BLUE RIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
LOCAL COLLEGE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
Biosciences (S) Building, Room S116
Friday, November 13, 2026
1:30 PM

The Local College Advisory Board convened at 1:30 PM on Friday, November 13, 2026, at One College Lane, Weyers Cave, VA 24486.

Members Present:
Dr. Bruce Bowman, Vice Chair
Dr. Robin Crowder
Ms. Allison Dugan
Ms. Janet Ewing
Ms. Vermell Grant
Ms. Sandra Hernandez-Brown
Dr. Drew Maerz

Members Absent:
Ms. Cathy Welsh, Chair
Mr. John Butler
Mr. Tony Davenport
Mr. Danny Ledford

Staff Present:
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

Members of the Public: None

Special Guests: None

B. OPENING

1. Call to Order

Dr. Bruce Bowman, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM.

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2. Moment in Mission

Dr. Downey reported that the President's Luncheon, hosted by the Educational Foundation prior to the meeting, served as the Moment in Mission.

3. Minutes: September 9, 2026

A motion was made by Ms. Dugan and seconded by Ms. Ewing to approve the minutes of the September 9, 2026 meeting as presented.

The motion was approved unanimously. The motion carried.

C. REPORTS

1. Chair

- **Finance and Facilities, Ms. Triplett:**

Ms. Triplett reviewed the financial reports provided in the meeting materials for the fiscal year period of July 1, 2026, through September 30, 2026.

ACTION ITEM: A motion was made by Dr. Crowder and seconded by Ms. Dugan to approve the Financial Reports for the Fiscal Year Period of July 1, 2026, through September 30, 2026, as submitted.

The motion was approved unanimously. The motion carried.

Ms. Triplett presented an informational item regarding the FY 2024 audit. She reported that the system-wide audit resulted in four recommendations. The recommendations highlighted opportunities to improve efficiency and consistency across the system's reporting processes. Ms. Triplett noted that the system is renewing its efforts to operate more cohesively as one system in these areas.

Updates on current facilities projects were shared. Progress continues on the exterior wayfinding project, which is expected to go out for bid in January or February, with construction anticipated to begin in Summer 2027. Additional projects planned include emergency lighting improvements in the P and V Buildings and restroom renovations in the Robert E. Plecker (P) Workforce Building. Emergency lighting improvements in the T and J Buildings were completed this past summer. A major waterline project will also soon be underway to replace aging underground piping. The project will be

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completed in phases to minimize disruptions and avoid the need to shut down buildings during construction.

The Board received an update on the Tennis Court Study. Options presented included resurfacing and repairing the existing tennis courts (approximately $452,000), constructing new tennis courts (approximately $550,000), constructing new pickleball courts (approximately $552,000), and removing the courts and returning the area to green space (approximately $224,000). Board members discussed the potential benefits and long term uses associated with each option, including recreational opportunities, community engagement, green space, and future campus development. It was noted that project costs could increase over time. The Board agreed to defer action and place the item on the agenda for a vote at the next meeting, allowing additional time for review of the information provided.

Sandra Hernandez-Brown left the meeting at 2:10 p.m.

- **Curriculum and Student Affairs, Dr. Urso:**

  Dr. Urso presented one item for the Board's consideration on the Consent Agenda. A technical edit was proposed to add MTH 267: Differential Equations to the Engineering Electives requirements for the Associate of Science degree. The course was intended to be included in two elective lists but was only added to one. This revision corrected that oversight.

  ACTION ITEM: A motion was made by Dr. Maerz and seconded by Dr. Crowder to recommend approval of the Consent Agenda item as presented to the State Board of Community Colleges.

  The motion was approved unanimously. The motion carried.

  Additionally, Dr. Urso presented several action items for the Board's review. Proposed curriculum changes included updates to GOL 106: Historical Geology to add the course to applicable elective lists; revisions to the Organic Chemistry curriculum, including CHM 241: Organic Chemistry I, CHM 245: Organic Chemistry I Lab, CHM 242: Organic Chemistry II, and CHM 246: Organic Chemistry II Lab, for incorporated within the Associate of Science degree pathways; and the removal of AGR 142: Introduction to Plant Science and Technology from the Associate of Science program as the course was not intended for transfer. The justification for the changes to these courses were outlined in the Board's meeting materials.

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ACTION ITEM: A motion was made by Dr. Maerz and seconded by Ms. Grant to recommend approval of the three Action Items, as presented, to the State Board of Community Colleges.

