

Grays Harbor College Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Board Meeting: The Board Meeting was convened on December 3, 2024, at 10:15 a.m.

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

Members on Zoom: Aliza Esty, Astrid Aveledo

Others Present: Ja'Shona Cooks, Dr. Carli Schiffner, Derek Edens, Kwabena Boakye, Lisa Smith, Kristy Anderson, Erin Tofte, Laurie Franklin, Heidi Wood, Julie Randall, Dr. Aaron Coby, Matt Edwards, Ashley Bowie-Gallegos, Kenji Seta, Isaac Humiston, Sydni Yager, Emily Robertson, Floyd Plemmons, Karyn Olson, Aliviah Chum, Isabel Lane, Tatiana Tejeda, Lori Christmas, Cassandra Smith, Ariel Finrock, Haley Adair, Stephanie Gibson, David Zagorodney

Others Present on Zoom: Annalee Atwell-Tobar, Barbara Dyer, Cathy LeCompte, Emma Benson, Dr. Evelyn Lanka, Jackie Blumberg, Jax Bonifer, Jeremy Winn, Jonni Dawson, Justin Kjolseth, Lizbeth Sanchez, Paige Pierog, Penny James, PJ Moore, Sarina Tung

A study session was provided at 9:00am focusing on Regional Labor Market Data, presented by Emily Robertson, Regional Labor Economist for Southwest Coastal Washington from the Washington Employment Security Department.

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m. Roll call taken by Ja'Shona Cooks.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

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

III. Land Acknowledgment

Jim Sayce read the Land Acknowledgment. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund thanked Jim Sayce for reading the land acknowledgement.

IV. 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. Motion carried.

V. Public Comments

No public comments.

VI. Celebration

Dr. Carli Schiffner celebrated Grays Harbor College's completion rate in the WSAC Student Experience Survey, noting significant progress compared to other institutions. She extended gratitude to Matt Edwards and the Student Life team for their efforts in encouraging participation, including creating a promotional video. Matt Edwards expressed appreciation for Karyn Olsen's contributions and provided an overview of the survey, which focused on student resources. This is the second administration of the

survey and it's now required by recent legislation for higher education institutions to participate. Insights from the 2022 survey revealed that over half of GHC students experienced food or housing insecurity. For the current survey, 194 students responded by the end of the third week, providing valuable data to support grant applications aimed at addressing student needs. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund thanked Matt Edwards and the team for their dedication and efforts.

The Latinx Youth Summit was held on November 22, with nearly 700 students visiting the Grays Harbor College campus. Laurie Franklin expressed gratitude to Ariel Finrock, Tatiana Tejeda, Ashley Bowie-Gallegos, Johnny Alvarez, and Chris Macht. Ariel Finrock reported that the summit welcomed 650 students and 50 chaperones from schools across the county area. The event rotates every five years among colleges in the region. Over 90 volunteers and 30 exhibitors contributed to the summit's success, which included hands-on program tours. The Hispanic Round Table played a significant role in supporting the event. Ashley Bowie-Gallegos noted that 18 schools participated, with over 300 hours dedicated to planning and organizing the event. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund commended the team for their efforts. Laurie Franklin circulated a program from the summit for attendees to view.

VII. Action Items & Standing Reports

Action

1. Approval of November 12, 2024 Minutes
 - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the November 12, 2024 minutes. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve the minutes, and Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Standing Reports

1. Student Government (Isaac Humiston)

Over 200 students were successfully supported during New Student Orientation by providing them with resources and connections to ensure a strong start at GHC. The Esports Program welcomed over 100 participants this year, marking a 50% increase in engagement compared to last year. Multiple campus-wide events were hosted, including the creation of an Ofrenda for Día de los Muertos, where 20–25 students and staff shared photos of loved ones as part of this meaningful cultural tradition. A Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion training has been scheduled for December 20th. Over \$25,000 in funding was approved to support Athletics, TRIO, The Tutoring Center, the Tribal Students' Lounge, and Esports, to enhance student engagement and academic success. Numerous student employment opportunities were supported in critical areas such as the Bookstore, Esports, Athletics, Student Life, the Diversity and Equity Center, the Harbor Landing Food Pantry, and Campus Operations. Participation in student government increased, with eight active senators now representing areas such as Athletics, Performing Arts, Career and Technical Education, TRIO, the Diversity and Equity Center, Esports, Student Veterans, and Running Start. Additionally, eight new student clubs were approved and established this year.

To support students during the Thanksgiving season, over 200 turkey dinners, including mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie, were distributed to students in need. A new initiative was launched in

November, where Student Life manages concessions at the Bishop Center, with all proceeds supporting the Harbor Landing Food Pantry. Members of the executive team attended a leadership event in Washington, D.C., where they gained valuable insights and advocated for student needs at the national level. Looking ahead, Student Government will host gingerbread house decorating events and distribute holiday hams during the first week of December. To celebrate the end of finals on December 13th, they will participate in the Festival of Lights Parade in Montesano at 5:30pm on Saturday, December 14th. Lastly, student concerns regarding pricing at Charlie's Café continues to be a topic of discussion.

