



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 April 14, 2026, at 1:01 PM.

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

Others Present:

Ja'Shonae Cooks, Derek Edens, Dr. Carli Schiffner, Holly Bringman, Jason Gordon, Kristy Anderson, Erin Tofte, Ginelle Hanaway, Lisa Smith, Holly Duffy, Cathy LeCompte, Shelly Hoffman, Jonni Dawson, Ryan Decker, Floyd Plemmons, Cassaundra Hogarty, Lori Christmas, Dalton Johnson, Rod McDonald, Matt Holder, Peter DenAdel, Jason Davison, Melissa Lenz, Matthew Barber, Isaac Humiston, Lisa Getty, Holly Duffy

Others Present on Zoom:

Alana Bertot, Annalee Atwell-Tobar, Carla Idohl-Corwin, Deanna Shedley, Dierk Meierbachtol, JEB Thornton, Jon Parker, Julie Randall, Kathy Young, Penny James, Phil Petheram, PJ Moore, Roxa Banks, Sydni Yager, Terri Bell, William Durden, Mishelle Gillespie, Lori Heay, Jeffrey Ingram

A study session featuring a Construction Trades Tour by Adam Pratt and Kelly Williams was held at 12:00 PM.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called the meeting to order at 1:01 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

Modifications to the agenda included the appointment of a member to the Foundation Board under Board Reports; addition of Action Item 9 regarding approval of the Memorandum of Understanding between Grays Harbor College and the Grays Harbor College Federation of Teachers (Local 4984); and moving the Resource Fair Celebration to the May meeting.

Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to adopt the agenda as modified. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to adopt the agenda as modified, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

VI. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

VII. Celebration

Derek Edens recognized the Information Technology team, including Matt Holder, Peter DenAdel, Jason Davison, Melissa Lenz, Phil Petheram, Jon Parker, and Phil Robinson, for their student focused and community focused service to the College.

Cathy LeCompte recognized Rod McDonald for successfully completing the eighth round of testing to maintain the College's Washington Association of Building Officials (WABO) welding certification status.

VIII. New Employee Introductions

Erin Tofte introduced new employees from the Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW), including William Durden, Dean of Corrections Education; Mishelle Gillespie, Full-Time Basic Skills Instructor; Lori Heay, Program Manager; Jeffrey Ingram, IT Customer Support; and Sioeli Lauptin, Corrections Education Navigator.

Additional new employee introductions included Ryan McDowell, Grounds and Nursery Services Specialist. Changes in employment included Roxa Banks, who assumed the role of Program Manager in Testing and Advising, and Dalton Johnson, who assumed a tenure track English faculty position at the Riverview Education Center.

IX. Review Items

1. First Reading of Operational Policy 502 – Travel
 - a. No comments.
2. First Reading of Operational Policy 513 – Institutional Unemployment Compensation Rate
 - a. The policy was revised to clarify that the College will budget for unemployment compensation, reflecting current practice.
 - b. Discussion occurred regarding the wording of the final sentence. It was noted that the sentence will be updated to remove the phrase “without regard to the fund from which the employee salary was originally paid.”
 - c. It was noted that unemployment compensation claims are paid on a reimbursement basis.

X. Action Items

1. Approval of March 10, 2026 Minutes
 - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the March 10, 2026 regular Board meeting minutes. Jim Sayce moved to approve the minutes, and Aliza Esty seconded the motion. The motion carried.
2. Approval of March 20, 2026 Minutes
 - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the March 20, 2026 special Board meeting minutes. Jim Sayce moved to approve the minutes, and Aliza Esty seconded the motion. The motion carried.
3. Second Reading of Operational Policies 517 and 525
 - a. Operational Policy 517 – Withholding Services for Outstanding Debts
 - No questions.

- b. Operational Policy 525 - Management and Disposal of Hazardous Wastes
 - No questions.
 - c. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve Operational Policy 517 – Withholding Services for Outstanding Debts and Operational Policy 525 – Management and Disposal of Hazardous Wastes. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve the policies, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
4. Second Reading of Operational Policy 804 - AI Policy
 - a. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve Operational Policy 804 Artificial Intelligence Policy. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve the policy, and Aliza Esty seconded the motion. The motion carried.
5. 2025-2026 Faculty Excellence Awards Approval
 - a. Holly Bringman reviewed the nominations and the nomination process.
 - b. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the 2025 to 2026 Faculty Excellence Awards. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve, and Jim Sayce seconded the motion. The motion carried.
6. FY2026-27 Fee Schedule Approval
 - a. Jason Gordon shared that the proposed fee schedule includes twelve fee revisions. Culinary Arts fees are being consolidated, and Physical Education fees are updated. Other revisions reflect increases in programmatic costs.
 - b. It was noted that assistance is available for students who are unable to cover fees. Discussion occurred regarding the fee changes and how they were developed.
 - c. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the FY2026-27 Fee Schedule. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
7. Bishop Trust Investment Scholarship Approval
 - a. Jason Gordon reviewed the report and shared that approval was requested for \$252,644.62. Discussion occurred regarding the structure of the report.
 - b. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the Bishop Trust Investment Scholarship allocation of \$252,644.62. Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve, and Aliza Esty seconded the motion. The motion carried.
8. Approval of the Memorandum of Understanding Between Grays Harbor College and the Grays Harbor College Federation of Teachers (Local 4984)
 - a. Erin Tofte and Dr. Carli Schiffner shared that the College worked with the faculty union to develop a memorandum of understanding with the Grays Harbor College Federation of Teachers (Local 4984) to add the Washington Corrections Center for Women to the contract.
 - b. Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund called for a motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding Between Grays Harbor College and the Grays Harbor College Federation of Teachers (Local 4984). Dr. Harry Carthum moved to approve, and Aliza Esty seconded the motion. The motion carried.

