

CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE
Wye Mills, MD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
August 27, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Chesapeake College Board of Trustees was held on Thursday, August 27, 2026 at 3:00 p.m. in the Dorchester Administration Building Board Room in Wye Mills, Maryland and via Zoom video conference. Chair, Ms. Shelly Gross-Wade called the meeting to order.

ATTENDANCE

Dr. Eric Cheezum, Ms. Addie Eckardt, Mr. Chris Garvey, Mr. Reza Jafari, Mr. Brent Fuchs, Ms. Erica Osterhout, and Ms. Shelly Gross-Wade attended the meeting in-person. Mr. Darius Johnson attended the meeting by Zoom. Absent was Ms. Mary Dennard-Turner and Ms. Brenda Shorter.

Dr. Clifford Coppersmith and Ms. Latellya Stewart were also present.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Eckardt, seconded by Dr. Cheezum and carried unanimously, the Board approved the following consent agenda items:

Approval of Minutes - The minutes of the June 11, 2026 meeting.
The minutes of the June 11, 2026 closed session meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Coppersmith provided an abridged State of the College address, reporting that Chesapeake College enters the 2026-27 academic year in a strong position, focused on stabilizing enrollment, increasing student retention, and investing in campus facilities and technology. He highlighted efforts to expand academic access through accelerated course offerings, strengthen dual enrollment partnerships, and align workforce programs with regional employment needs.

Dr. Coppersmith announced the completion of the College's executive leadership team, including the promotion of Dr. David Harper to Provost and Executive Vice President, the appointment of Dr. Caroline Wood as Vice President for Student Success and Enrollment Management, and the addition of Mr. Milton Nagel as Vice President for Administrative Services. He noted that the leadership team is advancing a "One College" approach that encourages collaboration across academic, student support, and workforce education areas.

He also reported on the College's nationally recognized student retention efforts, including expanded TRIO-informed student success initiatives, proactive student support services, and early-alert interventions that have contributed to improved student persistence and success.

An update was provided on the Queen Anne's Technical Building project, which remains a top institutional priority. Dr. Coppersmith noted that all five supporting counties approved a shared budget request to fund the local portion of the project. The facility will support workforce training programs in areas such as agriculture, HVAC, welding and metal fabrication, advanced manufacturing, and building trades, and will include the proposed Center for Career, Entrepreneurship, and Innovation (CCEI).

In closing, Dr. Coppersmith emphasized the importance of the One College Concept and thanked the Board, faculty, staff, and community partners for their continued support and commitment to the College's mission and strategic goals.

FINANCE AND FACILITIES REPORT

Mr. Jafari presented the following action items to the board for approval.

Action Item: Award of Contract - NEOED

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Jafari, seconded by Mr. Garvey and carried unanimously, the Board approved the FY2027 amended contract renewal for NEOGOV/NEOED for \$63,219.14.

Action Item: Award of Contract - NSP (Nurse Support Program) Grant

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Jafari, seconded by Dr. Cheezum and carried unanimously, the Board approved the purchase of two (2) Nursing Anne manikins, male upgrade kits, and peripheral supplies from Laerdal Medical for an amount not to exceed \$69,627.06 and the purchase of eight (8) ICU Medical Plum Duo Pumps from Med One for an amount not to exceed \$58,495.00. Funding is provided by the NSP Assistance Fund through the State of Maryland.

Action Item: Award of Contract - Athletic Team Transportation FY027

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Jafari, seconded by Ms. Eckardt and carried unanimously, the Board approved the athletic team transportation for FY2027 to Blanchard Charter of Severn, Maryland in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. Changes to this contract as proposed in the RFP may be necessary to accommodate schedule changes, playoff games, etc. as the college progresses into the teams' respective seasons.

Informational item: EDC HVAC Update

Mr. Nagel provided an update on the EDC building shutdown and temporary relocation of staff. It was reported that the transition was completed successfully, with no complaints received from staff members. The College is currently reviewing design plans for a new HVAC system, with appreciation expressed to Ms. Collins and Mr. Dyott for their contributions to the project. A recommendation will be brought to the Board to replace the existing HVAC system. In addition, plans are underway to replace the lighting system, with comparisons to be conducted to assess potential energy savings. No questions or concerns were raised by the counties regarding the project.

