

BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Board of Trustees Public Business Meeting Minutes

August 25, 2026

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

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

Present	Trustees	Administration:
	Ms. Barbara Horl, Chair	Dr. Katie Lynch
	Ms. Tracey Abby-White, Trustee, Vice-Chair	Ms. Nancy Kaari
	Ms. Mary Pat Angelini, Trustee	
	Mr. Steve Clayton, Trustee	Mr. Kornipibob Kanthanjan
	Mr. Paul Crupi, Trustee	
	Dr. Stephanie D'Alessio	Dr. Laura Longo
	Ms. Dyese Davis, Trustee	Dr. Teresa Manfreda-Foley
	Ms. Stephanie L. Hoitt, Trustee	
	Mr. James McCracken, Trustee	
	Dr. Les Richens, Trustee	Ms. Cynthia Gruskos
	Dr. David Stout, Secretary	
	Mr. Montez Swartz, Trustee	
	Ms. Cyndie Williams, Trustee	
Absent		
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 August 20, 2026 at 4 pm advance written notice of this meeting was posted on the Brookdale Community College website; posted on the BAC Bulletin Board 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 Horl led the pledge of allegiance followed by a welcome to those in attendance.

Chair 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 the Board in a moment of silence in memory of two members of the Brookdale family who recently passed away, Marilyn Siegler and Sondra Cannon.

Dr. Stout recognized Ms. Siegler, who served Brookdale as a faculty member during two periods of her career, teaching Food Service courses from 1977 to 1978 and returning to teach Nutrition from 2009 to 2011 following her retirement as a Registered Dietitian. He noted her lifelong commitment to education and to helping others through nutrition and healthcare.

Dr. Stout also recognized Ms. Cannon, who joined Brookdale in 2005 in Human Resources and dedicated many years of service to the College. He highlighted her contributions in recruitment, employee development, diversity, inclusion, and compliance, as well as her advocacy for a respectful and inclusive workplace and her belief in “One Brookdale.” He noted that she was respected for her professionalism, compassion, thoughtfulness, and advocacy for employees.

Dr. Stout acknowledged the lasting legacies of service, compassion, professionalism, and care left by both Ms. Siegler and Ms. Cannon, and extended sympathy to their families, friends, former students, and colleagues. The Board observed a moment of silence in their memory.

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Adoption of Agenda	A motion to adopt the agenda was made by Trustee Richens and seconded by Vice-Chair Abby-White.	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Swearing in of Graduate Trustee Jocelyn Fajardo Mr. Jacobs conducted the swearing in ceremony of Graduate Trustee Jocelyn Fajardo.		
Resolution to Hold a Closed Meeting	A motion to approve by resolution (Attachment A) to hold an Executive Session was made by Trustee Richens and seconded by Trustee Hoitt.	
Motion to Re-Open the Meeting to the Public	A motion to reopen the meeting to the public was made by Trustee Richens and seconded by Trustee D'Alessio.	
President's Report Dr. David Stout expressed appreciation to retiring employees Barbara Devine and Rich Robinson for their years of service to the College. He announced that Brookdale's Middle States Self-Study had been completed and is ready for submission, recognizing the extensive work of the MSCHE Steering Committee and numerous faculty and staff members who contributed over an 18-month period. Dr. Stout noted that the College is preparing for the Middle States site visit scheduled for November 8 – 11, 2026 and emphasized the importance of campus-wide understanding of and engagement with the self-study findings. Trustees commended the quality and comprehensiveness of the report and its executive summaries Dr. Stout provided additional context regarding the College's growing financial challenges, focusing primarily on the rapid escalation of healthcare costs. He shared a financial projection illustrating the impact of remaining in the New Jersey School Employees' Health Benefits Program, noting that healthcare expenditures are projected to increase from approximately \$11.9 million in FY2026 to \$24.3 million by FY2028, effectively more than doubling within a short period of time. He emphasized that these costs represent the primary financial pressure facing the institution and is the principal reason the College is considering a potential reduction in force.		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Dr. Stout expressed appreciation to Trustee Fajardo for participating in more than 50% of the new student orientations, while also focusing on her training as a Resident Assistance (RA) at Stockton University focusing on transfer students. He also thanked Trustee McCracken for spending the entire day on campus which began with his participation in the New Student Orientation all way through tonight's meeting.		
Reports from the Board Committees and Liaisons A. Finance & Facilities Committee –Trustee McCracken reported on the August 18, 2026 Finance and Facilities Committee meeting. The committee received a facilities update indicating that the theater lighting project had been completed and that construction of the annual Haunted Theater attraction was underway, including required safety improvements. The committee also reviewed plans for the development of a new welding program and facility, which will be located in the current print shop area adjacent to the dental clinic. The project supports the College's efforts to expand career-focused workforce training opportunities and will include associated renovations and site improvements. From a financial perspective, the committee reviewed year-end budget information showing a modest increase in revenue primarily attributable to tuition increases. However, operating expenditures also increased, driven largely by healthcare benefit costs, utilities, and snow removal expenses. The College's cash balance was reported to be approximately \$4.9 million lower than the previous year. The committee additionally reviewed purchases and payments to vendors, students, and employees, and received reports related to grants, gifts, and Foundation activities. B. Graduate Trustee Report - Graduate Trustee Jocelyn Fajardo introduced herself and shared her educational journey from Brookdale to Stockton University, where she is pursuing further studies in psychology. She emphasized her commitment to serving Brookdale and supporting students through active engagement and advocacy. Ms. Fajardo reported participating in approximately half of the College's New Student Orientation sessions and educating incoming students about student leadership opportunities, Board governance, and campus resources. She noted strong orientation participation, with 902 students registering, 753 attending, and an overall attendance rate of 84 percent. Students were introduced to key support services including financial aid, accessibility services, and wellness resources. Ms. Fajardo also described efforts to connect with students through a Graduate Trustee social media presence and reported that common student concerns centered on tuition affordability, scholarships, technology needs, and academic resources. She indicated that increasing awareness and utilization of student support services will remain a priority during her term.		

