

**NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**August 4, 2025 – Immediately Following the BOT Retreat – SCWT Walmart Auditorium**

**Call to Order**

       Action        X   Information

**Recognition, Awards, and Information Items**

- Introduction of Alisha Hoback, Executive Assistant to the Office of the President

  X   Action             Information

**Attendance**

  X   Action             Information

**Approval of Minutes**

- Regular Board Meeting – June 9, 2025

  X   Action             Information

**ENDS Monitoring Report**

- E-103: NWACC Library (*Ms. Shawna Thorup*)

  X   Action             Information

**Executive Limitations Monitoring Report**

- EL-205: Emergency Presidential Succession

       Action             Information

**Committee Reports**

- None

       Action        X   Information

**Presidential Report**

- Academic Updates
- Burns Hall Elevator Maintenance
- Enrollment Update
- Athletic Update

       Action        X   Information

**Chair Report**

- ACCT New Orleans – Oct. 22nd to Oct. 25th
- Adoption of New Policy Per AR Code § 25-19-103

  X   Action             Information

  X   Action             Information

**Other Board Action Items and Considerations**

- Approval of Provisional Position

**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, June 9, 2025**

**MINUTES**

Chair Todd Schwartz called the Board of Trustees of NorthWest Arkansas Community College meeting to order on Monday, June 9, at 4:30 pm in the Washington County Campus Room 210.

**Members Present:** Todd Schwartz (Chair), Rachel Harris (Vice Chair), Amber Latimer (Secretary), Ashley Pointer, Lori Frank, Mark Scott, Mary Schneider, and Joe Spivey

**Absent:** Ron Branscum

**Also in Attendance:** Dr. Dennis C. Rittle

**MINUTES**

**May Regular Board Meeting**

Mrs. Harris motioned, and Mrs. Latimer seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on May 12, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

**RECOGNITION**

**Recognition of New Trustee, Ashley Pointer**

Dr. Rittle introduced Mrs. Pointer as the newest Trustee appointed by Governor Sanders to fill the remainder of a vacant slot on the Board. Mrs. Pointer gave a brief bio of herself, exclaiming that she is a former teacher and is married to Lucas Pointer. She concluded by stating that she is excited to be here and ready to get started.

**ENDS MONITORING REPORT**

**E-105: Soft Phones**

Eddie addressed the Board to give some highlights of the new soft phone systems initiative the college is pursuing. He explained that this system will allow for phone call transcriptions and will have AI and cross-platform integrations.

He then introduced Janet O'Neill, who stepped through how the soft phone will work and function for employees. She explained that this will improve the day-to-day for employees by eliminating long-distance codes and dialing 9 or 1 for outgoing calls, making speed dial and conference calls easier, and providing access to voicemail outside of the office.

The Board asked about the phone systems NWACC currently has for employees. Eddie answered by stating that NWACC currently has hard phones set up for employees. He further explained that soft phones are internet-based, which will eliminate the issues of getting static and call dropping that employees are experiencing now.

### **Approval of E-105 Monitoring Reports**

Mr. Scott motioned, and Mr. Spivey seconded the motion to approve the ENDS-105 Monitoring Reports. The motion passed unanimously.

## **EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS MONITORING REPORT**

### **EL-208: Budgeting**

Dr. Rittle stated that 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. Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not fail to include credible projection of revenues and expenses, separation of capital and operational items, and disclosure of planning assumption, 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, fail to provide sufficient funds for Board prerogatives in any fiscal year budgets as is set for in the Cost of Governance Policy, or fail to propose the percent of annual BOT cash reserve to ensure fiscal stability.

### **Approval of EL-208 Monitoring Report**

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

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Land Use Committee Report**

Ms. Frank informed the Board that the Finance Committee met to discuss and determine whether the Board should approve the Fitness Court. She gave a summary, then called on Brooke Brewer to further present the subject.

Mrs. Brewer explained that she is seeking approval from the Board to install the Fitness Court. She continued by explaining that this project will be paid through grant funding, in-kind donations, and athletic fees, but no college operational funds will be used for the project. The Fitness Court is an outdoor gym that utilizes body weight circuit training, is also wheelchair accessible, and includes a free app supported with workouts and training ideas. The Fitness Court is designed to be a public space to encourage community interaction and can also be used as an outdoor classroom.

Additional inclusions, such as a bike rack, benches, and a walking/biking trail constructed by the Trails and Trades team, will be included in the space. The entire project will involve collaboration across Trails and Trades, Health Professions, Social and Behavioral Sciences, and all students, faculty, staff, and the community.