AI Advisory Committee

Mr. Moore provided an update on the College's efforts to evaluate the ethical use of artificial intelligence (AI) across the institution. Future reports and recommendations will be presented to the Board as the committee's work progresses.

Informational Item: Queen Anne's Technical Building Naming Opportunities

Ms. McGinnis provided an update on the College's fundraising campaign, noting that the \$3 million quiet phase was launched in June. She also reported that the naming policy is being reviewed and updated. While the policy itself will require Board approval, individual naming decisions made in accordance with

the policy will not require Board approval. It was noted that existing buildings cannot be renamed; however, spaces within buildings may be named in recognition of donors or contributions.

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Jafari, seconded by Ms. Eckardt, and carried unanimously, the board approved the endorsement of the naming authority for the new Queen Anne's Technical Building.

Board members discussed whether current naming opportunities would be permitted under the existing naming policy. It was noted that the current policy applies to all College buildings and will need to be updated to address proposed naming opportunities. The revised naming policy will be presented to the Board in September for review and approval. It was further clarified that any naming opportunities considered will be evaluated in accordance with the updated policy once adopted.

GOVERNANCE & HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

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

Informational Item: FY27 Board Committee Assignments

The Board Chair, Ms. Gross-Wade, recommended adding the immediate past Board Chair as a member of the Executive Committee. To implement this change, amendments to the Board bylaws will be required. The proposed bylaw revisions will be brought forward for Board review and approval.

PROGRAMS, PLANNING AND OUTREACH

Informational Item: FY2026 – 2030 PAR Benchmarks

Dr. Harper presented the FY2026-2030 PAR benchmarks to the Board. The benchmarks will be incorporated into the PAR report and will be brought back to the Board for review and approval at a future meeting.

COLLEGE REPORTS

Faculty Assembly

Ms. Foster, Chair of the Faculty Assembly, reported on the successful start of the academic year. Faculty participated in In-Service sessions held on August 18 and 19. During these sessions, faculty members had the opportunity to work on passion projects. Ms. Foster also noted that the Faculty Assembly held a productive meeting and elected faculty representatives to serve on the Academic Council.

Staff Assembly (StARs)

Ms. Fearins, Chair of the Staff Assembly, reported that the StARs representatives met in August and they are focused on strengthening employee engagement and staff recognition. The representatives reviewed feedback received from staff from the college-wide professional development survey. Ms. Fearins also shared that the Staff Assembly is planning several employee engagement events, including a staff social and a doormat decorating activity. In addition, Ms. Cheryl Cayer was recognized as the Staff Member of the Month for August.

TRUSTEES REPORT

Ms. Gross-Wade, Chair of the Board of Trustees, reported that the recent Board Retreat was highly successful, with trustees fully engaged throughout the discussions. The retreat provided an opportunity for the Board to reflect on its progress, reassess its direction, and discuss strategies to further advance

the College's mission. Discussions focused on strengthening connections with students and staff, supporting workforce development, responding to community expectations, and reaffirming the Board's role and purpose. Ms. Gross-Wade noted the value of learning from one another through open dialogue on a variety of important issues. She expressed appreciation for Dr. Coppersmith's leadership and thanked the College staff for their support in making the retreat a rewarding and meaningful experience.

CLOSED SESSION

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

OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Osterhout, seconded by Ms. Eckardt and carried unanimously, the Board adjourned closed session at 4:10 PM.

ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION

In closed session, the Board of Trustees approved faculty appointment of Dr. Victor White, and approved the president's evaluation and compensation.

ADJOURNMENT

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Osterhout seconded by Ms. Eckardt and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 PM.

Latellya Stewart, Staff Associate to the Board

APPROVED: _____
Shelly Gross-Wade, Chair

DATE: 9/24/26