

**West Liberty University
Board of Governors**

**Minutes
April 15, 2026**

Attendance: Rich Lucas, Will Turani, Mike Baker, Luke Sweat, Katie Kacmarik, Lou Karas, Robert Kreisberg, Erikka Storch, Tom Cervone

Unable to Attend: None

Administration/Faculty/Staff/Guests: Neil Szmunsky, Tim Borchers, Cyndi Galloway, Brad Forshey, Jacob Manning, Cathy Monteroso, Katie Cooper, Ann Saurbier, Sherri Theaker, Joe Horzempa

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

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

II. Introductions: None.

III. Public Comment: Neil Szuminsky, MLS Program Director, addressed the Board regarding the proposed closure of the Medical Laboratory Science (MLS) program. He emphasized the critical role MLS graduates play in healthcare and noted ongoing statewide and national shortages, including significant hiring incentives offered by healthcare organizations. He shared concerns about the impact the program's closure may have on local hospitals that rely on WLU graduates and noted current student enrollment in the program. Mr. Szuminsky also referenced potential cost-saving measures and external funding opportunities that could support the program.

IV. Approval of Minutes*

Minutes of the Full Board – February 11, 2026

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 minutes of February 11, 2026.

V. President's Report

President Borchers reported that nursing students and Chair Jessica Davis recently traveled to Washington, D.C., and nine students attended a psychology conference in New Orleans. The University also celebrated its first doctoral graduate successfully defending her dissertation. Key performance indicators remain stable, with revenue on target and expenses generally within projections, though utilities and contracts are slightly elevated. Admissions and housing numbers are trending higher than the previous year. The University hosted the Intermediate Court of Appeals on campus with strong attendance and positive coverage. Additionally, three congressionally directed funding requests totaling approximately \$4 million have been submitted. An aviation ribbon cutting is scheduled for April 24. A strategic planning update will be shared in June. Dr. Moonjung Kung will be on sabbatical in the fall to research the integration of artificial intelligence into the graphic design curriculum.

VI. Board Reports

A. Academic Affairs (Monteroso)

Cathy Monteroso reported that the Mental Health Counseling program has received HLC approval and will launch in Fall 2026. A Bachelor of Applied Sciences program will also begin in the fall, along with a construction management program currently under Faculty Senate review before submission to HEPC. The Physician Assistant program has expanded by seven students.

Five-year program reviews and monitoring reviews have been completed. Recommendations from the Program Review Task Force and the President are detailed in the Board packets.

5-Year Recommendations:

MA Art Therapy Counseling—Continue
BS Chemistry—Revise/Restructure
BS Creative Art Therapy—Continue
BA Elementary Education—Continue
BS Psychology—Continue
BA Secondary Education--Continue

Monitoring Recommendations:

AS/BS Dental Hygiene—Continue
BA English—Revise/Restructure
BS Nursing—Monitoring
BS Pre-Professional SPA—Monitoring
BA Visual Communication—Continue

Digital badge graphics for micro-credentials have been developed. Three students are presenting research at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research. Cathy also introduced Joe Horzempa as Interim Dean of the College of Sciences.

B. Student Affairs/Enrollment (Cooper)

Katie Cooper reported total enrollment of 1,002 students, including 826 continuing and 176 new students. Fall 2026 enrollment and housing trends are positive. Recruitment efforts in local feeder schools are showing improvement. EAB marketing efforts have reached over 50,000 prospective students. Some members of the Critical Incident Response Team will attend a state symposium, and student engagement activities for Spring Week are underway.

C. Fiscal Affairs (Hudson)

Lori Hudson reviewed the budget through the end of March, noting operations remain within acceptable ranges despite a tight budget. The proposed FY27 Tuition and Fee schedule includes modest increases to housing, online programs, and select fees. The proposed FY27 revenue budget is approximately \$46 million, reflecting increased operational costs. Deferred maintenance updates include state funding for roof replacements, paving, and fire system improvements.

D. Athletics (Forshey)

Brad Forshey provided athletics updates, including an impact story involving staff member, Chad Salisbury, participating in a kidney donation. Additional updates were shared through distributed materials.

E. Foundation (Delk)

Foundation revenue for FY26 is nearing \$1.9 million. The Topper Day of Giving raised over \$364,000, marking the most successful year to date. Recent gifts have supported scholarships, including the Megan Dart Memorial Volleyball Scholarship. Alumni engagement efforts continue, with upcoming events including the Larry Lowe Golf Scramble and Homecoming.

F. Faculty Representative (Kreisberg)

Robert Kreisberg highlighted faculty and student research achievements and participation in academic conferences. He raised concerns regarding scholarship credit hour requirements and early graduation trends. Further discussion on this topic will occur at a future meeting.

G. SGA Representative (Sweat)

Luke Sweat reported that he and Ashley Law have been reelected as SGA President and Vice President. Spring student programming is underway, including Spring Fling, Greek Week, and Spring Week. He also shared student concerns related to housing contracts, registration issues, graduation fees, and communication challenges across campus.

H. Staff Representative (Karas)

Lou Karas reported that she will attend the WV Advisory Council of Classified Employees meeting. Updates were also shared regarding student leadership conference participation and a community indoor farmers market initiative on campus.

VII. Board Items for Approval*

- A. **Five-Year Program Review Recommendations** – 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 Five-Year Program Review Recommendations as presented.
- B. **Monitoring Review Program Recommendations** – On motion by Tom Cervone and seconded by Rich Lucas, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the Monitoring Review Program Recommendations as presented.
- C. **BOG Rule 1.5 (combining Rules 28, 29, 32)** – On motion by Erikka Storch and seconded by Stephanie Shaw, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve BOG Rule 1.5 as presented.
- D. **FY27 Tuition and Fee Schedule** – On motion by Tom Cervone and seconded by Katie Kacmarik, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the FY27 Tuition and Fee Schedule as presented.

- E. **FY27 Revenue Budget** – On motion by Rich Lucas and seconded by Erikka Storch, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the FY27 Revenue Budget as presented

- F. **Spring 2026 Commencement Speaker and Honorary Degree** – Stephanie Shaw recused herself. On motion by Tom Cervone and seconded by Katie Kacmarik, it was unanimously adopted by the West Liberty University Board of Governors to approve the Spring 2026 Commencement Speaker and Honorary Degree as presented.

VIII. Discussion Items

MLS Program: Discussion continued regarding workforce demand, prior reviews, and future consideration. Additional data may be presented at the June meeting.

BOG Self-Assessment Results: The Board agreed to allow additional time for review and revisit in June.

IX. Executive Session

At 5:40 p.m., a motion to enter executive session was made by Will Turani and seconded by Erikka Storch; motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session began at 5:40 p.m.

A motion to rise was made by Rich Lucas and seconded by Mike Baker; motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session ended at 5:58 p.m. with no action taken.

X. Adjournment

On motion by Mike Baker and seconded by Rich Lucas, the meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Chair _____

Secretary _____

Minutes submitted by: Cyndi Galloway