

BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Board of Trustees
Public Business Meeting Minutes**

May 28, 2025

**Brookdale Community College
Student Life Center, Navesink Rooms
765 Newman Springs Rd.
Lincroft, NJ 07738**

Chair Brennan called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. and roll call was taken.

Present	Trustees	Administration:
	Ms. Tracey Abby-White, Trustee	Dr. Katie Lynch
	Ms. Mary Pat Angelini, Trustee	Ms. Bonnie Passarella, Esq.
	Ms. Latonya Brennan, Chair	Ms. Nancy Kaari
	Mr. Steve Clayton, Trustee	Dr. Yesenia Madas
		Ms. Teresa Manfreda-Foley
	Dr. Stephanie D'Alessio, Trustee	Dr. Joan Scocco
	Ms. Dyese Davis, Trustee	Dr. Nancy Kegelman
	Ms. Barbara Horl, Vice-Chair	Ms. Patricia Sensi
	Mr. Jean Guerdy Paul, Trustee	
	Mr. James McCracken, Trustee	
	Dr. Les Richens,	
	Dr. David Stout, Secretary	
	Ms. Cyndie Williams, Trustee	Ms. Cynthia Gruskos
Absent	Mr. Paul Crupi, Trustee	
College Counsel	Mr. Mitch Jacobs, Esq., General Counsel	

Ms. Gruskos read the following statement: "In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S. 10:4-6 et seq., advance written notice of this meeting of the Board of Trustees was provided in the following manner:

On May 21, 2025 at 5 PM advance written notice of this meeting was posted on the Brookdale Community College website; emailed to *The Asbury Park Press* and *the Star Ledger* and filed with the Clerk of the County of Monmouth.

Mr. Jacobs read the statement on procedures and requirements for making public comment during the public meeting.

Chair Brennan led the pledge of allegiance followed by a welcome to those in attendance.

Chair Brennan read our mission statement:

Brookdale Community College empowers a diverse community by providing open access to high quality and cost-effective educational and lifelong learning options with clear paths to personal, educational, and economic success.

