



*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 March 10, 2026, at 1:02 PM.

**Members Present:** Dr. Paula Akerlund, Jim Sayce, Astrid Aveledo

**Members Present on Zoom:** Dr. Harry Carthum, Aliza Esty

### **Others Present:**

Ja'Shonae Cooks, Dr. Carli Schiffner, Holly Bringman, Jason Gordon, Kristy Anderson, Erin Tofte, Ginelle Hanaway, Scyeland Hines, Dr. Aaron Coby, Lisa Smith, Holly Duffy, Kevin Smith, Kim Crawford, Cathy LeCompte, Shelly Hoffman, Jonni Dawson, Lizbeth Sanchez, Sarah Aiken, Dr. Bill Dyer, Janet Parker, Brian Mahoney, Anita Plagge, Ryan Decker, Annalee Atwell-Tobar, Destini Kirkwood, Tiffany Smith, Floyd Plemmons

### **Others Present on Zoom:**

Alana Bertot, Alexis Palmer, Angel Galeana, Anne Miller, Ariel Finrock, Barbara Dyer, Carla Idohl-Corwin, Cassandra Hogarty, Derek Edens, Hannah Tupper, Heidi Wood, Manny Garcia, Dr. Marco Cerqueira, Matt Holder, Melanie Israel, Melissa Lenz, Penny James, PJ Moore, Reco Jackson, Shiloh Winsor, Terri Bell, Tracey Ushman

There was no study session.

### **I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called the meeting to order at 1:02 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. A modification was noted to move Item 7, Faculty Rehire and Tenure Decisions, from Section X, Action Items, to Section XV, Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session. Astrid Aveledo moved to adopt the agenda as amended, and Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.

## **VI. Public Comments**

Ginelle Hanaway, staff member, shared updates on TRIO programming, including Dolly Days and recognition of TRIO Day in Washington State. She also introduced Scyeland Hines, a student, who shared her experience advocating for the Passport Program at the Capitol.

Kevin Smith, faculty member, spoke regarding his employment experience and the tenure review process.

## **VII. Celebration**

Holly Bringman recognized the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Jazz Festival and acknowledged Dr. Bill Dyer for his leadership in bringing together high schools. Dr. Dyer shared remarks and provided a brief history of the event. The Board expressed appreciation for his contributions.

Dr. Carli Schiffner recognized Kim Crawford, owner of Wild Pines, for her partnership with the College. She shared an example of Kim Crawford's contributions to supporting campus engagement and community building. Kim Crawford expressed appreciation for the partnership with the College.

Jason Gordon recognized Janet Parker for her retirement after 25 years of service to the College and shared remarks of appreciation. Janet Parker shared remarks reflecting on her time at the College. A standing ovation was given in recognition of her service.

## **VIII. New Employee Introductions**

Erin Tofte introduced employees in new roles, including Shelly Hoffman as Director of Advising and Jonni Dawson as Interim Director of Student Life.

## **IX. Review Items**

1. First Reading of Operational Policy 517 - Withholding Services for Outstanding Debts
  - a. Only minor updates were made, including updates to links and RCW references. It was also noted that transcripts are retained even if there are outstanding balances.
2. First Reading of Operational Policy 525 - Management and Disposal of Hazardous Wastes
  - a. It was shared that minor updates were made to links.
3. First Reading of Operational Policy 804 - Generative AI
  - a. This is a new policy outlining responsible use, including guidelines and parameters. Discussion occurred regarding challenges associated with managing implementation, compliance considerations when systems require personal data, and whether the use of AI increases costs for the College. It was noted that no increase has been observed.

## **X. Action Items**

1. Approval of February 10, 2026 Minutes
  - a. A correction was noted for page 3, Section 8. President's Report, to include the following language: "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."
  - b. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the February 10, 2026 meeting minutes as amended. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve the minutes, and Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.

