



BUCKS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Date: June 12, 2025

Time: 10:00 AM

Present:

Thomas J. Jennings, Chair
Richard Balukas, Ed.D.
James Dancy
Broadus Davis, Ed.D.
Tabitha Dell'Angelo, Ph.D.
Blake Eisenhart
Jamie Fazzalore
Shamsul Huda
Carol Mignoni Ferguson

Ronni Fuchs, Esq.
Adrienne King, via Zoom
Vincent Magyar, Esq.
John Murray
Ed Tokmajian
Phil Wursta
Michael Clarke, Esq., Solicitor
Patrick M. Jones, Ph.D., President & CEO

Mr. Jennings called the meeting to order at 10:09 A.M. He introduced Thomas Hinchliffe, an honors student at Bucks, who led the pledge of allegiance, and Lauren Kerrigan, Assistant Professor of Chemistry. Professor Kerrigan oversaw an Honors project in her Chemistry 121 course this spring. Thomas was a student in her class and presented at the Undergraduate Research Conference. His project researched and reviewed articles for a green alternative procedure for the treatment of stainless steel within the manufacturing industry. Thomas gave the same presentation to the Board.

Following the Roll Call, Mr. Jennings noted that the Board met in Executive Session on May 21 and prior to this public meeting to discuss contracts, personnel, and litigation.

Mr. Jennings asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 8, 2025 board meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Magyar, seconded by Mr. Dancy, the Board approved the minutes of the May 8, 2025 meeting.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Jennings reported that, since the last board meeting, the Executive committee met twice, the Finance Committee met once, there was a performance review discussion of the President by the Board. Commencement week activities included the Fire School graduation, the Nursing pinning ceremony and two excellent general Commencement ceremonies. He reported that he attended the PA Chamber of Business & Industry Annual Investor Reception in Harrisburg with President Jones; a recent County Commissioners meeting where Dr. Jones gave an update on the College; and that he and Dr. Jones spoke with a representative of AGB regarding a board retreat and training. He said there would be a meeting sometime in July to discuss Dr. Jones' goals for

FY26, and a retreat likely in August. He said board meeting dates for next year will be distributed once they are finalized.

PRESIDENT & CEO'S REPORT

Dr. Jones introduced the following new employees:

Dr. Carolina Blatt – Dean of Arts and Communication – Began at Bucks on June 2

- Experienced art professor and administrator
- Degrees in Art History and Education from Juniata, Savannah College of Art & Design, U of Georgia (Ph.D.)
- Certified in Arts Management from UMass Amherst and International Studies at the University of Barcelona
- Was a faculty member at Georgia Gwinnett College, and TCNJ
- Was Dean at Felician, VPAA at Neumann, VPAA & Provost at St. Peter's, and a Higher Education Consultant
- Most recently Professor & Director of Art & Design Education at UArts
- Published scholar and artist with a particular lens on placemaking, community engagement, and social interaction in and through art making and art experiences.

Dr. Gerry O'Sullivan – Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs – Began at Bucks on May 27

- Seasoned academic leader - faculty member, dean, provost/VPAA, university consultant.
- Degrees in English, Literature, and Theology from Fordham, Vanderbilt, and Penn (Ph.D.)
- Certificate in Ed Management from Harvard and from the Collegium Phaenomenologicum in Italy
- Most recently Provost/VPAA at Salus University - Worked with the Salus President and Chief of Staff to lead the integration of Salus and Drexel Universities - including all matters related to accreditation, compliance, and Title IV eligibility
- Taught writing at Bucks 1991–1993

He then gave congratulations and best wishes to two retiring deans:

Jean Konkel – Jean has been with the College for 30 years, with two years as Interim Dean of Arts & Communication.

Bill Hemmig – Bill has been with the College for 19 years, then years as the Dean of Learning Resources and Online Learning.

Dr. Jones then gave an update on recent highlights:

- 5/14 Radiography Pinning – 18 graduates
- 5/20 Fire School Graduation – 90 students

- 5/21 Nursing Pinning – 64 graduates
- 5/22 Commencement – for the entire fiscal year there were 860 credit graduates and 47,885 non-credit graduates
- 6/3 PA Chamber of Business & Industry Annual Investor Reception at the Governor's Mansion with Chair Jennings
- 6/5 BCHIP Annual Event held in Links Pavilion
- 6/9 AWS Economic Development Announcement by Governor Shapiro at Jackson Mansion in Berwick, PA. Thanks to Solicitor Michael Clarke for connecting BCCC with Amazon.
- 6/11 Future of Higher Education Dinner in Pittsburgh with Jeff Selingo and senior leaders from 11 different colleges and universities
- The Centurion Newspaper's Editor-in-Chief, Kassandra Castillo was featured in an article titled, "Student journalists rise to the occasion" in *Editor & Publisher*, a national publication. Congratulations to Kassandra and Professor Tony Rogers for putting Bucks' journalism program on the national map!
Link: <https://www.editorandpublisher.com/stories/student-journalists-rise-to-the-occasion,256011>
- Professor Ethel Rackin from Language & Literature recently published a new book of poetry, *In Time* published by Words Works Books. She will be signing books at the Doylestown Bookstore on Friday, June 13th at 6:30pm. A press release with information about her new book and book signing event was sent earlier this week.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Two individuals, Professors Ellen Prato Fiorito and Kathi Knight, gave public comments.

