

**AMARILLO COLLEGE BOARD OF REGENTS  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
August 26, 2025**

**REGENTS PRESENT**

Mr. Jay Barrett, Chair  
Mrs. Anette Carlisle  
Ms. Michele Fortunato  
Ms. Irene Hughes  
Mr. Johnny Mize  
Dr. Paul Proffer  
Ms. Peggy Thomas

**REGENTS ABSENT**

Mr. John Betancourt, Vice-Chair  
Dr. David Woodburn

**CAMPUS REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT**

Ms. Sara Pesina, Representative for the Hereford Hinkson Memorial Campus  
Mr. Jeff Turner, Representative for the Moore County 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  
Dr. Jamelle Conner, President  
Mr. Chris Sharp, Vice President of Business Affairs  
Mr. Joe Bill Sherrod, Vice President of Institutional Advancement  
Ms. Denese Skinner, Vice President of Student Services  
Dr. Frank Sobey, Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Mr. Mark White, Executive General Counsel

**CABINET MEMBERS ABSENT**

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Ms. Ash Albright, KAMR  
Ms. Jessica Arce, Administrative Assistant  
Ms. Tina Babb, Associate Vice President of Curriculum, Planning, & IE  
Ms. Kim Bruce, Communications Coordinator  
Ms. Becky Burton, Associate Vice President of Academic Learning & Services  
Ms. Edythe Carter, Executive Dean of STEM & Academic Success  
Ms. Gillian Crist, The Ranger  
Mr. Martin Conner, Community Member  
Ms. Tiffani Crosley, Associate Vice President of Business Affairs  
Ms. Penelope Davies, Department Chair - Math - Assistant Professor  
Ms. Becky Easton, Dean of Liberal Arts

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Dr. Robert Fulton, Associate Professor - Humanities  
Ms. Ally Greenwood, Executive Assistant & Asst. Secretary to the Board  
Mr. David Hall, Dean of Technical Education  
Ms. Amber Hamilton, Director of Student Life  
Dr. Chris Hudson, Faculty Senate President  
Ms. Kennedy Juarez, SGA Vice-President  
Mr. Christopher Key, Marketing Special Projects Coordinator  
Dr. Linda Munoz, Dean of Innovation Outpost Operations & Programming  
Ms. Jeanette Nelson, Budget Officer  
Ms. Courtney Milleson, Department Chair - Media, Arts and Communications- Professor  
Ms. Sadie Newsome, Director of Media, College Relations  
Dr. Lori Petty, Dean of Academic Services  
Ms. Molly Riesenbergs, Student  
Mr. Jay Sawyer, Assistant Professor - Speech/Communications  
Mr. Paul Simpson, Amarillo EDC  
Ms. Renee Stovall, Associate Professor - Business Management  
Mr. Collin Witherspoon, Executive Director of Institutional Research

**REGULAR MEETING**

The Regular Meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by Mr. Jay Barrett, Chair of the Board of Regents. He welcomed those in attendance. A quorum was present.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE****PRAYER**

Ms. Molly Riesenbergs prayed with Board.

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION REPORT**

Ms. Kennedy Juarez, the SGA vice-president, delivered the SGA report. Ms. Juarez discussed that Student life is starting the year off with 33 active student organizations including a new club called DECA. There will be SGA elections on September 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Juarez discussed goals such as the all-majors job fair, badger volleyball game, and ARC resource fair.

**REGENTS' REPORTS, COMMITTEES, AND COMMENTS REGARDING AC AFFILIATES****Executive Committee**

Mr. Barrett-Chair reported that they met last week and discussed some of the items that will be discussed today.

**AC Foundation**

Ms. Fortunato shared that the annual meeting is on September 9<sup>th</sup> and that they will be honoring Carol and Sam Lovelady as lifetime givers. Board should have received invitations.

**Amarillo Museum of Art (AMoA)**

Ms. Fortunato reported that a donor contributed \$500,000 to the museum, with the promise of an additional \$1 million if the museum could match the initial gift. AMoA successfully met the challenge, resulting in \$2 million dollars now generating interest for the museum. She highlighted

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several successful programs and events this summer such as the Teen Studios program, which engaged 88 teenagers for art classes. Art After Dark, hosted on June 20, welcomed 36 new members. Family Day on August 9<sup>th</sup> drew a crowd of 400 attendees. Ms. Fortunato also noted an opening reception for artist Jeri Salter, which AC assisted Panhandle Plains with space for the exhibition. During the event a guest generously donated \$500. Upcoming events include the Lab Lecture on October 16<sup>th</sup>, featuring Andrw Wyeth, with his granddaughter serving as speaker. On October 4<sup>th</sup>, the museum will host the opeing of the Biannual 600 Exhibition, a juried show open to artists within 600 miles.