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Adoption of Agenda	A motion to adopt the agenda was made by Trustee Paul and seconded by Trustee Angelini. Motion passed.	
Recognition of Paul Synn - National Junior College Athletic Association Esports (NJCAA) Super Smash Bros. Ultimate (SSBU) 1v1 National Championship title for the second consecutive season—winning both the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 championships. The Board of Trustees recognized Brookdale Community College student Paul Synn for his outstanding achievement in winning the National Junior College Athletic Association Esports (NJCAA) Super Smash Bros. Ultimate 1v1 National Championship title for both the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 seasons. Paul’s journey exemplifies dedication and growth. He went undefeated in the Fall 2024 season and secured his first national title by defeating Centralia College of Washington in the finals. In the Spring 2025 season, Paul faced a challenging rematch against the same opponent in the semifinals, experienced a setback, but rebounded through the elimination bracket to reclaim the national title—becoming Brookdale's first back-to-back national esports champion. The Board celebrated Paul’s commitment, skill, and representation of Brookdale at the national level, and noted that he will also be receiving a commendation from the New Jersey State Legislature in recognition of his accomplishments. Paul and his coach, Frankie, were formally honored at the meeting.		
Approval of Memorandum of Understanding with Monmouth University Dr. Stout provided remarks on the new agreement between Brookdale Community College and Monmouth University,	A motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding with Monmouth University was made by Trustee Richens and	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p>expressing deep appreciation to Dr. Patrick Leahy, President of Monmouth University, and Dr. Robert McCaig, Vice President of Enrollment Management and Marketing, for their collaboration over the past two years in bringing the agreement to fruition. He praised their efforts in improving articulation pathways and ensuring the transferability of Brookdale credits. Dr. Stout highlighted that the agreement establishes the Brookdale Promise Program, which supports Brookdale students transferring to Monmouth University who are Pell and TAG eligible with an adjusted gross income of \$65,000 or less. The program leverages federal and institutional aid, including Monmouth’s own financial contributions, to enable students to pursue a Monmouth University degree with little to no debt. He underscored the value of this opportunity for students and extended thanks on behalf of the college and its students for making access to a Monmouth education more affordable and attainable.</p>	<p>seconded by Trustee Angelini.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, D’Alessio, Davis, Horl, McCracken, Paul, Richens, Williams and Chair Brennan.</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	
<p>Signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with Monmouth University</p> <p>President Patrick Leahy of Monmouth University expressed deep appreciation for the longstanding partnership between Monmouth University and Brookdale Community College, emphasizing a shared commitment to excellence, access, and community impact. He noted the unique bond between the two institutions as the primary higher education providers in Monmouth County—one public and one private—both striving to serve similar student populations, including many first-generation and low-income students. Highlighting Brookdale as Monmouth’s largest transfer partner, he affirmed that the new agreement would further strengthen this relationship by making transfer pathways easier and more affordable, supporting Monmouth’s goal of making a high-quality private education more accessible. Dr. Leahy commended Dr. Stout’s leadership and dedication to the community, thanked Commissioner Director Tom Arnone for his support, and celebrated the agreement as a milestone for both institutions, Monmouth County, and most importantly, the students they are privileged to serve.</p> <p>Dr. Stout read the following statement on behalf of Monmouth County Commissioner Director Thomas A. Arnone, who was unable to attend due to his commitment at the Police Academy graduation ceremony:</p> <p>“On behalf of the Monmouth County Board of County Commissioners, I extend congratulations to Monmouth University and Brookdale Community College, two of the nation’s finest institutions of higher learning, on the launch of the Brookdale Promise. This enhanced partnership is a shining example of what can be accomplished when great institutions come together with a shared commitment to student</p>		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p>success and access to opportunity. The Brookdale Promise breaks down financial barriers and creates a seamless transfer pathway for Monmouth County students, making a high-quality Monmouth University education more affordable and attainable for Brookdale transfer students with the greatest financial need. Congratulations to the trustees, leadership team, and the faculty of both Monmouth University and Brookdale Community College for your vision, innovation, and collaboration. You're making a lasting impact on the lives of students and on the future of Monmouth County."</p> <p>Following the reading of the statement, Dr. Stout also expressed thanks to Commissioner Director Arnone for his support and acknowledged the efforts of Brookdale staff members Dr. Madas, and Dr. Lynch for their instrumental roles in advancing the partnership. The remarks concluded with an invitation to Dr. Leahy to participate in the ceremonial signing of the agreement.</p>		
<p>President's Report –</p> <p>Dr. Stout began by expressing deep appreciation to the members of the Graduate Trustee Advisory Council (GTAC), recognizing their valuable insights and encouraging current students to continue their service.</p> <p>He provided an update on the nursing program, noting ongoing efforts to expand clinical placements and strengthen student support. Meetings have been held with Hackensack Meridian and are scheduled with CentraState and other long term facilities, including a commitment from Monmouth Medical Center to provide 20 additional clinical seats. A meeting with Bayshore Hospital is also being planned. The nursing department has proposed strategies to improve first-semester student retention, including enhanced academic support and advising. Dr. Stout shared that a faculty search is underway, with potential to hire multiple new nursing faculty members to meet demand, reduce the program's waitlist, and remain competitive with local institutions. Funding is already set aside to support these hires. He acknowledged the disparity in salaries between college faculty and hospital positions but emphasized the dedication of Brookdale's educators. Dr. Stout also recognized nursing student Chris Pflaum, who will begin work at RWJ Barnabas in New Brunswick this summer, congratulating him on representing Brookdale in the field.</p> <p>He then provided an update on Middle States accreditation, reporting that the self-study design is in its final stages and will be submitted on schedule. He praised the steering committee's work and shared that Middle States liaison Dr. Clifton provided positive feedback on the draft. Dr. Stout commended student Christina Weber for engaging GTAC in the accreditation process and noted that this cycle would see an unprecedented level of student involvement. He concluded by affirming that Brookdale is on track for its self-study in Fall 2026</p>		
<p>Reports from the Board Committees and Liaisons</p> <p>Presenter: Chair Brennan</p> <p>A. Graduate Trustee Report - Trustee Paul provided a brief report on the recent Graduate Trustee Advisory Council (GTAC) meeting held on May 27. During the meeting, student, Christina Weber presented on the Middle States accreditation process, emphasizing opportunities for student involvement. Following the presentation, several council members volunteered to join the college's Middle States working group, contributing student perspectives to the self-study process. He invited</p>		

