Whatcom
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

MINUTES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES SPECIAL MEETING
237 W. Kellogg Road, Bellingham
Phyllis & Charles Learning Commons 160
Wednesday, May 14, 2025
2:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER Chair John Pedlow officially called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. Present in addition to the chair were trustees Wendy Bohlke, Jeff Fairchild, Rebecca Johnson, and Teresa Taylor constituting a quorum. Others present included President Justin Guillory; Nate Langstraat, Vice President for Administrative Services, Kerri Holferty, Interim Vice President for Student Services; Steven Thomas, Vice President for Instruction, Kerena Higgins, Assistant Attorney General; and Rafeeka Kloke, Executive Director for the Office of the President.

Chair Pedlow began with a land acknowledgment to recognize and pay respect to the Coast Salish Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories.

ACTION TO ACCEPT AGENDA

- Trustee Taylor moved to accept the agenda. It was seconded by Trustee Bohlke and the motion was approved.
- Chair Pedlow announced that there is a designated time for public comment on the agenda.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2025-2026

Trustee Johnson moved to elect Trustee Jeff Fairchild to serve as chair. It was seconded by Trustee Taylor and the motion was approved.

Trustee Taylor moved to elect Trustee Rebecca Johnson to serve as vice chair. It was seconded by Trustee Bohlke and the motion was unanimously approved.

Chair Fairchild expressed his appreciation for Trustee Pedlow's leadership in the past year.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Consent Agenda
  - Minutes of April 9, 2025 Board of Trustees Meeting.
  - Winter 2025 Graduates
  - Board Resolution 2025-2

Chair Fairchild stated: "If there are no objections, the items in the consent agenda will be adopted." As there was no objection, these items were adopted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Chair Fairchild called for public comment. The following individuals provided public comments:
  - Joanna Kenyon, English Adjunct Faculty, shared comments regarding the importance of Horizon Paper on our campus.
  - Annette Townsend, student, shared comments regarding the importance of Horizon Paper on our campus.
  - Chance Loewi, student and Horizon reporter, shared comments regarding the importance of Horizon paper and journalism classes.
  - Katherine Burns, English Faculty, shared statement of support of the WCC journalism program and Horizon Paper from WCC Alumnus Josh Hernandez.
  - Temesgan Neguse, student and Horizon Reporter, shared comments regarding importance of Horizon paper and journalism classes.
  - Ava Fly, student and Horizon reporter, shared comments regarding the importance of Horizon Paper on our campus.
  - Tidricus Williams, student studying journalism, shared comments regarding the importance of the journalism classes.
  - Maggie Flower, ASWCC Vice President for Clubs and Unions, shared comments regarding the importance of Horizon Paper on our campus.
  - Cameron Barlett, student, shared comments regarding the importance of Horizon paper on our campus.
  - Brian Cope - English faculty, shared comments regarding the importance of Horizon paper and journalism classes.
  - Thomas White – student major in Environment Science, shared comments regarding the importance of Horizon paper and journalism classes.

STRATEGIC CONVERSATIONS

- **Proposed 2025-2026 S&A Budget (first reading) – Moises Jacobo, ASWCC President**
- Jacobo shared a PowerPoint presentation with an overview of the proposed S&A budget.

  Highlights included:

  - Total recommended S&A Fee allocation of $1,018,972 including $69,612 to be pulled form S&A fund balance reserve.
  - $100,000 for Syre 211 and 216 refurnishing.
  - Specific funding allocations for student government, student organizations, Horizon paper, Office of Student Life and Development, Orcas Athletics, Campus Services (Intercultural Center, Learning Center, POD Leaders, and Piano Labs staff).

  Trustee Johnson asked Jacobo to provide answers to the following question at the June meeting:

  - When was funding last allocated to the Orca Field replacement reserve?
  - Was all the funding allocated for 2024–2025 fully spent?
  - Did the budget committee view student tutor experiences differently from those in other student positions, particularly given the reduced allocation to tutoring?

- **Proposed 2025-2026 WCC Operating Budget Update (first reading) – Nate Langstraat, VP for Administrative Services**

  Langstraat shared a PowerPoint presentation with an overview of the proposed 2025-26 Operating budget.

  Highlights included:

  - Legislative Conference budget highlights including:
    - Legislature-approved COLAs not fully funded
    - Office of Financial Management error results in reductions for FY26 and FY27
    - Removal of provisos and other budget reductions
  - Budget gap exceeding $3 million that must be addressed
  - Next steps: analyze allocation, confirm COLA and benefit rates, review and verify budget reduction items/proposals, identify additional reductions with budget manager, and provide budget proposal or continuing resolution to the board at the June meeting.

ACTION ITEMS

- **Proposed revision to Policy 516 (first reading possible action) – Kerri Holferty, VP for Student Services**

  Trustee Bohlke moved to approve the proposed revision to Policy 516. It was seconded by Trustee Johnson and the motion was approved.

