



Grays Harbor College provides meaningful and engaging learning opportunities and support services to enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of our students and support the cultural and economic needs of our community.

Grays Harbor College Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Board Meeting: The Board meeting was convened on August 12, 2025, at 1:10 PM.

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

Others Present: Holly Bringman, Dr. Aaron Coby, Ja'Shona Cooks, Derek Edens, Penny James, Floyd Plemmons, Dr. Carli Schiffner, Lizbeth Sanchez, Matt Edwards, Shelly Hoffman, Dr. Evelyn Lanka, Lori Christmas, Cassandra Smith, Ariel Finrock, Julie Randall, Dr. Ian Dorsch, Dr. Bill Dyer, Brad Duffy, Michelle Roos, Jason Gordon, Brian Mahoney, Natalie Tillery, Virgil Mathews, Camryn Scheuber, Jessica Madison, Annethe Orona

Others Present on Zoom: Jeremy Winn, Sydny Yager, Holly Duffy, Erin Tofte, Justin Kjolseth, Sarah Dalrymple, Lisa Smith, Emma Benson, Cathy LeCompte, Gordon Williams, Elisa Harvey, Karyn Olson, Annalee Atwell-Tobar, Ryan Colburn, Crystal Bagby, Ashley Bowie-Gallegos, Jordan Wolfe

A study session focusing on a Strategic Enrollment Update was presented by Dr. Carli Schiffner at 12:00 PM.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called the meeting to order at 1:10 PM. Roll call was taken by Ja'Shona Cooks.

II. Safety statement

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called attention to 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 Aliza Esty seconded the motion. The motion carried.

VI. Public Comments

No public comments.

VII. Celebration

Dr. Carli Schiffner celebrated the success of the summer production, *Shrek: The Musical*, noting that it was well attended and filled to capacity each night. She expressed appreciation to everyone involved and invited Brad Duffy, Dr. Bill Dyer, Dr. Ian Dorsch, and Ryan Colburn to share more.

Brad Duffy shared that he greatly enjoyed directing the production, which included strong participation from local youth. Of the 37 cast members, approximately 20 were high school students from Hoquiam and Aberdeen. Dr. Bill Dyer extended thanks to the Board of Trustees, Dr. Schiffner, the Foundation, and the College for their support. Dr. Ian Dorsch, vocal director, reported that both community and campus enthusiasm were high, with 96 individuals auditioning for the production. He stated that the team was exceptional and expressed gratitude for the College's support. Director Ryan Colburn, who joined via Zoom, also extended his thanks.

Dr. Harry Carthum remarked that this was one of the best performances he had seen, praising both the music and choreography. Additional acknowledgments were extended to cast and crew members, including Art Oestreich for production support, Lori Oestreich as lead choreographer, Cara Beth Stevenson for set design and painting, Monika Kuhnau as stage manager, and Jonni Dawson and Student Life for program and box office support.

VIII & IX. Action Items & Standing Reports

Action Items

1. Approval of July 8, 2025 Minutes
 - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the July 8, 2025 meeting minutes. Jim Sayce moved to approve the minutes, and Dr. Harry Carthum seconded the motion. The motion carried.
2. Approval of the July 14, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes
 - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the July 14, 2025 meeting minutes. Jim Sayce moved to approve the minutes, and Aliza Esty seconded the motion. The motion carried.
3. Second Reading of Operational Policies:
 - a. Second Reading of Operational Policy 316 – Advanced Placement International Baccalaureate Policy
 - Dr. Aaron Coby confirmed that the language in the policy reflects the terminology used by the State Board.
 - b. Second Reading of Operational Policy 317 – Transfer Rights and Responsibilities
 - There were no comments or updates.
 - c. Second Reading of Operational Policy 407 – Student Rights and Responsibilities
 - The policy was updated to correct typographical errors and clarification of references to the relevant Vice President.
 - d. Second Reading of Operational Policy 412 – Hazing
 - The policy was updated to correct typographical errors clarification of references to the relevant Vice President.
 - In regard to how the policy is disseminated, it was confirmed that it is shared with students through the student handbook and during New Student Orientation.
 - e. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to adopt Operational Policies 316, 317, 407, and 412. Jim Sayce moved to adopt the policies, and Aliza Esty seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Standing Reports

1. Student Government Report (Isaac Humiston)

There is no report due to the summer intermission.

2. Classified Staff Report (Jared Stratton)

There were no updates beyond the written report. It was noted that Melissa Lenz will be celebrated at the September Board meeting, as she has been selected as the Region A Classified Employee of the Year by the Staff Training for Technical and Community Colleges (STTACC) Board.

3. Represented Exempt Staff Report (Shelly Hoffman)

There were no updates beyond the written report.

4. Faculty report (Shiloh Winsor & Tom Kuester)

There is no report due to the summer intermission.

5. Administrative Services Report (Jason Gordon)

Jason Gordon reported that Administrative Services is in the process of wrapping up the fiscal year-end close. He noted that the final budget figures are close to being finalized and that a comprehensive year-end report will be presented to the Board in September. He also shared that the College recently welcomed a new bookstore manager, Michelle Roos, who has been with the College for 35 years and is excited to step into this leadership role.

He further reported that the financial audit is underway, with an expected completion date of September 12. A facility condition survey was completed in July, reviewing every building on campus, with initial results identifying priorities for the 2027–2029 Biennium. Gordon added that further updates will be provided at the next meeting, including a review of cash reserves and a two-year comparison of bookstore operations.

