

**West Liberty University
Board of Governors**

**Minutes
April 16, 2025**

Attendance: David McKinley, Katie Kacmarik, Erikka Storch, Mike Baker, Rich Lucas, Lou Karas, Robert Kreisberg, Will Turani, Jenna Maguire, Tom Cervone, Stephanie Shaw, Jamie Evick

Unable to Attend: None

Administration/Faculty/Staff/Guests: Tim Borchers, Cyndi Galloway, Jacob Manning, Lori Hudson, Katie Cooper, Cathy Monteroso, Brad Forshey, Ann Saubier, Cecilia Konchar Farr, Sherri Theaker, Betsy Delk

I. Call to Order/Roll Call/Quorum and Mission Statement

David McKinley called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and a quorum was established.

II. Introductions

None.

III. Public Comment

None.

IV. Agenda Order (Board may move to change order of consideration)

V. Approval of Minutes*

A. Minutes of the Full Board February 12, 2025*

On motion by Katie Kacmarik and seconded by Erikka Storch, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the minutes of the full Board of February 12, 2025.

VI. President's Report

Dr. Borchers opened the meeting with a brief President's Update, focusing on current enrollment challenges. He addressed the ongoing "enrollment cliff," noting that West Liberty University is not alone in the nationwide trend of declining college-going rates, particularly in West Virginia, where the rate is currently below 50%. Efforts are underway to attract more students, including the development of a strategic framework aimed at targeted student recruitment. Digital marketing efforts have been broad so far, but next year's approach will be more focused and data-driven.

A full website redesign is in progress, with the goal of making it more user-friendly for prospective students and aligning it with recruitment needs. New one-page program landing pages have begun rolling out, especially for online programs, featuring consistent content, career outlooks, and "Apply Now" buttons to improve market reach. The university is exploring the development of new academic programs, including a Construction Management degree aimed at meeting local business needs. Additionally, the MBA program has launched three new concentrations.

Market development efforts include the upcoming promotion of online Criminal Justice and Psychology programs, joining the already-promoted online Business program. Work is ongoing to streamline the transfer process with WVNCC, and the university will begin offering a metro rate to all students from Ohio and Pennsylvania. Dr. Borchers also emphasized the institution's pursuit of becoming an official Anchor Institution, which would recognize WLU as a vital community asset. He outlined the four criteria required for this designation and discussed ongoing initiatives supporting this goal.

VII. Board Reports

A. Academic Affairs (Monteroso)

Cathy Monteroso announced that the Physician Assistant program's accreditation has been extended through 2035. Additionally, the Nursing program has been awarded a grant through West Virginia's Nursing Workforce Expansion Program. The Board will vote today on submitting the five-year program review to the HEPC. A full document detailing the program review has been shared with the board, along with a summary document for their review. Faculty have begun training on the new Canvas LMS, with a full professional development day scheduled for both faculty and staff. This system will support micro-credential delivery, online programming, and expanded dual enrollment offerings, which are set to grow, particularly in Brooke County.

B. Student Affairs/Enrollment (Cooper)

Katie shared projections for Fall enrollment. Currently, 196 students are registered for orientation, with 40 athletes yet to register. Housing numbers are slightly down, potentially due to changes in the process. Marketing strategies are being adjusted to better target specific populations, and in July, the university will begin working with Student Search to refine its outreach efforts. Recruitment strategies are now focused on online, transfer, and graduate students.

Katie also shared updates from the Student Affairs division. The BetterMynd platform has been well-utilized, with 196 mental health sessions completed and 255 student registrations, and students rating it 10/10. The CIRT Committee has been restructured for efficiency. Spring Week is set for next week and will conclude with the Spring Fling. A new initiative, "Learning Communities," will launch next year as part of the strategic plan, with high student interest already reported—particularly in the "Sustainability and the Environment" theme. Katie noted that positive enrollment results and application growth are a win for our vendors.

C. Physical Plant/IT (Rodella)

Joe shared that the university's Master Plan is being updated, and a Town Hall is scheduled to review progress. Major summer construction includes HVAC upgrades and an accelerated Door Project starting in May. An IT assessment is underway to evaluate data protection practices, with positive results anticipated. Joe also mentioned key integration efforts, including the rollout of Canvas LMS, the Student Success retention platform, and the Event Manager system for centralized scheduling. Training on Microsoft Co-Pilot is also being considered.

D. Athletics (Forshey)

Brad Forshey noted that detailed updates are available in his board report and shared a touching video of student Finley Woodward's surprise reunion with his mother following a basketball game. The video exploded on social media, racking up countless views and shares.

