



BOARD AGENDA ITEM: 4.1 – Regular Meeting Minutes
DATE: April 21, 2026

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, March 17, 2026
This meeting was held remotely

ATTENDANCE:

Board of Education:

Kim Morgan
Tim Arbogast
Lucille Begay
OraLee Branch

Nathanael Stice

Darcy Long

Staff and

Representatives:

Dr. Kenneth Lawson

Dr. Jarett Gilbert

Sam Draper

Susan Davis

Tiffany Prince

1.0 CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Stice called the meeting to order at 5:31pm

2.0 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Stice led group introductions.

3.0 APPROVAL OR MODIFICATION OF THE AGENDA

Chair Stice opened the floor for considerations on modifying or approving the agenda.

MOTION #1 - APPROVED

Director Long **moved to approve the agenda, as presented.** Director Branch seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 Regular Minutes, February, 2026

MOTION #2 - APPROVED

Director Branch **moved to approve the meeting minutes from the February 2026 board meeting, as modified.** Director Morgan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

5.0 PUBLIC COMMENT – none

6.0 BUSINESS ITEMS

6.1 Revised Academic Calendar

Dr. Jarett Gilbert, Vice President of Instructional Services, reviews the changes made to the previously adopted Academic Calendar for 2026-27. For winter term, the “winter term ends” and final grades submitted” have been adjusted. Additionally, at the request of the Director of Financial Aid, all four terms now include the “census date,” day after enrollment is locked.

MOTION #3 - APPROVED

Director Morgan **moved to adopted the revised Academic Calendar for 2026-27, as presented.** Director Branch seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6.2 Merchant McIntyre Contract Renewal

Dr. Kenneth Lawson, CGCC President, requests contract approval for renewing the Merchant McIntyre contract. CGCC has partnered with Merchant McIntyre for the past seven years, during this partnership, CGCC’s investment in grant writing and federal advocacy with Merchant McIntyre has resulted in numerous significant grant awards totaling \$6,744,440, representing a return on investment of nearly 13:1.

This expense for Fiscal Year 2026–2027 and has been incorporated into the planned operating budget. The potential revenue generated through grant opportunities significantly exceeds the cost of the contract.

MOTION #4 - APPROVED

Director Morgan **moved to approve, for Presidential signature, the Merchant McIntyre contract, as presented.** Director Long seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6.3 Early Childhood Education – certificate suspension and new certificate approval

Susan Lewis, Dean of Curriculum and Academic Assessment, explains about the suspension of the Initial Early Childhood Education (12-credit certificate) needs to be suspended because the college is making an over 30% revision to the curriculum. At the same time, introducing the new 12-credit certificate for Initial Early Childhood Education, with the revisions to include courses that were more reflected of entry-level content.

Both, the suspension and the new certificate, have been approved by the Curriculum Committee and the Vice President of Instructional Services.

MOTION #5 - APPROVED

Director Morgan **moved to approve the suspension of the 12-credit Initial Early Childhood Education certificate.** Director Long seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

MOTION #6 - APPROVED

Director Morgan **moved to approve the revised 12-credit Initial Early Childhood Education certificate.** Director Branch seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

6.4 Tuition and Fee Schedule 2026-27

Sam Draper, Vice President of Administrative Services, presented the proposed Tuition and Fee Schedule for Academic Year 2026–27.

Sam reviewed the recommended tuition and fee adjustments and provided context regarding inflationary pressures, operating costs, and the need to maintain fiscal sustainability while continuing to support student access. He noted that the proposed schedule was developed in consideration of comparable regional institutions, current budget planning assumptions, and the college’s commitment to affordability.

Discussion included the balance between generating necessary revenue and minimizing impacts on students. Board members asked questions regarding historical tuition trends, comparative rates, and how fee adjustments may affect enrollment and student access. Sam provided clarification regarding the rationale for the proposed changes and how tuition revenue supports instructional and student service operations.

MOTION #7 - APPROVED

Director Long **moved to approve the Tuition and Fee Schedule for Academic Year 2026-27, as presented.** Director Branch seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

7.0 REPORT ITEMS

7.1 Bond End of Month Report

Darek Olson, of HMK Company, provided the monthly Bond End of Month Report to the Board.

Darek reviewed current bond-funded project activity, budget status, and upcoming construction milestones. They noted continued progress on planning, procurement, and implementation of multiple capital improvement projects, with an emphasis on sequencing work to minimize disruption to campus operations.

Updates were provided on active projects, including facilities improvements, infrastructure needs, and coordination with contractors and consultants. The presenters discussed current market conditions, project timelines, and ongoing efforts to align project scope with available bond resources while maintaining long-term value for the College.

