

BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Board of Trustees
Public Business Meeting Minutes**

November 25, 2025

**Brookdale Community College
Navesink Rooms, Lincroft Campus
765 Newman Springs Rd.
Lincroft, NJ 07738**

Trustee Horl called the meeting to order at 5:35 P.M. and roll call was taken.

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

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 November 19, 2025 at 1:30 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.

Trustee Horl led the pledge of allegiance followed by a welcome to those in attendance.

Trustee Horl read our mission statement:

Brookdale Community College opens doors to education with courage and care, guiding diverse learners toward a lifetime of growth and success.

Dr. Stout led a moment of silence for three retired Brookdalians, Martha McGeehan, Rosemarie Mikson and John Conroy who passed away in November.

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Adoption of Agenda Closed session was removed from the agenda. The swearing in of Trustee Hoitt was removed from the agenda, and rescheduled to December 16, 2025.	A motion to adopt the revised agenda was made by Trustee Abby-White and seconded by Trustee Crupi. Motion passed.	
Board of Trustees Reorganization A. Election of Officers of the Board of Trustees	Mr. Jacobs announced that nominations were in order for the office of Chair. Trustee McCracken nominated Trustee Horl for the office of Chair and seconded by Trustee Abby-White. Seeing no other nominations, nominations for the Office of Chair were closed. A roll call vote on the nomination of Trustee Horl as Chair for 2025-2026 was called, and Trustee Horl was elected unanimously. YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, McCracken, , Swartz, Williams, Horl NO: None ABSTENTIONS: None	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p>Following her election as Chair, Chair Horl expressed deep gratitude to her colleagues for this honor and emphasized her commitment to advancing Brookdale in the year ahead. She acknowledged the diverse talents of the board members and highlighted the value she places on their perspectives, stating her belief in the “wisdom of many” over the “wisdom of one.” Chair Horl encouraged open communication, inviting trustees to share ideas, concerns, and directions they believe the board should consider. She stressed the importance of collaboration to ensure the board continues to act with courage and care while fulfilling its mission for the benefit of students and the entire Brookdale community. She concluded by reiterating her appreciation and excitement for the opportunity to serve.</p> <p>B. Establishment of a Regular Meeting Schedule of the Board of Trustees & Designation of Public Notice Requirements</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussion of Board Schedule 2. Adoption of 2026 Board of Trustees Annual Calendar & Designation of Public Notice Requirements 	<p>Chair Horl announced that nominations were in order for the office of Vice-Chair.</p> <p>Trustee D’Alessio nominated Trustee Abby-White for the office of Vice-Chair with a second by Trustee Clayton..</p> <p>Seeing no other nominations, nominations for the Office of Vice-Chair were closed.</p> <p>A roll call vote was taken on the nomination of Trustee Abby-White as Vice-Chair for 2025-2026.</p> <p>Trustee Abby-White was elected Vice-Chair.</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, D’Alessio, Davis, McCracken, Swartz, Williams, and Chair Horl</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: Trustee Crupi</p> <p>A motion by resolution to adopt the annual Board of Trustees meeting calendar for 2026 and the designation</p>	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p>C. Discussion of Appointment of Standing Committees</p> <p>D. Annual Signing of Code of Ethics of Brookdale Community College</p> <p>The Trustees were provided with a copy of the Code of Ethics of the Board of Trustees and the Trustee Conduct Policy and were requested to provide Cynthia with the signed acknowledgement form.</p>	<p>of public notice requirements was made by Trustee Clayton and seconded by Trustee Swartz.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>Chair Horl announced that all committee assignments will be carried through this December. She requested the Trustees to communicate by December 10 their interest in serving on the various committees and committee appointments will be made at the December 16 meeting. She requested the Trustees to inform her if they had interest in serving as a Committee Chair or Alternate Committee Chair.</p>	