**Panhandle PBS**

Ms. Thomas shared that PBS in partnership with the Amarillo Symphony will present their next studio sessions event the Night in the Highlands. Thursday September 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 until 8pm. There will be Scottish inspired videos, food, and drinks. Tickets are available on the PBS website.

**Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone (TIRZ)**

No report

**Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone 2 (TIRZ 2)**

No Report.

**Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone 3 (TIRZ 3)**

Dr. Proffer shared they will meet on Thursday to approve the budget on TIRZ 3.

**Standing Policies & Procedures Committee**

Ms. Carlisle discussed that certain policies are up for approval on tonight's agenda.

**Finance Committee (AC Investment, Potential Lease & Sales Opportunities)**

Mr. Mize discussed that they have an item on the agenda.

**Legislative Affairs Committee**

No report.

**Community College Association of Texas Trustees (CCATT)**

No report.

**Nominating Committee**

No report.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Conner reported that several bills from the recent legislative session were passed, and that the college is seeking guidance from the Coordinating Board to determine their implications. To comply with Senate Bill 37, the Board will consider ratifying the Faculty Senate, effective September 1. Over the coming months it will be determined if there will be any other adjustments needed to Amarillo College's practices and policies and bring them to the Board for review and approval to be compliance with Senate Bill 37. She noted that SB 37 also establishes a General Education Curriculum Advisory Committee to streamline core curriculum. Dr. Conner announced that Dr. Frank Sobey has been selected to serve. She also recognized Shon Wagner, AC's Audio and Technical Lead, for being honored as a "Texan Caring for Texans" for his exceptional contributions.

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Dr. Conner shared highlights from Convocation, including work toward the new strategic plan and leadership updates; Ms. Denese Skinner was named the new Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Mr. Bob Austin's title will change to Vice President of Student Affairs. Dr. Conner provided data points on Innovation Outpost's successes such as growing workforce participants to 6,000, revenues of \$600,000, and \$660,000 in grant awards. A major achievement was AC's official designation as an OSHA alliance Partner, a distinction held by on a few community colleges in Texas. AC's enrollment is up nearly 5% in both headcount and credit hours, East Campus enrollment is up 20%, and the fall-to-fall retention rate is at 60.45%.

Dr. Conner discussing several recent community engagements such as presentations to the Amarillo Chamber of Commerce, Elevate Amarillo, and Amarillo College Foundation Boards as well as participating in a Panhandle Stakeholders meeting on the new advanced energy an intelligence complex being built out by Pantex. She shared that they have relaunched regular meetings with WT and local school district superintendence and that she attended the Stand-Up Rural America Summit in Canyon. Dr. Conner concluded by announcing that AC has been selected by the Texas Presidents and Trustees Collaborative under the Texas Success Center, which is a year long Aspen led initiative designed to strengthen board-presidential partnerships and accelerate student success.

Mr. Barrett added that Dr. Conner will be honored by the Amarillo Women's Network on September 16<sup>th</sup> for a Career Achievement award.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No public comments.

**MINUTES APPROVED**

Minutes of the special board meeting retreat on July 15, 2025 and the special board meeting on August 12, 2025 were provided to Regents.

**Dr. Proffer moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of July 15, 2025 and August 12, 2025. Ms. Carlisle seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

**CONSENT AGENDA APPROVED**

The following items were presented for Board approval.

**A. APPOINTMENTS**

Faculty – attached at page 7.

**B. BUDGET AMENDMENTS**

The Budget Amendments approved by the Board are attached at page 8.

**C. CONTRACT WORK**

**Electrical Work – Fiscal Year 2025-2026**

**Mechanical Work – Fiscal Year 2025-2026**

**Approval to purchase custodial supplies for the 2025-2026 Budget Year**

**Ms. Fortunato moved to approve the consent agenda. Mr. Mize seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

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There was a closed meeting at 6:24 pm in order for the regents to deliberate the following: Commercial or financial information received from a business prospect and/or to deliberate the offer of a financial or other incentive to a business prospect, pursuant to Section 551.087 of the Texas Government Code: #24-05-04 Flying Colors.

Representatives from Amarillo Economic Development Corporation were part of the meeting.

The closed session ended at 6:29 pm. No action was taken during the closed session. the open session reconvened at 6:30pm, a quorum was still present.