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<p>members of the Graduate Trustee Advisory Council to the Board meeting in recognition of their service during his term. He expressed deep appreciation for the group’s dedication and highlighted the monthly meetings as a personal highlight of his tenure. Council members were presented with certificates of appreciation. Additionally, Trustee Paul recognized former Graduate Trustee Rebecca Fischhoff, who was in attendance, and credited her as the founder of the Graduate Trustee Advisory Council.</p> <p>GTAC members for 2025 were: </p> <table><tr><td>Abdelrahman</td><td>Elbanna</td></tr><tr><td>Yelena</td><td>Gavrilovic</td></tr><tr><td>Allyah</td><td>Holt</td></tr><tr><td>Kira</td><td>Huggins</td></tr><tr><td>Mikaela</td><td>Mazzeo</td></tr><tr><td>Caitlin</td><td>McDonough</td></tr><tr><td>Brooke</td><td>Meberg</td></tr><tr><td>Maurice</td><td>Parks</td></tr><tr><td>Christopher</td><td>Pflaum</td></tr><tr><td>Grace</td><td>Seabrook-Woo</td></tr></table> <p>B. Finance & Facilities Committee - May 13, 2025 - The Finance & Facilities Committee met on May 13, 2025. Trustee McCracken highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilities Projects: Mr. Naparło provided an update on ongoing projects including chiller modernization in Larrison Hall and CVA, with cost estimates pending for the Culinary School. Projects in development include HVAC and building automation upgrades, ADA improvements, and classroom renovations.• Financial Overview: Vice President Teresa Manfreda Foley reported that as of March 31, 2025, operating revenue is 4.9% higher, and expenditures are 4.6% higher compared to the same period last year.• Esports Program: Chris Boehmer presented on the rapid growth of the Esports program, launched in Fall 2023. The program now includes 120 participants and has earned both national and regional championships in multiple games. It includes academic integration through a special project course in collaboration with the Communications and Media Department. The program has hosted Garden State Esports finals and raised \$3,700 for a children's hospital. The College also received a \$110,000 grant through the NJ Pathways initiative to support esports content creation and workforce development. A new academic program in esports production is being explored, modeled after a program at Camden County College with an articulation to Stockton University.• Purchasing Items: 41 items were reviewed, including the recommendation to renew the IT management services contract with Ellucian and awarding legal services to Cleary Giacobbe Alfieri & Jacobs, LLC.• Grants & Gifts: The College received a \$31,000 grant from the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth program to distribute student success packets—containing laptops, school supplies, and Brookdale swag—to housing-insecure high school students.			Abdelrahman	Elbanna	Yelena	Gavrilovic	Allyah	Holt	Kira	Huggins	Mikaela	Mazzeo	Caitlin	McDonough	Brooke	Meberg	Maurice	Parks	Christopher	Pflaum	Grace	Seabrook-Woo
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation Report: Vice President Kaari reported that year-to-date Foundation revenue exceeds \$1.1 million. Cybersecurity: CIO George Sotirion provided an update on enhanced cybersecurity measures, including expanded use of multi-factor authentication and security keys to strengthen system protection. <p>C. Audit Committee - Trustee Angelini reported on behalf of the Audit committee. The audit committee did not formally meet in May; however, they did review the audit that was performed by our independent auditors for the fiscal year 2024. Financial statement and management discussion and analysis for WBJB-FM which, as you all know, is our Brookdale's public radio station and recommended acceptance. She reported there were no internal control deficiencies or compliance concerns, and the audit resulted in an unmodified, clean opinion.</p> <p>D. NJCCC Update – Trustee Barbara Horl delivered a comprehensive report highlighting recent advocacy, legislative progress, upcoming events, and national updates affecting community colleges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State-Level Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Senate Budget Committee Advocacy: On May 1, Dr. Stout, Trustee Horl, Graduate Trustee J.P. Montez Schwartz, and others attended the Senate Budget Committee meeting in Trenton to advocate for restoring \$20 million in state funding for community colleges. They also engaged with legislators at a reception afterward. Legislative Progress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The General Assembly passed bill A5211, which permanently establishes the New Jersey Pathways to Career Opportunities Initiative—a major win for workforce alignment. b. The Senate Higher Ed and Education Committees passed companion bills, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. S4419: Revises county contracts law to permit bidder disqualifications based on prior experience. b. S4010: Expands social services for county colleges. NJCCC Summit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The upcoming New Jersey Community College Summit in Atlantic City will focus on access, student success, technology, and industry partnerships. One full day will be dedicated to the NJ Pathways initiative. Interested attendees should contact Cynthia. National-Level Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. ACCT Finance and Audit Committee: Trustee Horl recently approved the FY26 budget, noting ACCT has experienced a 50% revenue increase over three years, with funding from membership dues, grants, corporate partners, and professional services like searches and retreats. b. Federal Legal Developments: A U.S. District Court in Boston issued an injunction halting a Presidential Executive Order affecting the Department 		