E. Fiscal Affairs (Hudson)

Lori reviewed the current budget status. While graduate and Health & Medical enrollments are expected to be down, summer enrollment efforts are strong. Spending is being closely monitored. Lori reviewed FY26 projected revenues, noting that last year's approved revenue budget was \$42.6M. She also presented the proposed Tuition and Fee Packet for FY26, which includes undergraduate and graduate tuition increases, new course fees, and an online undergraduate tuition rate. A proposed enhancement fee for undergraduate students taking graduate-level courses is included to preserve graduate tuition rates. An entertainment fee increase and a new laundry fee (in response to student requests) are also proposed.

F. Foundation (Delk)

Betsy provided a WLU Foundation update, sharing that the Day of Giving (DOG) was the most successful to date, exceeding the \$300,000 goal. Top participation areas included Wrestling, Biology, and Theater in the “Number of Donors” category and Biology, Theater, and PA Program in the “Amount Raised” category. A new scholarship is being established by Todd and Joyce Kemple for students pursuing financial planning in the College of Business, with plans to endow the fund permanently within the year.

G. Faculty Representative (Kreisberg)

Robert highlighted recent faculty achievements, all available in the Team Account. He raised concerns about shrinking indirect grant funds, which are vital to supporting students and lab resources. Some current grants may be at risk.

H. SGA Representative (Maguire)

Jenna reported on upcoming student events, including Greek Week (ending with the Spring Fling), and Spring Week, which will feature multiple student-focused activities. A campus hike on the new trail system is scheduled for April 23. Jenna also announced the newly elected SGA President, Luke Sweat. Luke will join the June Board of Governors meeting. Eight senate seats remain open for the fall, and student nominations for Faculty and Staff of the Year are underway

I. Staff Representative (Karas)

Lou shared that annual elections will be held next Tuesday, including selection of group representatives, the Staff Council Chair, and the BOG staff representative (a two-year term). The Employee Engagement Committee hosted a well-received appreciation week in March. The Employees of the Month were announced: Matt Delfine for February and Bree Blum for March.

VIII. Board Items for Approval*

A. FY26 High-Level Budget

On motion by Rich Lucas and seconded by Mike Baker, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the FY26 High-Level Budget as presented.

B. FY26 Tuition & Fees Packet

On motion by Mike Baker and seconded by Will Turani, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the FY26 Tuition & Fees Packet as presented.

C. Program Review Submission to WVHEPC

On motion by Will Turani and seconded by Erikka Storch, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve submission of the 5-Year Program Review to WV Higher Education Policy Commission as presented.

IX. Discussion Items

A. BOG Reappointments-McKinley, Cervone, Shaw

All three members are interested in reappointment to the board and a request will be send to the Governor.

B. HB 3279 – Voting rights for Faculty, Staff, and Student Representatives

Dr. Borchers shared that according to the bill, faculty, staff, and student representatives would no longer be eligible for voting. Discussions will take place about how we’ll handle executive sessions and subcommittees. Our bylaws and policies will need revised. This applied to all state schools. Some discussion took place about the disappointment of the passing of this bill. **NOTE: HB 3279 had passed both Houses of the Legislature as of April 12, 2025, but at the time of this meeting, was awaiting the Governor’s signature. On April 30, 2025, the Bill was signed by the Governor and made**

effective April 12, 2025. Thus, at the time of this meeting, the faculty, staff, and student representatives attended as advisory, non-voting members.

C. Discussion of President’s evaluation, compensation, and renewal of contract (possible executive session)

Rich Lucas gave a brief overview of the Presidential Evaluation and noted that it was overwhelmingly positive. WVHEPC will be notified of the results.

Pursuant to WV Code § 6-9A-4(b)(2), at 5:35 PM, a motion to retire to executive session was made by Rich Lucas to consider a matter involving personnel. The motion was seconded by Katie Kacmarik; motion passed unanimously.

A motion to rise from executive session at 5:58 PM was made by Rich Lucas and seconded by Mike Baker; motion passed unanimously.

The board shared that they would like to offer Dr. Borchers a 5-year contract extension with no immediate pay increase. A retention and performance bonus is to be paid at the final year of the contract—final details will be discussed between the board Chair McKinley and Dr. Borchers.

President Borchers’ Contract Renewal

Rich Lucas requests a motion to approve the 5-year contract extension for Dr. Borchers as discussed. Robert Kreisberg seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Information Gathering:

Dr. Borchers shared that a Draft BOG Calendar for 2025-2026 has been added to the BOG Team for review. He is also considering a campus tour or something along those lines instead of a full orientation before the opening BOG meeting in the fall.

XI. Adjournment

On motion by Robert Kreisberg & seconded by Mike Baker, the meeting adjourned at 6:03 p.m.

David McKinley _____
Chair

Tom Cervone _____
Secretary

Minutes submitted by: Cyndi Galloway