

**West Liberty University  
Board of Governors**

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**Minutes  
February 11, 2026**

Attendance: David McKinley, Katie Kacmarik, Will Turani, Mike Baker, Luke Sweat, Robert Kreisberg, Lou Karas, Rich Lucas, Tom Cervone, Stephanie Shaw

Unable to Attend: Erikka Storch, Jamie Evick

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

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

David McKinley called the meeting to order at 4:01 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 December 17, 2025\***

1. 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 minutes of the full Board of December 17, 2025.

**VI. President's Report**

President Borchers recognized the facilities team for their effective snow removal efforts. He reported that Katie Cooper is leading the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT), which is conducting tabletop exercises and preparedness planning. Key performance indicators remain on track, with the University meeting revenue and expense projections. Admissions activity across applications, acceptances, housing, and orientation was also reviewed.

President Borchers and Betsy Delk recently met with representatives from Senators Capito's and Justice's offices in Washington, DC, resulting in \$460,000 in congressionally directed funding for police department updates. Luke Sweat is coordinating WLU Day at the Capitol, scheduled for February 26 (date to be confirmed). A Nonprofit Opportunities Fair will be held March 4 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the library, with approximately 20 nonprofit organizations participating. Marketing efforts continue to expand through paid media and social platforms to highlight student work and achievements.

**VII. Board Reports**

**A. Academic Affairs (Monteroso)**

- VIII.** Cathy Monteroso highlighted efforts to align experiential learning with career readiness through experiential major maps. She noted the opening of the biomedical research lab, recognized as one of the best in the state. A book signing featuring Dr. Zack Graham was held on February 4 with strong student engagement. The Academic Program Review schedule was reviewed,

including focused reviews submitted in December and upcoming five-year program reviews to be presented at the April Board meeting.

**A. Student Affairs/Enrollment (Cooper)**

Katie Cooper reported that Spring 2026 enrollment is meeting projections. Fall 2026 undergraduate applications total 1,259, slightly below last year but consistent with national trends, while acceptances increased to 1,026. Engagement with local feeder schools and high school visits remains strong. Accepted Students Day will be held in March, followed by orientation sign-ups. Marketing efforts with EAB continue, reaching more than 34,000 students through digital and print communications. Outreach initiatives are underway to re-engage former dual-enrolled students who did not enroll following high school.

**B. Fiscal Affairs (Hudson)**

Lori Hudson reviewed the budget status through January 23. Undergraduate tuition and fee revenue exceeds projections for Fall 2025 and Spring 2026, while graduate revenue remains on target. Expenses continue to fall within acceptable ranges, and 75% of the state appropriation has been received. Deferred maintenance projects are progressing well, including roofing, HVAC, and window replacements, with additional funds forthcoming. Recent milestones include the ribbon cutting for the new Arnett Hall lab, installation of an aviation simulator, and completion of the Blatnik Hall flooring project. A campus-wide Budget Forum has been established to promote transparency and shared understanding of University finances.

**C. Athletics (Forshey)**

Brad Forshey reported strong academic and competitive success across athletics. Men's Basketball is ranked seventh, and Men's Wrestling won the MEC Championship. The department achieved its 15th consecutive semester with a cumulative GPA above 3.0, with numerous academic honors awarded to student-athletes. The University will host its first NCAA regional women's wrestling tournament, and spring sports are now underway.

**D. Foundation (Delk)**

Betsy Delk shared an update on Foundation revenue and recent significant gifts supporting scholarships and academic resources. The 10th annual Topper Day of Giving will be held March 25, with The Health Plan serving as title sponsor. Scholarship luncheons will begin later this month, and ongoing alumni and donor engagement continues across multiple states.

**E. Faculty Representative (Kreisberg)**

Robert Kreisberg shared that the College of Sciences lab opening was held with strong attendance from campus and community partners. Faculty participation in WV INBRE grants remains strong, with WLU recognized as a leading participant among smaller institutions.

**F. SGA Representative (Sweat)**

Luke Sweat reported that SGA approved a consolidated governance handbook to streamline operations. Student organization funding packets have been approved, and plans are underway for WLU Day at the Capitol and Spring Fling on the Quad. Additional student advocacy travel to Washington, DC is being planned for later this spring.

**G. Staff Representative (Karas)**

Lou Karas reported that Melissa Carroll continues to serve as the University's representative to the West Virginia Council, monitoring legislation and issues that may affect state employees. She noted discussions around restoring student voting rights on the Board of Governors, while voting rights for faculty and staff have not been a significant focus.

The University Spring Welcome was held on January 8. Staff Council Chair Eric Burkle presented Staff Council awards, including the True Topper Award to Merilee Madera, the

Customer Service Award to Andrew Lewis, and the Team Award to the Student Success Center.

**IX. Board Items for Approval\***

**A. Focused Program Review Recommendations**

Dr. Borchers reminded the Board that at the October meeting, a process was approved to conduct focused reviews of certain academic programs based on established criteria, including program size, recent enrollment declines, and contribution margin. Programs meeting these criteria were identified, and department chairs and deans submitted reports that were due in December. These reports were reviewed by the Program Review Task Force, which developed recommendations and forwarded them to Dr. Borchers. Based on that work, Dr. Borchers presented recommendations to the full Board for consideration.

It was emphasized that the recommendations pertain to programs, not individual faculty members. Cathy Monteroso and Tim Borchers have met with applicable deans and chairs to review the recommendations. Approximately 12–14 students would be affected across all proposed changes, and the University will work directly with each student to support degree completion.