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<p>of Education. All DOE employees must be reinstated, and weekly compliance reports are now mandated.</p> <p>c. Legislation: The House passed the “One Big Beautiful Bill Act”, which now moves to the Senate for consideration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closing Remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Trustee Horl expressed enthusiasm over Brookdale’s plans to expand its nursing program, a long-term priority of hers. b. She praised Graduate Trustee Paul, Graduate-Trustee Elect, Montez Schwartz and former Graduate Trustee Rebecca Fischhoff for their impactful service, emphasizing the value of having a student voice on the Board. <p>E. Foundation Update - Trustee Abby-White encouraged everyone to support and attend the 46th Annual Education Open Golf Tournament, scheduled for Thursday, September 18 at Eagle Oaks Golf Club. The event will honor Tina Munson and her husband, recognizing Tina’s long-standing advocacy and support of the tournament and the Brookdale Foundation. As the Foundation’s second-largest fundraiser, participation is highly encouraged. Trustee Abby-White noted that even those who do not golf can still get involved by attending the dinner or placing an ad in support of the event. She added that the tournament is a scramble format, making it accessible and fun for players of all skill levels</p>		
<p>Public Comment on Agenda Items -</p> <p>No public comment was made and Ms. Gruskos confirmed that no written public comment was submitted.</p>		
<p>Review of Consent Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Any item may be removed from the consent agenda for discussion by any voting member of the Board of Trustees.</i> <p>A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda</p>	<p>A motion to adopt the revised consent agenda was made by Trustee Clayton and seconded by Trustee Angelini.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p>	
<p>Approval of Special Public Business Meeting - April 1, 2025</p>	<p>A motion to approve the minutes from the Special Public Business Meeting on April 1, 2025 was made by Trustee Abby-White and seconded by Trustee Clayton.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p>	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
	Abstentions: Trustee Abby-White	
Approval of Board Retreat Minutes - April 11, 2025	<p>A motion to approve the minutes from the Board Retreat Minutes on April 11, 2025, was made by Trustee Abby-White and seconded by Trustee McCracken.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: Trustee Abby-White.</p>	
Approval of Board Retreat Minutes - April 12, 2025	<p>A motion to approve the minutes from the Board Retreat Minutes on April 12, 2025, was made by Trustee Abby-White and seconded by Vice-Chair Horl.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: Trustees Abby-White and Richens</p>	
Approval of Public Business Meeting Minutes - April 29, 2025	<p>A motion to approve the minutes from the Public Business Meeting on April 29, 2025, was made by Trustee Angelini and seconded by Trustee Williams.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: Trustee McCracken</p>	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Approval of Executive Session Meeting Minutes - April 29, 2025	<p>A motion to approve the minutes from the executive meeting held on April 29, 2025 was made by Trustee Clayton and seconded by Trustee Richens.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: Trustee McCarcken</p>	
Approval of Consent Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Approval of Human Resources B. Purchases in Excess of \$41,600 and New Jersey "Pay-to-Play" bids, and Pursuant to the New Jersey "Pay to Play" Process, in Excess of \$17,500 C. Open Invoice Payment Requests for Vendor, Student and Employee Payments D. Monthly Financial Reports E. Capital Project Update 	<p>A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Trustee Richens and seconded by Trustee Paul.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, D'Alessio, Davis, Horl, McCracken, Paul, Richens, Williams and Chair Brennan.</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	
Acceptance of FY24 Radio Audit	<p>A motion to accept the FY24 radio audit was made by Trustee D'Alessio and seconded by Trustee Abby-White.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, D'Alessio, Davis, Horl, McCracken, Paul, Richens, Williams and Chair Brennan.</p>	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
	NO: None ABSTENTIONS: None	
Public Comment - No public comment was made and Ms. Gruskos confirmed that no written public comment was submitted.		
Old/New Business –		
Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 6:50 PM	A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Vice-Chair Horl and seconded by Trustee Abby-White. Motion passed.	