

Athletic Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, April 9, 2026

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: Boyd Conference Room

Members Present: Mr. Ryan Bailey, Ms. Cathy Deeb, Dr. Darrin Martin, Mr. Tim McKenzie, Ms. Felicia Oakes, Mr. Anthony Tolley (Virtual), Mr. Brodderick Tucker.

Guests: Dr. Sudhakar Jamkhandi, Mr. Darrell Malamisura, Mr. Ansel Ponder

1. Call to Order

Mr. Anthony Tolley called the meeting or order at 4:01 PM in the Boyd Conference Room

2. Men's Golf

- Team currently ranked **#1 in the North/South region.**
- Upcoming competition in North Carolina.
- Strong expectation of a **championship outcome.**
- Likely to be the primary championship sport this year.

3. Fall 2026 Football Schedule

- Schedule officially released.
- Season opener:
 - **Away game at Tusculum**
 - Scheduled for late August (Thursday game).

4. Summer Retreat

- Scheduled for **July 7–8, 2026.**
- Purpose:
 - Review and implement **new policies and procedures**
 - Align coaches and staff
 - Include a **leadership development session** (speaker TBD)

Athletics Data & Reporting (Future Direction)

- Committee emphasized the need to:
 - Track **semester-over-semester** and **year-over-year** comparisons
 - Focus on:
 - GPA
 - Retention
 - Roster sizes
- Goal: Identify trends and improve decision-making across athletics.

Financial Aid & Scholarship Process

- New approach for awarding athletic aid:
 - **Financial aid (Pell Grants, WV grants, etc.) evaluated first**
 - Scholarships awarded based on remaining need
- Coaches:
 - Must stay within **set scholarship caps**
 - Use provided **financial calculators**
- Emphasis on:
 - Recruiting athletes who can meet financial obligations
 - Ensuring students understand **true costs before enrollment**
- Collaboration with financial aid staff to provide early, accurate balances.

Faculty Athletics Representative Update

- Role serves as a **bridge between athletics and academics.**
- Participation in external peer review (Bowie State) to assess:
 - Institutional control
 - Best practices
- Key takeaway:
 - Strong focus across institutions on **student-athlete degree completion**
- Plans to share:
 - Reports
 - Best practices
 - Recommendations with committee

Game Attendance & Marketing Strategies

Football Attendance Initiatives

- Increase **community engagement and marketing**:
 - Flyers and posters (print shop distribution)
 - Targeted **social media ads** (WV & VA counties)
 - Community appearances by coaches and staff

New Ideas Discussed

- Youth engagement strategies:
 - “Little League Day” / halftime youth games
 - Invite families to increase attendance
- Partnerships:
 - Youth organizations (via Dennis Thompson)
 - Local school bands performing at games
- Promotions:
 - Themed ticket packages (meal + drink)
 - Recognition of youth groups (e.g., Big Blue Club)

Ticketing & Revenue Opportunities

- Current ticketed sports:
 - Football
 - Men's & Women's Basketball
 - Volleyball
- Discussion on:
 - Expanding concessions (including mobile options)
 - Increasing attendance at baseball (noted improvement this season)
 - Potential for enhanced game-day experience (food, beverages)

Upcoming Events

- **Baseball home game:** April 14 vs. Bluefield University
 - Expected strong attendance
 - Possible food truck/vendor participation

Future Planning

- Development of:
 - **Football marketing plan** (to be presented at next meeting)
 - Standardized **recurring agenda structure** for meetings
- Continued emphasis on **ongoing discussion and follow-up tracking**

Action Items

- Develop leadership session for July retreat
- Implement financial aid-first scholarship process across teams
- Create and distribute marketing materials for athletics events
- Explore youth engagement programs (Little League partnerships)
- Prepare comparative data (semester/year trends) for future meetings
- Present football marketing plan at next meeting

Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at approximately 4:28 PM.

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