

**BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**Board of Trustees  
Public Business Meeting Minutes**

**March 24, 2026**

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

Vice-Chair Abby-White called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. and roll call was taken.

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

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 March 18, 2026 at 10 AM 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.

Vice-Chair Abby-White led the pledge of allegiance followed by a welcome to those in attendance.

Vice-Chair Abby-White 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 in memory of retired Brookdalian, Robert Macaluso and Dr. Steve Rose, President of Passaic Community College.

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p><b>Adoption of Agenda</b></p> <p>The Agenda since noticed has been revised to honor William Salcedo with an Honorary degree at Commencement 2026 and to add a ratification of an alternate records custodian.</p>	<p>A motion to adopt the revised agenda was made by Trustee Angelini and seconded by Trustee Crupi.</p> <p><b>Motion passed.</b></p>	
<p><b>President's Report</b></p> <p>Dr. Stout provided an update on the College’s Middle States accreditation process, announcing that the visiting team chair has been identified and a preliminary visit is scheduled for May 5, 2026. During this visit, the team chair will meet with the Middle States steering committee, working groups, internal leadership, collegial governance representatives, and members of the Board of Trustees. Tentative dates for the full accreditation visit were also discussed, with preferred dates in November 2026 and alternate dates in October. The visit will begin on a Sunday with a college-wide reception, followed by two days of meetings, including a scheduled meeting with the Board of Trustees, and concluding on Wednesday morning. President Stout noted that the College’s self-study is currently available for campus-wide review and that preparation for the visit will be incorporated into the April Board Retreat, including mock questions to ensure readiness. He expressed appreciation to faculty, staff, and administrators involved in the accreditation process.</p> <p>Dr. Stout also acknowledged several members of the College community, including retirees and those transitioning to retirement, recognizing their years of service and contributions to the institution.</p>		
<p><b>Reports from the Board Committees and Liaisons</b></p> <p><b>A. Finance &amp; Facilities Committee</b> – Trustee McCracken reported on the Finance and Facilities Committee meeting held on March 17, 2026. Facilities updates included progress reports on multiple ongoing capital and maintenance projects. Plans were discussed to relocate and expand the welding instruction program by converting the former print shop into new instructional space and relocating print operations to the mailroom receiving area. Additionally, culinary continuing education programming is expected to operate from the Wall campus, with planning and build-out activities underway.</p> <p>The financial report for January 2026 was presented, noting operating revenues of \$72.6 million,</p>		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p>representing 79% of the annual budget and reflecting an increase of 6.9% compared to the same period last year. Expenses totaled \$50.7 million, exceeding 56% of the budget and representing a year-over-year increase of 7.8%. The College’s cash balance at the end of January was reported at \$29 million, approximately \$4 million lower than the prior year, with interest earnings of \$341,000 to date and projected total interest income of approximately \$585,000 by fiscal year end.</p> <p>A spring semester financial forecast for fiscal year 2026 was provided, indicating strong enrollment and solid revenue performance in several areas, alongside significant financial pressures. The College is currently projecting the use of \$2.9 million in reserves, an increase from the originally anticipated \$818,000, due to unforeseen cost increases including higher health insurance expenses, reduced state aid, increased snow removal costs, adjunct pay overruns, and utility overages. Despite these pressures, several favorable developments were highlighted, including \$780,000 in internal cost savings achieved through delayed hiring and spending controls, a \$594,000 Strategic Plan 2030 Foundation grant, and strong performance in Continuing and Professional studies, with projected net income of \$1.2 million compared to a budgeted \$550,000. Auxiliary operations were also favorable, with a projected surplus of \$188,000.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed purchases, payments, gifts, and grants, noting several in-kind donations and the receipt of grant awards totaling more than \$4 million, with additional grant applications pending.</p> <p><b>B. Audit Committee</b> - Chair Horl reported that the Audit Committee met on March 16, 2026. The Committee received an update on the independent audit RFP process, which remains on schedule, with the goal of bringing a recommended auditor forward in April so year-end work can begin in May. An update was also provided regarding the internal audit of the College’s budget development process, with preliminary results expected by the end of March and a final report anticipated in mid-April. The Committee further reviewed one ethics hotline matter, which did not involve unethical conduct, and noted that the issue was addressed through human resources coaching. An update was also provided on a previous matter that was thoroughly reviewed and had no findings.</p> <p><b>C. Student Success &amp; Educational Excellence Committee</b> - Trustee D’Alessio reported that the Student Success and Educational Excellence Committee met on March 18, 2026, to review initiatives supporting student engagement, academic quality, and the College’s poverty-informed strategic priorities. The Committee received an update on the Ocelot chatbot and text-messaging campaigns, which continue to demonstrate strong utilization and nationally recognized engagement outcomes. Updates were also provided on recruitment and student life activities, including high participation at the recent transfer fair and continued success across Brookdale’s athletic programs. The Committee discussed insights gained from the Bellwether Conference and a visit with the Chancellor of the Austin Community College District, highlighting opportunities to strengthen institutional culture, onboarding, basic needs support, and professional development in alignment with the College’s North Star goal. In addition, the Committee reviewed sabbatical proposals that support faculty scholarship while generating cost savings, received a consolidated update on program accreditation activities, and reviewed the Middle States self-study draft now available for Board feedback.</p> <p>Overall, the meeting reflected continued cross-divisional collaboration and progress toward a more student-centered, data-informed, and equity-driven institution.</p>		