<p>E. Annual Report of the College - Ms. Laura Oncea, Director of Communications presented the Annual Report.</p> <p>Ms. Oncea presented the Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2025, highlighting a year of transformation, momentum, and impact for Brookdale Community College. She emphasized Brookdale's continued leadership as the number one college in New Jersey and its commitment to student success, belonging, and workforce development. Key achievements included a smooth Board leadership transition, strategic plan advancement, and Middle States reaccreditation preparation. Brookdale strengthened partnerships with organizations such as Lunch Break and Habitat for Humanity, earning statewide and national recognition for innovation and community engagement.</p>		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p>Academic excellence was reaffirmed with Brookdale ranked among the top 10% of U.S. community colleges. Student achievements included national honors, NASA internships, and expanded transfer pathways with Monmouth University and The College of New Jersey. Workforce initiatives featured healthcare partnerships, electric vehicle training programs, and Brookdale's designation as lead institution for the Workforce Innovation Center. Continuing and Professional Studies launched new programs, including the NJ Film Academy and Center for Adult Transition.</p> <p>The College celebrated artistic and design achievements, civic engagement initiatives, and expanded wellness and support services. Athletics and esports programs earned national awards, while the Foundation provided over \$840,000 in scholarships and assistance. Brookdale also completed a major rebranding initiative, introducing the "B. Brookdale" framework to unify its identity and strengthen recognition. Ms. Oncea concluded by affirming Brookdale's role as a leader in academic excellence, workforce development, and student success, thanking the Board for its continued support.</p>		
Approval of MOA with Visiting Nurse Association of Central New Jersey Health Center, Inc.		
<p>Introduction of Guests and Partnership Celebration</p> <p>Chair Horl introduced guests from the Visiting Nurse Association (VNA) and VNA Health Group, welcoming Christopher Rinn, President & CEO of VNA Health Group; Sarina Bradley, CEO of Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey (VNACJ) Community Health Center; Board Chair Robert Dibble; Vice Chair Eileen O'Hern Luby; Community Health Center Board Treasurer Sophia Taylor; and staff members Wendy Ebner and Susan Giglia, among others. Chair Horl noted the significance of the new partnership between Brookdale and VNA, which will greatly benefit students and the Brookdale community.</p> <p>Remarks by Dr. Stout</p> <p>Dr. Stout expressed appreciation to VNA leadership and Brookdale staff for their collaboration in finalizing the agreement. He highlighted key components of the partnership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancements to Brookdale's nursing curriculum, including visiting faculty from VNA. • Creation of a Virtual Reality Simulation Laboratory, with VNA providing equipment and Brookdale providing space and staffing. • Access for VNA employees to Brookdale library databases and tuition discounts for employees and eligible dependents. • Expanded healthcare access for Brookdale students and employees through the Carolyn Huber Holistic Wellness Center, including screening services. Dr. Stout emphasized that the partnership strengthens health access and nursing education for the entire community. 		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Remarks by Christopher Rinn, CEO, VNA Health Group		
<p>Mr. Rinn praised Brookdale as “the number one community college in New Jersey” and commended the Board for its leadership. He noted that the partnership addresses critical healthcare challenges, including the nursing shortage, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding access to care for uninsured and underserved populations. • Continuing and expanding clinical rotations for Brookdale nursing students. • Providing educational opportunities for VNA employees, enabling career advancement from roles such as home health aide to nursing. He described the collaboration as a way to “pay it forward” for the healthcare profession. 		
Remarks by Sarina Bradley, CEO, VNACJ Community Health Center		
<p>Ms. Bradley explained the mission of Community Health Centers as nonprofit, patient-governed organizations delivering comprehensive primary and preventive care regardless of income or insurance status. She emphasized the shared commitment of Brookdale and VNACJ to open doors—Brookdale to education and VNACJ to health and wellness. She expressed pride in entering the agreement, which aligns with both organizations’ missions to serve the community.</p>		
<p>A motion to approve by resolution the authorization of President Stout to continue negotiations with the Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey Health Center to finalize the terms of the MOU and authorization to execute the MOU was made by Trustee Crupi and seconded by Vice Chair Abby-White.</p>		
<p>Motion passed.</p>		
<p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, Crupi, D’Alessio, Davis, McCracken, Swartz, Williams, and Chair Horl</p>		
<p>NO: None</p>		
<p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>		
President’s Report –		