The motion was approved unanimously. The motion carried.

Additionally, Dr. Urso shared an informational item regarding the upcoming Advisory Committee Summit, which is scheduled for Wednesday, January 6, 2027, at 11:00 a.m. The summit will bring all advisory committees together on a single day. Board members were invited to attend if interested.

2. Secretary

- **Personnel Report, Ms. Triplett:**

  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. Urso:**

  At Secretary Downey's request, Dr. Urso shared that electronic copies of the FTES (Full-Time Equivalent Student) Enrollment and FastForward Enrollments by College through Fiscal Week 20 reports would be emailed to Board members following the meeting.

- **Report for the Educational Foundation, Ms. Kiger:**

  Ms. Kiger reviewed the Educational Foundation reports, including the Blue Ridge Fund and All Funds Comparison Reports. She thanked the Board for achieving 91% participation in providing a gift or pledge to the 2026-2027 Blue Ridge Fund. She also reported that the Educational Foundation Board achieved 100% participation.

  Casino Royale, the Educational Foundation's largest fundraising event for the year, will be held on Friday, April 16. A handout listing event sponsors to date was included in the meeting materials.

  Ms. Kiger also expressed appreciation to the Board members who attended the President's Luncheon prior to the meeting. She reported that 106 individuals had RSVP'd for the event and noted that the previous days Outlook outage affected attendance tracking, resulting in some cancellations and additional attendees not being reflected until the day of the event.

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OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

D. NEW BUSINESS

1. Graduation Speaker

Dr. Downey shared that the process of identifying a commencement speaker had just begun and encouraged Board members to submit any suggestions of potential speakers to him or Ms. Otrhalik.

2. Report from the President

Dr. Downey reported that he and Ms. Kiger recently attended the Virginia Community College System's 60th anniversary celebration at the Jefferson Hotel in Richmond. He highlighted remarks from Governor Spanberger and a panel of former Virginia governors, who spoke positively about the Community Colleges' impact on the Commonwealth. He noted that BRCC will celebrate its 60th anniversary next year.

The second terms of Ms. Welsh, Mr. Butler, and Ms. Grant will conclude on June 30, creating vacancies for Rockingham County, Augusta County, and the City of Harrisonburg. Dr. Downey shared that he is working with local jurisdictions to encourage interested citizens to apply, noting that appointments are made by each locality. The first terms of Dr. Crowder and Mr. Davenport will conclude in June 2027; however, both will be eligible for reappointment.

BRCC hosted its 20th Hunger Symposium and raised a total of $6,521, the highest amount collected since 2019. Events during the week included Shenandoah Cabaret performances and the Empty Bowl Dinner. With support from the Educational Foundation, event costs were covered, allowing all proceeds to benefit the local food bank. The BRCC Food Pantry, the Blue Cupboard, celebrated its grand opening during the symposium, with 600 pounds of food collected for the pantry. Nursing students also participated in a Hunger Simulation to gain a clearer understanding of the food insecurity experienced by patients they may serve and to learn more about the local resources available to them. Dr. Downey expressed appreciation to the Educational Foundation for its support.

Several projects are underway, including the Lab School in Rockingham County and a partnership with Harrisonburg City Schools for the Career Academy. The Career Academy is nearing completion of its first year, with students assimilating well into the program, and other school divisions have expressed interest in future participation.

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Dr. Downey updated the Board on recent developments in Dual Enrollment and on pharmaceutical expansion efforts occurring in the state. He noted that the Aviation Maintenance Technician Program has doubled in size, and that the College is seeking General Assembly support for a full hangar at Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport, as the program is currently operating in a half hangar.

Five BRCC faculty and staff will attend the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), now known as The Commission, Annual Meeting in Houston. The Commission is considering major revisions to its accreditation process, including reducing the number of standards from 75–100 to approximately 30, with multiple requirements expected within each standard. The accreditation timeline is also expected to shift from 10 years to 8 years, eliminating the 5-year interim report and moving BRCC's next reaffirmation from 2035 to 2033.

E. PUBLIC INPUT

There were no members of the public in attendance, and no public input was presented or discussed.

F. ADJOURNMENT

The Board's next meeting will be held Wednesday, January 13 at 6:00 p.m.

There being no further business to come before the Local College Advisory Board, the meeting was adjourned at 2:42 PM.

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