The Fitness Court enhances current fitness offerings on campus, helps create a “sticky campus” culture, the court will have Wi-Fi and can be used as an outdoor classroom for academic programs, and will be located off the AR-MO trails to give the community ease of access to the court. The Fitness Court has already been designated a space on campus through the Campus Master Plan to be located close to other future planned athletic and recreational courts.

Safety features include warnings that will be permanently affixed to the Fitness Court Wall, the court will not be opened at night, the Department of Public Safety phone number will be displayed, the court will be monitored by video surveillance, and proximity of the court is located close to the Department of Public Safety, located in the Center for Health Professions. The court is designed to be as indestructible as possible. The only maintenance required is an annual check-up, but the equipment is guaranteed for 20 years.

Brooke concluded by outlining the timeline of the project being installed in Summer 2025 with a grand opening in Fall 2025, pending Board approval.

The Board asked questions about the dawn until dusk use and additional features such as lighting and shade. Brooke replied by saying there is much interest in adding additional features to the space as time passes. She also mentioned that as more projects are completed per the Campus Master Plan, it will aid in providing proper light and shade for the Fitness Court.

### **Approval of Fitness Court**

The Land Use Committee recommended the approval of the Fitness Court as presented by Ms. Frank, and Mrs. Schneider seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **PRESIDENT’S REPORT**

Dr. Rittle informed the Board that he was invited to visit Skysong to observe their AI Program. He described it as an immersive experience as they taught Chemistry through AI, created a “who done it” experience, and a “back in time” exercise with full immersion technology. He exclaimed that he is excited to see this come to Northwest Arkansas. He further stated that Dr. Diana Johnson also attended the trip and asked her if she had

anything to share. Dr. Johnson stated that she is excited to integrate the technology to boost student engagement, AI tutoring, and AI advising.

Dr. Rittle also informed the Board that fall enrollment is in full swing. Future students have been communicated with through text, emails, and mailers. Over 2,000 students have been contacted via text and email; emails have a 42% open rate and over 500 students responded to the text messages. Approximately 2,012 students have applied and not yet registered for classes.

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

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

Mr. Schwartz reminded the Board of the August 4 Board Retreat, with the August Regular Board Meeting to immediately follow the Retreat.

Mr. Schwartz also asked Mrs. Latimer to share her experience about throwing the first pitch at a recent Naturals Baseball game. Mrs. Latimer exclaimed that she was happy to be there and thanked Alex Vasquez, Brooke Brewer, and their teams for facilitating the partnerships between NWACC and The Naturals.

### **OTHER ACTION ITEMS**

**None**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 5:21 p.m.

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Mr. Todd Schwartz, Chair

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Mrs. Amber Latimer, Secretary

**POLICY TYPE: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS EL-205**

**POLICY TITLE: EMERGENCY PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION**

**Policy 205:** In order to protect the Board from sudden loss of Presidential services, the President may have no fewer than two other executives familiar with Board and Presidential issues and processes.

*Definition: Presidential succession refers to acting in the stead of the College President in case he/she is unavailable to administer college activities.*

**Narrative:** The President will recommend at least two College Cabinet members to the Board of Trustees who will act in the President's stead in case he/she is unable to administer college activities.

**Policy 205A:** At the beginning of each new fiscal year, the President will present to the Board for affirmation, the two individuals identified in rank order as the college executives to act in the President's stead in case he/she is unavailable to administer College activities.

**Narrative:** The President recommends that the following Cabinet members be affirmed as the College executive to act in the President's stead in case he/she is unavailable to administer College activities:

1. Dr. Diana Johnson, SVP of Learning/CAO
2. Dr. Justin White, VP of Student Affairs and Strategic Initiatives

**Policy 205B:** Should there be a change in executives identified for succession planning during a fiscal year, new individuals, once identified or hired, will be presented to the Board for affirmation.

**Narrative:** The President will advise the Board if the need arises to change the executive(s) named for succession during the fiscal year.

**Policy 205C:** The President is authorized to delegate, or withdraw such delegation, to the executives in presidential succession, the President's authority to contract in the name of the College for business activities in the normal course of operations.

**Narrative:** The President will delegate his authority to executives in presidential succession to contract in the name of the College for business activities only when he is not available to conduct such operations.

**I am reporting in compliance with Executive Limitations, Policy 205.**

**Dennis C. Rittle, PhD**  
**President**  
**August 4, 2025**