



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 February 10, 2026, at 1:04 PM.

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

Members Present on Zoom: Astrid Aveledo

Others Present: Ja'Shonae Cooks, Derek Edens, Dr. Carli Schiffner, Jason Gordon, Kristy Anderson, Erin Tofte, Matthew Barber, Cassaundra Hogarty, Lori Christmas, Ginelle Hanaway, Anita Plagge, Sarah Dalrymple, Lisa Getty, Isaac Humiston, Penny James, Jose Hernandez-Lopez, James Bergstrom, Kevin Smith, Jonni Dawson, JEB Thornton, Holly Duffy, Jennifer Johnson, Carmen Hammonds, Lisa Williams, Kalina Ebling, Nina Urioste

Others Present on Zoom: Cathy LeCompte, Lizbeth Sánchez, Annalee Atwell-Tobar, Matt Holder, Julie Randall, Dr. Aaron Coby, Dr. Brittany Ferry, Holly Bringman, Angel Galeana, Jackie Blumberg, Holly Samuelson, Terri Bell

A study session featuring Quarters two budget report, economic forecast, and the state outlook by Jason Gordon was held at 12:00 PM.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM. Roll call was taken by Ja'Shonae 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. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve the agenda, and Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.

VI. Public Comments

Jose Hernandez-Lopez, a student, spoke regarding concerns about the Culinary Arts program fees.

Kevin Smith, faculty member, spoke regarding concerns about his experience at Stafford Creek Correction Center and the tenure review process.

VII. Celebration

Dr. Carli Schiffner recognized the Human Resources team for their outstanding work related to onboarding, exit interviews, monthly trainings, hiring, and creating a welcoming environment.

VIII. New Employee Introductions

There were no new employee introductions this month.

IX. Review Items

1. First Reading of Operational Policy 405 - Academic Progress and Performance
 - a. JEB Thornton shared that definitions and additional context from the RCW were incorporated into the policy.
2. First Reading of Operational Policy 411 - Alcohol/Substance Abuse Prevention
 - a. JEB Thornton shared that no major changes were made. Language was updated from referencing a counselor to “provide resources.”
 - b. It was noted that, in addition to orientation for new students, substance abuse prevention information is included in the student handbook. Discussion occurred regarding the use of broader language, including revising to indicate that student services will provide resources. The policy will be reviewed further and brought back for consideration for a second reading.
3. First Reading of Operational Policy 413 - Student Residency Status and Non-Resident Tuition Waivers
 - a. JEB Thornton shared that language and links from the RCW were added to the policy.
4. First Reading of Operational Policy 414 - Adult Basic Education, English Language Acquisition, and General Education Development Tuition Waiver
 - a. JEB Thornton shared that language was added to clarify the \$25 quarterly fee. He also noted that terminology was updated from ASL to ELA to reflect current practice.
5. First Reading of Operational Policy 415 - Reasonable Accommodations
 - a. JEB Thornton shared that language related to the Vice President title was updated.
 - b. He noted that the College has a coordinator and that contact information is included in the associated procedure. Clarification regarding the required documentation for accommodations was discussed.
6. First Reading of Operational Policy 506 - Property Management
 - a. Jason Gordon shared that the policy ensures the College maintains its facilities and addresses self-insurance.
 - b. Discussion occurred regarding the definition of property of limited value. Jason Gordon clarified that the language refers to larger equipment and assets. He will review the language to provide additional clarity.

X & XI. Action Items & Standing Reports

Action Items

1. Approval of January 13, 2026 Minutes
 - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the January 13, 2026 meeting minutes. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve the minutes, and Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Standing Reports

1. Student Government Report (Isaac Humiston)

Isaac Humiston shared that Student Government created a new position of Immediate Past President, and he will continue serving on the Board in that capacity. Additionally, Sarah Dalrymple has submitted notice of leave from the College and will depart at the end of the month. Appreciation was expressed for her leadership and contributions.

2. Classified Staff Report (To Be Determined)

Dr. Carli Schiffner shared that Ryan Decker and Elsa Larson were recently named shop stewards.

3. Represented Exempt Staff Report (Shelly Hoffman)

There were no additional updates.

