

CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE
Wye Mills, MD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
February 27, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Chesapeake College Board of Trustees was held on Thursday, February 27, 2025 at 3:00 p.m. at the Chesapeake College Cambridge Center in Cambridge, Maryland and via Zoom video conference. Chair, Mr. Reza Jafari called the meeting to order.

ATTENDANCE

Dr. Blenda Armistead, Ms. Mary Dennard-Turner, Ms. Addie Eckardt, Mr. Reza Jafari, Ms. Shelly Gross-Wade, Mr. Milton Nagel, and Ms. Erica Osterhout attended the meeting in-person. Mr. Brent Fuchs and Brenda Shorter attended the meeting by Zoom. Absent was Mr. Chris Garvey. Dr. Clifford Coppersmith and Ms. Latellya Stewart were also present.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Gross-Wade, seconded by Ms. Eckardt and carried unanimously, the Board approved the agenda as presented.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Armistead, seconded by Ms. Dennard-Turner and carried unanimously, the Board approved the following consent agenda items:

Approval of Minutes - The minutes of the January 23, 2025 meeting with a correction.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT

Haley Wondrash, SGA President, reported ongoing efforts to sponsor more student events. Recent and upcoming initiatives include a chocolate-covered strawberry event, a Women's Month event highlighting various student leaders, and Student Advocacy Day in Annapolis, where students had the opportunity to meet state delegates—special thanks to Dr. Collins for attending. Additionally, SGA is planning a spring formal and collaborating with Public Safety on campus events. Spring is a great time for students to get involved and learn more about SGA.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Coppersmith shared several key updates during the mid-term report. The annual Black History Month luncheon took place on Saturday, celebrating JC Gibson and the Building African American Minds initiative. Special thanks were extended to Dr. Collins and the staff for organizing a successful event. Additionally, recent data from the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond highlighted positive news, with particularly strong rates for dual enrollment. Spring enrollment numbers have also seen significant

growth, marking the highest headcount since 2017, a testament to the dedicated efforts of the admissions team and website staff.

On the budget front, Dr. Coppersmith acknowledged that some community members are experiencing job losses and seeking assistance through the Workforce Investment Board (WIB), though there is currently no direct impact on the college. The annual county budget hearings are in progress, with QA Tech remaining on the priority list. In response to the Dear Colleague letter, the college remains in compliance with federal guidelines and will continue current practices while awaiting further instruction.

Regarding the QA Tech building project, plans are moving forward for a new facility that will double the space of the existing building. The college is addressing a list of questions and has two months to respond before submitting budget requests to county officials. The priority is to create the most flexible space possible to meet future needs.

Enrollment in skilled trades programs continues to grow, particularly in electrical and CDL programs, while marine programs remain stable. Additional staff has been hired to support these expanding programs. Although the state acknowledges the need for a new building, integrating it into the funding formula remains a challenge. However, the college is committed to maximizing the use of the new space once completed.

FINANCE AND FACILITIES REPORT

Mr. Nagel presented the following action items to the board for approval. The committee met on February 19, 2025.

Action Item: Award of Contract Auditing Services

The college recently initiated a request for audit services and received proposals from five audit firms. After careful consideration, it was decided to proceed with interviewing PKS as the selected firm. The decision to exclude other firms was based on key factors: one firm lacked experience working with Maryland community colleges, while another, despite having experience with other colleges, was heavily committed to multiple firms.

Choosing PKS ensures continuity, as they have been a trusted partner of the college. While the team assigned to the audit will be different, staying with the same firm minimizes the learning curve that would have been required with a new provider. This consistency allows PKS to serve as a reliable resource and partner in the audit process.

The same information regarding the selection process was presented to both the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and the Foundation Board, who will review and vote on the decision.

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Nagel, seconded by Dr. Armistead and carried unanimously, the Board approved the award of contract for auditing services for Chesapeake College, Chesapeake College Foundation and the Upper Shore Workforce Investment Board to PKS & Company, P.A. in an amount not to exceed \$303,300 for a period of four years beginning with the FY 2025 audit through the FY 2028 audit.