Board members asked questions regarding construction scheduling, budget management, and prioritization of remaining projects. Darek Olson provided clarification regarding project phasing, anticipated timelines, and strategies being used to address cost pressures and maintain progress across the bond program. It was discussed that future bond reports potentially include a clearer high-level summary of the overall bond program, including available funds, expenditures to date, remaining balances, and project completion status, to assist the Board in monitoring overall progress.

7.2 Instructional Program Highlight – Community Education

Dr. Jarett Gilbert, Vice President of Instructional Services, introduced the Instructional Program Highlight and welcomed Sara Wade and Angela Jones to present on Community Education programming.

The presentation provided an overview of Community Education offerings and discussed the role of non-credit programming in supporting lifelong learning, workforce skill development, and community engagement. They noted that Community Education serves a broad range of participants through personal enrichment courses, professional development opportunities, youth programming, and special interest classes.

Sara and Angela reviewed recent efforts to rebuild and expand Community Education offerings, including outreach to instructors, identification of community interests, and development of new programming responsive to regional needs. They discussed operational considerations such as instructor recruitment, scheduling, registration processes, and marketing.

They also highlighted the value of Community Education in strengthening community connections with the College, increasing visibility of campus resources, and creating pathways for future student enrollment in credit-bearing programs.

Board members asked questions regarding participation trends, program growth opportunities, and strategies for increasing awareness of Community Education offerings. Dr. Gilbert provided additional context regarding current demand and future development plans.

The Board expressed appreciation for the presentation and the continued efforts to expand community-centered programming.

7.3 Quarterly Audit Report Update

Sam Draper presented the Quarterly Audit Report Update to the Board.

Sam provided an overview of ongoing audit-related work, including progress toward completion of current audit items and continued follow-up on previously identified findings. He discussed efforts to strengthen internal controls, improve documentation practices, and enhance reconciliation procedures across business operations.

The report included updates on coordination with external auditors, status of outstanding items, and process improvements intended to support timely and accurate financial reporting. Mr. Draper noted that student services, financial aid, and business office staff continue to prioritize corrective actions and implementation of recommendations identified through prior audit reviews.

7.4 Monthly Financial Update

Sam Draper, Vice President of Administrative Services, reviews the monthly financial report with the board.

Unaudited General Fund Revenue and Expense Summary as of January 31, 2026
General Fund revenues through February 2026 are \$12,790,860 representing 99% of the budget and \$3,008,379 increase over the same period as the previous year. The primary driver of this is state appropriations.

General Fund expenditures and transfers through February are \$7,136,624 representing 58% of the budget and an increase of \$523,763 over the same period as the previous year. Expenditures have increased in the Instruction and Instructional Support functions.

Bank Account Balances, Receivable and Payables

The College's bank account balances total \$17,603,558 on February 28th. Accounts receivable balances total \$1,741,989 and represent amounts owed to the College from students, property tax, agencies, and grantors. Accounts payable balances total \$187,676 and represent amounts owed to vendors and suppliers of goods and services received by the College.

Café Operations

Café operational highlights include revenue of \$56,117 which is trending behind the annual revenue target of \$191,181. Operating costs were \$169,370.

7.5 Monthly Foundation Report

Director OraLee Branch, Board liaison to the College Foundation, provided the monthly update from the Foundation.

Director Branch highlighted recent Foundation activities focused on scholarships, fundraising, and community engagement in support of Columbia Gorge Community College students and programs. She shared updates regarding current scholarship administration, donor outreach efforts, and planning for upcoming Foundation events. Director Branch highlighted the recent Community Legacy Giving event, noting positive participation and continued collaboration with community partners to promote charitable giving and long-term support for local organizations, including Columbia Gorge Community College.

The report included discussion of recent fundraising progress and continued efforts to build partnerships with community members, businesses, and regional organizations. Director Branch noted the Foundation's ongoing commitment to expanding resources that support student access, completion, and institutional priorities.

Additional updates were provided regarding Foundation Board engagement, volunteer participation, and future initiatives intended to strengthen long-term philanthropic support for the College.

7.6 Chinook Brief

Dr. Kenneth Lawson, President, presents a monthly Presidential Operational Update, for the Board of Education.

Equitable Access:

- CGCC hosted the Oregon Transfer Days event bringing admissions representatives from four- year universities to campus to connect with students interested in continuing their education.
- The 2026–27 College Now course approval cycle is underway. High school teachers are currently submitting courses for approval. Courses will be reviewed and approved before the end of the school year.
- The 2026–27 Nursing application cycle is now closed.