**FINANCIAL REPORTS – Tiffani Crosley**

Ms. Crosley gave a summary of the June and July financial reports. The financial statements for June 30 and July 31, 2025 were provided to the regents.

**Mrs. Carlisle moved to approve the financial reports. Ms. Fortuanto seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

**PRESENTATION OF THE PROPOSED 2025-2026 BUDGET**

Mr. Chris Sharp, Vice President of Business Affairs, presented the 2025-2026 proposed budget, he also reviewed related budgetary items.

Mr. Sharp discussed total revenues with the Board. Expenditures are 93,999,869 and it is a balanced budget. The appointed wages include a 2.5% one-time payment to full time employees. State allocations are up, it will be 19,268,663. That is an increase because outcomes are better than what they anticipated. Before it was a little over 17,000,000. Mr. Sharp discussed the current Ad Valorem Tax Rate. We have a tax rate of .21994. Mr. Sharp discussed that the purposed 2.5% one-time payment that will be \$1,121,258. We based it on how much you make, if you do not make enough to get 1250 we will increase that one-time payment to those people. We do 500 faculty step increases; this goes to their base pay 195 faculty members receive this. Mr. Sharp asked if there are questions. Ms. Fortunato asked when the payment would go to employees, it will be either December or January.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET FOR 2025-2206 FISCAL YEAR**

Any person and/or persons wishing to come before the Board of Regents regarding the 2025-2026 budget for Amarillo College in the Amarillo Junior College District was/were given the opportunity to be heard.

There were no comments.

**ADOPTION OF THE BUDGET FOR 2025-2026 FISCAL YEAR**

The following resolution was read by Mr. Sharp and adopted.

**R E S O L U T I O N**

**WHEREAS**, the legal requirements of the laws of the State of Texas and the regulations of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board regarding this document have been met;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the said proposed budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year is hereby designated as the official budget for Amarillo College in the Amarillo Junior

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College District for the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Mr. Jay Barrett, Chair of the Board of Regents of the Amarillo Junior College District, be directed to file copies of this official budget with the county clerks of Potter and Randall counties of Texas, and with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for distribution to the Governor's Budget and Planning Office, the Legislative Budget Board, and the Legislative Reference Library.

**Mrs. Carlisle moved to approve budget for 2025-2026 fiscal year. Ms. Fortunato seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

**PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TAX RATE FOR 2025**

In accordance with provisions of Section 26.06 of the Texas Property Tax Code, a notice of a public hearing regarding the proposed tax rate for 2025 was published in the newspaper on August 18, 2025.

Any person and/or persons wishing to come before the Board of Regents regarding the proposed tax rate for 2025 for the Amarillo Junior College District was/were given the opportunity to be heard. There were no public comments.

**APPROVAL OF THE TAX RATE FOR 2025**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 26.06 of the Texas Property Tax Code, Amarillo Junior College District published a legal notice stating that the no-new-revenue tax rate for 2025 for the Amarillo Junior College District is \$0.20773 per \$100 of assessed value.

Adoption of the following resolution will set the 2025 Tax Rate at \$0.21994 for operations.

**R E S O L U T I O N**

**WHEREAS**, the Chair of the Board of Regents of the Amarillo Junior College District has caused to be formulated and adopted a budget for Amarillo College in the Amarillo Junior College District for the fiscal year beginning September 1, 2025, and ending August 31, 2026, the tax year 2025, now, therefore,

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. An ad valorem tax of, and at the rate of five thousand six hundred thirty-one hundred thousandths cents (\$0.05631) on the one-hundred-dollar (\$100) value thereof, estimated in lawful currency of the United States of America, be levied to pay interest on and provide a sinking fund for Amarillo College in the Amarillo Junior College District for bonds issued July 2, 2015, September 1, 2016, September 12, 2019, February 15, 2020, March 23, 2021, and April 7, 2022.
2. An ad valorem tax of, and at the rate of sixteen thousand three hundred sixty-three hundred thousandths cents (\$0.16363) on the one-hundred-dollar (\$100) value thereof, estimated in lawful currency of the United States of America, be levied to pay for the support and maintenance of Amarillo College in the Amarillo Junior College District for the fiscal year 2025-2026, the tax year 2025.