Professor Prato Fiorito began by noting that she has been a faculty member for 24 years. She said she felt compelled to represent that there is low morale among many employee groups due to what is perceived as unilateral decision making at the College. She said many employees feel they do not have a voice. She said the faculty union has some voice and has been actively challenging decisions through various stages of grievances and arbitration. She said one such arbitration was recently resolved in the faculty's favor. Professor Prato Fiorito said those employees who are not represented by the union are fearful and feel they are walking on eggshells. She said they have a problem with the frequent, abrupt changes that have been made to the working environment, feeling like there is an atmosphere of surveillance, as if they can't be trusted to do their jobs. She said there has been a strategic hiring freeze and many vacated positions have not been filled, yet there has been an increase in administrative positions. She claimed there has also been interference in search committees.

Dr. Kathi Knight then spoke, noting that she is a Professor in the STEM Department, and has been a tenured track faculty member since January 1999. Dr. Knight said she was speaking as a concerned, long-term employee, and also as the Co-Chair of the Building Related Illnesses Committee. She said the committee has been in existence for about two years and that she has

met with many employees across campus during this time. Dr. Knight said these are employees who, for the most part, are ill. She reported that some of these employees want to remain anonymous, but others have been very forthcoming. She said, with each person she meets, she asks them what she and the committee can do for them. Dr. Knight said many ask her to share their stories and let them know what is going on because they feel they are in the dark. She said there are a lot of sick people on campus, and a lot of people with cancer, notably estrogen related cancer. She said it's happening in many of the buildings and across all ages, genders, and groups. Dr. Knight said it often starts with burning eyes, which leads to an allergic reaction. She said over time other issues emerge, such as pneumonia and bronchitis. She said, for some, it has affected their speech, has caused brain fog, and has affected their digestive systems. Dr. Knight said she wanted the board to know that there are sick people at the College. She said she thinks the testing of the buildings and the results should be shared and should be outward facing.

Chair Jennings thanked Dr. Knight for her comments and said the Board would have a response at its next meeting.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Chair Jennings

Mr. Jennings reported that the Executive Committee met on May 15 to act on The Registry agreement. They also met on May 20 to act on the Dane & Son Construction contract and one for Independent Contract Flooring. This will enable these projects to be completed over the summer. Chair Jennings asked for a motion to ratify these actions.

Upon motion by Mr. Murray and second by Mr. Wursta, the Board of Trustees ratified the action of the Executive Committee on May 15, 2025 and May 20, 2025 relating to the following contracts :

- *The Registry Agreement*
- *Dane & Son Construction, Inc.*
- *Independent Contract Flooring, LLC.*

FINANCE & AUDIT COMMITTEE – Ms. Fuchs & Mr. Christensen

Ms. Fuchs reported that the Finance Committee met twice since the last board meeting in an attempt to get onto a schedule where they meet in advance of the board meetings. She said the committee reviewed items that are on the Consent Agenda and are recommending them for approval.

ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS FOR 2025-2026

Chair Jennings invited Michael Clarke, Esq. to lead the election of the board officers. Mr. Clarke noted that the Governance Committee presented a slate of officers for the 2025-2026 academic year. He said the board can vote one of two ways, either the entire slate in one vote or

individually. Mr. Clarke noted that the Governance Committee recommended the following slate:

Chair	Thomas Jennings
Vice-Chair	Ronni Fuchs
Secretary	Jamie Fazzalore
Asst. Secretary	Broadus Davis
Executive Committee	Carol Mignoni-Ferguson

He then asked if there were any nominations for Chair. Ronni Fuchs nominated Thomas Jennings for Chair, which was seconded by Jim Dancy. Richard Balukas nominated Blake Eisenhart for Chair, which was seconded by Adrienne King.

Mr. Eisenhart then asked if he could make a comment. He said he has respect for the Board and its role in safeguarding the College's mission. He said he was disappointed with the board's decision last month to remove term limits for the Chair in the Bylaws. He said he was concerned that a small group of people reviewed the Bylaws and made suggested changes. Mr. Eisenhart added that it is not Board Chairs who make Presidents successful, but rather Presidents earn their success by building trust, fostering strong relationships, remaining accountable to board committees, and engaging productively with all trustees. He said the success of the College rests on the President's leadership, not on the authority or continuity of the Board Chair. Mr. Eisenhart said it's important for the President to engage with a variety of Board Chairs to foster trust and stronger institutional relationships.

Mr. Huda commented that the board has been congenial, but it seems like that may be significantly affected by the officer election process. He said consideration should be given to maintaining the congenial atmosphere among the board and, if this can be done without making significant changes in the way things are done, that should be a priority.