2. Classified Staff Report (Jared Stratton)

Jared is currently home sick. His report is included in the packet, and there are no new updates to share at this time.

3. Represented Exempt Staff Report (Deanna Shedley)

There are no updates beyond what is included in the report.

4. Faculty report (Tom Kuester)

Dr. Schiffner shared that Tom submitted a report this morning, which has been sent to the Trustees' inboxes. Efforts are ongoing to ensure all materials are submitted on time for the packet. The Grays Harbor College Faculty Team (GHCFT) and the administration have mutually agreed that it would be in the best interest of all involved to extend the current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) for another year, along with the relevant Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) agreed upon since the last negotiations. Additionally, faculty respectfully request that the March Board meeting, which will include meeting with the probationer and the chair of the probationer's tenure committee, be scheduled at a time that avoids class cancellations, minimizing instructional disruptions.

5. Administrative Services Report (Kwabena Boakye)

Kwabena has met with the food service vendor to initiate discussions on the feasibility of reducing food prices. In alignment with these efforts, the Culinary Arts program consultant is collaborating with the vendor to review menu options, ingredients, and portion sizes. Additionally, Kwabena is analyzing sales reports and related information to inform these discussions. The topic of food pricing remains under review, with ongoing efforts to make pricing more reasonable. Further updates on this matter will be provided to the Board in a subsequent meeting.

Budget managers met on October 8th, and the budget process email communication will be sent out soon. Kwabena will meet with other SBCTC financial representatives on Friday to discuss the recent hiring freeze communication and will provide further updates to the Board after the meeting. The Accountability Audit is currently in the planning phase and it will cover the period from 2019 to 2024. Kwabena is awaiting the official entrance date and time for the audit and will share this information with the Board once it becomes available.

At the November meeting, the Board requested information on the FY2025 Comprehensive Budget Status of the college. The comprehensive budget consists of the Operating Fund, Grants, Bishop Center, Bookstore, and Minor Capital. Currently, the Student Life budget is not included; however, Kwabena is working on incorporating it. The remainder of the college's revenue sources are presented separately, as the budgets cannot be co-mingled. When an auxiliary operation incurs a loss, the college supplements it from reserves; however, the loss will still appear on the auxiliary's financial records. For grants, billing occurs based on actual expenditures, ensuring they always balance out. The Bishop Center operates on a combination of sales and donations and is forecasted to end the fiscal year in the black. The Bookstore is forecasted to lose approximately \$155,000 by the end of the fiscal year, with a current year-to-date loss of around \$34,000. Historically, the bookstore has operated at a loss between \$46,000 and \$60,000 annually, which increased significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The additional personnel costs, including the partnership with Centralia College, have further contributed to the deficit. The Bookstore's profit margins are currently insufficient to cover overhead costs. A plan is in development to minimize these losses, and the details will be reported back to the Board. Discussion also occurred regarding bookstore operations across the SBCTC system.

The Board also requested information comparing the State enrollment FTE target with the local revenue budget FTE targets and actual FTE numbers. Included in the Follow-Up section of Kwabena's written report is the FY2025 Enrollment FTE Budget Tracking report. Additionally, the attached State Allocation Base FTE document provides a three-year rolling average of the State's expected FTE versus the college's actual FTE. Local revenue projections are based on FTE predictions, with the State target serving as the driver for allocation. Kwabena walked through the past FTE numbers outlined in the written report, noting a 9% gap between the college's enrollment and the State target over the past three years. The second quarterly report will reflect Winter quarter revenue from FTE. This led to a discussion about the Winter quarter local revenue and how GHC plans to manage billing and cash collection. The Business Office is developing a process for dropping students who have not paid, with plans to implement this system during the spring quarter. Additionally, Lori Christmas spoke about the work being done to engage Running Start students after they graduate from high school.

6. Human Resources Report (Erin Tofte)

Human Resources provided an update regarding the faculty and exempt union and management's proposal to extend the current collective bargaining agreement by one year. A memorandum of understanding related to this extension will be presented to the Board for consideration in January. Erin also provided updates on new hires and open searches. She recognized all new hires by name and title, as well as individuals who experienced changes in employment status. Additionally, Erin reviewed the current active searches and their respective progress. As an informational note, Erin shared that she received communication from the government the previous evening regarding a hiring freeze and emphasized the importance of exercising caution with the budget moving forward.

7. **Instruction Report** (Julie Randall)

Julie highlighted several upcoming events, including a jazz concert and steel drum performance, both scheduled for December 5th. The Tutoring Center hosted a Student Success Conference on November 19th focusing on topics such as study skills, test anxiety, writing techniques, and citing resources. The conference was a great success, with 123 students attending and participating in various workshops. Feedback from the sessions was highly positive. Julie recognized Nancy Estergard and Haley Adair for their contributions to the event. The Tutoring Center continues to thrive in its newly renovated location in the library, providing valuable support to students.

Following up on the previous meeting, Julie clarified details about E-Tutoring, a service offered through the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. GHC has utilized this service since 2010, offering 24/7 tutoring in a wide range of subjects. Plans are underway to improve communication with students to increase service usage. A discussion ensued regarding how GHC's E-Tutoring usage compares to that of other colleges.