<p>Dr. Stout began his report by commending the College Relations team for their outstanding work on the Annual Report, noting its compelling design and storytelling. He shared that while the printed version will be available in early spring, digital copies should be ready sooner. He then provided an update on the Middle States accreditation process, reporting that all seven working groups have submitted their first drafts to the steering committee, which is now providing feedback. A second draft is expected by January or early February, followed by college-wide review in the spring. Dr. Stout emphasized the challenge of consolidating multiple contributions into a unified, 100-page document that speaks with one voice. He thanked the steering committee and working group chairs for their efforts and acknowledged the recent appreciation breakfast celebrating the submission of first drafts. He confirmed that the Board will be asked to approve the final self-study in July 2026, in alignment with Middle States’ timeline, and expressed confidence that the document will present a compelling story of Brookdale’s progress.</p>		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Reports from the Board Committees and Liaisons		
<p>A. Finance & Facilities Committee – Trustee McCracken reported on the November 17th meeting, which covered several key items. The committee discussed the Carvertise vehicle advertising campaign, with Risk Management advising against wrapping student cars; the decision was made to wrap only college-owned vehicles. Facilities updates included plans for new outdoor scoreboards for softball, baseball, and soccer, scheduled for mid-October installation, and indoor basketball scoreboards during the holiday break. Dr. Manfreda-Foley presented the fall semester financial forecast, noting enrollment and tuition revenue are on track but projecting a \$2.7 million deficit due to a 32% increase in health insurance costs, higher adjunct salaries, and reduced state aid. Recommended actions include freezing discretionary spending, reviewing operations for efficiencies, exploring revenue-generating opportunities, and identifying alternative health insurance solutions, with a goal of achieving a balanced budget and modest surplus by FY27. Financial reporting showed operating revenue at \$37.8 million (10% higher than last year), though cash reserves declined by \$3 million. Grants totaling \$1.6 million have been awarded, and Foundation revenue stands at \$680,000, down from \$833,000 last year due to decreased investment income.</p> <p>B. Student Success & Educational Excellence Committee - Vice Chair Abby-White summarized the November 19th meeting, which focused on academic and student success initiatives. Highlights included plans for a new Dental Hygiene AAS program, a 69-credit degree aligned with CODA and state licensure standards, supported by Parker Health's commitment to build and equip an on-campus dental clinic. Launch is anticipated in Fall 2027 or Spring 2028. The committee reviewed dual enrollment strategies and NASAP accreditation, with Brookdale partnering with 89% of Monmouth County high schools and working on a 3–4-year accreditation plan to enhance transferability. Workforce development updates included new esports production and sports management degrees, strong enrollment in alternative route teaching programs, and expansion into high-demand trades such as welding and HVAC. The committee also discussed the newly signed VNA nursing partnership and plans for a virtual reality lab in 2026. Student Affairs reported significant athletic achievements, increased campus engagement, and expanded student life initiatives. Dr. Lynch provided an update on Middle States Standard 3, emphasizing progress in learning design, faculty qualifications, and assessment. Trustees were invited to attend upcoming program assessment days on December 3–4.</p> <p>C. Graduate Trustee Report – Trustee Swartz shared updates on leadership development and student engagement. He completed the Fall 2025 Virtual Trustee Leadership Academy, earning certification and presenting case studies during the sessions. Trustee Swartz will hold its first Graduate Trustee Advisory Council meeting on December 3rd with 12 new members representing diverse student backgrounds. He attended campus events, including the Haunted Theater and the biannual Student Speak out, where students praised the Wellness Center and Nutrition Hub but raised concerns about communication, academic advising, and consistency in instructional delivery... A detailed report on student feedback is available for review.</p> <p>D. NJCCC Update – Chair Horl reported on recent NJCCC meetings, including the Executive Committee and Legislative Committee sessions. Discussions centered on the incoming governor's transition team and the urgent issue of rising healthcare costs, which increased by nearly 32%, creating significant budget challenges for community colleges statewide. Advocacy efforts will focus on securing state support and exploring alternatives. Upcoming NJCCC events include the Student Leadership Academy</p>		

