.

Definition: The Board shall annually approve a cash reserve to cover potential operational costs due to natural disasters or other emergencies. The approved cash reserve for the fiscal year (generally 8-10%) should be taken from the projected educational and general revenue or carryover funds before the annual expenditure budget is established.

Narrative:

The President proposed and set aside \$4,244,157 or 7.6% of E&G fund budget of \$54,867,087 in the FY2026 Operating Budget as the BOT reserve to cover potential operational costs due to natural disasters or other unforeseen emergencies. This reserve was approved by the Board of Trustees along with the FY2026 budget.

I am reporting in compliance with Executive Limitations, Policy 208.

Dennis C. Rittle, Ph.D.
President
June 9, 2025