Equitable Learning and Outcomes:

- Danny Jacobsen was sponsored by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) to attend as Oregon's representative to the OERwest Network Convening in Salt Lake City, Danny will connect with OER specialists and bring back strategies to expand access to affordable course materials at CGCC.
- CGCC hosted a successful open house to launch our new Industrial Training and Assessment Center (ITAC). This new lab will be a resource to help provide hands-on training to help small and medium sized manufacturers improve

efficiency, reduce costs and build a stronger technical workforce here in the Columbia Gorge.

- Lisa AbuAssaly George and Jessie Herrada Nance gave a very well attended presentation to the Student Success and Retention Conference, entitled "Let's Taco Bout It: Students Organizing for Social Justice."

Economic growth, inclusive prosperity, and thriving community:

- Columbia Gorge Community College welcomed more than 200 eighth-grade students from The Dalles Middle School, Mosier School, and St. Mary's for a Career Day hosted in partnership with the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center. Local employers were well represented.
- Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) collected over 17 bags of cans for the Cans for Canines drive. PTK will also host one final Blood Drive on April 28 on The Dalles Campus. In addition, four PTK students and two advisors will attend the PTK Catalyst conference in Baltimore over spring break.
- Amirra Malak's new exhibition, What Blooms in Grief, opened March 6 at the SWANA Rose Culture and Community Center in Portland. The work explores themes of grief, remembrance, and ancestral connection through Egyptian Khayamiya textiles, plants, dyes, and layered translucent materials.
- In collaboration with the CGCC DEI Office, The Clear Clinic held two Know Your Rights workshops. Workshops covered Oregon Sanctuary Law, 4th & 5th Amendment rights, and resources available.

Other News:

- CGCC was featured in the "Career Connected Learning Systems Navigators (CCLSN) Sustainability Report" for our implementation model that aligned Career Connected Learning work with our institutional mission and SEM priorities.
- Regrettably, after an examination of fiscal considerations and upcoming budgetary constraints, Oregon President's Council recommended not to renew the CCLSN program beyond the grant period ending on June 30, 2026.
- CGCC attended the 3rd Rural Guided Pathways Institute this past week with our K-12 partners from Hood River, North Wasco, South Wasco, and White Salmon. The focus of the Institute was on implementing high-quality dual enrollment programs.
- CGCC was also well-represented at the recent Achieving the Dream conference in Portland. Sue Davis co-presented "This Place Fits Me: How Strategic Branding and Community Connections Can Engage Adult Learners." The presentation was part of the Lumina Foundation's project to engage adult learners using strategic branding and predictive analytics. This project will allow CGCC to develop two major paid media campaigns. Dr. Jarett Gilbert co-presented on how disaggregated course data, course outcomes, and institutional trends can illuminate opportunities

for addressing success for underserved students through teaching and learning.

7.7 OCCA Update

Director Long provided an update from the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA), focusing on recent legislative activity and statewide advocacy efforts impacting Oregon community colleges.

Director Long reported that OCCA continues to monitor bills during the legislative session related to higher education funding, governance, workforce development, and student access. She noted ongoing advocacy efforts to protect community college resources and to ensure the needs of rural institutions remain represented in statewide policy discussions.

She also shared updates regarding OCCA meetings and communications with member colleges, including opportunities for trustees to participate in training, legislative engagement, and professional development activities.

Discussion included the importance of maintaining awareness of statewide policy changes that may affect college operations, funding stability, and future strategic planning.

7.8 Board Subcommittee Reports

7.8.1 Policy & Equity Subcommittee

Director Morgan noted that the subcommittee continues its review of Board policies on a rotating basis to ensure alignment with current legal requirements, OCCA model policies, and institutional priorities. Ongoing discussion includes governance practices, policy clarity, and future revisions as needed.

7.8.2 Finance & Audit

Director Arbogast noted continued discussions regarding financial reporting practices, audit progress, internal controls, and budget development. The subcommittee remains engaged in reviewing financial transparency measures and monitoring progress on outstanding audit-related items.

7.8.3 President's Performance Review

- none

7.9 Chair's Report

Chair Stice provided brief remarks to the Board and reflected on recent Board activity, governance responsibilities, and institutional priorities.

Chair Stice expressed appreciation for the continued engagement of Board members, committee participation, and the work of college employees who contributed to the evening's presentations and reports. He noted the importance of maintaining strong governance practices as the College continues work related to budgeting, facilities planning, enrollment, and strategic initiatives.

He also encouraged continued collaboration among Board members and administration in addressing upcoming priorities and preparing for future Board actions.

8.0 CRITICAL DATES

Chair Stice reviewed the critical dates with the Board.

10.0 ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm

As recorded by Tiffany Prince, Interim Assistant to the Board of Education