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<p><b>D. Graduate Trustee Report</b> – Trustee Swartz reported on a wide range of student leadership, advocacy, and engagement activities over the past several months. Highlights included participation in the 2025 ACCT Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C., where he engaged in leadership development, national networking, and student advocacy alongside College leadership and Trustees. While in Washington, meetings were held with New Jersey federal representatives to advocate for student-related policy priorities and to highlight the impact of Brookdale’s programs and student support services. On campus, Trustee Swartz described numerous student engagement initiatives, including cultural celebrations, involvement fairs, wellness-focused programming, civility discussions, advising and transfer events, and social activities designed to foster community connection and student belonging. He also noted upcoming spring programming and emphasized the continued importance of student leadership, collaboration, and engagement in enhancing the student experience.</p> <p><b>E. Ad-Hoc Credential Expansion</b> – Trustee Williams reported no report this month.</p> <p><b>F. NJCCC Update</b> – Chair Horl reported on the March 16, 2026, executive meeting of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges. Discussions focused on the Council’s recently released Economic Impact Study and statewide budget strategy in advance of the Governor’s fiscal year 2027 budget. Chair Horl noted that community colleges statewide will receive flat funding of \$169 million, which presents challenges given rising operational and benefit costs, particularly a significant increase in state health benefits. The Council requested a one-time appropriation to offset these costs and has begun coordinated advocacy with legislators and state officials. Chair Horl also summarized key budget adjustments affecting higher education, including funding changes to tuition aid grants, workforce and opportunity programs, and student support initiatives. She highlighted President Stout’s testimony before the Assembly Budget and Appropriations Committee, advocating on behalf of community colleges, and underscored the continued need for statewide legislative advocacy to address funding pressures.</p> <p><b>G. Foundation Update</b> - Vice Chair Abby-White reported on the March 19, 2026, meeting of the Brookdale Community College Foundation Board. The Foundation discussed the benefits and challenges associated with restricted and unrestricted charitable giving and introduced a new “Impact Fund” concept designed to provide greater flexibility in meeting emerging student and institutional needs. The Impact Fund is intended to simplify gift administration and allow resources to be directed to areas of highest need, supporting operational stability and high-demand programs. Foundation board development was also a focus, with expectations for board members to commit to an annual “give or get” contribution, including support for the Impact Fund. Vice Chair Abby-White also provided an update on the upcoming Scholarship Bash fundraiser, highlighting strong planning progress, sponsorships, and auction items, while encouraging continued outreach and participation to meet attendance and fundraising goals.</p>		
<p><b>Public Comment on Agenda Items</b></p>		

