

GARRETT COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OPEN SESSION MEETING MINUTES
April 21, 2026
McHenry, Maryland

A. COMMUNICATION ITEMS:

Note: Mr. Chris Painter, Garrett College's Director of Facilities, Security, and Capital Projects, provided a tour of the #700 Building to Board Members, Deans, and Faculty and Staff Senate Co-chairs prior to the Board Meeting.

1. Call to Order and Attendance: Chair Jason Rush called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. Other Board Members in attendance included: Ms. Karen Myers-Vice-Chair, Ms. Madeleine Collins, Retired Maryland State Senator George C. Edwards, Mr. Kurt Heckman, Mr. Gary Ruddell (*via Zoom*), and Mr. Duane Yoder. College Administrators in attendance included: Dr. Richard Midcap-President, Ms. Janis Bush-Director of Human Resources, Dr. Robert "JR" Kerns-Dean of Student Affairs, Ms. Lisa Nichols-Dean of Administrative Services, and Ms. Julie Yoder-Dean of Continuing Education and Workforce Development. Guests present included: Mr. Rich Lewis, Co-Chair of Faculty Senate; and Ms. Erica Hook and Ms. Tasha Mongold-Co-Chairs of Staff Senate.

2. Communication from the Public: None

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

CAAB: Dr. Kerns reported that the Campus Advisory & Activities Board is gearing up for Spring Fling, Exam Jam, and Final Exams.

Faculty Senate: Co-Chair Rich Lewis provided the following update:

- Faculty Senate recently reviewed the updated Governance Charter, Fundraising Policy, Confiscated Items Policy and Procedures, Involuntary Student Withdrawal Policy and Procedures, and the Professional Residence Life Staff Guests Policy and Procedures with no further updates or comments.
- Faculty enjoyed participating in the College Open House on Saturday, April 11th and will also participate in the WV Junior/Senior Preview Day scheduled this Friday.
- The next Faculty Senate meeting will be held on Friday, April 24th.

Staff Senate: Ms. Erica Hook and Ms. Tasha Mongold, Staff Senate Co-Chairs, shared the following report:

- The last Staff Senate meeting was held on April 17th.
- Dean Lisa Nichols was the guest speaker. She discussed her background and experience prior to coming to Garrett College. She also summarized current projects and future projects that are planned for FY27 by her direct reports.
- Staff Senate also reviewed the same policies as Faculty Senate with a few updates provided.
- Erica Hook has been re-elected to serve another term as Co-Chair of Staff Senate with Tasha Mongold.
- The next meeting is scheduled for Friday, May 29th at 9:30 a.m.

4. Approval/Changes to the Agenda: On a motion by Trustee Heckman, seconded by Trustee Collins, the Board unanimously approved the agenda as distributed (Vote=7-0-0).

B. CONSENT AGENDA: On a motion by Vice-Chair Myers, seconded by Trustee Heckman, the Board unanimously approved the Consent Agenda as distributed and listed below (Vote=7-0-0).

1. *Approval of the minutes from the March 17, 2026 Board Meeting*

C. ACTION ITEMS:

1. **FY2026 Budget Amendment #2:** Dean Nichols reported that this budget amendment identified operational savings that could be shifted to support higher-than-budgeted electricity prices. She further noted that savings were largely realized from vacated and unfilled positions in Instructional and Student Services areas. On a motion by Trustee Ruddell, seconded by Vice-Chair Myers, the Board unanimously approved the FY2026 Budget Amendment #2 as distributed and discussed (Vote=7-0-0).

2. **Conferral of Degrees/Certificates for May 2026 Graduates:** President Midcap reported that the Garrett College Board of Trustees approves the awarding of the degrees and certificates earned by this year's prospective graduates, assuming successful completion of all outstanding graduation requirements. The Board also approves the awarding of degrees and certificates to any student certified by the Registrar as having met graduation requirements for that individual's degree or certificate who may be certified after this date but by May 16, 2026.

At present time, Garrett College expects to confer a total of 159 degrees and certificates to 156 potential graduates for the 2025-2026 Academic Year. The requested action language allows for the conferring of degrees to any other qualified degree candidate surfacing prior to Commencement. The breakdown of degree/certificate information is as follows: 81 AA Degrees, 1 AAT Degree, 15 AS Degrees, 50 AAS Degrees, and 12 Certificates.

On a motion by Vice-Chair Myers, seconded by Trustee Heckman the Board unanimously approved the awarding of the degrees and certificates for May 16, 2026 prospective graduates per the details distributed and discussed (Vote=7-0-0).

D. INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. **FY2027 Budget Draft:** Board Members were provided a draft copy of the FY2027 Budget. Dean Nichols displayed a presentation, noting the Fiscal Year 2027 budget was developed to support Garrett College's FY2026-30 Strategic Plan. The following spending priorities were used in creating the FY 2027 budget: **1.)** Funding Year 5 of a faculty compensation plan to address the Maryland Blueprint impacts; **2.)** Addressing internal salary compression and regional salary competition for staff; **3.)** Maintaining and enhancing the College's infrastructure, including IT and facilities; **4.)** Implementing strategies to increase enrollment and retention; and **5.)** Effective partnering with Garrett County Public Schools in Blueprint implementation. Dean Nichols also explained credit and non-credit revenue projections and displayed related graphs comparing FY23-FY27; discussed other key revenue data, fund balance review and projection; and FY27 special budget requests.

The FY27 Draft Budget will also be on the May Board Agenda as an Information/Discussion Item. The Board will then be asked to act on this budget during their June 2026 meeting.

2. **MSCHE Self-Study Steering Committee Update:** Dean Kerns reported that the efforts to draft the self-study report continue, including compiling a list of the College's third-party providers, which is new to the accreditation process. The use of third-party providers requires institutions maximize transparency and student considerations in these relationships, providing forthright reporting and disclosure of any such relationships and their terms.
3. **Policy Informational Updates from College Council:** The following policies were recently reviewed through College Governance and provided to the Board as "Information Updates Only": Confiscated Items Policy, Involuntary Student Withdrawal Policy, and Professional Residence Life Staff Live-in Guests Policy. The only changes made to these policies were updates to the policy format, updates to titles, and updates to contact information. No Board action is required since no changes were made to the policy statement/section.
4. **Board Bylaw Review Discussion:** President Midcap noted that the Board typically reviews the Bylaws annually in the Spring. Chair Rush asked for volunteers to serve on the Board Bylaw Review Committee. Trustee Yoder and Trustee Collins volunteered to work together on this project. On a motion by Vice-Chair Myers, seconded by Trustee Heckman, the Board unanimously voted to hold a review of the Board Bylaws and approved the committee membership as noted above (Vote=7-0-0).
5. **Report of the Chair of the Board:** Chair Rush reminded board members about the First United Community Field Dedication Ceremony scheduled around 2:30 p.m. on Saturday between the doubleheader home baseball games. He further noted that the forecast is calling for heavy rain, so Coach Hallenbeck may try to move the games to Friday. If this happens, we will notify Board Members via email and will also send out a news blast on social media.
 - a. **Upcoming Events:** The other upcoming events were included in the previously distributed Board Agenda file.
6. **Report of Board Members:** No updates at this time.
7. **Report of the President of the College:** President Midcap provided the following updates to his previously distributed April President's Report:
 - Summer 2026 and Fall 2026 enrollment numbers are looking favorable at this time.
 - The newly formed Garrett College Learning Hub includes personal and professional development opportunities for employees. Two sessions have been held to date:
Cybersecurity: Quick Online Safety Tips by the College's Cybersecurity Assistant Professor Kenny Allman, and *Saving and Planning for Retirement*, presented by First United Wealth Advisor Julia Hershman.
 - Washington Elm Tree Planting – scheduled on April 29th on the Mosser Road Heritage Trail.
 - Updates on the record of the Garrett baseball team and upcoming schedule.

8. College Administrative & Financial Reports: Dean Nichols updated Board Members on the anomalies noted in the financial reports last month that were negatively impacting financial statements. She recently confirmed with the auditors that the mechanics of entering doubtful accounts was incorrect, and are being corrected. There were no further updates to the previously distributed administrative and financial reports at this time.

E. RECESS OPEN SESSION TO GO INTO AN EXECUTIVE/CLOSED SESSION OF THE BOARD: On a motion by Vice-Chair Myers, seconded by Trustee Heckman, the Board unanimously recessed the Open Session at 6:55 p.m. for the purpose of convening an Executive Session to discuss the following matters listed in the chart below (*see also the attached Exclusionary Basis for Closing a Meeting Sheet* and related exceptions covered under the Maryland Open Meetings Act) (Vote=7-0-0):

**For each citation checked on the attached, the reasons for closing and topics to be discussed include:*

Citation <i>(Insert # from above)</i>	Topic <i>(We expect to discuss these matters)</i>	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic <i>(We are closing the meeting to discuss this topic because)</i>
§ 3-305(b)(1)	Personnel-Dean Professional Development Debrief and Contractual Employee	Personnel matters are confidential.
§ 3-305(b)(2)	Student Housing	Preliminary discussions are confidential.

