

BROOKDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Board of Trustees
Public Business Special Meeting Minutes**

April 18, 2026

**Brookdale Community College
Student Life Center, Ft. Hancock Room
765 Newman Springs Rd.
Lincroft, NJ 07738**

Chair Horl called the meeting to order at 9:13 am. and roll call was taken.

Present	Trustees	Administration:
	Ms. Barbara Horl, Chair	
	Ms. Tracey Abby-White, Trustee, Vice-Chair	
	Mr. Steve Clayton, Trustee	
	Mr. Paul Crupi, Trustee	
	Ms. Dyese Davis, Trustee	
	Ms. Stephanie Hoitt, Trustee	
	Mr. James McCracken, Trustee	
	Dr. Les Richens, Trustee	
	Dr. David Stout, Secretary	
	Ms. Mary Pat Angelini, Trustee	Ms. Cynthia Gruskos, Senior Assistant to the President and the Board of Trustees
	Mr. Montez Swartz, Trustee	
	Ms. Cyndie Williams, Trustee	
Absent	Dr Stephanie D’Alessio, Trustee	

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 April 7, 2026 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

Topic and Discussion	Votes Taken	Action and Follow-up Actions
Adoption of Agenda	<p>A motion to adopt the agenda was made by Vice-Chair Abby-White and seconded by Trustee Richens.</p> <p>Motion passed.</p>	
<p>Board Retreat</p> <p>Reflections of Board Self-Evaluation - The Retreat opened with a review of the Board’s Self-Evaluation conducted in December 2025. Trustees discussed the key strengths and accomplishments identified through the evaluation process and reflected on the Board’s continued progress and effectiveness. The recommendations from the previous retreat were also reviewed, and Trustees expressed satisfaction with the implementation and outcomes of those recommendations</p> <p>Development of a Board Mission Statement – This agenda item was not addressed due to limited time and priorities at the meeting.</p> <p>Strategic Oversight –Dr. Stout reviewed the updated language for the Board’s Strategic Priorities, reflecting the BOLD framework. Following discussion, the Board formally endorsed the BOLD Strategic Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build and Improve Dynamic, Innovative Programs • Operate with Excellence and Efficiency • Leverage Caring Services to Support Success • Develop and Sustain Resources to Support the Communities We Serve <p>A significant area of discussion during the Retreat focused on enhancing Board and committee meetings by shifting from primarily informational reporting toward more meaningful strategic dialogue and engagement. Trustees discussed the importance of dedicating additional time to forward-looking discussions, institutional priorities, and governance-level matters that support the College’s long-term strategic direction.</p> <p>The Board discussed the current committee structure vs a “Committee of the Whole”, and contrasted the benefits of both, and will continue to utilize the current committee structure.</p>		

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<p>Financial Outlook & Sustainability -</p> <p>During the Board Retreat, trustees discussed the institution’s financial outlook within the context of broader challenges facing higher education, with particular attention to rising operating costs, including significant increases in healthcare expenses. In response, the Board reviewed key strategic priorities focused on strengthening long-term financial sustainability. These include maintaining modest tuition increases achieving a balanced budget and eliminating the structural deficit, rebuilding institutional reserves, and diversifying revenue through auxiliary sources. Trustees also discussed the importance of diversifying revenue sources, with a goal of lowering the proportion derived from student tuition and fees over time. Throughout the discussion, trustees emphasized the importance of preserving academic quality and the institution’s mission</p> <p>Finally, the Board reviewed the significant financial and operational impact of employee health benefits, which account for approximately \$19 million in annual claims across roughly 530 employees, with about half of costs driven by prescription drugs. Dr. Stout noted the limited availability of external insurance options due to the institution’s high-risk profile and the Trustees discussed the importance of maintaining comparative benefits while exploring strategic partnerships, alternative benefits and expanded employee wellness initiatives to help mitigate long-term cost growth</p> <p>Preparing for the MSCHE Visit – Dr. Stout reviewed the timeline and expectations for the Self-Study reaccreditation visit scheduled for November 8–11, 2026. The Board participated in a mock Self-Study evaluation exercise, during which Trustees responded to questions related to the seven Standards of Excellence and discussed the College’s ongoing efforts to demonstrate institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement</p> <p>Next Steps and Implementation – the following are action items identified at the Board Retreat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop FY28 budget projections and framework to eliminate structural deficit • President to present on Strategic Plan 2030 Updates at Board meetings • Shifting Board meetings and committee work toward more strategic discussion vs operational reporting 		
<p>Adjournment</p> <p>Meeting adjourned at 3:02 pm</p>	<p>A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Vice-Chair Abby-White and seconded by Trustee Richens.</p> <p>Meeting adjourned.</p>	