**BE IT ORDERED** by the Board of Regents of the Amarillo Junior College District that there is

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hereby levied for the tax year 2025 on all real property situated in, and all business personal property owned within the limits of said district on the first day of January 2025 same being the current year, except so much thereof as may be exempt by the Constitution and Laws of the State of Texas, or of the United States of America, a total of twenty-one thousand nine hundred ninety-four thousandths cents (\$0.21994) on the one-hundred dollar (\$100) value thereof, estimated in lawful currency of the United States of America for support and maintenance, payment of current interest, and a sinking fund for the retirement of bonds of Amarillo College in the Amarillo Junior College District for the fiscal year 2025-2026. "THIS TAX RATE WILL RAISE MORE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS THAN LAST YEAR'S TAX RATE." "THE TAX RATE WILL EFFECTIVELY BE RAISED BY 5.87% AND WILL RAISE TAXES FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS ON A \$100,000 HOME BY APPROXIMATELY \$10.25."

**Mr. Mize moved that the property tax rate be increased by the adoption of a tax rate of 0.21994, which is effectively a 5.87 percent increase in the tax rate and adoption of the resolution as stated in the agenda. Mrs. Fortunato seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.**

**DENTAL HYGIENE STUDENT KITS**

Dr. Sobey requested approval for a one-time purchase of dental hygiene student kits totaling \$98,153.00 from Henry Schein, utilizing the E&I Cooperative Contract #E100075. This purchase supports students entering the Dental Hygiene Program in Fall 2025 and includes essential clinical tools such as blood pressure kits and dental instruments.

The kits are required by the second week of classes, and timely procurement is critical to ensure students are equipped for clinical sessions. Funding for this purchase will be provided through institutional funds, with future student fees collected each semester to sustain annual kit purchases.

The use of a cooperative contract eliminates the need for competitive quotes, streamlining the procurement process.

Ms. Hughes asked how many kits. Ms. Burton stated 25 to 28.

**Dr. Proffer moved to approve the purchase of dental hygiene student kits. Ms. Hughes seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

**TITLE V YEAR TWO TECH LABS BUDGET REQUEST**

Dr. Sobey discussed that AC was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (Title V award #P031S230034) that includes Year 2 funding for instructional equipment and supplies for Amarillo College's Technical Education Division. These items will address gaps in equipment needed to teach important industry skills as identified by our Business Leadership Council. The updated equipment and supplies will allow Amarillo College to impart knowledge and skills to students for jobs that are in high demand in the region and across the state.

The Title V grant budget for Year 2 equipment and supplies has received approval from the Department of Education, and the list of purchases is included on pages 27-28.

Items will be purchased through one of the following methods: competitive quote process; direct purchase from an AC approved cooperative purchasing contract; formal bid process; or sole source provider. All of these methods meet the requirements for a competitive procurement

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process as mandated by the college's internal procedure, state requirements, and federal Uniform Grant Guidance regulations.

**Ms. Thomas approved the purchase of Grant funded equipment and supplies. Mrs. Carlisle seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

**BADGER BOUND SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

This item was placed on the agenda so that the Board of Regents could review the proposal and approve the *Badger Bound Scholarship Program*, a transformative initiative designed to strengthen the educational pipeline and create equitable early access to higher education for students across our entire service area. Students who complete 15 hours of dual credit qualify for free tuition up to 45 hours. Rooted in Amarillo College's commitment to student success, this innovative scholarship is strategically aligned with House Bill 8 (HB8) performance funding metrics and serves as a scalable model for evidence-based student outcomes.

**Mrs. Carlisle moved that the board of regents authorize the college administration to draft the necessary documents and take all necessary steps to implement the Badger Bound Scholarship Program in the Fall of 2026 as outlined in tonight's PowerPoint presentation which is to be attached to the minutes. Mrs. Thomas seconded.** Mr. Barrett stated that he thinks that when this starts it will be important that at every board meeting there needs to be a report on Badger Bound. **The motion carried unanimously.**

**FACULTY SENATE AND COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE BILL 37**

Senate Bill 37, passed by the 89<sup>th</sup> Regular Legislative Session and signed into law on June 20, 2025, provides that a faculty senate at a public institution of higher education is abolished on September 1, 2025 unless it is ratified in accordance with the legislation. Drafts of the motions to accomplish the ratification have been provided to the regents. Mr. White discussed the motions that needed to be approved.

