

Board of Governors Meeting Minutes
Boyd Conference Room
Thursday, March 13, 2025, 4:00 PM

Members Present: Mr. Charlie Cole, Chair – virtual; Mr. Shannon Remines; Mr. Bill Cole – virtual; Mr. Randall Price; Mr. Ed Toman; Ms. Cathy Deeb; Mr. Anthony Tolley – virtual; Mrs. Rebecca Peterson – virtual; Mr. Tim McKenzie (Staff Representative); Mr. Luke Roberts (Student Representative)

Members Absent: Mr. Mike Hastings; Mr. Jack Sheffler (Faculty Representative)

Guests: President Darrin Martin; Mr. Joshua Grubb; Mr. Brent Benjamin; Dr. Sarita Rhonemus; Mr. Chuck McGonagle; Mr. Ryan Bailey; Mr. Ronald Shidemantle; Mr. Ansel Ponder; Ms. Jane Charnock – virtual; Dean Angela Lambert; Dean Bill Bennett; Dean Karen Grogan; Ms. Sherri Williams; Dr. Tabitha Young; Dr. Darrel Malamisura; Ms. Julie Orr; Dr. T. Joel Vance; Dr. Terene Stiltner; Dr. Sudhakar Jamkhandi; Dr. Amanda Matoushek; Dr. Albertus Barnes – virtual; Ms. Jennifer Johnson; Dr. David McMillan - virtual; Mr. Davon Morgan – virtual; Mr. Cary Harwood; Ms. Rita LaBarre; Ms. Anna Roten; Ms. Melissa Roten; Ms. Rachel Jackson;

1. Call to Order and Chair Remarks

Vice-Chair Remines called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., and welcomed attendees. He highlighted recent positive developments at Bluefield State University, including achievements in athletics, mining engineering, and faculty accomplishments.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. No changes or comments were noted. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Price and seconded by Mr. McKenzie. The motion carried unanimously.

3. President's Report – Dr. Martin

- Dr. Martin attended the State of the State address and held discussions with legislators about Bluefield State's role in academics and workforce preparation.
- Continued collaboration with the city on economic, business and living space development projects.
- Chief of Staff Josh Grubb introduced.
- The search for a Provost has concluded, with final recommendations pending.
- The search for an Athletic Director continues, with 18 applicants. On-campus interviews of the finalists will soon occur and a selection of an Athletic Director is expected to be completed this Spring.
- The Foundation is hiring a Director of Advancement to increase fundraising efforts.
- HLC Focused Visit scheduled for March 24-25; Board members encouraged to complete assessments. A report from BSU to the HLC in anticipation of this Focused Visit was submitted by Interim Provost Rhonemus.
- The College of Health Sciences has moved to its new facility, with an open house scheduled for March 26.
- A 65,000 sq. ft. facility in Princeton has been donated to Bluefield State, with plans for athletic and academic use.

- Mr. Marvin Woody, of Conn-Weld Industries, LLC, will be the commencement speaker for the May 17 graduation at Brushfork Armory.

4. Standing Reports

Academic Update – Dr. Rhonemus

- A Notice of Intent proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Multicategorical Special Education with Autism was unanimously approved for submission to the Higher Education Policy Commission upon Motion by Bill Cole, with a Second from Chair Cole.
- Discussion on HLC Focused Visit planning and board participation.

Finance and Budget – Ms. Higgins-Atwell (Reported by Dr. Martin)

- Budget is ahead of last year's pace, with ongoing efforts to collect outstanding student balances.
- Continued adjustments may be necessary to balance the budget.

Safety and Security – EVP Benjamin

- Recent dormitory incident handled by law enforcement.
- New security company in place; feedback requested from staff.
- Officer Tony Palmer to increase campus presence and visibility.

Enrollment Update – Mr. Shidemantle

- Current enrollment is 1,242 students, a 7.16% increase from last year.
- Readmission numbers are lower than expected; strategies are in place to improve engagement.
- New targeted recruitment efforts include personalized outreach and digital marketing.
- A new admissions counselor, Andrew Vance, has joined the team.
- Open House scheduled for March 29.

Faculty Representative – Dr. Sheffler (Absent)

Staff Representative – Mr. McKenzie

- No major concerns; security concerns previously raised have been addressed.

Student Representative – Mr. Roberts

- Working on official class ring design and a Big Blue statue for campus.
- Student concerns about unused classroom spaces in Dickason Hall raised for review.

Chancellor's Report – Rev. Moore (Absent)

Foundation Report – Dr. Guyton (Reported by Dr. Martin)

- Giving Day scheduled for April 9, with coordinated social media and email outreach.

5. New Business

Proposed Policies for 30-Day Review

- After consideration and discussion, a motion was made by Bill Cole, seconded by Randall Price, to post the following proposed new/revised policy for a 30-day public policy period, and to be further considered at the Board's April 24, 2025 Meeting:
 - Post-Tenure Policy
 - Attendance Policy
 - Immunization Policy
 - Online College Policy
 - Alcoholic Beverages on Campus Policy
- The Motion was approved unanimously.

6. Announcements

- Higher Learning Commission Focus Visit: March 24-25.
- Board members encouraged to complete assessments and participate in scheduled meetings.

7. Public Comments

Rita LaBarre

- Requested full-time employment for long-term housekeeping staff.

Dr. Amanda Matoushek

- Spoke in support of Rita LaBarre and staff, expressing concerns about the transition to a new housekeeping contractor.

Contractor Update – EVP Benjamin

- New housekeeping contractor, Top Notch, has expressed intent to retain existing staff.
- Further meetings are scheduled to discuss employment conditions.

8. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made and carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 5:13 PM.