



(APPROVED )

**BERKSHIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
PITTSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS**

**MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
October 28, 2025**

**CONVENING**

A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Berkshire Community College was held on Tuesday, October 28, 2025 via Zoom. Chair Bowen called the meeting to order at 4:32PM and noted that meeting will be cablecast on Pittsfield Community Television. These meetings are allowed to be recorded under the MA Open Meeting Law and are not subject to editing. H. Seely conducted a roll call and noted that a quorum was present.

**PRESENT:** Chair Bowen; Trustees: Chacon, Cuyler, Hughes, Gonzales, Kiely, Myers, and Student Trustee Reyes, Rivers Murphy, Vrabel, Zaffanella

**ALSO PRESENT:** BCC President, Ellen Kennedy; Vice President for Students Affairs & Enrollment Management, Adam Klepetar; Vice President for Administration & Finance, Christina Wynn; Vice President of Academic Affairs, Laurie Gordy; Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Community Engagement, Jim Mancall; Assistant to the President, Heather Seely  
Additionally, J. Sykes, R. Wehry, M. Donnelly, C. Norcross, K. Breault, S. Greb, L. Dister, N. Mooney, R. Bucknell, L. Broderick-Bean  
Media: PCTV

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

*Upon a motion made by J. Cuyler and seconded by J. Hughes it was VOTED to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2025, meeting. Minutes approved via roll call with C. Zaffanella abstaining.*

*Upon a motion made by M. Myers and seconded by L. Kiley it was VOTED to approve the minutes of the August 26, 2025, meeting. Minutes approved via roll call with M. Rivers Murphy abstaining.*

**Finance and Audit Committee**

Jeremy Meisel of Whitum presented the FY25 audit results, confirming a clean, unmodified opinion with no findings, material weaknesses, or significant deficiencies—an improvement over prior year. The audit noted full cooperation from management, no suspected fraud, and compliance with independence standards. Financial highlights included a \$3.3M increase in total assets, driven by higher cash and capital assets, and a \$3.6M rise in unrestricted net position. Operating loss decreased, and net income improved from a \$1.5M loss to near break even, supported by a \$4M Massachusetts Educates grant. No significant policy changes occurred; new GASB standards were disclosure-based only.

*J. Hughes called for acceptance of the fiscal year 2025 audit. Upon a motion made by D. Gonzalez and seconded by M. Myers it was VOTED to accept the audit from Whitum, Approved via roll call.*

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Enrollment and Retention Update:

Adam Klepetar and Liza Dister reported significant enrollment growth, with Fall 2025 headcount at 2,085 students, a 13% increase over last year and the largest class in more than a decade. Credits rose to 16,868, and matriculated students increased 17% year-over-year, reflecting a 73% gain since Fall 2022. Early College partnerships expanded with Pittsfield High and plans for Taconic and Lee High. Retention improved

to 54.5%, up eight points from last year, supported by enhanced student services, open educational resources, AI engagement tools, and faculty-driven interventions. Free Community College programs and targeted recruitment strategies were cited as key drivers. Development of real-time enrollment and outcomes dashboards continues, alongside peer comparisons and initiatives to support student basic needs.

#### Essential Needs:

Meghan Donnelly reported on efforts to address non-academic barriers impacting student success, including food insecurity, housing, transportation, childcare, and healthcare. Over 200 students have received case management support, with 335+ meetings held. The Campus Cupboard served 350+ students with 855 visits, and demand is expected to rise due to potential SNAP benefit cuts. Key partnerships include the Food Bank of Western Mass, Stop & Shop (grant of \$7,500), Goodwill for food deliveries, and YMCA for summer camp vouchers. A new fridge/freezer now enables fresh food distribution, and collaborations with the Sheriff's Department Aquaponics Lab have doubled produce supply. Programming includes cultural cooking demonstrations, pet food drives, snack stations, and Thanksgiving baskets (projected 200–250 this year). Despite state funding dropping from, community support remains strong. These wraparound services are critical to retention and student well-being.

### **FOUNDATION BOARD REPORT**

L. Kiely noted the Foundation has had a strong year with total giving up, raising about \$1.5 million in FY25. We have had an increase in employee giving and the Foundation Board achieved 100% participation and hope that happens with the Board of Trustees as well. Nearly \$400,000 in scholarships was awarded to 196 students.

