

**GARRETT COLLEGE**  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES**  
**January 21, 2025**  
**McHenry, Maryland**

**A. COMMUNICATION ITEMS:**

**1. Call to Order and Attendance:** Chair Jason Rush called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Other Board Members in attendance included: Ms. Karen Myers-Vice-Chair, Ms. Madeleine Collins (via Zoom), Mr. Kurt Heckman, Mr. Gary Ruddell, and Mr. Duane Yoder. Retired Maryland State Senator George C. Edwards was unable to attend the meeting this evening. College Administrators in attendance included: Dr. Richard Midcap-President, Ms. Janis Bush, Dr. Robert Kerns (via Zoom), Ms. Cherie Krug (via Zoom), Ms. Shelley Menear, Ms. Dallas Ouellette, Mr. Chris Painter, Dr. Kelli Sisler (via Zoom), and Ms. Julie Yoder (via Zoom). Ms. Christa Bowser was absent. Guest present included: Mr. Richard Lewis-Faculty Senate Co-Chair.

**2. Communication from the Public:** None

**3. Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Campus Advisory & Activities Board (Student Updates:**

**Faculty Senate:** Mr. Richard Lewis, Faculty Senate co-chair, reported that Faculty Senate met on January 15<sup>th</sup> and discussed updates to the Tuition Assistance and Reimbursement Policy as part of the Human Resource Manual, class excused absences for student athletes, and updates to the OLA Program and personnel as a result of Terry Peterson's recent retirement. The group also voted on Governance and Academic Affairs Committee replacements for Jack DuBose, who recently retired. Olivia Beitzel will now serve on the Curriculum and Academic Standards Committee (CASC) and Andy Hershey will serve on the Academic Dismissals Committee. The next meeting is scheduled for February 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Staff Senate:** No representative was present to provide an update, but Staff Senate has not met since the last board meeting.

**CAAB:** Since no CAAB representative was available to attend the meeting this evening, President Midcap read the following report that was provided by Andrew Catone, Student Activities Manager:

- There were no January events planned since students were not scheduled to return to campus until late in the month.
- Events that are planned in February include:
  - February 6<sup>th</sup> – Laker Launch Party with the Library and Learning Commons Team. CAAB will provide grand prizes for raffle.
  - February 6<sup>th</sup> – GC Wrestling match water bottle giveaway to the first 50 students.
  - February 13<sup>th</sup> – Student Advocacy Day in Annapolis, MD. President Midcap and Andrew Catone will accompany the students as they participate in this event with the other community college student government groups across

the State of Maryland. The students will also meet with Senator Mike McKay and Delegate Jim Hinebaugh while they are there to discuss the College's interests during this legislative session.

- February 19<sup>th</sup> – Garrett College Men's Basketball Team Game – Black t-shirts will be given away to the first 75 students.
- February is also Black History Month – so there will be several special events held to celebrate.

4. **Approval/Changes to the Agenda:** On a motion by Trustee Heckman, seconded by Vice-Chair Myers, the Board unanimously approved the agenda as distributed (Vote=6-0-0).

- B. **CONSENT AGENDA:** On a motion by Trustee Ruddell, seconded by Vice-Chair Myers, the Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda as distributed and listed below (6-0-0).

1. *Approval of the minutes from the November 19, 2024 Board Meeting*
2. *FY2026 Holiday Schedule and AY25-26 Academic Calendar*

C. **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. **Garrett College 2025 Facility Master Plan Update:** Board Members received the 2025 Facility Master Plan (FMP) Update to review in advance of the Board Meeting. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) requires each Maryland community college to provide an annual update to the decennial FMP by February 1<sup>st</sup>. Garrett College's annual update included the following updates:
- Designate the renovation of the #700 Building space for intercollegiate athletic needs and development of Room 663 as a radiologic technology lab as the College's top capital priority; and
  - Identifies targeted renovation of the #600 Building if needed for potential new academic programs as a possible project, pending funding, in FY29.

President Midcap thanked Mr. Chris Painter, Director of Campus Facilities, Security, and Capital Projects, for all of his work on this FMP update. He then discussed possible funding options for the #700 Building project and answered related questions. On a motion by Vice-Chair Myers, seconded by Trustee Heckman, the Board approved the 2025 FMP Update to be submitted to MHEC by February 1<sup>st</sup> (Vote=6-0-0).

2. **Garrett College Strategic Goals:** In November, Board Members received and reviewed the FY2026-2030 Strategic Plan Goals that were developed by the Strategic Plan Steering Committee. The proposed goals align with the College's updated Mission/Vision/Values statements approved by the Board in November.
- **Goal 1:** Enhance connections with the community.
  - **Goal 2:** Offer innovative sustainable programs that adapt to changing student and community needs to enable student success.
  - **Goal 3:** Maximize human, technical, physical, and fiscal resources to support the College's strategic objectives.

President Midcap noted that Chair Rush serves on the Strategic Plan Steering Committee and that the new strategic goals will also serve as institutional goals in order to eliminate duplication and confusion. On a motion by Trustee Ruddell, seconded by Vice-Chair Myers, the Board unanimously approved the College's Strategic Goals as presented (Vote=6-0-0).