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C. NJCCC Update – Chair Horl reported that the New Jersey Council of County Colleges had not met since the June workshop in Atlantic City. She advised that an Executive Committee meeting is scheduled for early September, followed by a full Council meeting on September 14, which she and Dr. Stout planned to attend. An update will be provided at a future Board meeting. D. Foundation Update – Vice Chair Abby-White encouraged participation in the Foundation’s Education Open Golf Outing scheduled for September 28, noting it is one of the Foundation’s largest fundraising events supporting student scholarships and assistance programs. Trustees were also reminded of the upcoming Breakfast with Brookdale event on November 17, which will serve as the kickoff celebration for Brookdale Community College’s 60th anniversary.		
Public Comment on Agenda Items Chair Horl opened the public comment section on agenda items only requesting commenter(s) to provide public comment in accordance with the instructions given by Mr. Jacobs. She further announced that public comment would be limited to 5 minutes per commenter. Terrence Wall, a Brookdale Community College alumni and Vice President with Marsh McLennan Agency, addressed the Board regarding employee healthcare costs and the proposed reduction in force. Mr. Wall discussed potential alternatives to the State Health Benefits Program and stated that his organization had developed a proposal that could result in healthcare cost savings while maintaining comparable benefits. He encouraged the Board to further evaluate alternative healthcare options and consider delaying action on the health insurance broker appointment to allow additional review of potential cost-saving opportunities. Ms. Gruskos confirmed there were no written comments submitted. In addition, she noted that Mr. Wall had previously submitted written comment but chose to provide his public comment in person. Seeing no additional public comment, Chair Horl closed the public comment portion of the meeting.		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Review of Consent Agenda Any item may be removed from the consent agenda for discussion by any voting member of the Board of Trustees. A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda	A motion to adopt the consent agenda was made by Trustee Richens and seconded by Trustee Clayton. Motion passed.	
Approval of Public Business Meeting Minutes - June 23, 2026	A motion to approve the minutes from the Public Business Meeting on June 23, 2026, was made by Trustee Angelini and seconded by Vice Chair Abby-White. Minutes Approved. ABSTENTIONS: Trustee D'Alessio	
Approval of Executive Session Minutes – June 23, 2026	A motion to approve the Executive Session Minutes on June 23, 2026, was made by Vice-Chair Abby-White and seconded by Trustee Hoitt. Minutes Approved. ABSTENTIONS: Trustee D'Alessio	
Approval of Consent Agenda A. Approval of Human Resources - August	A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Trustee Angelini and seconded by Vice Chair Abby-White.	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
B. Ratification - Approval of Human Resources - July 2026 C. Acceptance of Gifts D. Acceptance of Grants E. Ratification - Acceptance of Grants - July 2026 F. Submission of Grants G. Ratification - Submission of Grants - July 2026 H. Purchases in Excess of \$44,900 and New Jersey "Pay-to-Play" bids, and Pursuant to the New Jersey "Pay to Play" Process, in Excess of \$17,500 I. Ratification - Purchase in Excess of \$44,900 and New Jersey "Pay-to-Play" bids, and Pursuant to the New Jersey "Pay to Play" Process, in Excess of \$17,500 Purchase(s) - July 2026 J. Open Invoice Payment Requests for Vendor, Student and Employee Payments K. Ratification - Open Invoice Payment Requests for Vendor, Student and Employee Payments - July 2026 L. Monthly Financial Reports M. Capital Project Update	YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, Fajardo, Hoitt, McCracken, Richens, Williams and Chair Horl NO: None ABSTENTIONS: None Motion passed	
Approval of submission of MSCHE Self-Study Report	A motion to approve by resolution the submission of MSCHE Self-Study Report was made by Trustee Richens and seconded by Trustee Davis. YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, Fajardo,	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
