

Ozarka College
Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting and Planning Retreat
Thursday, May 21, 2026
9:00 a.m.
The Waters Hotel – Hot Springs, AR
The Whippoorwill Room

MINUTES OF MEETING

The Ozarka College Board of Trustees met at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 21, in The Whippoorwill Room at The Waters Hotel in Hot Springs, AR.

Present: Chair – Robert Wright, Vice Chair – Mike Watson, Secretary – Pam Setser, Trustee Ben Cooper, Trustee Gayle Cooper (*via call-in*), Trustee Fred Holzhauer, Trustee Ryan Howard, Dr. Josh Wilson, Dr. Chris Lorch, Marcus Orf, Scott Pinkston, Zeda Pruitt, Amber Rush, and Valerie Long

Chair Wright called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Trustee Setser led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2026 Regular Meeting was made by Trustee Howard and seconded by Trustee Setser. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the minutes from the April 20, 2026 Special Meeting was made by Trustee Howard and seconded by Trustee Setser. The motion passed unanimously.

Area Reports

Academic Affairs

Dr. Chris Lorch, Provost

- Spring Successes
 - Final grades of D or F were below 10% for the first time.
 - Faculty successfully helped students pull up their midterm grades.
- Enrollment
 - Enrollment is on track.
 - Concurrent numbers are on par for this time of year.
 - The admissions department is currently contacting applicants not enrolled.
 - Summer I starts next Tuesday, May 26.
- Common Course Numbering
 - All colleges in the state will have the same course numbers to streamline transfer credits.
 - Division chairs have completed work on this.

- There is a meeting to discuss this with ADHE in June.
- The changes will likely take effect next year.
- Summer Camps
 - Kids College will take place in Melbourne and Mountain View next month.
 - Culinary Camp will take place over two weeks, separated by age groups.

Finance

Amber Rush, Vice President of Finance

- Fitness Center
 - 24-hour access is now available, which has increased attendance.
 - Mark Manry, fitness center coordinator, has done an outstanding job in promoting the fitness center in the community.
 - Fees will increase slightly from \$35 to \$40 per month to support equipment repair and maintenance.
- Banking
 - The College will transition accounts with Cadence to other local banks in Melbourne due to upcoming changes which affect the services provided.
 - Board policy does not require action from the Board to make the transition.

Student Services

Zeda Pruitt, Vice President of Student Services

- Zeda provided a handout detailing the equipment purchases made with Perkins funding during this academic year; several departments were represented.
- Candice Shaver presented a successful Service Excellence workshop in conjunction with advisor professional development this semester, which was submitted and selected for presentation at the annual ACC Conference in October.
- Career Pathways had a successful desktop compliance review.
- TRIO took students on several educational trips this year:
 - Top of the Rock
 - Clinton Library
 - Arkansas State Capitol – attended a legislative session
 - Chef Erin Rowe came to campus a couple of times for culinary workshops facilitated by TRIO.
- VA site visit went well. Next summer a federal VA site visit is expected.
- The Campus Safety and Preparedness Committee updated the emergency response plan, as well as held a fire drill in the fall and a tornado drill this spring.
- Access to Acceleration Scholarship
 - Paid more than concurrent challenge last year.
 - Students are able to take up to 15 hours per semester, which has led several concurrent students to take an increased course load.
- Education Freedom Accounts
 - Served about 12 students this semester.
 - Targeted marketing to homeschoolers will likely increase enrollment with these funds.

- There was renewed interest in SGA this spring; elections will take place in August.
- Zeda is currently working on fall housing placements.

Advancement and Workforce Development

Marcus Orf, Vice President of Advancement and Workforce Development

- Marcus provided the Board with handouts detailing the successes of the Foundation events and scholarship endowments this year, as well as tentative dates for Fall events.
- Johnstone Supply has expressed interest in naming rights for the Skilled Trades building, as well as continuing ed classes for local contractors.
- Working with Bad Boy Mowers' marketing department to create a sign for the welding lab.
- Industry Partnerships
 - Marcus will absorb duties now that Dawsyn has resigned.
 - In contact with Emerson regarding short-term training needs.
 - Bad Boy Mowers wants short-term welding training this summer.
 - In contact with Beasley Flooring for possible industrial maintenance training.
 - Industrial Signing Day was a success. Over twenty students were employed.
- Marketing
 - Brecken is continuing to learn about messaging and related marketing strategies.
 - New digital sign seems to be working well; City of Melbourne events are posted as well as college information.
 - Exploring professional development opportunities.
- Grants Updates
 - Delta Workforce, Mtn View Skilled Trades – wrapped up and final reporting submitted; helped over 100 students over 18 months.
 - ARDOT TAP submitted, partnered with the City of Ash Flat.
 - Recreational Trails grant, partnered with the City of Melbourne.
 - Blue & You Food Pantry mini grant is wrapping up, asked for extension to expend the funds, being used by RN students this summer.
 - HIRED – majority of the funds have been expended, equipment and materials purchased for fall semester; waiting on mobile training unit, expecting to pick up next week; in use by the Fall.

Operations and Infrastructure

Scott Pinkston, Vice President and Chief Information Officer

- TRIO moved to an online version of their software.
- Aviation is transitioning to a new software for training records that is less expensive and more user friendly.
- A new product has been chosen for computer management and transitioning is underway.
- Completed file uploads for new retirement vendor accounts.
- Maintenance Update
 - Library exterior door was replaced with a glass door. May rearrange the library to put the front desk by the exterior entrance, making it the main entrance.
 - Summer projects include painting exterior railings and light poles, and waxing floors.

- Contracted with Wade's to repair the SSC HVAC system. All but one compressor bank has been repaired, which Marty will do. The college will enter a service contract on July 1 with Wade's for preventative maintenance.

