

Ozarka College
Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting
Thursday, December 18, 2025
4:30 p.m.
Ozarka College – Melbourne
Student Services Center Community Rooms

MINUTES OF MEETING

The Ozarka College Board of Trustees met at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 18, in the Student Services Center Community Rooms on the Melbourne campus.

Present: Chair – Robert Wright, Vice Chair – Mike Watson, Secretary – Pam Setser, Trustee Ben Cooper, Trustee Ryan Howard, Trustee Gayle Cooper, Dr. Josh Wilson, Dr. Chris Lorch, Marcus Orf, Scott Pinkston, Zeda Pruitt, and Valerie Long

Absent: Trustee Fred Holzhauer and Amber Rush

Vice-Chair Watson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Trustee G. Cooper led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion to approve the minutes from the September 18, 2025 Regular Meeting with a minor edit was made by Trustee Howard and seconded by Trustee G. Cooper. The motion passed unanimously.

Area Reports

Academic Affairs

Dr. Chris Lorch, Provost

- The College had a successful Fall semester.
- Spring enrollment is trending upward.
 - Most concurrent students have been enrolled.
 - Admissions is contacting applicants and currently enrolled students who have not yet registered.
 - The College is working with high schools to accommodate student schedules.
- The Fine Arts Theater class, under the director of instructor Jason Blankenship, performed a series of scenes from the play *Wit* in the Ash Flat lecture hall.
 - The performance was well attended by Ozarka staff and community members.
 - Dr. Lorch commended Jason for his work.
- Ozarka signed an MOU with Black River Technical College establishing a 1+1 pathway from machining to gunsmithing.
 - Trustee Watson asked about the long-term viability of the machining program.

- Dr. Lorch responded that due to its niche nature, the College continues to explore additional opportunities for students to apply the skills learned in the program.

Finance

Dr. Josh Wilson, President

- The 2025 Foundation audit was completed with no findings.
- The Business Office submitted several state-required reports during the semester.
- The FY 2024-25 audit was completed with no findings.

Student Services

Zeda Wilkerson, Vice President

- Two Career Pathways employees were furloughed during the federal government shutdown. The College has been informed that these employees will receive backpay.
- Perkins Funding
 - Several equipment orders will be made using surplus funds after the break. Programs receiving equipment include welding, culinary, and nursing.
 - The College has applied for \$50,000 in reserve funds; approval is expected in January. Funds would be used to purchase a 3D anatomy visualizer for the nursing program.
- Mary Justus, new TRIO Director, will start on January 5, 2026.
- Tiffney is currently marking December graduates.
- Kelly has been very busy with testing and finals.

Advancement and Workforce Development

Marcus Orf, Vice President

- Foundation Events
 - Golf Tournament: Record participation with 22 teams and \$22,000 in profit
 - Mountain View Fall Concert: Record attendance (100+) and nearly \$6000 in profit
 - Casino Night: Attendance declined, but profit ranged between \$13,000-\$15,000
 - Holiday Event: Approximately 700 attendees
 - Trustee Watson expressed positive feedback on the holiday event and appreciation for the volume and quality of events held annually.
 - Dr. Wilson commended the Advancement team: April, Dawsyn, and Marcus.
- Student Events
 - The welding contest was successful, with 60–70 participants representing ten area schools.
 - FFA contests were held on the Ash Flat and Melbourne campuses, with participation from several schools both within and outside the College's service area.
- Scholarships
 - Scholarships endowed since July include: Ronnie Rush, Eric Bray, Dr. John and Joann Wilson, Tony Stewart, Bucksey Harmon, and Danny Graham.
 - Scholarships currently needing endowment include Wanda McConnaughay and one additional scholarship.

- Marcus encouraged Board members to contribute to the Board of Trustees Scholarship.
- Industry Partnerships
 - HVAC short-term training received strong employer feedback; another session is planned for spring.
 - Welding instructors Jesse Kinder and Wyatt Thomas are developing an upskill training program with Bad Boy Mowers.
 - Dawsyn is working on an upskill training program with Air Ready.
- Marcus stated that Dawsyn has done an excellent job supporting the College's marketing efforts following the director's resignation.