3. **Climate Access Fund Lease-Solar Energy Project:** President Midcap summarized the project that has been discussed as part of multiple monthly board meetings. Last fall, President Midcap designated Compliance Director Shelley Menear to chair a committee that included Business & Finance Dean Dallas Ouellette and Facilities Director Chris Painter with the charge of providing a recommendation regarding the potential Climate Access Fund solar project. A memo outlining the Committee's unanimous recommendation that the College not further pursue this project was shared with the Board last month, and the Board is now being requested to act on that recommendation.

On a motion by Trustee Ruddell, seconded by Vice-Chair Myers, the Garrett College Board of Trustees voted to end ongoing discussions with Climate Access Fund (CAF) on a lease agreement to permit CAF to lease campus building roofs and develop parking lot canopies for a proposed solar energy project. The Board of Trustees further noted that they saw value in the project, but the majority of members had overriding concerns regarding potential long-term issues for the College related to the project (Vote=5-1-0).

#### D. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. **FY26 Budget Update:** President Midcap reported that Governor Moore's draft FY26 state budget was posted online last week. Considering all state operating funds – Cade, Small College, Appalachian, WV Reciprocity – the College is scheduled to receive nearly \$1 million in additional state funding this year. That increase 1.) nearly restores the College to FY24 state funding levels and 2.) is dependent upon approval of the Maryland General Assembly. He further noted that the College will not receive requested state capital funding, but does have a County commitment letter for \$1.5 million (plus \$1 million in contingency funding). The College may need to ask for some additional contingent funding for the 700/600 building projects. President Midcap asked for Board permission to obtain the Commissioners' input regarding viable options (additional local funding, phased project over multiple years, scaled-back project, etc.). There was board consensus to proceed.

The College must submit its FY26 county funding request by February 21<sup>st</sup> to the County Commissioners. President Midcap will share a draft request with the Board via email prior to board review and action during the February Board Meeting.

2. **Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE)-Accreditation/Self-Study Preparation Updates to Board:** President Midcap noted that as presented last month, the College Administration is beginning to refresh the Board on the Middle States

accreditation process. We will try to tie updates to actual agenda items whenever possible. This month's update highlights Standard VII: Governance, Leadership, and Administration. This standard is all about the Trustees – their role as our governing body, including responsibilities in policy development, financial oversight, and the selection and evaluation of a Chief Executive Officer. In addition, this standard talks about periodic assessment of governance, leadership, and administration. The Board fulfills that role in part by its own annual self-assessment and periodic review of the Board bylaws. We thought Standard VII would be a relevant topic this month given the discussion that will take place under the Chair's Report regarding bylaw review. Additional information was provided to each Board Member in this month's board agenda packet.

3. **Tuition Assistance and Reimbursement Update-Human Resource (HR) Manual:** Per the previously distributed information, most of the changes to the Tuition Assistance and Reimbursement Section of the College's HR Manual are general language updates, removal of references that are either outdated or contained elsewhere, and clarifications to address vague language. A policy change permits employees eligible for internal scholarships or grants to use those funds to defray fees and book costs. All external aid – principally federal and state aid – must be used to reduce tuition costs before the College benefit kicks in. President Midcap noted his support of these changes, which also have been approved by Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and College Council. The Board will take action on this update during the February Meeting.
4. **Report of the Chair of the Board:**
  - a. **Upcoming Events:** Chair Rush summarized upcoming events and reminded members of the MACC Trustee Leadership Conference and Legislative Reception on January 27<sup>th</sup> in Annapolis. President Midcap plans to attend, but no board members were available to attend this year.
  - b. **Board Bylaw Review:** Chair Rush asked for volunteers to review the Board of Trustee Bylaws. Trustee Heckman volunteered to serve on this committee and will pull other members in as needed. The goal is to provide feedback or review suggested updates with the full board during the April Board Meeting.
5. **Report of Board Members:** Vice-Chair Myers reminded Board members of the Deep Creek Lake Centennial 2025 celebration. President Midcap noted that the College-sponsored Joan Crawford Lecture Series (JCLS) may be a good place to highlight this celebration with a guest speaker. He also noted that he would send a link to the Board to the past guest lectures, since we recently had a local speaker who discussed DCL history.

Trustee Heckman then reported that he recently met with three out of the four college deans and learned so much more about the College, which helps him to be a better board member. He encouraged all board members to do the same as time allows.

- 6. Report of the President of the College:** President Midcap summarized the reorganization of the College that was announced during the All-College Forum this morning. He then passed out updated College organizational charts to board members that were present.

President Midcap also reported on upcoming meetings related to the MACC Strategic Plan and updates regarding the College soccer programs.

**7. College Administrative & Financial Reports:**

- a. College Administrative Reports:** There were no additional questions or comments regarding these previously distributed reports.
- b. College Financial Reports:** There were no additional questions or comments regarding these previously distributed reports.

- E. EXECUTIVE SESSION:** The Board did not convene an Executive Session this evening.
- F. NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING:** The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Garrett College Board of Trustees is February 18, 2025 at 5:30 p.m. in the #100 Building, Board Room #102.
- G. ADJOURNMENT:** The Board adjourned the Open Session at 6:17 p.m. on a motion by Trustee Heckman, seconded by Trustee Ruddell (Vote=6-0-0).

Respectfully submitted by:

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Richard Midcap, Ed.D.  
President, Garrett College  
Secretary/Treasurer, GC Board of Trustees

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Mr. Jason Rush  
Chair  
Garrett College Board of Trustees