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p>Vice-Chair Abby-White opened the meeting to public comment on agenda items only. She announced that anyone wishing to make public comment on agenda items only may do so in accordance to the instructions for making comment provided by Mr. Jacobs at the beginning of the meeting.</p> <p>No public comment was made and Ms. Gruskos confirmed that no written public comment was received.</p> <p>Vice-Chair Abby-White closed the public comment portion on agenda items only.</p>		
<p><b>Review of Consent Agenda</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any item may be removed from the consent <b>agenda</b> for discussion by any voting member of the Board of Trustees.</li> </ul> <p><b>A. Acceptance of Consent Agenda</b></p>	<p>A motion to adopt the consent agenda was made by Trustee Richens and seconded by Trustee Crupi.</p> <p><b>Motion passed.</b></p>	
<p><b>Approval of Public Business Meeting Minutes - February 25, 2026</b></p>	<p>A motion to approve the minutes from the Public Business Meeting on February 25, 2026, was made by Trustee Angelini and seconded by Trustee Hoitt.</p> <p>Minutes approved.</p> <p><b>ABSTENTIONS:</b> Trustees McCracken and Swartz</p>	
<p><b>Approval of Executive Session Minutes - February 25, 2026</b></p>	<p>A motion to approve the Executive Session Minutes on February 25, 2026, was made by Trustee Hoitt and seconded by Trustee Crupi.</p> <p>Minutes approved.</p> <p><b>ABSTENTIONS:</b> Trustees McCracken and Swartz</p>	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p><b>Approval of Consent Agenda</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>A. Approval of Human Resources</b></li> <li><b>B. Acceptance of Gifts</b></li> <li><b>C. Submission of Grants</b></li> <li><b>D. 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</b></li> <li><b>E. Open Invoice Payment Requests for Vendor, Student and Employee Payments</b></li> <li><b>F. Monthly Financial Reports</b></li> <li><b>G. FY26 Spring Semester Financial Forecast</b></li> <li><b>H. Capital Project Update</b></li> </ul>	<p>A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Trustee Clayton and seconded by Trustee Crupi.</p> <p><b>YES:</b> Trustees Abby-White, Angelini, Clayton, Crupi, D'Alessio, Davis, Hoitt, McCracken, Richens, Swartz, Williams and Chair Horl</p> <p><b>NO:</b> None</p> <p><b>ABSTENTIONS:</b> None</p>	
<p><b>Authorization to present to Siobhan Fallon Hogan and William Salcedo an Honorary Associate Degree at Commencement 2026</b></p>	<p>A motion to authorize to present to Siobhan Fallon Hogan and William Salcedo an Honorary Associate Degree at Commencement 2026 was made by Trustee Angelini and seconded by Trustee Clayton.</p> <p><b>Motion passed.</b></p>	
<p><b>Alternate Records Custodian</b></p>	<p>A motion to ratify and affirm the President's appointment of the Senior Assistant to the President and the Board of Trustees as the Alternate Public Records Custodian was made by Trustee Richens and seconded by Trustee Angelini.</p> <p><b>Motion passed.</b></p>	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p><b>Public Comment -</b>  Vice-Chair Abby-White opened the meeting to public comment. She announced that anyone wishing to make public comment on agenda items only may do so in accordance to the instructions for making comment provided by Mr. Jacobs at the beginning of the meeting.</p> <p><b>Richard Leahey</b> - a community member and parent of a current student, shared praise for the College’s academic reputation and transfer success but expressed concerns regarding the format and instructional delivery of an online mathematics course, including the reliance on external video resources and challenges with instructional communication.</p> <p>Dr. Stout acknowledged the comment and directed senior academic leadership to follow up with the individual directly.</p> <p><b>Professor Jonathan Moshberger</b> - Expressed appreciation for the participation and leadership of Board members in connection with the College’s Women’s History Month programming. He specifically recognized Board Chair Barbara Horl and Trustee Dr. Stephanie D’Alessio for serving as panelists at the Women’s History Month discussion, noting that their personal stories, professional journeys, and insights were both inspirational and impactful for students. He shared that the annual event is organized in collaboration with Assemblywoman Vicky Flynn and has grown in strength and significance over the past three years. Mr. Moshberger further acknowledged Vice Chair Abby-White for attending the event in support of her colleagues. He expressed gratitude to all Trustees for their continued engagement with campus programs, emphasizing that their presence and participation enhance students’ educational experience and demonstrate a strong institutional commitment to civic engagement and leadership development.</p> <p>Ms. Gruskos confirmed that no written public comment was received.</p> <p>Vice-Chair Abby-White closed the public comment portion of the meeting.</p>		
<p><b>Old/New Business –</b></p> <p>No old or new business was discussed.</p>		
<p><b>Resolution to Hold a Closed Meeting</b></p>	<p>A motion to approve by resolution (<b>Attachment A</b>) to hold an Executive Session was made by Trustee Crupi and seconded by Trustee Clayton.</p> <p><b>Motion passed.</b></p>	

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
<p><b>Motion to Re-Open the Meeting to the Public</b></p>	<p>A motion to reopen the meeting to the public was made by Trustee Angelini and seconded by Trustee Crupi.</p> <p><b>Motion passed.</b></p>	
<p><b>Adjournment</b></p> <p><b>Meeting adjourned at 7:23 PM</b></p>	<p>A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee D’Alessio and seconded by Trustee Clayton.</p> <p>Meeting adjourned.</p>	

**BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE 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** issues are 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 **March 24, 2026 at approximately 6:30 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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"(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 – **consideration of leasing real property, as well as negotiations of a contract**

"(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:

"(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

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WHEREAS, the length of the Executive Session is estimated to be **30 to 45** 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.