Operations and Infrastructure

Scott Pinkston, Vice President and Chief Information Officer

- IPEDS reporting is in progress and due in February.
- TRIO funds were used to purchase new computers for all campuses this semester.
- A new entrance was completed for the fitness center with key fob access. Extended hours are being beta tested during the break.
- Aviation
 - The FAA and NTSB concluded their investigations of the incident involving the Seminole.
 - There was no fault except flight crew failure to extend landing gear; no remediation is required.
 - The plane is back and ready for service in the spring.
- Maintenance
 - Scott commended maintenance staff for ensuring smooth operations during community events and the holiday event.
 - A sidewalk project connecting housing to campus is planned.
 - Trustee Watson inquired about building insurance changes and suggested reviewing current coverage.

Staff Council

Valerie Long, Staff Council Vice-President

- Staff competed in a door decorating contest during the holiday event; the Finance department won.
- Staff Council continued their partnership with SGA in collecting food and toys this year.
 - Toys were donated to DHS.
 - Food donations will support the College food pantry.
- Staff Council is coordinating with the Registrar's office to hold a professional development event in March.
 - Plans include advisor training and a mental health presentation.

President's Report – Discussion Item 5.A

Dr. Wilson introduced the following:

- Retirement Plan Co-Fiduciary
 - The College met with PlanGuide Financial to discuss employee 403b retirement plans.

- An MOU has been signed appointing PlanGuide as a co-fiduciary.
- PlanGuide will assist with account management, investment advising, fee negotiation, and index performance monitoring.
- May Board Retreat
 - The Board agreed to hold the retreat in Hot Springs again this year during the week of May 21, 2026.
 - Dr. Wilson and Valerie will begin planning after the break.
- Grants Update
 - Mountain View
 - Delta Workforce Program funds have been fully expended; one final report remains.
 - Approximately 80–85 students were served over three semesters.
 - All students seeking employment have been placed.
 - \$50,000 remaining from Entergy will fund construction of a lean-to, beginning in January.
 - HIRED
 - \$502,000 of the \$1.5 million grant has been spent.
 - Equipment purchases include two one-ton trucks, a mini excavator, skid steer, scissor lift, and portable welders.
 - Completion of the skilled trades building is expected in January and will account for additional expenditures.
 - Dawsyn and Colton’s salaries and benefits, along with supplies for skilled trades, will be funded through the grant.
 - Blue & You Foundation
 - A \$5,000 food pantry grant application was submitted by Dawsyn and fully funded.
 - Food pantries will be established by Admissions on the Melbourne campus and by Kim and James at their respective campuses.

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.1

Dr. Wilson informed the Board of the following new full-time personnel:

- i. Mary Justus – Director of TRIO SSS

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.2

Dr. Wilson informed the Board of the following new part-time personnel:

- i. Jessica Johnson – Part-time TRIO Tutor
- ii. Karla Rush – Part-time Fitness Center Assistant
- iii. Mason Goers – Part-time Flight Instructor
- iv. David Thompson – Part-time Fitness Center Assistant

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.3

Dr. Wilson informed the Board of the following resignations, retirements and others:

- i. Katie Norris – Director of PR & Marketing
- ii. Colton Berger – Part-time Fitness Center Assistant
- iii. Lance Pinkston – Aviation Faculty
- iv. Roger Parsons – Skilled Trades Instructor at MVTC

- v. Patricia Miller – Director of Adult Education

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.4

Dr. Wilson informed the Board of the following active searches:

- i. Director of Adult Education
- ii. Director of Marketing and Digital Media
- iii. Allied Health Instructor – Mountain View Campus
- iv. Director of Nursing Programs
- v. Practical Nursing Instructor

Action Item 7.A.1

Finance – End-of-Month and Year-to-Date Financial Reports

- Dr. Wilson presented the End-of-Month and Year-to-Date Financial Reports to the Board for approval.
- A motion to approve the report was made by Trustee G. Cooper and seconded by Trustee Howard. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Items 7.B.1-7.B.14

Governance – Board Policies Approval

- The Special Committee for Board Policy Review met to review the policies included in Action Items 7.B.1 through 7.B.14.
- Two of the policies were new; the remaining policies were revised for clarity and to reflect updates in law and current practice.
- The committee approved the policies and recommended them to the full Board for approval.
- A motion to approve all policies as presented was made by Trustee Howard and seconded by Trustee B. Cooper. The motion passed unanimously.
- Dr. Wilson commended the College committees and Valerie for their hard work in reviewing and updating the Board Policies Manual.

Action Item 8

New Business

- No new business was discussed.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee B. Cooper and seconded by Trustee Howard. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 5:39 p.m.