Ashley Bowie-Gallegos and Julie presented a demonstration on the use of EAB (Navigate360), a third-party software for student engagement that addresses a missing component within the CTC system. Julie acknowledged and highlighted the contributions of those who supported the implementation process. The software was purchased in January 2023, with an initial target launch date of May 2024. Despite some delays, it successfully launched in September 2024. Training with faculty commenced during the kick-off week, and ongoing training sessions continue to ensure effective use. Navigate360 launched with the Recruitment Success Tool, allowing for targeted campaigns to maintain engagement with students in the recruitment funnel. The platform also supports current students by enabling note creation across campus, the ability to flag students requiring additional support, and enhanced communication tools. Julie shared a success story from a library faculty member illustrating the platform's positive impact. Ashley provided a live demonstration of Navigate360's features, followed by a discussion on how students are informed about the platform. Julie concluded with data insights and plans for further enhancements. Chair Dr. Akerlund expressed appreciation for the work of Julie, Ashley, and the entire team involved in the implementation and ongoing use of Navigate360.

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

Grays Harbor College will participate in the Montesano Festival of Lights on December 14th with a float, and everyone is encouraged to attend. Laurie highlighted enrollment numbers from the past two weeks and addressed a question regarding the 802 students who did not receive financial aid during the 2023–24 academic year. The Financial Aid Office identified several reasons for this, tiered from the most to least frequent occurrences. These reasons, including students not applying for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WASFA), are detailed in the written report. It was noted that breaking down percentages is challenging, as students often face multiple overlapping issues. The list of fall quarter events was also included in the report.

Laurie introduced and welcomed Cassaundra Smith, the new Program Coordinator for Running Start and the World Class Scholars (WCS) program. Cassaundra has already enrolled over 670 new applicants this academic year, with only two schools remaining for presentations and sign-ups. The baseball team supported the community by giving away turkeys, and the basketball season has started on a positive note compared to last year. Grays Harbor College student-athletes have decided to incorporate themes for each home game to enhance the game-day experience. Laurie also drew attention to a photo from the TRiO Day event included in the report. As of yesterday, the Bishop Center donations total \$25,100, with a target goal of \$50,000 for the year.

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

Dr. Schiffner shared about the ongoing challenges at the state and federal level that continue to impact the college. The budget remains a primary focus, with ongoing discussions about how to adapt local planning efforts to meet reduction requirements from the Office of Financial Management (OFM) and the hiring freeze. Legislative preparations are in full swing, with plans for hill climbs in January. Dr. Schiffner also noted that the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) has new leadership, which began yesterday. Additionally, the presidents are working through the new allocation model, and Dr. Schiffner will provide updates to the Board as more information becomes available.

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

Floyd reported that the tulalW Student Center is nearly complete, with commissioning of the lighting system currently underway. Warranty work and punch list items are on track for completion. Looking to make small improvements to the kitchen to enhance its functionality for instructional purposes. Additional minor tasks remain, and collaboration with the fire department is ongoing to address those needs. A warranty inspection is scheduled for March 5, 2025. Any issues identified beyond this point will remain under warranty beyond the one-year period until fully resolved. A discussion ensued regarding the involvement of the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) in these processes. The Board expressed their gratitude to Floyd for his dedication and work on this project.

10. Board Report

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

Astrid reported that there are no new updates to share at this time.

b. Board Art Committee Update (Astrid Aveledo)

The Board Art Committee has overseen the installation of two major art purchases: one located on this floor and the other in the atrium of the tulalW Student Center. Work on additional installations and projects is ongoing.

c. Legislative Committee Update (Jim Sayce)

Jim provided an update on the Legislative Committee activities, including a meeting with Daniel Pailthorp scheduled for December 12th and a Hill Climb on January 30th. Ongoing meetings are being held to prepare, with efforts underway to coordinate with the State Board.

d. Items of Interest (Dr. Paula Akerlund)

No items of interest.

The meeting recessed at 12:10 p.m. and reconvened at 12:17 p.m.

XI. Executive Session

The Board entered a closed executive session at 12:17 p.m. under [RCW 42.30.110\(1\)](#) for the following purpose: (i) to consult with legal counsel regarding ongoing or potential litigation and personnel issues. The session was scheduled to last approximately 30 minutes. The Board returned to the open meeting at 12:49 p.m.

XII. Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session

Jim Sayce moved to add Resolution 2024-02 as an action item to the December 2024 agenda. Dr. Harry Carthum seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Jim Sayce then moved to adopt Resolution 2024-02. Dr. Harry Carthum seconded the motion. The motion carried.

XIII. Good of the Order

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund asked if there were any items for the good of the order. Aliza shared that her daughter will be participating in the Festival of Lights. Dr. Akerlund extended warm holiday wishes to everyone and expressed excitement for the upcoming year.

XIV. Adjournment/next meeting

There being no further business, Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund adjourned the meeting at 12:54 p.m. The Board of Trustees will hold its next meeting on January 14, 2025 at the Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen and via Zoom.

Dr. Carli Schiffner, Secretary

Dr. Paula Akerlund, Chair