

Blue Ridge Community College

College Board Meeting

September 10, 2025

Board Members Present:

- Dr. Bruce Bowman
- Dr. Robin Crowder
- Ms. Allison Dugan
- Ms. Janet Ewing
- Ms. Sandy Hernandez
- Mr. Danny Ledford
- Dr. Drew Maerz
- Ms. Cathy Welsh

Board Members Absent:

- Mr. John Butler, Jr.
- Mr. Tony Davenport
- Ms. Vermell Grant

College Staff in Attendance:

- Dr. John Downey, President of the College and Secretary of the Board
- Dr. Dave Urso, Vice President of Academic Affairs
- Ms. Anastasia Triplett, Vice President of Finance and Administration
- Ms. Amy Kiger, Executive Director of the BRCC Educational Foundation
- Ms. Laura Otrhalik, Executive Assistant to the President
- Mr. Wandi Maseko, Career Services Coordinator

Welcome and Call to Order

Dr. Downey welcomed the Board and called the meeting to order at 5:49 p.m.

Moment in Mission

Dr. Downey introduced Mr. Wandi Maseko, Career Services Coordinator. Mr. Maseko provided the Board with an overview of Career Services, highlighting the support and resources available to BRCC students and alumni. These services include career exploration, career readiness, résumé assistance, and mock interviews. In Spring 2025, the Career Closet was launched to provide students with access to professional clothing. Each student is able to select up to four donated items to keep each semester. To date, 64 students have utilized this resource. The Board discussed visiting the Career Closet in the spring, following the completion of the HVAC fan coil renovation project. Looking ahead, Career Services plans to expand employer partnerships, enhance data tracking, and incorporate alumni engagement through mentoring and job shadowing opportunities.

Ms. Hernandez joined the meeting at 5:55 p.m.

Dr. Downey thanked Mr. Maseko for his presentation.

Approval of May 14, 2025 Minutes of Proceedings

***Dr. Crowder motioned to accept the minutes of the May 14, 2025 meeting. Mr. Ledford seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Elections of Board Leadership

***Ms. Ewing motioned to nominate Ms. Welsh as Board Chair. Dr. Crowder seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. *Dr. Crowder motioned to nominate Dr. Bowman as Vice Chair. Ms. Welsh seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.** With the conclusion of the vote, Ms. Welsh took over conducting meeting business.

New and returning Board members provided brief introductions.

Reports

A. Finance and Facilities

Ms. Triplett reviewed the financial reports provided in the meeting materials for the period of the fiscal year between July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. ***Dr. Maerz motioned to approve the Financial Reports from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025. Mr. Ledford seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. Triplett provided updates on current and upcoming facilities projects. The CDL Driving Range is close to completion with the grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony scheduled for September 23. Renovations to the Houff Student Center restrooms are finished. The HVAC fan coil replacement project is currently underway. This project will update equipment and improve temperature control and is expected to be completed by spring 2025. Due to the recent flooding in C Building, drawings are currently in progress, and the project will soon go out for bid. Planned repairs include replacing carpeting and drywall, as well as addressing a large hole beneath the building caused by the damage from the capped sprinkler system. The timeline for completing the repairs remains uncertain. Ongoing projects include the installation of enhanced campus signage to improve pedestrian wayfinding, as well as the continued review of space planning data collected last October to reimagine the use of space in Buildings D, E, and F to better serve the campus's current and future needs.

Academic Affairs

Dr. Urso announced that David Shofstahl was recently hired as the new Dean of Workforce Solutions. He expressed appreciation to Velma Bryant, Dean of Student Services, for serving in both roles during the interim. Mr. Shofstahl joins BRCC from Mountain Gateway Community College, where he led the apprenticeship programs. Dr. Urso expressed enthusiasm for Mr. Shofstahl's arrival and the continued development of the Workforce program.

An additional update was also shared regarding Advisory Committees. These committees are community based and assist in the development and improvement of occupational, technical and continuing education programs. Members participate in advisory meetings throughout the year with deans and faculty. Planning is currently underway for two upcoming events in 2026, one to recognize the contributions of volunteers, and the other to bring community partners together to collaborate on curriculum development.

