

## Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Thursday, April 16, 2026  
**Time:** 4:00 PM  
**Location:** Boyd Conference Room, Conley Hall

**Members Present:** Mr. Brent Benjamin, Ms. Cathy Deeb, Dr. Darrin Martin, Mr. Randy Price.

**Virtual:** Mr. Bill Cole, Mr. Charlie Cole

### 1. Call to Order:

Mr. Charlie Cole called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM in the Boyd Conference Room.

### 1. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order by **Chair Charlie Cole**.
- Members confirmed attendance and readiness to begin.

### 2. Updates (Dr. Darrin Martin)

#### a. President's Update

- General institutional updates were provided throughout discussion topics.

#### b. BOG Self-Evaluation

- A Board self-evaluation was completed.
- No formal action required; purpose is awareness and alignment with governance standards.
- Evaluation results will be distributed to all board members.
- Decision:
  - Board will **review results** individually.
  - Discussion to be placed on the **June meeting agenda (open session)**.
  - Minutes will reflect that the Board reviewed the assessment.

#### c. HLC Visit Review

- Initial feedback from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) visit was **positive**.
- No major concerns anticipated regarding shared governance or standards.
- Minor recommendations expected regarding **process improvements** (e.g., simplifying administrative procedures).
- Final report expected in **July 2026**.
- Next accreditation visit anticipated in **2032**, with goal of returning to **Open Pathway status**.

#### **d. University Housing / Expansion Plan**

- Proposed construction of a **~50-bed residence hall** (Building I)
- Focus: **First-Year Experience (FYE) housing model**, including:
  - Embedded student support services:
    - Counseling
    - Tutoring
    - Financial Aid
    - Registrar access
- Target population:
  - Primarily first-year students, especially those identified as **at-risk**.
- Goal:
  - Improve **student retention and success**.
- Funding strategy:
  - Combination of institutional funds and **external donations/matching funds**.

#### **e. Library Renovation Initiative**

- Planned renovation to improve student engagement and academic environment.
- Key improvements:
  - Updated lighting, flooring, and branding
  - Study spaces (individual and group)
  - Technology enhancements (including podcasting capability)
- Estimated cost: **~\$800,000**
- Funding sources:
  - Title III funds
  - Donations and foundation support

#### **Additional Discussion**

- Potential partnership with the **City of Bluefield** regarding the **Craft Memorial Library**:
  - Possible transfer of materials to campus
  - Opportunity for:
    - Additional funding (city and state)
    - Expanded community engagement
- Action:
  - Further evaluation and discussion with city representatives

#### **f. President's Advisory Council**

- Proposal to establish a **non-governing advisory council**:
  - Comprised of influential community members and potential donors
  - Meets **twice annually**
- Purpose:
  - Strengthen external relationships

- Support fundraising and institutional visibility
- Develop future board member pipeline
- Concept received positively.

#### **g. April BOG Agenda Review**

- Upcoming Board meeting agenda discussed.
- Key items include:
  - Budget approval
  - Committee updates
  - Alumni and student reports
- Additional notes:
  - **Annual Giving Day** scheduled for April 29, 2026
  - Goal to exceed prior fundraising (~\$66,000), with potential matching funds

#### **h. Budget**

- Budget Committee approved submission to HEPC.
- Full Board vote required at next meeting.
- Financial outlook improving, with increased funding activity and donor engagement.

#### **i. Recognition Items**

- Recommendation to recognize:
  - **Dr. Sarita Rhonemus** for extensive work on HLC preparation
  - **Mr. Luke Roberts (Student Representative)** for outstanding service and leadership.

#### **j. BOG Appointments**

- Concern expressed regarding delays from the Governor's Office on board appointments.
- Chair will continue follow-up with the Governor's Office.

### **4. Adjournment**

Mr. Bill Cole made a motion to go into Executive Session at 4:13 p.m.



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