Action Item: TPAC – AV Refresh Budget Transfer

The Todd Performing Arts Center (TPAC), the largest auditorium on campus, currently uses an outdated classroom-grade projector that lacks brightness, clarity, and poses a tripping hazard. The Division of IT has designed an upgraded AV system with improved presentation hardware, cabling, input switching, and controls, with a projected cost not exceeding \$25,000. To fund the project, \$10,264.59 in leftover funds from the Cadby Theater AV Refresh project will be reallocated, with the remainder covered by IT operational funds. The project is expected to be completed by April 15, 2025.

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Nagel, seconded by Ms. Eckardt and carried unanimously, the Board approved the budget transfer of \$10,264.59 from the Cadby Theater AV Refresh project to cover costs associated with the AV refresh in the TPAC Theater (new project).

GOVERNANCE & HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

Ms. Dennard-Turner presented the following action items to the board for approval.

Action Item: Smoke & Tobacco-Free Campus Policy

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Dennard-Turner and seconded by Dr. Armistead and carried unanimously, the Board approved the Smoke & Tobacco-Free Campus Policy.

Action Item: Drug & Alcohol – Free Workplace Policy

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Dennard-Turner and seconded by Dr. Armistead and carried unanimously, the Board approved the Drug & Alcohol – Free Workplace Policy.

PROGRAMS, PLANNING AND OUTREACH

Ms. Shorter presented the following action items to the board for approval.

The program upgrade will double the number of credits and align with similar courses at Salisbury University. The Letter of Recognition (LOR) had minimal enrollment, with only two students, who will graduate this spring. Moving forward, the certificate option will provide more value to students.

There will be no changes to faculty or curriculum, as the courses can be taught in-house by Dr. Hall (Literature & History). The LOR will no longer be offered after this catalog year.

Action Item: Program Termination: African-American Studies Letter of Recognition

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Shorter, seconded by Ms. Eckardt and carried unanimously, the Board approved the Program Termination: African-American Studies Letter of Recognition.

Action Item: New Program: African-American Studies Certificate

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Shorter, seconded by Ms. Eckardt and carried unanimously, the Board approved the New Program: African-American Studies Certificate.

COLLEGE REPORTS

Faculty Assembly

Ms. Reinard, Faculty Assembly vice chair, did not have a report.

Staff Assembly (StARs)

Ms. Hrobar, the Staff Assembly Representative, expressed congratulations and thanks to staff for their participation in the Super Bowl event. She also announced two upcoming staff events: bowling on April 6 and a Ten Eyck staff social on April 10.

TRUSTEES REPORT

Mr. Jafari, Chair of the Board, reminded everyone that ethics forms need to be completed. He also highlighted that April is Community College Month, and encouraged connecting with MACC to request a citation from the governor to raise more awareness about community colleges.

The mid-year retreat was well-organized, but attendance was low. It was suggested to hold an extension of one of the board meetings instead. The next January budget meeting could be extended to include one or two additional topics. The proposed schedule would include lunch at 11:30, the business meeting at 12:30, followed by the budget meeting. It was also suggested to hold the budget approval in February, it was recommended to bring it to the finance committee for discussion, as the budget often arrives late.

The Dorchester Chamber Business meeting will be held on March 13 at 5:00 PM at the Hyatt. Trustees should be informed of the dates for other Chamber events.

The 60th Anniversary Event planning committee is working on a celebration set for December, and the board commencement reception will include some form of recognition for the anniversary.

CLOSED SESSION

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Nagel, seconded by Ms. Dennard-Turner and carried unanimously, the Board entered into a closed session in accordance with Md. Code, General Provisions Article § 3-305(b)(1), to discuss a legal matter.

OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Nagel, seconded by Ms. Eckardt and carried unanimously, the Board adjourned closed session at 4:21 PM.

ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION

In closed session, the Board of Trustees discussed a legal matter.

ADJOURNMENT

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Nagel seconded by Ms. Dennard-Turner and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 4:21 PM.



Latellya Stewart, Staff Associate to the Board

APPROVED 

Reza Jafari, Chair

DATE: 3/27/25