- **Proposed revision to Policy 518 & 519 (first reading possible action) – Nate Langstraat, VP for Administrative Services**

  Trustee Pedlow moved to approve the proposed revision to Policy 518 and Policy 519. It was seconded by Trustee Bohlke and the motion was approved.

- **Proposed Academic Calendars (first reading possible action) – KayCee Johnson, Executive Director for Human Resources**

  Trustee Johnson moved to approve the proposed academic calendars for 2026-2027, 2027-2028 and 2028-2029. It was seconded by Trustee Taylor and the motion was approved.

- **Proposed Associate of Applied Science degree in Allied Health (second reading possible action) – Steven Thomas, VP for Instruction**

  Trustee Taylor moved to approve the Associate of Applied Science in Allied Health. It was seconded by Trustee Bohlke and the motion was approved.

- **Proposed Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Computer Science (second reading possible action) – Steven Thomas, VP for Instruction**

  Trustee Taylor moved to approve the Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Computer Science. It was seconded by Trustee Pedlow and the motion was approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

- President Justin thanked the Board for their leadership and support; and acknowledged Dr. Kathi Hiyane-Brown for her leadership and service to the college.
- President Justin shared he had been spending time meeting faculty, staff and students on campus.
- On May 2, President Justin attended his first President's Council meeting. The main topics were the State Operating budget, proposed federal policy changes, and funding cuts, which could directly

impact our students and the programs supporting them. Specifically:

- **Student Success and Taxpayer Savings Act:**

  The bill could reduce Pell Grant eligibility, potentially causing a $212,000 loss in financial aid for Whatcom Community College students over three quarters. It also introduces "risk-sharing" provisions that could financially strain institutions with minimal benefits to the student loan system.

- **National Science Foundation (NSF) Funding Cuts:**

  Proposed cuts to NSF funding will hinder efforts in cybersecurity education and other STEM programs. WCC National Cybersecurity Training and Education Center (NCyTE), supported by the NSF, plays a vital role in building a national cybersecurity workforce. The current grant ends at the end of September 2026, NCyTE is working on the application for a new grant. These cuts will have a direct impact on future funding.

- **Elimination of Federal TRIO Programs:**

  TRIO programs, crucial for supporting low-income and first-generation students, could be cut. This would undermine our Upward Bound program, which boasts a 98% high school graduation rate and a 73% GPA rate above 2.5, well above national averages.

- President Justin shared that the College has sent letters to our congressional delegation and encouraged student leaders (ASWCC) to do the same. Follow-up meetings have been scheduled with Senator Murray's staff, and meetings with other congressional offices are being planned.

REPORTS

- **ASWCC** – Moises Jacobo, President

  Jacobo shared that WCC has been designed as a Voter Friendly Campus for the 3rd consecutive cycle.

- **WCCFT** – Barry Maxwell, President

  Maxwell shared that while he understands instruction is a major cost center, it is also a significant revenue generator. If the class schedule is made too lean, we risk losing students.

- **WSFE** – Dan Andreason, President

  Andreason welcomed President Justin to campus.

- **Administrative Services** – Nate Langstraat, Executive Vice President

  Langstraat announced that William Martens, Director of Finance, will be leaving the college to pursue another opportunity. He expressed his appreciation for Martens' service during his 13 years with the college.

He shared that the Community Transition project is preparing for its groundbreaking ceremony. The school district has selected RAM Construction to handle the project.

WCC's Technology Engineering Center capital project was included in the legislative bill for capital funding. The college is in the process of selecting a project consultant.

- **Student Services** – Kerri Holferty, Interim Vice President

  Holferty congratulated the students for their work in increasing voter registrations.

DISCUSSION ITEMS OF THE BOARD

- **Act Spring Conference – May 22-23**

  Trustee Bohlke and Johnson, along with President Justin will be attending the ACT Spring Conference in Spokane.

- **Upcoming events**
  A list of upcoming events was shared with board members.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 4:00 p.m. the meeting was adjourned for an executive session of the Board for approximately thirty minutes, as provided in RCW 42.30.110 and 42.30.140 (4) (a), to discuss collective bargaining, to discuss with legal counsel representing the agency matters relating to litigation or potential litigation…

Chair Fairchild announced that action was not anticipated. Guests included President Justin Guillory, Vice President for Administrative Services Nate Langstraat, Executive Director for Human Resources, Rafeeka Kloke, Executive Director for Office of the President, and Assistant Attorney General Kerena Higgins.

The Executive Session was adjourned at 4:30 p.m. and the Board reconvened into open session at 4:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

_____ _____6/11/2025 _____

Chair of the Board Date

_____ _____6/11/2025_____

President and Secretary of the Board Date