

**West Liberty University
Board of Governors**

**Finance Committee
Minutes
April 3, 2025**

Attendance: Robert Kreisberg, Rich Lucas, Mike Baker

Unable to Attend: Tom Cervone, Erikka Storch, David McKinley

Administration/Faculty/Staff/Guests: Tim Borchers, Cyndi Galloway, Lori Hudson, Joe Rodella, Betsy Delk, Chris McPherson

**1. Meeting called to order at 9:00 AM
A quorum was not established.**

2. Budget Status Report Through 3/31/25-Lori Hudson

Lori Hudson provided an update on the university's financial position nine months into the fiscal year. While revenues are closely aligned with projections, undergraduate and graduate enrollment numbers continue to trend downward, creating a tight budget environment. Fall enrollment was slightly higher than projected, but summer billing has not yet occurred and is currently estimated based on previous year figures.

Undergraduate tuition is currently exceeding projections, while graduate tuition is underperforming, particularly in the MBA and MAED programs. Housing and meal revenue has also fallen below expectations due to changes in residence hall configurations. Overall, total tuition, room, and board revenue is projected to fall short of the original budget.

The university has received a significant portion of its state appropriation and expects to receive the remainder as scheduled. Lori also noted that tuition waivers—especially for athletes and graduate assistants—are over budget and will be closely monitored moving forward. Despite the shortfalls, she remains confident the university will remain within budget for FY25.

Tim Borchers shared that digital marketing efforts have been launched to support summer enrollment. He also noted that the PA program brought in less revenue than anticipated due to a higher number of in-state students.

3. FY26 Tuition & Fees Packet

Lori outlined proposed tuition and fee increases for the upcoming fiscal year. Most programs will see modest increases, with slightly higher rates for non-resident students. She explained the program review process and noted that all academic programs are expected to contribute a standard portion toward the university's operational costs. Some programs will have additional course fees applied as a result of this analysis.

Colleges and departments such as the College of Sciences, Business, Dental Hygiene, Education and Human Performance, Speech Pathology, Music, and Theater are among those slated for increases. Comparisons were made to similar institutions to ensure proposed rates are in line with peers. A specific example included aligning aviation program rates with those at Marshall University.

The fully online undergraduate rate for select programs will be set per credit hour, and the university is also preparing to offer micro-credentials at the same per-credit rate. A new enhancement fee is proposed for undergraduate students who enroll in graduate-level coursework, applicable per graduate credit hour.

Graduate tuition is proposed to increase slightly for most programs, with certain non-resident and international categories seeing a slightly higher increase. A new metro rate is proposed for the Speech Pathology master's program, which will operate under a cohort billing model. Approval is also being sought for a new Physician Assistant cohort beginning in June 2026, with a significant increase proposed for resident tuition.

Proposed increases include modest adjustments to on-campus housing, summer housing, cable/internet services, and a larger increase for leased off-campus facilities. Meal plan rates are also set to increase. A new laundry fee is being considered in response to student feedback and requests.

The committee discussed the leased housing facilities, which remain highly utilized despite some units being uninhabitable. The lease terms do not adjust for unused space, which impacts cost-effectiveness.

Lori confirmed that all fees have been reviewed and noted several proposed new fees, including those related to lab supplies and clinical programs. Additional increases are proposed for items such as dental kits, graduation fees, software licenses, and private music lessons.

New service-related fees are proposed to recover banking and administrative costs, including check reissuance and wire transfer requests. A slight increase is also proposed for campus ID cards. Athletics is requesting incremental increases for single-game and season ticket prices for select sports. Additional costs are proposed for extended stay housing during summer camps and conferences, along with a minor board rate adjustment. The tennis court rental fee will be removed entirely.

4. FY26 Budget—Revenue Estimate

Lori reported that the overall revenue budget is projected to be lower than last year's due to enrollment declines. She reviewed key contributors to this shortfall. Tim noted that new online programs in Criminal Justice and Psychology are being launched and are expected to appeal to students from institutions like WVNCC.

A partial hiring freeze is in place, and staffing is being evaluated continuously. Contribution margin analysis has guided strategic decisions, including identifying areas where fees could be added or adjusted. The MLS program is under review for potential restructuring or phase-out.

Efforts to grow enrollment include program expansion, operational efficiency, and ongoing software and service evaluations.

5. WLU Foundation Report-Betsy Delk

Betsy Delk shared that the university raised a substantial amount during the Day of Giving campaign, with strong participation from departments across campus.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 AM.

Minutes submitted by: Cyndi Galloway