XI. Standing Reports

1. Student Government Report (Isaac Humiston)

Isaac Humiston shared that the Services and Activities (S&A) and technology fee budgets have been approved and will be submitted to the Board in May.

2. Classified Staff Report (Ryan Decker)

Ryan Decker shared that Classified Staff held a potluck on April 1, and Phil Robinson was recognized as the Classified Staff Winter Quarter Award winner.

3. **Represented Exempt Staff Report** (Deanna Shedley)

No additional updates.

4. **Faculty report** (Anita Plagge)

Deanna Shedley read the faculty report on behalf of Anita Plagge.

5. **Administrative Services Report** (Jason Gordon)

Jason Gordon shared that final budget details for the upcoming fiscal year are being completed and will be presented in June. He also reported that the final recommendation for Lake Swano Dam was received from KPFF and will be presented to the Board in May. He also shared that the Quarter 3 budget update will be presented at the May Board meeting.

6. **Human Resources Report** (Erin Tofte)

Erin Tofte shared that the PACE Committee presented the workplace culture statements to Cabinet earlier in the day. The statements will be shared with campus soon and will also be presented to the Board at their retreat. She also shared that staff project management training is being planned with Kate Krieg of Learn Consulting, and she provided an update on recent hiring activity for open positions.

7. **Learning & Student Success Report** (Holly Bringman)

Holly Bringman reported that current enrollment is at 1,435 students across state funded programs, Running Start, and Stafford Creek Corrections Center. She noted that enrollment is expected to increase with the addition of the Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW) students. It was also shared that 43 state funded students will be recoded as Running Start as part of the registration process. Discussion ensued regarding separating Nursing and Medical Assisting data in future enrollment reports. Discussion also occurred regarding the enrollment impact of adding WCCW and the College's current bachelor's degree programs.

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

Dr. Carli Schiffner reported that the College will present a balanced budget in June. She also shared that potential future budget concerns continue to be monitored, including rising operating costs, State economic forecasts, and possible shifts in State funding that could result in mid-year reductions.

Dr. Schiffner shared that recent conversations have occurred with Congresswoman Emily Randall's staff, and efforts are underway to coordinate a campus visit, as well as continued engagement with other district legislators. She also noted ongoing legislative planning, the State Board efficiency report, and strategic work related to pursuing grants to build institutional capacity.

Dr. Schiffner further shared that the College is monitoring developments at the federal level related to accreditation. She noted that, as of April 1, the Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW) has officially transitioned to the College, and a future Board tour of the facility is anticipated.

Congratulations were shared with Dr. Schiffner regarding her Aspen Institute President's Fellowship recognition.

a. **Accreditation** (Kristy Anderson)

No additional updates.

9. Board Reports

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

Lisa Smith shared that the Foundation will award \$575,000 in scholarships for the upcoming academic year, with student notifications scheduled for later in the week. She noted that additional funding will be available during the summer through a second round of scholarship applications. She also shared that the Bishop Scholarship application will open on May 1 and close at the end of July, and the Scholarship Social is scheduled for Wednesday, May 20.

Astrid Aveledo will conclude her service as the Foundation representative, and Aliza Esty will assume the Board's representative role with the Foundation. Appreciation was expressed for Astrid Aveledo's service on the Foundation Board, and Astrid Aveledo reflected on her time collaborating with the Foundation Board.

b. Legislative Committee Report (Jim Sayce)

Jim Sayce recommended that the Board meet with local legislators in August and also shared several ideas for future discussion topics. He noted that the Legislative Committee will meet in May and will begin planning summer visits.

c. Fiscal Liaison Report (Aliza Esty)

Aliza Esty shared that the first meeting with the audit team is scheduled for the end of the month and that the audit is expected to conclude before July.

d. Items of Interest (Dr. Paula Akerlund)

Board members discussed meeting schedules, including the possibility of Board meetings returning to the morning. Additional future discussion topics were identified, including athletics programming and media visibility.

A debrief of the tenure process ensued. Discussion included documentation standards, clarity and consistency of evaluative language, committee feedback processes, and development of summary materials for the Board. It was noted that some improvements are already underway, and the Board requested that tenure process debriefs become a regular part of the annual cycle.

Discussion also occurred regarding 2026 Graduation logistics, including event flow, recognition opportunities for faculty and staff, and related scheduling considerations.

A laptop review was conducted. The Board was presented with a standard laptop and a touchscreen laptop and selected the touchscreen option.

The meeting recessed at 3:08 PM and reconvened at 3:18 PM.

XII. Executive Session

The Board entered a closed executive session at 3:18 PM under RCW 42.30.110 to consult with legal counsel regarding ongoing legal matters. The session was originally scheduled to last approximately 15 minutes. The Board reconvened in open session at 3:33 PM.

XIII. Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session

Dr. Harry Carthum moved that the Board approve the settlement agreement dated April 10, 2026, between FORMA Construction Company; Riverside Steel Erectors, LLC; KMB Architects, Inc.; the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services; and Grays Harbor College, as presented, and direct President Schiffner to sign the agreement on behalf of the College. Jim Sayce seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

XIV. Good of the Order

Astrid Aveledo highlighted the Culinary Arts Breakfast flyer and expressed enthusiasm for the events. Jim Sayce shared that he remains retired.

XV. Adjournment/next meeting

There being no further business, Chair Dr. Paula Akerlund adjourned the meeting at 3:37 PM. The Board of Trustees will hold its next meeting on May 12, 2026 at 1:00 PM, at Grays Harbor College in Ilwaco and via Zoom.

Dr. Carli Schiffner, Secretary

Dr. Paula Akerlund, Chair