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<p>at Brookdale on April 29, 2026, and the Community College Opportunity Summit on June 9, 2026, in Atlantic City. Chair Horl announced her election as NJCCC Vice Chair and Dr. Stout's election as Treasurer. Vice Chair Abby-White added that NJCCC will develop a unified advocacy plan to present to the new administration.</p> <p>E. Foundation Update -Vice Chair Abby-White reported on the November 20th Foundation meeting, which reviewed a successful audit and emphasized board development and donor engagement. The Feed the Future campaign raised nearly \$9,000, ranking Brookdale first in the state. The Breakfast at Brookdale event continues to generate interest and donations. Planning is underway for the Scholarship Bash on April 24, 2026, with a focus on making the event more engaging and less formal, and for the Education Open on September 28, 2026. Trustees were encouraged to support the year-end campaign and identify potential new Foundation members.</p>		
Public Comment on Agenda Items		
<p>Jack Ryan – Assistant Professor, English - congratulated Chair Horl on her election and raised a question regarding the Middle States visit schedule. He asked when the Board of Trustees will meet with the head of the Middle States visiting team, noting that such a meeting typically occurs several months before the full team visit. Reflecting on his experience nearly ten years ago, he emphasized the importance of clear internal communication about the meeting schedule.</p>		
<p>Dr. Stout responded that the schedule for the team chair's visit should be available early in the spring semester, with the visit anticipated in May or June, prior to the full team visit in October or November 2026. He assured us that the college community will be notified once details are confirmed.</p>		
<p>Ms. Gruskos confirmed there were no written comments submitted on agenda items only.</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 consent agenda was made by Trustee D'Alessio and seconded by Vice Chair Abby-White.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p>	
<p>Approval of Public Business Meeting Minutes - October 28, 2025</p>	<p>A motion to approve the minutes from the Public Business Meeting on October 28, 2025, was made by Trustee Crupi and seconded by Trustee McCracken.</p> <p>Minutes approved.</p>	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Approval of Consent Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Approval of Human Resources B. Acceptance of Gifts C. Acceptance of Grants D. Submission of Grants E. 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 F. Open Invoice Payment Requests for Vendor, Student and Employee Payments G. Monthly Financial Reports H. FY26 Fall Semester Financial Forecast I. Capital Project Update 	<p>A motion to approve the consent agenda was made Trustee Crupi and seconded by Trustee D'Alessio.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, McCracken, , Swartz, Williams, and Chair Horl</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	
Approval of Revised Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Policy 1.8000 Adoption, Review, and Amendment of Mission, Commitment, Vision, Values and Strategic Priorities of Brookdale Community College (revised title) B. Policy 3.3002 Grand Funded Positions C. Policy 3.9001 Multi-Year Contracts for Administrative Staff D. Policy 6.2000 Financial Aid Policy 	<p>A motion to approve the revised policies listed below was made by</p> <p>A. Policy 1.8000 Adoption, Review, and Amendment of Mission, Commitment, Vision, Values and Strategic Priorities of Brookdale Community College (revised title)</p> <p>B. Policy 3.3002 Grand Funded Positions</p> <p>C. Policy 3.9001 Multi-Year Contracts for Administrative Staff</p> <p>D. Policy 6.2000 Financial Aid Policy</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, McCracken, ,</p>	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
	<p>Swartz, Williams, and Chair Horl</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	
<p>Approval of A.A.S. Dental Hygiene</p> <p>Dr. Stout announced the recommendation of Brookdale's new Dental Hygiene program, developed as part of a partnership with Parker Family Medical. Parker Family Medical is establishing a free on-campus dental clinic for income-qualified individuals and veterans. He highlighted the significant shortage of dental hygienists locally and nationally, underscoring the program's importance. Dr. Stout commended Dr. Jayne Edman for designing the 69-credit Associate of Applied Science degree, streamlined to help students complete their studies efficiently. Students enrolled in the program will gain hands-on experience through the Parker clinic and campus facilities, creating a strong synergy between academic learning and practical training. He noted that financial support from Parker and private donors will help offset costs, making the program more accessible compared to similar offerings elsewhere. Dr. Stout expressed enthusiasm for the program's approval and its potential to meet workforce needs while expanding educational opportunities.</p>	<p>A motion to approve by resolution the Associated Degree of Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Dental Hygiene program was made by Trustee Clayton and seconded by Trustee Montez.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p> <p>YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, McCracken, , Swartz, Williams, and Chair Horl</p> <p>NO: None</p> <p>ABSTENTIONS: None</p>	
<p>Public Comment -</p> <p>Christopher Plaum, a nursing student and adjunct faculty member, presented a petition signed by 425 supporters advocating for fair adjunct compensation. He requested the Board to allow independent bargaining for adjunct pay, adjust per-credit rates to reflect cost-of-living, and create higher pay tiers for experienced faculty. He urged the Board to address policy barriers and empower negotiations ahead of mediation on December 1st</p> <p>John McGrath spoke on behalf of student volunteers who operate Brookdale Esports livestreams, expressing concern about the lack of compensation for their work. He noted that while participation is voluntary, the labor provided is significant and should not be minimized. Mr. McGrath argued that</p>		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p>compensation would motivate students, improve production quality, and attract more participants. He highlighted that Brookdale Esports often partners with organizations such as Garden State Esports, generating thousands of online viewers, and emphasized that in other settings such viewership would warrant paid roles. He concluded by stating that the students' specialized skills and dedication deserve recognition and respect.</p>		
<p>Written public comment was submitted and was read into the minutes:</p> <p>Faculty Association - We, the members of the Brookdale Community College Faculty Association, support our colleagues in the Brookdale Community College Adjunct Association during their contract negotiations, and we hope that a just and fair resolution of the impasse issues can be completed quickly.</p>		
<p>Old/New Business –</p>		
	<p>The Board confirmed its decision to conduct self-evaluations twice annually, in December and May. The December self-evaluation will be administered starting December 1, with a completion deadline of December 12. Chair Horl announced her appointment to the ACCT Impact and Success Committee and shared insights from the recent ACCT Leadership Congress, noting national trends in enrollment challenges and the growing importance of industry-based credentials and artificial intelligence. She proposed forming an ad hoc committee to explore expanding industry-based credential programs at Brookdale, inviting interested trustees to participate. The discussion emphasized the value of integrating AI and professional certifications to strengthen workforce readiness. The meeting concluded with recognition of Vice Chair Abby -White's upcoming birthday.</p>	
<p>Adjournment</p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm</p>	<p>A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Crupi and seconded by Trustee Clayton.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p>	