

Minutes of the Amarillo College Board of Regents Special Meeting and Budget Workshop of July 15, 2025

**AMARILLO COLLEGE BOARD OF REGENTS
MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING
July 15, 2025**

REGENTS PRESENT

Mr. Jay Barrett, Chair
Mr. John Betancourt, Vice-Chair
Mrs. Anette Carlisle
Ms. Michele Fortunato
Ms. Irene Hughes
Mr. Johnny Mize
Dr. Paul Proffer
Ms. Peggy Thomas
Dr. David Woodburn

REGENTS ABSENT

CAMPUS REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Ms. Sara Pesina, Representative for the Hereford Hinkson Memorial Campus

CAMPUS REPRESENTATIVES ABSENT

Mr. Jeff Turner, Representative for the Moore County Campus

CABINET MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr. Bob Austin, Vice President of Enrollment Management
Mr. Kevin Ball, Vice President of Communications and Marketing
Mr. Joe Bill Sherrod, Vice President of Institutional Advancement
Mr. Chris Sharp, Vice President of Business Affairs
Ms. Denese Skinner, Vice President of Student Affairs
Dr. Frank Sobey, Vice President of Academic Affairs
Mr. Mark White, Executive Vice President and General Counsel

CABINET MEMBERS ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ms. Jessica Arce, Administrative Assistant
Ms. Tina Babb, Associate Vice President of Curriculum, Planning, & IE
Ms. Kim Bruce, Communications Coordinator
Mr. Martin Conner, Community Member
Ms. Ally Greenwood, Executive Assistant & Asst. Secretary to the Board
Mr. Christopher Key, Marketing Coordinator
Ms. Jeanette Nelson, Budget Manager
Mr. Shon Wagner, Audio Visual Technical Leader - Information Technology
Ms. Collin Witherspoon, Executive Director of Institutional Research

Minutes of the Amarillo College Board of Regents Special Meeting and Budget Workshop of July 15, 2025

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING AND BUDGET WORKSHOP

The Special Board Meeting and Budget Workshop was called to order at 4:07 pm by Mr. Jay Barrett, Chair of the Board of Regents. He welcomed those in attendance. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

MINUTES

Minutes of the regular meeting on June 24th were provided to the Regents.

Mr. White noted that there needs to be a change in the minutes, on agenda item 14, to move the sentence that starts with “the motion passed 6-0” down so that Ms. Michele Fortunato’s comments are in the correct order that the motion was made, seconded, commented on, and then voted on. The change has been made by Ms. Greenwood.

Mrs. Carlisle moved to accept the minutes as amended. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Mr. Sharp presented the draft of the 2025-2026 Amarillo College budget to the Regents, reviewing each line item and answering questions. Mr. Sharp noted that state appropriations have increased to \$19,268,663 due to stronger than expected outcomes. Mr. Sharp alerted Board to a proposed bill that will be voted on by the public next year to exempt the first \$120,000 of business personal property taxes, which could significantly reduce future revenues for Potter and Randall counties. Other budget highlights include childcare tuition adjustments, modest increase in rental income and investments, and a balanced budget. Mr. Sharp continued that a one-time 2.5% payment for full time employees has been budgeted.

No action was taken on the item.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Dr. Conner discussed strategic planning with the Board, sharing that the college currently has 8% in headcount and credit hours, with Washington Campus up 4% and East Campus up 22%, noting that both new and returning students are significantly ahead of the five-year average, attributing this growth to initiatives such as the new registration hub and the largest re-enrollment effort in outreach in the college’s history by AC Success Coaches. Dr. Conner outlined the strategic planning timeline and related engagement activities:

- Tonight’s Board Retreat
- August 2025 Convocation (Faculty/staff)
- January 2026 Facilities Master Planning RFQ
- Mar 2026 Facilities Master Planning Selection
- July 2026 Board Retreat Presentation
- August 2026 Board New Strategic Plan Approval

Dr. Conner emphasized engaging students, faculty, community, and businesses throughout the year for feedback to guide priorities and set measurable goals, while ensuring faculty and staff align their work with the plan. She highlighted progress under the 2020-2025 plan, with

Minutes of the Amarillo College Board of Regents Special Meeting and Budget Workshop of July 15, 2025

fall-to-fall retention up 6%, graduation up 12%, transfer rate at 21%, and completion rising from 49% to 63%. Dr. Conner reviewed the No Excuses 2025 mission with the Board and engaged them in an exercise to work on the mission, vision, and values.

No action was taken on the item.

DUAL CREDIT AND THRIVE SCHOLARSHIP

Dr. Conner presented the Badger Bound proposal, a new model designed to expand beyond the current Thrive Scholarship by increasing college access and degree attainment across all ISDs in Amarillo College's nine-county service area. The initiative seeks to address low matriculation rates, particular in Potter and Randall counties, by offering pathways for high school students to earn up to 15 dual-credit hours, a proven benchmark for college readiness, retention, and completion. Supported by House Bill 8 funding, the model emphasizes early engagement with the elementary and middle school levels, and strong partnerships with local districts. Dr. Sobey discussed next steps with the Board on Badger Bound if moving forward.

- Board Approval for FY26 Start
- ISDs and MOU Finalization
- Partner Development and Exploration
- Badger Bound Announcement
- Implementing a Marketing and Communication Plan
- Implement K12 Engagement Frameworks.

The Board expressed support for the plan, recognizing its potential to strengthen enrollment pipelines, expand opportunity, and build lasting pathways for student success.

No action was taken on the item.

BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT

Mr. Barrett opened discussion on the Board's self-evaluation pursuant to Board of Regents Internal Operating Procedures Section 2.13 and invited individual members to share their thoughts. The evaluation results, which were provided to the Board, prompted discussion on the importance on collaboration, trust, and maintaining a nonpartisan focus. The Regents acknowledged differing perspectives on governance but underscoring the importance of disagreeing respectfully, while remaining united in purpose. The Board also addressed the need for goal-setting for Dr. Conner, who shared feedback on her mentorship with Dr. Brenda Kays, and noted potential leadership opportunities at the state level for Dr. Sobey.

No action was taken on the item.

ADJOURNMENT

At 8:01 pm, Ms. Fortunato moved to adjourn the meeting. Mrs. Carlisle seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8.01 pm.

Sara Pesina, Secretary