

Ozarka College
Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting
Thursday, September 18, 2025
4:30 p.m.
Ozarka College – Melbourne
John E. Miller Building Board Room

MINUTES OF MEETING

The Ozarka College Board of Trustees met at 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 18, in the John E. Miller Building Board Room on the Melbourne campus.

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

Absent: Trustee Fred Holzhauer, Trustee Ryan Howard

Chair Wright called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Trustee Watson led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion to approve the minutes from the May 21-22, 2025 Regular Meeting and Board Retreat was made by Trustee Watson and seconded by Trustee G. Cooper. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Wright expressed appreciation to former Board Chair Fred Holzhauer for his leadership and service to the Board and the College.

Area Reports

Academic Affairs

Dr. Chris Lorch, Provost

- HLC Assurance Review
 - We passed the review with no findings.
 - The next review will be in 2030; a quality initiative will have to be completed between now and that time.
 - Dr. Lorch commended Kim Wilson and the rest of the assurance team for their work on the review.
- Enrollment
 - Overall headcount and FTE are up 6% this semester.
 - Concurrent enrollment has also increased this semester and makes up the majority of this increase.
- Short-term training

- An HVAC course taught by a faculty member got off to a good start this week.
- There are plans to partner with Bad Boy Mowers for several trainings in the future.
- Internships in machining and welding at Emerson will start in January; the class will fold into the current certificate.
- Trustee Watson asked about income from short-term training.
 - Dr. Lorch and Dr. Wilson explained that there is ongoing conversation about the cost structure.
 - Potential sources of payment are the Workforce Challenge, which is increasing to \$3000 next year, and a 75/25 grant from the Office of Skills Development.
- Trustee Wright asked if we have a partnership with Excel in Mountain View.
 - Dr. Lorch explained that we do work with them at times, but employment opportunities tend to follow the economy.

Finance

Amber Rush, Vice President

- The business office is currently working on several ADHE and DFA reports that are due at this time of year.
- The first Pell disbursement was today.
- \$1.1 million in financial aid was processed; 76% came back to Ozarka.
- The annual audit has concluded with no findings.
- Fitness Center
 - A new sidewalk has been installed to provide a direct entrance to the Paul Weaver Fitness Center.
 - The new coordinator, Mark Manry, has enthusiastically embraced his role and has ensured a smooth transition from previous management.
 - We are looking at expanding the hours and offering annual memberships.

Student Services

Zeda Wilkerson, Vice President

- Zeda expressed appreciation for the student services team, admissions, and financial aid for their help with enrollment and ensuring a successful start to the semester.
- TRIO
 - Grant approved for the next five years; award amount: \$1.7 million.
 - Hoping to hire a new TRIO Director by late fall.
 - There are currently 212 students in TRIO; the goal is 250.
 - Planning several on-campus workshops with practical subjects like financial literacy and financial aid.
- We have been approved for \$111,000 in Perkins funds.
 - Surplus funds are likely to be available.
 - We can also request reserve funds.
- Career Pathways has been supplying students with childcare vouchers and nursing uniforms, and helping to fill any gaps left over after financial aid.
- Career Coach site visits have changed to high schools instead of the college. Zeda and Tiffney met with the Mountain View High School principal yesterday in preparation for their upcoming visit.

- Annual Campus Safety and Security report was submitted to the state last week; 0 crimes reported.
- All but one of the 32 beds in housing have been filled for the fall semester.
- SGA is currently accepting officer nominations.
- Trustee G. Cooper asked how long the outgoing TRIO director has been employed with the College. Zeda informed him that it has been just under one year. There was discussion about retention of employees in grant-funded positions.

