



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 May 12, 2026, at 1:00 PM.

Members Present: Jim Sayce

Members Present on Zoom: Astrid Aveledo, Aliza Esty

Others Present: Ja'Shonae Cooks, Derek Edens, Dr. Carli Schiffner, Jason Gordon, Kristy Anderson, Erin Tofte, Lisa Smith, Amy Hitchcock

Others Present on Zoom: Dr. Aaron Coby, Alana Bertot, Amanda Newbold, Anne Miller, Carla Idohl-Corwin, Cassandra Hogarty, Cathy LeCompte, Cheyenna Carroll, Clara Gillies, Derek Edens, Elisa Harvey, Dr. Evelyn Lanka, Floyd Plemmons, Jody Pope, Ginelle Hanaway, Gracie Thomsen, Heidi Wood, Holly Bringman, Holly Duffy, Holly Samuelson, Jackie Blumberg, Jacob Borden, Jeremy Winn, Jonni Dawson, Julie Randall, Lori Christmas, Madelyn Roy, Penny James, Ryan Decker, Sydney Yager, Virgil Matthews

A study session featuring a Community Education presentation by Amy Hitchcock and a Lake Swano Dam Predesign Report by Jason Gordon was held at 12:00 PM.

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Acting Chair Jim Sayce called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. Roll call was taken by Ja'Shonae Cooks.

II. Safety statement

Acting Chair Jim Sayce called attention to the safety statement.

III. Pledge of Allegiance

Acting Chair Jim Sayce asked Lisa Smith to lead attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Land Acknowledgment

Acting Chair Jim Sayce read the Land Acknowledgment.

V. Agenda Adoption

Acting Chair Jim Sayce called for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Aliza Esty moved to adopt the agenda as presented, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.

VI. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

VII. Celebration

Carla Idohl-Corwin recognized the Workforce Funding team for their work coordinating the March 4

Resource Fair. Team members recognized included Madelyn Roy, Elisa Harvey, Clara Gillies, Karyn Olson, Amanda Newbold, and Savannah Thompson. Madelyn Roy shared details about the Resource Fair and noted that the next Resource Fair is planned for the Fall.

VIII. New Employee Introductions

Erin Tofte introduced new employees Jacob Borden, Dual Credit Navigator and Head Women's Soccer Coach, and Gracie Thomsen, Communications Consultant 1.

IX. Review Items

1. First Reading of Operational Policy 401 – Admissions Policy
 - a. The policy outlines the College's admissions criteria in alignment with Washington Administrative Code (WAC) requirements, and is required as part of the College's role as an open access institution.
2. First Reading of Operational Policy 417 – Title 38 USC § 3679(e) Compliance Policy
 - a. The policy is required for institutions providing qualifying services under Title 38.
3. First Reading of Operational Policy 520 – Coffee and Light Refreshments
 - a. The policy was updated to align with State requirements and included minor link revisions.
4. First Reading of Operational Policy 526 – Internal Controls
 - a. An introductory paragraph explaining internal controls was added. Additional updates included revised RCW links.

X. Action Items

1. Approval of April 14, 2026 Minutes
 - a. Acting Chair Jim Sayce called for a motion to approve the April 14, 2026 regular Board meeting minutes. Aliza Esty moved to approve the minutes, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
2. Second Reading of Operational Policy 411 – Alcohol/Substance Abuse Prevention
 - a. No changes were made since the previous meeting.
 - b. Acting Chair Jim Sayce called for a motion to approve Operational Policy 411 – Alcohol/Substance Abuse Prevention. Aliza Esty moved to approve the policy, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
3. Second Reading of Operational Policy 502 – Travel
 - a. No changes were made since the previous meeting.
 - b. Acting Chair Jim Sayce called for a motion to approve Operational Policy 502 – Travel. Aliza Esty moved to approve the policy, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
4. Second Reading of Operational Policy 513 – Institutional Unemployment Compensation Rate
 - a. The phrase “without regard to the fund from which the employee salary was originally paid” was removed for clarity.
 - b. Dr. Carli Schiffner noted that the word “Institutional” had been omitted from the policy listing in the agenda.
 - c. Acting Chair Jim Sayce called for a motion to approve Operational Policy 513 – Institutional Unemployment Compensation Rate. Aliza Esty moved to approve the policy, and Astrid Aveledo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
5. Approval of the Lake Swano Dam Recommendation
 - a. Acting Chair Jim Sayce called for a motion that the Board approve the recommendation to

proceed with the Lake Swano Dam removal, including construction of a replacement long-span bridge, as identified in the Lake Swano Dam Predesign Alternative Analysis, and authorize President Schiffner or her designee to proceed with project planning, funding coordination, and subsequent design and implementation steps on behalf of the College. Astrid Aveledo moved to approve the recommendation, and Aliza Esty seconded the motion. The motion carried.

6. Approval of the FY2027 Service & Activities (S&A) and Tech Fee Budgets
 - a. Jonni Dawson presented the budget on behalf of Isaac Humiston.
 - b. Acting Chair Jim Sayce called for a motion to approve the FY2027 Services & Activities (S&A) Budget in the amount of \$588,633. Astrid Aveledo moved to approve the budget, and Aliza Esty seconded the motion.
 - c. Discussion occurred regarding the proposed budget amount. Astrid Aveledo moved to withdraw the motion. Aliza Esty seconded the motion to withdraw, and the motion carried.
 - d. The action item will be deferred to the June meeting.

XI. Standing Reports

1. Student Government Report (Isaac Humiston)

Jonni Dawson shared the report on behalf of Isaac Humiston and noted that Student Government is preparing for graduation activities.

2. Classified Staff Report (Ryan Decker)

Ryan Decker shared that bargaining has begun between WPEA and the Office of Financial Management (OFM). The next bargaining session is scheduled for May 21.