### **STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORT**

V. Reyes Pagan noted that SGA has all seats filled and that many will be at a leadership conference in few weeks. Students are encouraged to participate in the climate survey.

### **ALUMNI TRUSTEE REPORT**

M. Myers reported they alumni had a benefit bingo at Hot Plate recently that was successful and fun event for the staff, retirees and alumni in attendance.

### **SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Finance and Audit Committee:**

Christina Wynn presented the first quarter financial report, noting that revenue and expenses are on track, with fall revenue at approximately 54% and expenses aligning with expectations. Lifelong Learning revenue is outperforming projections due to strong workforce development programs, while expenses remain under pace.

Ms. Wynn then reviewed the FY26 budget, highlighting adjustments based on a 13% enrollment increase, modest operational cost increases, and recalibrated trust fund allocations. The student government trust was reduced from \$137,000 to \$107,644 due to fee assessment practices, with the gap covered by the General Purpose Trust to maintain student activity funding.

Motion made by J. Hughes that the Board of Trustees approve the FY26 budget in the amount of \$26,046,286, comprised of:

- State Appropriation: \$15,120,176
- General Purpose Trust: \$9,996,466
- Lifelong Learning Trust: \$632,000
- Designated Trust: \$190,000
- Student Government Trust: \$107,644

Motion seconded by M. Myers, with approval via roll call vote

**Amended motion on FY 26 Budget with Correction to State Appropriation Amount:** Christina Wynn reported an error in the state appropriation figure previously presented. The amount listed as **\$15,120,176** was incorrect; the correct amount is **\$16,145,101**, as reflected in the budget packet.

J. Hughes moved to amend the motion to reflect the corrected amount, motion was seconded by M. Myers and approved by the Board via roll call.

## Student Success Committee: No Report

### Governance and Nominating Executive:

D. Gonzalez noted that he will be meeting in November to review terms and build a pool of candidates to submit to Governor to fill vacant seats as members' terms end.

### Executive Committee:

J. Bowen noted that the focus of committee has been the presidential search. Academic Search has been selected from the thirteen firms that responded to the RFP. We will have first meeting with consultants from the firm this week to begin the work. Extended thanks to the committee for working through this process which was time consuming and everyone provided thoughtful feedback and guidance from the development of the RFP to the interviews with the firms and deliberations for selecting the firm. The committee is still working on membership of the presidential search committee, as there was a lot of interest from employees and students in serving and filling the limited seats available.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS

J. Singer presented personnel actions for the period of August 26, 2025, to October 27, 2025 (attached).

*Upon a motion, duly made by M. Myers, and seconded by L. Kiely, it was VOTED unanimously to approve the personnel actions as presented.*

## ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:54pm with motion by M. Myers and seconded by J. Cuyler and was VOTED unanimously.

DATE:

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Heather Seely

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Julia Bowen, Board Chair

*Berkshire Community College  
Personnel Actions for the Period:  
August 26, 2025 - October 27, 2025*

| NAME                                         | EFFECTIVE DATES    | TITLE                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <u>Appointment - AFSCME</u>                  |                    |                                                                      |
| Andrew Liebenow                              | October 20, 2025   | HVAC Mechanic II                                                     |
| <u>Appointment - MCCC Unit Professionals</u> |                    |                                                                      |
| Anna Mester                                  | September 17, 2025 | Coordinator of Instructional Design                                  |
| Meghan Bone                                  | September 25, 2025 | Special Programs Coordinator, Bridge to College                      |
| <u>Appointment - Non-unit Professionals</u>  |                    |                                                                      |
| Jane Singer                                  | October 12, 2025   | Executive Director of Human Resources                                |
| Josh Visser                                  | October 20, 2025   | Graphic Designer                                                     |
| <u>Change of Position</u>                    |                    |                                                                      |
| Erin Morris                                  | September 1, 2025  | Sr. Special Program Coordinator & Mentor - EEC Career Pathways Grant |
| Katherine Elliott                            | August 27, 2025    | Assistant Professor of Nursing                                       |
|                                              |                    |                                                                      |