2. Second Reading of Operational Policies 405, 413, 414, and 415.
  - a. Operational Policy 405 - Academic Progress and Performance
    - No questions were raised.
  - b. Operational Policy 413 - Student Residency Status and Non-Resident Tuition Waivers
    - No questions were raised.
  - c. Operational Policy 414 - Adult Basic Education, English Language Acquisition, and General Education Development Tuition Waiver
    - No questions were raised.
  - d. Operational Policy 415 - Reasonable Accommodations
    - No questions were raised.
  - e. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve Operational Policies 405, 413, 414, and 415. Jim Sayce moved to approve the policies, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
3. Second Reading of Operational Policy 506 - Property Management
  - a. A definitions section was added based on feedback from the previous meeting. Discussion occurred regarding property ownership and inventory.
  - b. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve Operational Policy 506 Property Management. Jim Sayce moved to approve the policy, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

## **XI. Standing Reports**

1. **Student Government Report** (Isaac Humiston)  
No additional updates.
2. **Classified Staff Report** (Ryan Decker)  
Ryan Decker shared that Elsa Larsen has officially assumed the role of shop steward.
3. **Represented Exempt Staff Report** (To Be Determined)  
No additional updates.
4. **Faculty report** (Anita Plagge)  
No additional updates.
5. **Administrative Services Report** (Jason Gordon)  
Jason Gordon reported on ongoing budget development efforts and noted that the College is monitoring the State budget, with legislative updates expected on March 12. He also shared that the Lake Swano Dam public meeting will be held on March 16 at 6:00 PM in the Boardroom and will be hosted by KPFF.
6. **Human Resources Report** (Erin Tofte)  
No additional updates.
7. **Learning & Student Success Report** (Holly Bringman)  
No additional updates.

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

Dr. Carli Schiffner reported on current State budget developments and their potential impact on the College. The College is anticipating a local reduction of approximately \$120,000 based on the current House and Senate budget proposals. Running Start FTE is projected to decrease from 1.4 to 1.3; a previous proposal had suggested a reduction to 1.2. WPEA retroactive pay will proceed with a 79/21 fund split, consistent with the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) split. A fund swap is also being considered, which would shift resources from the State's operating budget to the State's capital budget. System-level discussions are underway regarding the potential declaration of a financial emergency, with additional information expected following upcoming State Board discussions.

The College's contract with the Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW) in Purdy will begin on April 1, 2026. Will Durden will serve as Dean of Corrections Education.

**a. Accreditation (Kristy Anderson)**

No additional updates.

**9. Board Reports**

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

Astrid Aveledo shared that the Foundation will meet on Thursday.

**b. Legislative Committee Report (Jim Sayce)**

Jim Sayce reported that recent meetings with Representatives McEntire and Walsh, and Senator Wilson, were well received. He noted that students, faculty, and Dr. Carli Schiffner participated in the meetings. He also shared that Representative Walsh expressed support for Running Start.

**c. Fiscal Liaison Report (Aliza Esty)**

No report.

**d. Items of Interest (Dr. Paula Akerlund)**

It was requested that time be scheduled to debrief the tenure process, including onboarding and system practices. Dr. Carli Schiffner confirmed that a discussion is scheduled for the April meeting.

The meeting recessed at 2:02 PM and reconvened at 2:15 PM.

**XII. Executive Session**

The Board entered a closed executive session at 2:15 PM under RCW 42.30.110 to consult with legal counsel regarding personnel and ongoing legal matters. The session was originally scheduled to last approximately 90 minutes. The session was extended by 20 minutes, and subsequently extended an additional 15 minutes. The Board reconvened in open session at 4:26 PM.

**XIII. Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session**

**Faculty Rehire and Tenure Decisions**

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to grant tenure status at Grays Harbor College to Destini Kirkwood. Astrid Aveledo moved to grant tenure status to Destini Kirkwood, and Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to rehire the following tenure track probationary faculty from year two to year three at Grays Harbor College: Dr. Evelyn Lanka, Sofia Martinez, Dr. Daniel Nogales, Holly Samuelson, and Justin Kautzman, and Nina Urioste. Jim Sayce moved to approve the rehire of the tenure probationers from year two to year three, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to rehire Miranda Shumate from year one to year two at Grays Harbor College. Aliza Esty moved to approve the rehire of Miranda Shumate from year one to year two, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

#### **XIV. Good of the Order**

No items were brought forward.

#### **XV. Adjournment/next meeting**

There being no further business, Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund adjourned the meeting at 4:29 PM. The Board of Trustees will hold its next meeting on April 14, 2026 at 1:00 PM, at Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen and via Zoom.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Carli Schiffner, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Paula Akerlund, Chair