	Hoitt, McCracken, Richens, Williams and Chair Horl NO: None ABSTENTIONS: None Motion passed	
Approval of Declaration of Reduction in Force	A motion to adopt the resolution declaring a reduction in force and strategic reorganization in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:60-3, and further direct the President to develop and present a recommended implementation plan at the September 22, 2026 Board meeting, at which time the Board may take action on those recommendations was made by Trustee Crupi and seconded by Vice-Chair Abby-White. YES: Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, Fajardo, Hoitt, McCracken, Richens, Williams and Chair Horl NO: None ABSTENTIONS: None Motion passed	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Public Comment Chair Horl opened the public comment section requesting commenters to provide public comment in accordance with the instructions given by Mr. Jacobs. She further announced that public comment would be limited to 5 minutes per commenter. Cameron Mount, President of the Brookdale Faculty Association, addressed the Board regarding the recently approved resolution declaring a reduction in force. Mr. Mount acknowledged the College's financial challenges and stated that the Faculty Association shares the goal of maintaining the College's long-term financial stability. He expressed concern about the potential impact of reductions in force on faculty, staff, administrators, and students, emphasizing the role of College employees in supporting student success through instruction and student services. Mr. Mount stated that the Faculty Association supports the College's mission of student success and access and expressed its willingness to work collaboratively with the College in addressing financial challenges. He encouraged the Board to consider the impact of reduction in force decisions on the College community and student experience. Ms. Gruskos confirmed there were no written comments submitted. Seeing no additional public comment, Chair Horl closed the public comment portion of the meeting.		
Old/New Business – Vice Chair Abby-White shared positive feedback regarding Brookdale's Esports program. She described a recent visit with her young grandson, who specifically requested to participate in Esports activities, and praised the program's quality and appeal. She also commended staff member Mateo for his patience, engagement with students, and efforts to promote the program through social media and graphic communications, noting the positive impression the experience left on her family. Dr. David Stout offered several closing remarks. He acknowledged the significance of the Board's action approving a declaration of reduction in force and strategic reorganization, recognizing the impact such actions may have on members of the College community. Dr. Stout reaffirmed the commitment of the leadership team to conduct the process as transparently and compassionately as possible while exploring every opportunity to minimize the impact on		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
employees and the institution. Dr. Stout also recognized the attendance of former Trustee and Brookdale benefactor Dr. Susie Whyman, whose family name is associated with the Whyman Center for Transformative Learning, and thanked her for her continued support of the College. Chair Horl, requested Trustees hold the date of November 10, 2026 at 3:30 pm for the meeting with the MSCHE Self-Evaluation Team. In addition, she encouraged the Trustees to hold the date of November 17 at 8 am for the Foundation Breakfast with Brookdale event. In closing comments, Chair Horl stated that the Board understands the seriousness of the actions taken regarding the reduction in force resolution and emphasized that all Trustees recognize the weight of the decision. She noted that the Board would carefully consider the concerns expressed during the meeting and remain mindful of the impact on employees, students, and the broader College community as future recommendations are reviewed.		
Adjournment Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm	A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Clayton and seconded by Vice-Chair Abby-White.	

BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION – First Session

WHEREAS, while the Sen. Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.) requires all meetings of the Brookdale Community College Board of Trustees to be held in public, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) sets forth nine (9) types of matters that may lawfully be discussed in "Executive Session," i.e. without the public being permitted to attend, and

WHEREAS, the Brookdale Community College Board of Trustees has determined that **1** issue is permitted by N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) to be discussed without the public in attendance and shall be discussed during an Executive Session to be held on **August 25, 2026 at approximately 5:45 PM** _____. The nine (9) exceptions to open public meetings set forth in N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) are listed below, and next to each exception is a box which will be marked when the issues to be privately discussed fall within that exception, and after each exception is a space where additional information that will disclose as much information about the discussion as possible without undermining the purpose of the exception shall be written.

☐ "(1) Any matter which, by express provision of Federal law, State statute or rule of court shall be rendered confidential or excluded from public discussion." The legal citation to the provision(s) at issue is: _____ and the nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is _____

☐ "(2) Any matter in which the release of information would impair a right to receive funds from the federal government." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is _____

☐ "(3) Any material the disclosure of which constitutes an unwarranted invasion of individual privacy such as any records, data, reports, recommendations, or other personal material of any educational, training, social service, medical, health, custodial, child protection, rehabilitation, legal defense, welfare, housing, relocation, insurance and similar program or institution operated by a public body pertaining to any specific individual admitted to or served by such institution or program, including but not limited to information relative to the individual's personal and family circumstances, and any material pertaining to admission, discharge, treatment, progress or condition of any individual, unless the individual concerned (or, in the case of a minor or incompetent, his guardian) shall request in writing that the same be disclosed publicly." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is _____

☐ "(4) Any collective bargaining agreement, or the terms and conditions of which are proposed for inclusion in any collective bargaining agreement, including the negotiation of terms and conditions with employees or representatives of employees of the public body:

☐ "(5) Any matter involving the purchase lease or acquisition of real property with public funds, the setting of bank rates or investment of public funds where it could adversely affect the public interest if discussion of such matters were disclosed." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality –

"(6) Any tactics and techniques utilized in protecting the safety and property of the public provided that their disclosure could impair such protection. Any investigations of violations or possible violations of the law." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is:

☒ a) "(7) Any pending or anticipated litigation or contract negotiation in which the public body is or may become a party. Any matters falling within the attorney-client privilege, to the extent that confidentiality is required in order for the attorney to exercise his ethical duties as a lawyer." The parties to and docket numbers of each item of litigation and/or the parties to each contract discussed are and the nature of the discussion, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is: **Attorney client advice/privilege as to a potential declaration of a Reduction in Force.**

☐ "(8) Any matter involving the employment, appointment, termination of employment, terms and conditions of employment, evaluation of the performance, promotion or disciplining of any specific prospective public officer or employee or current public officer or employee employed or appointed by the public body, unless all individual employees or appointees whose rights could be adversely affected request in writing that such matter or matters be discussed at a public meeting." Subject to the balancing of the public's interest and the employee's privacy rights under South Jersey Publishing Co. v. New Jersey Expressway Authority, 124 N.J. 478 (1991), the employee(s) and nature of the discussion, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality..

☐ "(9) Any deliberation of a public body occurring after a public hearing that may result in the imposition of a specific civil penalty upon the responding party or the suspension or loss of a license or permit belonging to the responding party as a result of an act of omission for which the responding party bears responsibility." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality is a

WHEREAS, the length of the Executive Session is estimated to be 60 minutes after which the public meeting of the Brookdale Community College Board of Trustees shall (select one) ☐ reconvene and immediately adjourn or

☒ reconvene and proceed with business where formal action will be taken.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Brookdale Community College Board of Trustees will go into Executive Session for only the above stated reasons; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Brookdale Community College Board of Trustees hereby declares that its discussion of the aforementioned subject(s) will be made public at a time when the public's interest in disclosure is greater than any privacy or governmental interest being protected from disclosure.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary, at the present public meeting, shall read aloud enough of this resolution so that members of the public in attendance can understand, as precisely as possible, the nature of the matters that will privately discussed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board Secretary, on the next business day following this meeting, shall post this Resolution on the Board website and furnish a copy of this Resolution to any member of the public who requests one at the fees allowed by N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1 et seq.

Approved: Board of Trustees Public Business Meeting: August 26, 2026

August 25, 2026 - RESOLUTION