4. Faculty report (Anita Plagge)

Anita Plagge shared that faculty are participating in Advising Day today.

5. Administrative Services Report (Jason Gordon)

Jason Gordon reported that progress on Lake Swano Dam is continuing and that KPW is assessing the most feasible and appropriate approach to the work. KPW will hold a public meeting to gather community feedback. The date will be finalized soon, with March 16 or 19 under consideration.

6. Human Resources Report (Erin Tofte)

Erin Tofte reported that interest-based bargaining has begun with the faculty union regarding the Stafford Creek Correction Center portion of the contract. She also shared that a Title IX information session was provided for Student Government members and student athletes. At All College Day, the PACE Committee presented survey results and draft workplace culture statements. A final update will be provided to the Board once the statement is finalized.

7. Learning & Student Success Report (Holly Bringman)

JEB Thornton reported that there have been small gains in enrollment and the Direct Admissions Initiative has begun. He noted that Enrollment Days are upcoming and that later this quarter Shelly Hoffman will focus on adult reengagement efforts. Discussion occurred regarding the Computer Science program's ability to adjust programming as needed given changes in the field.

Dr. Carli Schiffner provided an update on tenure files, and time will be added to the April meeting agenda to debrief on the tenure process.

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

Dr. Carli Schiffner reported that All College Day was held on Friday and focused on completion of the Year Seven accreditation report, workplace culture, safety and security, and the state of the College. The College has been actively engaged at the Capitol and is continuing advocacy efforts with local legislators. She noted the budget picture for the State will be better understood by the end of the month.

Dr. Schiffner also shared that a strong slate of community education offerings is planned for Spring Quarter. She noted that retention numbers are being closely monitored and that an intrusive advising model is being implemented. She also shared that leadership from performing arts centers have met to explore the development of a consortium for advertising, programming, and related collaboration.

Dr. Schiffner provided an update regarding the College taking over educational programming at the Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW), and noted that an announcement will be shared the following day.

In response to the earlier public comment regarding course fees, Dr. Schiffner stated that the College is addressing the matter and is working to ensure similar issues do not occur in the future.

Discussion ensued regarding how the Computer Science program will remain current with technological changes. Dr. Schiffner shared that the curriculum is regularly reviewed through advisory committees and will continue to be evaluated. Discussion also occurred regarding expanding programming in the medical field. Dr. Schiffner noted that preliminary ideas are beginning to take form through the Recompete grant work.

a. **Accreditation** (Kristy Anderson)

Kristy Anderson shared that the College is preparing the Year Seven report and concluding the current planning cycle. She reported that the Year Six report was accepted by NWCCU, with three areas identified as in compliance but noted for improvement. The feedback will inform preparation of the Year Seven report, which is due in August.

9. Board Reports

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

Astrid Aveledo shared that the Foundation will meet this Thursday and will further refine its strategic plan and review the budget.

b. Legislative Committee Report (Jim Sayce)

Jim Sayce reported that the committee met the prior day. Discussion included bills to watch, including Senate Bill 6260, upcoming legislative meetings scheduled for Wednesday, February 18, and key messaging points.

c. Fiscal Liaison Report (Aliza Esty)

No report.

d. Items of Interest (Dr. Paula Akerlund)

Dr. Paula Akerlund shared that Board members reviewed the proposed schedule. It was noted that one member will be unable to attend the August meeting. The Board agreed to move forward with the proposed schedule.

The meeting recessed at 2:15 PM and reconvened at 2:25 PM.

XIV. Executive Session

The Board entered a closed executive session at 2:25 PM under RCW 42.30.110 to consult with legal counsel regarding ongoing legal matters. The session was scheduled to last approximately 60 minutes. The Board reconvened in open session at 3:25 PM.

XV. Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session

No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

XVI. Good of the Order

There were no items for Good of the Order.

XVII. Adjournment/next meeting

There being no further business, Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund adjourned the meeting at 3:27 PM. The Board of Trustees will hold its next meeting on March 10, 2026 at 1:00 PM, at Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen and via Zoom.

Dr. Carli Schiffner, Secretary

Dr. Paula Akerlund, Chair