

**CHESAPEAKE COLLEGE**  
**Wye Mills, MD**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**April 23, 2026**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A meeting of the Chesapeake College Board of Trustees was held on Thursday, April 23, 2026, 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, Dr. Eric Cheezum, Ms. Mary Dennard-Turner, Ms. Addie Eckardt, Mr. Chris Garvey Mr. Reza Jafari, Ms. Erica Osterhout attended the meeting in-person. Mr. Brent Fuchs attended meeting by Zoom. Absent was Ms. Shelly Gross-Wade 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.

The Board welcomed new member Dr. Eric A. Cheezum. Dr. Cheezum has many years of experience working in higher education and is a Preston native, where he farms about 600 acres. He is the author of *Chessie: A Cultural History* (Johns Hopkins, 2024). Dr. Cheezum has taught as an adjunct at Chesapeake since 2008, and also earned his CDL through the College.

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Armistead, seconded by Ms. Eckardt and carried unanimously, the Board approved the agenda as presented.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

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

- Approval of Minutes - The minutes of the March 26, 2026 meeting.
- The minutes of the March 26, 2026 closed session meeting.
- The minutes of the April 8, 2026 closed session meeting.

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

- Conferring of Degrees and Certificates

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT REPORT**

Ms. Crump, SGA Secretary, reported that the academic year is coming to a close. She noted that the spring dance is scheduled for next week and has received strong student participation through sign-ups. She also highlighted the upcoming May 4th Star Wars Day. This will be her final board meeting of the year. The SGA will welcome a new executive board. The incoming officers are as follows: B. Kanter

Matadeen, President; Ronald Aburn, Vice President; Erin Fair, Secretary; and Kyra Espejo, Treasurer. Ms. Crump concluded by noting that the current board is wrapping up its term and preparing to transition responsibilities to the incoming team. The Board also thanked Ms. Crump for her service to the Board this year. It was noted that she was the speaker at the Foundation's donor luncheon last week.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Coppersmith presented a revised version of a forthcoming Op-Ed in recognition of National Community College Month, highlighting Chesapeake College's role as a regional economic engine and provider of accessible, workforce-aligned education. He emphasized the College's impact in supporting local industries, preparing students for evolving workforce demands, and retaining talent in the Mid-Shore region, noting that the majority of graduates remain in the area and that the College contributes significantly to the regional economy. The report recognized student and alumni achievements, including honors received by transfer students and individual success stories demonstrating perseverance and career advancement. Updates on workforce development initiatives and capital projects were also shared, including mobile training labs and the planned Queen Anne's Technical Building. The President expressed appreciation for community and Board support, invited members to attend the May 20, 2026 Commencement, and reported that the College's operating and capital budget was unanimously approved by all five supporting counties.

Dr. Solano, Cambridge Center Director, provided an update on the Cambridge Center and services in Dorchester County.

### **FINANCE AND FACILITIES REPORT**

Ms. Gross-Wade did not have any action items to present to the board for approval.

### **GOVERNANCE & HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT**

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

#### **Action Item: Data Classification Matrix**

Guidelines were discussed regarding what types of data are appropriate for use with AI platforms. It was noted that members of the Board of Trustees are governed by the same policy as college employees.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Osterhout and seconded by Dr. Armistead and carried unanimously, the Board approved the Data Classification Matrix.

#### **Action Item: Information Security Policy**

A cybersecurity assessment was discussed, with an emphasis on establishing clear, straightforward guidelines for both IT and executive leadership. It was clarified that Board members are classified as part of the executive body.

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Osterhout and seconded by Dr. Armistead and carried unanimously, the Board approved the Information Security Policy.

#### **Action Item: Remote Access and Management Policy**

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Osterhout and seconded by Mr. Garvey and carried unanimously, the Board approved the Remote Access and Management Policy.

**Action Item: Slate of Candidates for Chair and Vice Chair**

The Board was presented with the FY27 Slate of Candidates: Ms. Shelly Gross-Wade for Chair and Ms. Erica Osterhout for Vice Chair.

On a **MOTION** by Mr. Garvey and seconded by Dr. Armistead and carried unanimously, the Board approved the FY27 Slate of the Candidates for Chair and Vice Chair.

**PROGRAMS, PLANNING AND OUTREACH**

Ms. Shorter did not have any action items to report.

**COLLEGE REPORTS**

**Faculty Assembly**

Mr. Crouse, Faculty Assembly Chair, reported that faculty are currently engaged in grading, meeting with students, and finalizing coursework, including the preparation and revision of final exams, with an emphasis on accuracy during this period.

He also shared an update on faculty leadership transitions. The Faculty Chair serves a two-year term, and Mr. Nevin is completing his term. Ms. Sherri Foster was introduced as the incoming Faculty Chair, with Ms. Carrie Arnold serving as Vice Chair.

Dr. Coppersmith expressed appreciation to Mr. Nevin for his service and extended a warm welcome to the incoming faculty leadership.

**Staff Assembly (StARs)**

Ms. Tipton, Staff Assembly Representative, reported that there will be three open positions for the upcoming year—two exempt and one non-exempt—with nominations due by April 30. She also noted that the April Staff Member of the Month is Ms. Cheyenne Roache, and that the Annual Report is currently in progress and expected to be completed and shared by June. Additionally, she shared that a staff social is scheduled for this evening, and an ice cream social on June 9.

**TRUSTEES REPORT**

Mr. Jafari, Chair of the Board, welcomed Dr. Eric Cheezum. Ms. Gross-Wade and Ms. Osterhout will assign committee roles. Dr. Cheezum has been assigned to the PPO Committee in the interim. He reminded members that the State Ethics Forms are due by April 30, a reminder will be sent. Mr. Jafari also shared that Commencement will take place on May 20, with a reception at 12:00 p.m. and the ceremony in the TPAC at 2:00 p.m. Additionally, he reminded the board of the upcoming ACCT Leadership Congress, encouraging members to consider attending, while noting that budgets for professional travel have been reduced and noted the rising cost of transportation. The college is considering applying to be a panelist at the upcoming ACCT Leadership Congress.

**CLOSED SESSION**

On a **MOTION** by Ms. Eckardt, seconded by Ms. Osterhout 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. Dennard-Turner, seconded by Dr. Armistead and carried unanimously, the Board adjourned closed session at 4:05 PM.

**ACTION FROM CLOSED SESSION**

In closed session, the Board of Trustees approved the administrator contracts.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a **MOTION** by Dr. Armistead seconded by Ms. Eckardt and carried unanimously, the meeting was adjourned at 4:05 PM.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Latellya Stewart, Staff Associate to the Board

APPROVED:  DATE: 6/11/26  
  
Reza Jafari, Chair