

**NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
February 17, 2025 – 4:30 pm – BH 3rd Floor Board Room**

Call to Order

 Action X Information

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Pledge of Allegiance

Recognition, Awards, and Information Items

- Introduce Jessica Chronister, Dean of Community & Student Engagement
- SGA New Logo Presentation

Attendance

Approval of Minutes

- Annual Board Meeting – January 13, 2025
- Regular Board Meeting – January 13, 2025

ENDS Monitoring Report

- E-101: Academics (*Dr. Diana Johnson*)

Executive Limitations Monitoring Report

- EL-200: Executive Constraint

Committee Reports

- Honorary Associate Degree Committee (*Dr. Carolyn Reeves*)
- Finance Committee (*Mrs. Amber Latimer*)
 - Approval of FY2025 Tuition and Fee Adjustment
 - Accept FY2023 Audit
- Code of Ethics Committee Ad Hoc (*Dr. Carolyn Reeves*)

President's Report

- Bentonville Campus Master Planning
- Enrollment Update
- ACCT Summit Recap
- Paydown of WCC Debt

Chairman's Report

- ACCT Summit Recap
- March Board Retreat
- March Executive Session: President's Regular Annual Performance Evaluation, Part 1

Other Board Action Items and Considerations

- None

Adjourn

For upcoming events, please see the Board of Trustees Calendar of Upcoming Events document located in the front pocket of binder.

**NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING**

Monday, January 13, 2025

MINUTES

Chair Todd Schwartz called the Board of Trustees of NorthWest Arkansas Community College Annual Meeting to order on Monday, January 13 at 4:00 p.m. in the Burns Hall 3rd Floor Board Room.

Members Present: Todd Schwartz (Chair), Rachel Harris (Vice Chair), Amber Latimer (Secretary), Carolyn Reeves, Lori Frank, Ron Branscum, Mark Scott, Mary Schneider, and Joe Spivey

Members Absent: Student Trustee Taryn Settle

Also in Attendance: Dr. Dennis C. Rittle

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OFFICIAL MEETING DATES FOR 2025

Mr. Schwartz set the official meeting dates for 2025 as follows: February 17, March 17, April 14, May 12, June 9, August 4, September 8, October 6, and November 10.

Approval of Official Meeting Dates for 2024

Mr. Scott moved, and Mr. Spivey seconded the motion to name February 17, March 17, April 14, May 12, June 9, August 4, September 8, October 6, and November 10 as the official Board meeting dates for 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Mr. Todd Schwartz, Chair

Mrs. Amber Latimer, Secretary

**NORTHWEST ARKANSAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEE MEETING**

Monday, January 13, 2025

MINUTES

Chair Todd Schwartz called the Board of Trustees of NorthWest Arkansas Community College meeting to order on Monday, January 13 at 4:02 pm in the Burns Hall 3rd Floor Board Room.

Members Present: Todd Schwartz (Chair), Rachel Harris (Vice Chair), Amber Latimer (Secretary), Carolyn Reeves, Lori Frank, Ron Branscum, Mark Scott, Mary Schneider, and Joe Spivey

Also in Attendance: Dr. Dennis C. Rittle and Student Trustee Taryn Settle

MINUTES

November Regular Board Meeting

Mr. Spivey moved, and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting on November 11, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

RECOGNITION

Introduce Dr. Chris LaFata, Dean of Business and Computer Information Systems

Dr. Rittle introduced Dr. Chris LaFata as NWACC's new Dean of Business and Computer Information Systems and gave a brief of Dr. LaFata's background. Dr. LaFata thanked the Board for having him, expressed his gratitude for being at NWACC, and stated that he had a great first week.

ENDS MONITORING REPORT

E-103: Campus Master Planning

Liz Anderson gave a brief overview of the Campus Master Planning project and introduced the Lake Flato Team. She thanked everyone who has helped with the project thus far, including NWACC staff, faculty, students, and community members. She, then turned to the Lake Flato Team to present on their findings.

The Lake Flato Team stated they are wrapping up with part two and finalizing the schemes. They stepped through all the information they have gathered from the workshops they conducted with staff, faculty, students, and community members. The workshops focused on determining what was needed within each respective communities and finding ways to make it fit with what NWACC already has. The team listed the top key themes and goals, presented the four scheme comparisons, and explained which scheme was identified as the preferred scheme. Based on the preferred scheme, a draft was created which includes student housing, wellness and recreation centers, public areas, mixed use village housing, and streamlined academic buildings. They highlighted the growth opportunity zones and listed the first priorities.

The Board asked questions regarding how this compares to other institutions, how these projects will be funded, and whether accessible healthcare has been considered within this plan.

Lake Flato stated that they referred to other two-year and four-year colleges to assist mapping the campus through an academic lens while also gearing towards area-specific growth trends.

Liz stated that the Walton Family Foundation's Design Excellence grant is funding the Campus Master Plan project but will not fund the building of the plan. The Board discussed utilizing the Land Use Committee to help decide what projects to proceed with as the plan unfolds and can be done over time. Overall, the Campus Master Plan project is to create a big vision for where NWACC would like to go. Mrs. Harris encouraged the Board to think big because the region is growing at such a rate to need this big of a vision.

The NWACC team also expressed that while healthcare and childcare have not been considered in the current scheme, NWACC is interested in exploring this opportunity.