F. NEXT REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Garrett College Board of Trustees is May 19, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. in the College’s #100 Building, Board Room #102.

G. ADJOURNMENT: The Board did not reconvene an Open Session and adjourned the Executive Session at 7:17 p.m. on a motion by Vice-Chair Myers, seconded by Trustee Heckman (Vote=6-0-0).

Summary of the April 21, 2026 Board Executive/Closed Session Meeting: A closed session of the Garrett College Board of Trustees was held on Tuesday, April 21, 2026 in the Board Room #102 in the GIEC #100 Building at Garrett College. The purpose of this session was to discuss confidential matters regarding a debrief of the recent Dean Professional Development Activity and Student Housing.

Each Board member voted to close the session pursuant to the Maryland State General Provisions Article, Title 3-Open Meetings Act. Most board members were present for this closed session, except for Trustee Ruddell, who had another meeting to attend. College Administrative Staff Members present included: President Richard Midcap and Dean Robert “JR” Kerns (see the “roll call” section of the minutes for additional details).

Respectfully submitted by:

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

Mr. Jason Rush
Chair
Garrett College Board of Trustees

***EXECUTIVE SESSION - PRESIDING OFFICER’S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING (“CLOSING STATEMENT- EXCLUSIONARY BASIS FOR CLOSING A MEETING”) UNDER THE MARYLAND OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General Provisions Article § 3-305):** The Board of Trustees of Garrett College adheres to the Open Meetings Act of the State of Maryland. The topics discussed and the exclusions permitting the Board to meet in closed session are stated below:

Date: April 21, 2026 **Time:** 6:55 p.m.

Location: Board Room #102 & Zoom **Motion By:** Vice-Chair Myers **Seconded By:** Trustee Heckman

Recorded Vote to Close the Meeting:

BOARD MEMBER	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
Mr. Jason Rush, Chair	√			
Ms. Karen Myers, Vice-Chair	√			
Ms. Madeleine Collins	√			
Mr. George C. Edwards	√			
Mr. Kurt Heckman	√			
Mr. Gary Ruddell	√			
Mr. Duane Yoder	√			

STATUTORY AUTHORITY TO CLOSE MEETING/SESSION (Check all provisions that apply): The meeting will only be closed under the provision or provisions checked below, all from the Maryland General Provisions Article § 3-305(b):

- (1) To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals;
- (2) To protect the privacy or reputation of individuals concerning a matter not related to public business;
- (3) To consider the acquisition of real property for a public purpose and matters directly related thereto;
- (4) To consider a matter that concerns the proposal for a business or industrial organization to locate, expand, or remain in the State;
- (5) To consider the investment of public funds.
- (6) To consider the marketing of public securities;
- (7) To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice;
- (8) To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation;
- (9) To conduct collective bargaining negotiations or consider matters that relate to the negotiations;
- (10) To discuss public security, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to the public or public security, including: (i) the deployment of fire and police services and staff; and (ii) the development and implementation of emergency plans;
- (11) To prepare, administer, or grade a scholastic, licensing, or qualifying examination;
- (12) To conduct or discuss an investigative proceeding on actual or possible criminal conduct.
- (13) To comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter;
- (14) Before a contract is awarded or bids are opened, to discuss a matter directly related to a negotiation strategy or the contents of a bid or proposal, if public discussion or disclosure would adversely impact the ability of the public body to participate in the competitive bidding or proposal process; and
- (15) To discuss cybersecurity, if the public body determines that public discussion would constitute a risk to” (i) “security assessments or deployments relating to information resources technology”; (ii) “network security information,” such as information that is related to passwords, personal ID numbers, access codes, encryption, security devices, or vulnerability assessments or that a governmental entity collects or maintains to prevent, detect, or investigate criminal activity; or (iii) “deployments or implementation of security personnel, critical infrastructure, or security devices.

For EACH provision checked above, the corresponding topic to be discussed and the public body’s reason for closing that topic in closed session, in as much detail as possible without disclosing the information that may be discussed behind closed doors:

Citation <i>(Insert # from above)</i>	Topic <i>(We expect to discuss these matters)</i>	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic <i>(We are closing the meeting to discuss this topic because)</i>
§ 3-305(b)(1)	Personnel-Dean Professional Development Debrief and Contractual Employee	Personnel matters are confidential
§ 3-305(b)(2)	Student Housing	Preliminary discussions are confidential.

This statement is made by: Mr. Jason Rush, Board Chair

Signature of Presiding Officer: On file in the Garrett College President’s Office