**Program Recommendations:**

**Theatre** – Restructure and revise

**Communications** – Restructure and revise

**Community Education** – Phase out or suspend (7 students currently enrolled)

**Music** – Restructure and revise

**Social Sciences** (standalone majors)

- **Social Science Education** – Continue with monitoring
- **History** – Continue with monitoring
- **Political Science** – Continue with monitoring
- **Sociology** – Phase out or suspend (no students or faculty assigned)
- **Geography and Planning** – Phase out or suspend, potential of a minor

**Data Science** – Phase out or suspend (4 students enrolled; teach-out will be provided)

**MS in Exercise Psychology** – Restructure and revise

**MBA** – Restructure and revise; in-person option to be discontinued

**MS in Speech-Language Pathology** – Continue with monitoring

Programs recommended for restructuring and revision will remain under ongoing monitoring, with continued evaluation of outcomes and progress.

Board discussion included potential cost savings and possible position impacts. Robert noted the strong workforce demand for Data Science and asked whether enhanced marketing could increase enrollment. Katie shared that there are currently three applicants, who will be offered alternative academic pathways such as Business with a Data Analytics focus.

Robert asked about the timing of faculty discussions and transparency. Dr. Borchers and Dr. Monteroso confirmed that deans and chairs have been engaged and that faculty conversations will occur if the recommendations are approved. Dr. Borchers reviewed the multiple communications shared throughout the process, and Cathy stated she does not expect faculty to be surprised by the recommendations. Additional discussion focused on the demand for Data Science and the definition of “restructure and revise.” It was noted that approaches will vary by program, with the goal of strengthening viable offerings.

**Action: On motion by Rich Lucas and seconded by Katie Kacmarik, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the Focused Program Review Recommendations as presented.**

**X. Executive Session**

Pursuant to WV Code § 6-9A-4 (b)(10), at 5:21PM, a request for a motion to retire to executive session was made by David McKinley. The motion was made by Mike Baker and seconded by Katie Kacmarik; motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session began at 5:21PM

A motion to rise from executive session at 5:24PM was made by Katie Kacmarik and seconded by Mike baker; motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session ended at 5:24PM with no action taken.

**Cont. Board Items for Approval\***

**B. Spring 2026 Commencement Speaker & Honorary Degree**

Pursuant to WLU Procedure 238: Guidelines for Honorary Degrees and Recognition, the Honorary Degrees and Recognition Committee and the President of the University recommend that the West Liberty University Board of Governors authorizes the conferral of an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters (DHL) degree from West Liberty University at the May or December 2026 commencement to Stephanie Shaw and approve the resolution:

**Action:** On motion by Rich Lucas and seconded by Will Turani, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the preceding resolution and authorize the President of the University to confer the Doctor of Humane Letters degree to Stephanie Shaw at its May or December 2026 Commencement ceremony as discussed.

**XI. Discussion Items:**

• **BOG Self-Assessment**

- Will Turani discussed some comments and recommendations that were made to change the assessment. Some questions were redundant. A timeline was discussed to release the survey to the full board for completion if the board is OK with the recommended changes. The survey is planned to go out electronically via SurveyMonkey in the next couple of weeks and results will be reviewed at the next Governance Sub-Committee meeting and then reviewed with the full board at the April meeting.

The board agrees to advance the final survey for completion.

• **2026-2027 BOG Meeting Schedule**

- David shared that he would like to set a BOG retreat date soon so that members can plan to attend. No action is required today. He'd like to hold a retreat in August to begin the year. This will give the board an opportunity to think deeper and express insights. An estimated date would be August 12<sup>th</sup> and we'll plan for 1:00-4:00 prior to the regularly scheduled board meeting.

Items the Board of Governors would like to include on the upcoming retreat agenda were discussed. David emphasized the importance of developing a clearer understanding of what the University should look like over the next three to five years, noting the need to consider broader strategic decisions beyond cost-cutting measures. He also highlighted the value of shaping long-term strategy around community outreach.

Dr. Borchers suggested including a facilities-focused discussion at the retreat. He noted that significant bond payments will be coming due soon and emphasized the need to establish a process for prioritizing how funds will be allocated once bond resources become available. He also proposed providing the Board with a campus tour to highlight current facility needs.

Mike Baker suggested inviting department chairs to participate as special guests in future Board engagements to provide updates on activities and strategic direction within their areas. With

approximately 22 department chairs across campus, he expressed interest in gaining deeper insight into departmental goals and faculty initiatives.

Robert raised questions around marketing strategy, specifically how the University determines which academic programs to promote on platforms such as Facebook. He also suggested that Board members arrive approximately 30 minutes early to certain meetings to allow for informal discussions with selected department chairs. Chairs could be notified in advance of the topics or information the Board would like to hear about regarding their programs.

Lou recommended including a focus on student life, noting that it would be beneficial for the Board to hear more about the work of student life staff, including professionals such as Kate Billings and Sarah Fonner, and the level of institutional support required for their efforts.

Brad suggested that the Board hear from Lisa Witzberger from Counseling Services to better understand mental health support and related student needs.

Stephanie proposed adding a discussion on artificial intelligence and automation, particularly regarding how these tools can improve productivity. Katie agreed, adding that employment implications should be part of the discussion, especially given the significant time devoted to state and federal reporting requirements.

**XII. Adjournment**

On motion by Mike Baker & seconded by Katie Kacmarik, the meeting adjourned at 5:43PM

David McKinley \_\_\_\_\_ Tom Cervone \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair Secretary

Minutes submitted by: Cyndi Galloway