Advancement and Workforce Development

Marcus Orf, Vice President

- Foundation events update:
 - The scholarship reception had 70-80 in attendance.
 - Around eighty-five scholarships were given this fall.
 - Patrick Moody, former Ozarka Culinary student, gave a fantastic speech.
 - Golf Tournament is scheduled for next Thursday at 11:00 a.m.
 - A record 40 teams have signed up.
 - Fall Concert – October 4
 - There are several good raffle items available.
 - A former Ozarka Culinary student from Mountain View will provide the food from his successful food truck. There will be a press release.
 - Casino Night – November 1
 - Holiday Event – December 5
- An article on a former student from the Skilled Trades program in Mountain View, as well as a thank you card written by the recipient of the Board of Trustees Scholarship was passed around for the Board.
- Welding Contest scheduled for October 24.
 - Approximately sixty students representing ten area high schools will be participating.
 - Bad Boy Mowers will be the presenting sponsor again.
- Scholarship update:
 - Ronnie Rush, Dr. John and Joann Wilson, Tony Stewart, and Eric Bray scholarships have all been endowed.
 - Danny Graham and Bucksey Harmon scholarships are close to being endowed.
 - Wanda McConnaughay Memorial Scholarship was started last month. It was given out this year upon the request of employees.
- Farco was awarded the bid for construction of the addition to the building which houses the skilled trades program on the Melbourne campus.
 - The slab has been completed and is ready for the structure to stand up.
 - The structure should be delivered by end of September and is expected to be up by October 15.

- Adult enrollment in skilled trades is full; high school enrollment is under expected.
 - Industry partners have been to the campus to speak with students about employment opportunities.
- Instructor Jesse Kinder has been building an outdoor structure at the Mountain View Tech Center to simulate a real working environment for welding students.
- Six welding booths were added to the Carpenter Tech Center to accommodate students from Salem. Of 21 total booths, only three are empty this semester.
- Almost sixty high school students from area schools are enrolled in Ash Flat tech programs.
- Marketing is looking at changing signage on all campuses. The first quotes were requested for Nix Ridge Road in Ash Flat.
- Industry Partners
 - Marcus praised Dawsyn Cole, Director of Workforce Development, for her dedication and enthusiasm in this new role, and credited her with developing and maintaining good relationships with industry partners such as Emerson, Bad Boy Mowers, Cushman Climate Control, and Foster's Heat & Air.
 - Five students are enrolled in the first HVAC short-term training.
 - Bad Boy Mowers wants to send employees to more short-term trainings; meeting planned for October.
 - Farco and Bad Boy Mowers have both sent representatives to speak with students.

Operations and Infrastructure

Scott Pinkston, Vice President and Chief Information Officer

- Maintenance
 - Susan Mitchell has transitioned from the airport to the maintenance department as the administrative assistant and is doing excellent work.
 - Maintenance and IT work orders have been combined to simplify and streamline the process.
 - The courier schedule has been streamlined; deliveries to the Ash Flat and Mountain View campuses will now occur twice per week.
 - A recent aviation program graduate has been hired to serve part-time as an administrative assistant and part-time as a flight instructor at the airport.
- IT
 - Completed routine firewall and security updates during the summer.
 - No major issues have been reported so far this semester.
- Aviation
 - Record enrollment of 44 students across two sections, including 26 first-year students.
 - Program inspection was completed with no findings and full approval for the next two years.

Staff Council

Valerie Long, Staff Council Vice-President

- A new professional development subcommittee has been formed.
 - The first meeting is scheduled for next week.
 - We plan to work with the Perkins department to coordinate workshops for staff.
- The Jeans Day Fundraiser raised a total of \$518.
 - Proceeds will support Staff Council activities, including professional development opportunities.
- Upcoming fall activities include the annual Chili/Soup Cook-off and Halloween Costume Contest.