Chair Jennings noted that the bylaws changes drafted by Trustees Fuchs and Magyar were considered at and prior to the May meeting and were approved by a vote of 14-0. He added that, in Spring of 2023, he appointed an ad-hoc committee, which included Mr. Eisenhart, to review and update the Bylaws, but nothing was done. He said an ad-hoc committee led by Trustee Magyar will be formed to look at possible further changes.

Mr. Wursta commented that Chair Jennings is a thoughtful and selfless leader and has the best interests of the College and students at heart.

Dr. Balukas said that Mr. Eisenhart has over three decades of experience on the Board, with an outstanding background of knowledge. He noted that, while Chair Jennings has confronted major barriers in his time as Chair, his background is not in the area of education and college oversight. He said Mr. Eisenhart has that. He said he believes the Board needs a leader with a history of the institution. He said the way the College confronted the issue of DEI was a failure, and that we

should have confronted it head on. Dr. Balukas said Mr. Eisenhart has the ability to make Bucks an outstanding institution with his knowledge and foresight.

Mr. Tokmajian said Chair Jennings invests 125% of his time to the College and that, since he became a trustee a year ago, he has seen much improvement in many areas of the college. He credited Chair Jennings for that leadership.

Ms. King recognized Mr. Jennings' work and tireless effort with the Board. She said she believes, however, that term limits are a benefit to the institution, bringing new perspectives by rotating leaders.

A roll call vote was taken for the position of Board Chair. There were ten votes for Mr. Jennings (Jim Dancy, Broadus Davis, Jamie Fazzalore, Ronni Fuchs, Tom Jennings, Vince Magyar, Carol Mignoni-Ferguson, John Murray, Ed Tokmajian, and Phil Wursta). There were five votes for Mr. Eisenhart (Rick Balukas, Tabitha Dell'Angelo, Blake Eisenhart, Shamsul Huda, and Adrienne King). With a vote of 10 to 5, Mr. Jennings was elected as Board Chair for the coming year.

Upon motion by Mr. Murray and second by Mr. Tokmajian, the Board of Trustees approved the remainder of the slate as recommended by the Governance Committee. The full list of officers for 2025-2026 is listed below.

Chair	Thomas Jennings
Vice-Chair	Ronni Fuchs
Secretary	Jamie Fazzalore
Asst. Secretary	Broadus Davis
Executive Committee	Carol Mignoni-Ferguson

PRESIDENT'S PERFORMANCE AWARD – Chair Jennings

Chair Jennings reported that all 15 trustees evaluated the President's performance on the prescribed form that was part of the employment contract. He said the board met collectively on May 21 and a collective assessment was made and shared with Dr. Jones. Part of the discussion was whether the board was inclined to give the President a performance award. Chair Jennings reported that based on the 15 individual reviews and model which took all ratings into account, the recommendation is to award Dr. Jones a performance bonus of \$27,500.

A motion was made by Mr. Murray and seconded by Mr. Dancy to award Dr. Jones a performance bonus of \$27,500. A roll call vote was then taken, and the motion was approved. The roll call vote was fifteen in favor, zero opposed, and zero abstentions.

APPROVAL OF INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS LOCAL 835,
AFL-CIO CONTRACT FOR 2024-2027 – Dr. Jill Blanco, CHRO

Upon motion by Ms. Fuchs and second by Mr. Dancy, the Board of Trustees approved the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 835, AFL-CIO Contract for 2024-2027.

APPROVAL OF CLASSIFIED STAFF HANDBOOK FOR 2024-2027 – Dr. Jill Blanco, CHRO

Upon motion by Mr. Murray and second by Ms. Fuchs, the Board of Trustees approved the Classified Staff Handbook for 2024-2026.

CONSENT AGENDA – Mr. Niels Christensen

The Chair announced that all action items would be considered on the Consent Agenda unless a Trustee requested an item be removed for specific discussion and individual action. There were no requests.

Upon motion by Mr. Murray, and second by Mr. Tokmajian, the Board of Trustees approved all items as set forth on the Consent Agenda.

- *Summer 2025 Copier Lease Refresh*
- *Adobe License Renewal*
- *Integra One – Barracuda Email Filtering Renewal*
- *Black Magic Video Camera Equipment Lease – First American Financial*
- *Fred Beans Government Sales*
- *Parchment Digital Certificate Program*
- *Suitable Engagement & Events Platform Renewal*
- *Hirschberg Mechanical, LLC - ELC & IU Mechanical Systems Replacement*
- *ProctorU Renewal*
- *Insurance Renewal Award 2025-2026*
- *Educational Furniture Solutions*
- *Lenovo Laptop Purchase (20)*
- *Veolia – Boiler & Cooling Tower Water Treatments*

OTHER ACTIONS – SUMMER ACTION BY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – Chair Jennings

Upon motion by Mr. Murray, seconded by Dr. Davis, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to approve Summer Action by the Executive Committee.

BOARD COMMENT

Chair Jennings noted that the comments made by Professors Knight and Prato Fiorito will get the proper attention from the Board. He added that if board members receive additional questions, they should direct them either to him or President Jones.

ADJOURN

Upon the motion to adjourn being duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 11:12 A.M.

Jamie Fazzalore, Secretary