Approval of E-103 Monitoring Report

Mrs. Harris moved, and Mr. Spivey seconded the motion to approve the ENDS-103 Monitoring Report. The motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS MONITORING REPORT

EL-204: 204 Treatment of Staff

Dr. Rittle stated that with respect to the treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the President shall not cause or allow conditions, which are unfair, undignified, and unclear or present a conflict of interest. Further, without limiting the scope of the foregoing by this enumeration, he or she shall not operate without written personnel policies, which clarify personnel rules for faculty and staff, provide for the effective handling of grievances, and protect against wrongful conditions, fail to make available to staff in a timely manner all personnel rules that affect them, or continue in employment or employ any person serving on the Board.

Approval of EL-204 Monitoring Report

Mr. Scott moved, and Dr. Reeves seconded the motion to approve the Executive Limitations Monitoring Report. The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee

Jonathan Woods stated that the Finance Committee met to discuss next year's budget given the upcoming required expenses of Cost-of-Living Adjustments for employees, IT upgrades from cyber event, and maintenance from storm damage. The committee also discussed moving forward with the phase three of the Compensation Study and the options available to make the best impact. The committee also discussed how to approach tuition and fees and will review options in the February Finance Committee meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Rittle informed the Board that NWACC will submit four Letter of Notifications to ADHE to delete the Certificate of Proficiency in Safety and Health, Certificate of Proficiency in Workforce Readiness, Technical Certificate in Environmental Management & GIS Technician, and Technical Certificate in Environmental Management & Regulatory Science due to low enrollment.

Dr. Rittle informed the Board that enrollment for the Spring Semester is strong and thanked the NWACC team for welcoming students today despite the snowy weather late last week.

Dr. Rittle informed the Board that a Budget Work Session will occur on April 30, 2025.

Dr. Rittle informed the Board that approval of Tuition and Fees and the FY2023 Audit will be on the February Board Meeting.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Schwartz informed the Board that the ACCT National Legislative Summit will be February 9 to February 12. He encouraged all who will be attending to bring back key takeaways to share at the February Board Meeting.

Mr. Schwartz informed the Board that their Statement of Financial Interests are due to Sammantha by January 24.

Mr. Schwartz announced the Committee Chair Appointments as follows: Dr. Reeves as the Chair of the Honorary Degree Committee, Mrs. Latimer as the Chair of the Finance Committee, Ms. Frank as the Chair of the Land Use Committee with Mrs. Schneider as the Vice Chair, Mrs. Harris as the Master Planning Liaison, and will rotate any trustees not on a committee to attend as a Trustee Representative on the Foundation Board.

Mr. Schwartz asked Mrs. Latimer to read the Code of Ethics from the Board Manual. He then asked the Board if they felt that changes in language is needed. He encouraged the Board to send any update suggestions to Sammantha. He suggested creating a committee to review and offer an updated version of the Code of Ethics to be approved at the February Board meeting. Dr. Reeves volunteered to head the committee.

Mr. Schwartz turned to Alex Vasquez to step through a presentation overview of the Policy Governance Board Model. Alex encouraged the Board to review the Board Manual and noted the framework and one-voice principle is key to making the Policy Governance Model work. He further gave tips to help the model effective on a n individual level.

Mr. Schwartz stepped through the results of the Board Self Evaluation and pointed out key things that were identified as areas of concern and noted the comments made about what the Board does well.

OTHER ACTION ITEMS

None

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Mr. Todd Schwartz, Chair

Mrs. Amber Latimer, Secretary

POLICY TYPE: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS

EL-200

POLICY

TITLE: GLOBAL EXECUTIVE CONSTRAINT

Policy 200: The President shall not cause or allow any practice, activity, decisions, or organizational circumstance, which is either unlawful, imprudent or in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics or Board of Trustee policy.

Definition: Practice or activity refers to events of the college. These events cannot violate law or NWACC's Ends and Executive Limitations.

Organizational circumstance refers to any event occurring that involves the college.

Unlawful refers to violation of local, federal, and state statutes.

Imprudent refers to actions taken without regard to outcome or consequential results to the college.

Commonly accepted business and professional ethics refers to truthfulness and avoidance of conflicts of interests.

Narrative: NWACC elects to be audited by the Division of Legislative audit. The result of tests performed during the 2023 financial audit disclosed an audit finding. This finding affected the College's reported total net position to be overstated on June 30, 2023, by \$161,342 This finding also affected the College's reported Statement of non-operating Revenues to be understated by \$2,459,023. The financial statements were subsequently corrected by college personnel during audit fieldwork. The audit finding was presented to the Board of Trustees at the February 2025, board meeting.

The 2024 financial audit has not yet begun; therefore, no reporting has been presented for the 2024 financial audit period. As an approved Title IV granting institution, NWACC's federal financial aid program is monitored through internal local controls, the Arkansas Department of Legislative Audit, and the Department of Education. NWACC recently underwent an ERP system change from Banner to Workday, Phase I was completed during 2020, Phase II started Fall 2021 and completed December, 2023 however configuration adjustments and issues regarding implementation and integration are still being identified and corrected.

I am reporting compliance with Executive Limitations, Policy 200.

Dennis C Rittle, Ph.D.
President