Dr. Urso suggested, and the Board agreed, to discuss all proposed action items related to program changes and, if there were no concerns, to vote on them collectively. Proposed changes included

the addition of SPA 115 Intensive Beginning Spanish as a new program elective; and the addition of ITD 110 Web Page Design I with the revision to include local prerequisite options ITE 152: Introduction to Digital Literacy and Computer Applications and ITE 120: Principal of Information Systems. The addition of proposed Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) courses includes: Manufacturing Skills Institute's Manufacturing Technician Level 1 and MT1 Certified Trainer Certificate; awarding credit for the National Institute for Metalworking Skills' Industrial Technology Maintenance: Process Control Systems; and awarding credit for the Certified Payroll Professional Credential. ***Ms. Hernandez motioned to approve all action items as proposed. Dr. Crowder seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

B. Personnel Report

At the request of Secretary Downey, Ms. Triplett presented the Personnel Report to the Board. A personnel handout was included in the meeting materials.

Enrollment Update

Dr. Downey asked Dr. Urso provide an enrollment update to the Board. A Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Student Enrollment handout was shared, showing an increase in the total FTEs from 2021 to 2025.

Report from the Educational Foundation

At the request of Secretary Downey, Ms. Kiger presented a report from the Educational Foundation. She noted that the Foundation had its most successful fundraising year in its 40-year history, exceeding its Blue Ridge Fund goal of \$225,000 by raising \$257,430.39. Handouts for the Blue Ridge Fund and All Funds Comparison were included in the Board's meeting materials. An additional handout from the Curtis Group highlighted national trends in charitable giving across the United States. Ms. Kiger noted that local trends differ, with a smaller number of donors contributing at the regional level. Looking ahead, the Foundation hopes to raise \$230,000 this year with 100% Board participation. Ms. Kiger concluded her report by sharing details about upcoming Educational Foundation events.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business

A. President's Institutional Priorities

Dr. Downey introduced his Institutional Priorities for 2025-2026 and reviewed the 13 initiatives. Once approved, progress updates will be shared at meetings throughout the year. The Board is asked to review the accomplishments at the end of the year in accordance to the Institutional Priorities and the goals set by the VCCS. In March or April, the Board conducts an evaluation of the President, and an evaluation letter is sent to the Chancellor. ***Dr. Bowman motioned to accept the President's Institutional Priorities for 2025-2026. Dr. Crowder seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

B. Conflict of Interest Signatures

The annual Conflict of Interest signature sheet was handed out to the Board members. ***Seven members in attendance at the meeting reviewed and signed the form.** Ms. Otrhalik will reach out to the four remaining Board members to have them sign and return the form.

C. Report from the President

Dr. Downey presented his report to the Board, noting that the administration had recently attended the Chancellor's Retreat, *Mission Possible*, which focused on the Chancellor's *Focus* Priorities and *One System* goals to streamline operations across Virginia's 23 community colleges. Dr. Bowman and Ms. Ewing represented the Board at the retreat. Dr. Downey expressed his appreciation for their participation.

Key information was reviewed under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) policy during the new Board member orientation. Dr. Downey highlighted important topics for members that had been unable to attend.

Last week, BRCC held its *Strategic Directions Retreat* at Hotel Madison. This campus-wide event, held every five to seven years, brings staff together to begin the strategic planning process. Dr. David Doré, Chancellor of the Virginia Community College System, spoke on how BRCC's strategic goals align with system-wide initiatives across the VCCS. Stephanie Norris of the Richmond Federal Reserve also presented new data comparing the success rates of full-time and part-time students in community colleges.

This past spring, BRCC successfully completed its ten-year accreditation review with The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) with no findings. The college continues to explore innovative ways to meet the needs of the community, including working toward developing a Career Academy for dual enrollment students.

Ms. Welsh shared appreciation to the members of the Board for attending the meeting and being ambassadors of the college.

There being no further business or discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

**Items requiring action.*

Respectfully submitted by Ms. Laura Otrhalik