**Mrs. Hughes moved to adopt policies for the Amarillo College faculty Senate verbatim as written in the 14-paragraph motion provided to the Regents as follows:**

**I move to adopt the following policies in accordance with Education Code Section 51.3522 regarding the Amarillo College Faculty Senate.**

**1. The faculty senate must adequately represent each college and school of the institution and**

**(A) require the members to be faculty members;**

**(B) limit the number of members to not more than 60, with at least two representatives from each community, including:**

**(i) one member from each community appointed by the president of the college; and**

**(ii) the remaining members elected by a vote of the faculty of the member's respective community.**

**2. The faculty senate is advisory only and may not be delegated the final decision-making authority on any matter. The faculty senate shall represent the entire faculty of the institution of higher education and advise the institution administration and any system administration regarding matters related to the general welfare of the institution. The faculty senate may not issue any statement or publish a report using the institution's official seal, trademark, or resources funded by the institution on any matter not directly related to the faculty senate's duties to advise the institution administration.**

**3. Service on the faculty senate is an additional duty of the faculty member's employment. Members of the faculty senate are not entitled to compensation or**



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reimbursement of expenses for their role as members of the faculty senate unless the expense is on behalf of and approved by the institution of higher education.

(A) Officers of the faculty senate appointed by the president of the college may be compensated with release time in the following manner:

- (i) president: three hours;
- (ii) vice president: two hours;
- (iii) secretary: two hours; and,
- (iv) parliamentarian: one hour.

4. A member of the faculty senate appointed by the president of the college in accordance with Section (1)(B)(i) may serve up to six consecutive one-year terms and then may only be reappointed after the second anniversary of the last day of the member's most recent term. A member of the faculty senate elected by a vote of the faculty of the member's respective community serves a two-year term, staggered in a manner that allows approximately one-half of the elected members to be elected each year, and may only be reelected after the second anniversary of the last day of the member's most recent term.

(A) Current members of the faculty elected before the spring 2025 election will be appointed by the president to serve the 2025-2026 academic year as their final year of service;

i) the president may appoint any of those members to serve again in accordance with Section 4.

(B) Current members elected in the spring 2025 election will serve through the 2026-2027 academic year.

5. A faculty member serving on the faculty senate may be immediately removed from the senate for failing to conduct the member's responsibilities within the senate's parameters, failing to attend senate meetings, or engaging in other similar misconduct. A member of the faculty senate may be removed on recommendation of the institution's VPAA and by the president of the college.

6. The president of the college shall appoint a faculty senate president, vice president, and secretary from the members of the faculty senate.

(A) The faculty senate may hold a vote to select potential officers and advise the president of the college of the outcome;

(B) The president of the college may consider, but is not bound by, that vote when appointing officers.

7. The faculty senate president shall preside over meetings of the faculty senate and represent the senate in official communications with the institution administration and any system administration.

8. The faculty senate shall conduct meetings at which a quorum is present in a manner that is open to the public and in accordance with procedures prescribed by the president of the college.

9. The faculty senate shall broadcast over the Internet live video and audio, as applicable, of each open meeting of the faculty senate if more than 50 percent of the members of the senate are in attendance.

10. The faculty senate shall adopt rules for establishing a quorum.

11. The following shall be made available to the public on the institution of higher education's Internet website not later than the seventh day before a meeting of the faculty senate:

(A) an agenda for the meeting with sufficient detail to indicate the items that are to be discussed or that will be subject to a vote; and

(B) Any curriculum proposals reviewed by the council or senate that will be discussed or voted on at the meeting.

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12. The names of the members in attendance must be recorded at a meeting in which the faculty senate conducts business related to:

- (A) a vote of no confidence regarding an institution or system administrator; or
- (B) policies related to curriculum and academic standards.

13. These policies may not be construed to limit a faculty member of an institution of higher education from exercising the faculty member's right to freedom of association protected by the United States Constitution or Texas Constitution.

14. To the extent these policies conflict with any existing policies of the current Board of Regents Policy Manual or procedures contained in the Amarillo College Employee Handbook, these policies control.

Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Fortunato moved that the Amarillo Board of Regents:

- (a) ratifies the continuation of the Amarillo College Faculty Senate;
- (b) directs the faculty senate to amend its Constitution, Bylaws, and procedures to comply with these policies and Education Code Section 51.3522; and
- (c) finds that the faculty senate meets the policies adopted by the board and the requirements of Section 51.3522.

Mrs. Carlisle seconded. The motion carried unanimously

### **CLOSED MEETING**

There was closed meeting at 7:55pm so that the regents could deliberate the following:  
Private consultation with the college attorney to receive confidential advice on two litigation matters in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 551.071.

President Jamelle Conner, Counsel Mark White, and Vice President of Business Affairs Chris Sharp were asked to stay for both items. Outside counsel for the college attended. The closed session ended at 9:00pm. No action was taken during the closed session.

the open session reconvened at 9:04pm, a quorum was still present.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Carlisle moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Thomas seconded. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

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Sara Pesina, Secretary