President's Report – Discussion Item 5.A

Dr. Wilson introduced the following:

- Board Self-Assessment
 - The Board received a report summarizing the results of the Board Self-Assessment. The report included a comparison with the 2013 results, along with a list of strengths, areas for improvement, and goals for the coming year.
 - Dr. Lorch emphasized the importance of this assessment for HLC accreditation.
 - It was noted that completing the assessment once per cycle, in alignment with the strategic planning process, would be beneficial to the Board.
- Legal Easement
 - Ozarka previously granted an easement to the same entity on the east side of the Ash Flat property.
 - Maps showing the new easement location were provided to the Board.
 - The new easement will allow the College access to the back fields once culverts are installed, creating opportunities for future programs such as environmental science and agriculture.
- College Governance
 - Dr. Wilson has launched a new initiative to review the Board Policies Manual and Administrative Procedures Manual.
 - As part of this initiative, the committee structure was reorganized to eliminate unnecessary committees, align responsibilities with current practices and priorities, and update membership.
 - Dr. Wilson recognized Dr. Lorch and Valerie for their contributions to the committee restructure and policy review.
 - Each committee will be assigned specific sections of the Board Policy Manual to review and revise as needed. The initial review is expected to take approximately 24 months, after which an ongoing review schedule will be established.

- A temporary ad hoc committee may be created to expedite policy updates as necessary.
- The goal of this initiative is to expand representation across departments and campuses, increasing engagement and ownership in the governance process.
- Aviation Update
 - A gear-up landing incident occurred in July.
 - The FAA has completed its investigation, and the College is awaiting the final outcome from the NTSB.
 - Recommended corrective actions have been implemented, including updates to checklists and other safety procedures. No further consequences are anticipated.
 - The aviation department has voluntarily enrolled in an FAA safety training scheduled for September 23.

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.1

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

- i. Lori Coleman – Career Coach – MV School District
- ii. Trevor Jones – Flight Instructor/Training Coordinator
- iii. Wyatt Thomas – Welding Faculty
- iv. Jason Blankenship – English Faculty
- v. Gary Thompson – Institutional Services Assistant MV

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.2

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

- i. William “Mark” Manry – Part-time Fitness Center Coordinator
- ii. Colton Berger – Part-time Fitness Center Assistant
- iii. Carla Mabry – Part-time MVTC Administrative Assistant

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.3

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

- i. Brianna Mosley – Accountant I
- ii. Brittnie Walling – LPN Instructor
- iii. Ashton Lester – Math Faculty
- iv. Brandy Gore – English Faculty
- v. Stacy Gore – Fitness Center Coordinator
- vi. Jamie Yates – Director of Nursing Programs
- vii. Daniel Carlile – Aircraft Maintenance Coordinator
- viii. Ana Hollis – Part-time MVTC Administrative Assistant
- ix. Brittnee Donaldson – CNA Instructor MV
- x. Kim Childress – Director of TRIO

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.4

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

- i. Practical Nursing Instructor

- ii. Director of Nursing Programs
- iii. Director of TRIO Student Support Services

Action Item 7.A.1

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

- Amber Rush 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 Watson and seconded by Trustee G. Cooper. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item 7.A.2

Finance – End-of-Year Financial Report

- Amber Rush presented the End-of-Year Financial Report to the Board for approval.
- A motion to approve the report was made by Trustee Watson and seconded by Trustee G. Cooper. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item 7.B.1

Governance – Revision of Board Policy 2.47

- Dr. Wilson presented the revisions to Board Policy 2.47 to the Board for approval.
- A motion to approve the revisions was made by Trustee B. Cooper and seconded by Trustee Watson. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item 7.B.2

Governance – Revision of Board Policy 3.32

- Dr. Wilson presented the revision to Board Policy 3.32 to the Board for approval.
- A motion to approve the revisions was made by Trustee B. Cooper and seconded by Trustee Watson. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item 7.B.3

Governance – Legal Easement

- Dr. Wilson presented a request to grant an easement agreement to DJS Farms LLC.
- A motion to approve the request was made by Trustee Watson and seconded by Trustee B. Cooper. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item 8

New Business

- No new business was discussed.

With no further business, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Watson and seconded by Trustee G. Cooper. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 6:11 p.m.