3. Represented Exempt Staff Report (Deanna Shedley)

No additional updates.

4. Faculty report (Anita Plagge)

Dr. Evelyn Lanka shared the faculty report on behalf of Anita Plagge. She reported that negotiations for the Stafford Creek Correction Center (SCCC) portion of the faculty contract are ongoing and are expected to conclude in June. It was also shared that contract language regarding the addition of Washington Corrections Center for Women (WCCW) staff still needs to be addressed.

Dr. Lanka noted that faculty members will be voting on changes related to the dues payment schedule, including a proposed reduction in member dues, which remains under discussion. She also shared that concerns were raised by SCCC faculty regarding dues. Dr. Lanka also shared that Dalton Johnson was hired for the tenure-track English faculty position.

5. Administrative Services Report (Jason Gordon)

Jason Gordon presented the third quarter budget report covering July 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026, and reviewed the presentation included in the Board packet. It was shared that State Board allocation adjustments are received throughout the year in multiple phases, which accounts for the additional \$139 referenced in the report. The College is currently operating under allocation number nine, with the potential for additional adjustments.

Discussion occurred regarding the difference between the College's budget enrollment target and

the State funded FTE target. Discussion also occurred regarding positive enrollment trends and factors contributing to increased enrollment. Factors identified included improved communication, implementation of EAB, leadership within Advising, and increased institutional collaboration.

6. Human Resources Report (Erin Tofte)

Erin Tofte shared that the Dean of Enrollment and Student Services position has been reposted. She also noted that the Financial Aid Outreach position has been filled and that the employee will be introduced at the next meeting. Since the written report was submitted, the Campus Safety and Security Coordinator, Administrative Assistant 4 for Workforce, and Administrative Assistant 4 for Student Services and Corrections positions have also been posted.

7. Learning & Student Success Report (Holly Bringman)

Holly Bringman reported an increase in enrollment, with current enrollment at 1,585 students across state funded programs, Running Start, Stafford Creek Corrections Center, and the Washington Corrections Center for Women. No additional updates were provided.

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

Dr. Carli Schiffner called attention to upcoming Spring and Summer events, including the Student Art Show reception scheduled for May 21. She also highlighted accreditation preparation efforts, including an accreditation readiness workshop scheduled for June 4 and recent Mission, Vision, and Priorities (MVP) review meetings. Dr. Schiffner addressed the recent Canvas/Instructure security breach and expressed appreciation for the College's responsiveness and support.

Dr. Schiffner provided an update regarding off-cycle tenure files and noted that no formal Board action would be taken at this time, though updated materials were provided for Board review. An informational summary document regarding the off-cycle tenure process is being developed for Board review in June.

Dr. Schiffner then presented information regarding the College's financial outlook and ongoing statewide funding concerns. Topics included State budget pressures, allocation formula changes, the State fund swap, and the broader financial challenges facing higher education in Washington State. The importance of continued advocacy with elected officials was also discussed.

Dr. Schiffner emphasized the importance of strengthening enrollment growth, retention, and customer service. She also highlighted efforts to diversify funding sources through grants and Foundation coordination. She noted that the College plans to present a balanced budget in June while continuing to monitor external financial pressures and potential future reductions.

a. Accreditation (Kristy Anderson)

No additional updates.

b. Phone System (Derek Edens)

The Phone System update was tabled to the June meeting.

9. Board Reports

a. Foundation Meeting Report (Aliza Esty & Lisa Smith)

Aliza Esty shared that she will attend her first Foundation meeting later in the week.

Lisa Smith shared appreciation for the Community Education efforts and noted that Foundation funding played a significant role in supporting the relaunch of the program. She also provided an overview of the new Entrepreneur Academy being launched in partnership with Foundry. The noncredit program is designed to support students interested in entrepreneurship and business development through online learning, monthly in-person sessions, and guest speakers. The program is supported through a three year grant from a confidential donor. Discussion ensued regarding the Entrepreneur Academy and future partnership opportunities, including the pursuit of a renewable hydrogen grant in partnership with Foundry. She also shared additional Foundation supported projects, including funding for the gym flooring project and support for carpentry program tools and materials.

b. Legislative Committee Report (Jim Sayce)

Jim Sayce suggested meeting prior to the July Board retreat to discuss scheduling summer meetings with legislators and planning key messaging. Dr. Carli Schiffner noted that the Legislative Committee has concluded for the legislative session and will reconvene in the fall. In the meantime, the College will continue engaging with elected officials.

c. Fiscal Liaison Report (Aliza Esty)

Aliza Esty shared that she provided feedback to Jason Gordon prior to the Board meeting regarding the budget presentation, including highlighting certain figures. Another suggestion was to explore whether there is a way to estimate Running Start revenue, since billing occurs a quarter later. Discussion also occurred regarding transfer partnerships and articulation efforts with other institutions, including Evergreen State College.

d. Items of Interest (Acting Chair Jim Sayce)

Board members received updated materials related to off-cycle tenure files.

XII. Executive Session

The Board did not enter into Executive Session.

XIII. Action Items as a Result of the Executive Session

No action items.

XIV. Good of the Order

Aliza Esty shared excitement regarding the Computer Science program. Jim Sayce shared an update on his retirement. Dr. Carli Schiffner expressed appreciation to Acting Chair Jim Sayce for serving in the role during the meeting.

XV. Adjournment/next meeting

There being no further business, Acting Chair Jim Sayce adjourned the meeting at 2:52 PM. The Board of Trustees will hold its next meeting on June 9, 2026 at 1:00 PM, at Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen and via Zoom.

Dr. Carli Schiffner, Secretary

Dr. Paula Akerlund, Chair