Staff Council

Valerie Long, Executive Assistant to the President

- New Officers
 - Erin Lamb – President
 - Tiffney Miller – Vice President
- Summer Fundraisers
 - Bingo Night – June 11
 - Ozarka T-shirt sales - Now through June 1
 - Summer Jeans Days

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.1

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

- i. Kathy Thomas – Director of Nursing Programs
- ii. Summer Misenheimer – Career Coach MV School District

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.2

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

- i. Brennon Burch – Part-time Fitness Center

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.3

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

- i. Bryan Jeffery – TRIO Transfer Specialist
- ii. Mary Justus – Director of TRIO
- iii. David Thompson – Part-time Fitness Center
- iv. Rondal Moser – Maintenance Technician (retirement)
- v. Dawsyn Cole – Director Workforce Development
- vi. Lori Coleman – Career Coach MV
- vii. Christine Owens – Career Coach ICC

Information Item – Personnel 6.A.4

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

- i. Transfer Specialist
- ii. Allied Health Instructor MV Campus
- 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 Setser. The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item 7.A.2
Finance – Annual Budget Approval

- Amber Rush presented the Annual Budget to the Board for discussion and approval.
- A motion to approve was made by Trustee Setser and seconded by Trustee Holzhauer. The motion passed unanimously.
- Dr. Wilson and the Board commended Amber for her work on the budget and the presentation.
- Trustee Watson commended the Administrative Council for abstaining from the COLA this year.

Action Item 7.B.1-7.B.2
Governance – Board Policies Approval

- Dr. Wilson presented revisions to BP 2.34 and BP 2.50 to the Board for approval.
- A motion to approve the policies as presented was made by Trustee Setser and seconded by Trustee Holzhauer. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion Item 8.A-8.D – President's Report

Dr. Wilson introduced the following:

- Academic Planning
 - Dr. Lorch introduced the new Associate in General Studies Degree. This degree consists of 15 hours of general education courses and 45 hours of elective credits, allowing students to build their own degree.
 - The Allied Health program will change in the following ways:
 - Dr. Lorch praised Katie Wilson for stepping in to do the Director of Nursing position, teach classes when necessary, and keep the nursing program going.
 - Planning to make all LPN cohorts 11 months; currently, Melbourne offers one 18-month program.
 - Streamlining prerequisites while continuing to make sure students are prepared for the LPN program.
 - Reconsidering accreditation of surgical technology program in order to better serve local needs.
 - There is a need to start marketing the nursing program due to waning interest.
 - Exploring new partnerships
 - Meeting scheduled with ATU to discuss expanding pathways in the teacher education program, such as offering an education center on the Ozarka campus.

- Williams Baptist has reach outed regarding a partnership specifically with the agriculture program; they are exploring a 3 year baccalaureate degree in agriculture that we could funnel our students into.
 - Exploring a partnership with Goodwill. Meeting in Little Rock next month to discuss welding.
- Workforce Development and Training Updates
 - Marcus has toured Goodwill training center in Little Rock. They are working on a re-entry program to help inmates get education in skilled trades.
 - Newterra, located in Heber Springs, came out to the Mountain View Tech Center, interested in welding students.
 - Urban Forge, located in Mountain View, has hired students from our program. They have also recently increased pay, which will be an incentive to recruit new employees.
 - Partnership has been seamless with Johnstone Supply, as some College employees have done business with them for several years.
 - Bad Boy Mowers has discussed hiring students in programs aside from welding, including electrical and HVAC.
 - The implementation of Workforce Pell by the federal government has prompted the College to reimagine some current programs to adhere to new standards.
 - Workforce Challenge is changing funding models from a flat fee per person to a two-tiered model based on hours, 80 hours and 180 hours. Programs are being worked to conform to these models.
- Operations and IT Infrastructure Planning
 - Scott discussed plans to transition the LMS from myOzarka to a new platform.
 - A faculty committee has been created to test two different platforms.
 - The chosen platform will be piloted in Spring 2027.
 - The target date for full transition is August 2027.
 - After the LMS transition is completed, other systems will be reviewed.
 - Other operations in myOzarka can be transitioned to portals in SONIS and MIP.
 - Cloud-based services updates will be a strong option; other vendor options are available, but would be more expensive and require more extensive transition.
 - Maintenance
 - Deferred projects are a top priority.
 - Under-expensed budgets realized at yearend will be rolled over and devoted toward these projects.
 - The Administration roof replacement will be completed this summer.
 - Parking lots on all campuses are the next priority, with plans to complete repair on one campus per year.
- Organizational Structure Updates
 - Dr. Wilson presented the new organizational structure.
 - The academic structure is changing to a more modern model. All directors and division chairs will become deans. This is just a title change,

with no increase in pay, but more reflective of their respective roles and responsibilities.

- Zeda will transition from Vice President of Student Services to Vice President of Academic Records and Institutional Records, taking on institutional research.
- Institutional grant programs will report directly to the President.
- Advancement no longer has a director of workforce development; a temporary solution has been reached while options for moving forward are discussed.
 - Marcus will step back into industry partner outreach.
 - Valerie will take on some grant research and writing duties.

Discussion Item 9 - New Business

- No new business was discussed.

Action Item 10.A.1

Personnel – President’s Review and Contract

- A motion to go into executive session at 11:33 a.m. was made by Trustee Howard and seconded by Trustee Watson. The motion passed unanimously.
- The Board returned from executive session at 11:58 a.m.
- After discussion of the president’s review with Dr. Wilson, a motion to extend the president’s contract through June 30, 2028, was made by Trustee Howard. Trustee Holzhauer seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

With no further business, Chair Wright asked that a motion be made to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Howard and seconded by Trustee Watson. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 12:29 p.m.