6. Human Resources Report (Erin Tofte)

Erin Tofte began with new employee introductions. Virgil Matthews, Head Men's Basketball Coach, started in June. He previously played in Washington's community college system at Centralia College and spent the last 15 years in Germany. Jessica Madison, Head Softball Coach, is a graduate of Hoquiam High School and played softball in college. She currently works as a school counselor in Aberdeen and continues to play softball competitively. Natalie Tillery, Support Specialist at Stafford Creek, is a Grays Harbor College alumna and is originally from Toppenish, Washington. She earned her master's degree last year, previously worked in K–12 education for 13 years, and has been a part of the Grays Harbor community for 18 years. She will assist students with Second Chance Pell eligibility at Stafford Creek and shared that she loves learning.

Tofte noted that additional new employees will be introduced at the September meeting. These include Amber Bratten, Medical Assistant Faculty; Justin Parish, Head Baseball Coach; Angel Galeana, Library and Archives Paraprofessional 1; and Lori Valentine, Office Assistant 3 at Stafford Creek.

Tofte also highlighted several position changes and updates. Roxa Banks, Program Coordinator for the Office of Instruction, is now serving in a permanent capacity. Michelle Roos is now the Bookstore Supervisor and shared that she began her career at the College as a work-study student in the Business Office, later worked as a cashier for 23 years, and then served in TRIO for 12 years before stepping into her new role. Shelly Hoffman is now a Recruitment Facilitator. She shared that she is a Grays Harbor College alumna and former TRIO participant, and noted that she is eager to take on her new role.

Tofte added that an offer has been made for the Associate Dean of Instruction at Stafford Creek. Interviews are underway for the position of Associate Dean of Financial Aid and Workforce Funding. An offer has also been extended for the Safety and Security Coordinator position, with James Bergstrom scheduled to begin next week.

7. Instruction & Student Services Report (Holly Bringman)

Holly Bringman reported that SSAIL (Student Services and Instruction Leadership), the new group that combines Student Services and Instruction, has begun work on mapping out the student journey. The group will gather input from both students and faculty, with the goal of presenting its findings to the Board in the future. She also noted that planning for Fall Kick-Off is underway and that a strong schedule of events is being developed.

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

Dr. Carli Schiffner reported her priorities are focusing on strategic enrollment and preparations for the upcoming academic year, in addition to her work with the Allocation Model Review Committee's final presentation. She noted that the accreditation report will be submitted to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) shortly and that work is already underway on the Year Seven Report. Dr. Schiffner also shared that Stafford Creek will hold its graduation ceremony on Thursday, August 14, and expressed appreciation to the team at Stafford Creek and to Dean Heidi Wood for their support.

a. Accreditation (Kristy Anderson)

There are no updates beyond the written report.

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

Floyd Plemmons reported that following the July push, significant progress has been made in wrapping up the SSIB project. The Aberdeen Fire Marshal approved the communications enhancement system, which allowed the City of Aberdeen to issue the final certificate of occupancy. With this approval, construction of the Student Services and Instructional Building (SSIB) is officially complete. This serves as the final report. Board members expressed their gratitude for Mr. Plemmons' efforts over the past three years.

9. Board Report

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

Dr. Carli Schiffner noted that the Foundation does not meet during the month of August. Lisa Smith's team hosted the Washington Advancement Foundation Leaders (WAFL) Conference last week at the College, which was very successful and received positive reviews.

b. Board Art Committee Update (Astrid Aveledo)

Dr. Paula Akerlund reported that the committee is still finalizing signage. Dr. Carli Schiffner added that she has been working with Hailey McGraw on several events planned throughout November to celebrate the arts on campus—including the tulalW Student Center building's artist talk, the Fall Art Gala, and the Washington State Poet Laureate, Derek Sheffield.

c. Legislative Committee Update (Jim Sayce)

Jim Sayce reported that there were no updates.

d. Fiscal Liaison Update (Aliza Esty)

Aliza Esty reported that she met with Jason Gordon to discuss routine presentations, including the operational budget, auxiliary services (including the Bishop Center and the bookstore), and cash reserves. She noted that the binder from June continues to track what has been presented. Ms. Esty stated that she looks forward to the year-end report and is monitoring the impact of economic inflation on operational spending, as well as the potential effects of new tax laws.

e. Items of Interest (Dr. Paula Akerlund)

Dr. Harry Carthum expressed his appreciation to Floyd Plemmons for his work. Dr. Paula Akerlund also thanked him for his significant contributions to the Board Art Committee.

The meeting recessed at 1:53 PM and reconvened at 1:55 PM.

XIII. Executive Session

The Board entered a closed executive session at 1:55 PM under RCW 42.30.110 to consult with legal counsel regarding ongoing and new litigation. The session was scheduled to last approximately 15 minutes. The Board reconvened in open session at 2:11 PM.

XIV. Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session

No action was taken as a result of the executive session.

XV. Good of the Order

There were no items.

XVI. Adjournment/next meeting

There being no further business, Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund adjourned the meeting at 2:14 PM. The Board of Trustees will hold its next meeting on September 9, 2025 at 1:00 PM, at Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen and via Zoom.

Dr. Carli Schiffner, Secretary

Dr. Paula Akerlund, Chair