

## MINUTES

### WASHINGTON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT 17 BOARD OF TRUSTEES WORK SESSION SPOKANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Present:** Trustee Todd Woodard, Chair, Trustee Anna Franklin, Trustee Kelly Fukai, Trustee Glenn Johnson. Also present: Chancellor Kevin Brockbank, President Jenni Martin, Interim President Patrick McEachern, Chief Human Resources Officer Fred Davis, Chief General Services Officer Nichole Hanna, Chief Financial Officer Linda McDermott, Chief Institutional Advancement & External Affairs Officer Melanie Rose, Vice President of Learning Bonnie Glantz, Vice President of Instruction Jaclyn Jacot, Vice President of Workforce and Development Julie Parks, Vice President of Student Services Patrick Tanner, SCC Classified Staff Representative Tessa Greene, Acting Chief Information Officer Dan Duffy, Director of Budget and Planning Chris Grochowski, IT System Administrator Sean Cotter, Executive Assistant to the President of Spokane Community College Nancy Delgado (recording secretary).

**Excused:** SFCC Faculty Katie Satake, ASG President Jayla Knights, ASG President Naveah Person, Trustee Steve Yoshihara, Chief of Staff and Strategy Lori Hunt, Interim Vice President of Student Affairs Jim Mohr, Attorney General Carrie Culver, AHE President Jason Eggerman.

**Guests:** Scott Kerwien

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The Board of Trustees of Washington State Community College District 17 held a special meeting at Spokane Community College, on Tuesday, April 7, 2026. Todd Woodard called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

#### **Executive Session**

The Board will convene in executive session under RCW 42.30.110(1) to receive and evaluate complaints or charges brought against a public officer or employee, and to evaluate the qualifications of a candidate for appointment to elective office.

The executive session will begin at 8:31 am and will last for approximately 50 minutes.

Todd Woodard reconvened the meeting at 9:31 am. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by roll call. The Native Land Acknowledgment was given by Todd Woodard.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

Being no objections, the consent agenda was entered into the record. Topics include the following:

- a. Board Minutes – March 17, 2026, Regular Meeting
- b. Capital Projects – Nichole Hanna
- c. Budget & Expenditures – Linda McDermott
- d. Head Start Updates – Bobbi Woodral
- e. Admin Procedures – Linda McDermott

The motion to approve the consent agenda was so moved by Glenn Johnson, seconded by Anna Franklin, and approved unanimously by the Board.

### **Spokane Community College and Spokane Public Schools Partnership: Trades High School**

SCC President Jenni Martin, Spokane Public Schools (SPS) Chief of Student Success Scott Kerwien, and Spokane Colleges Chief General Services Officer Nichole Hanna provided an update on the proposed Trades High School initiative.

President Martin explained that the Spokane region is facing a critical workforce shortage in sectors such as healthcare, construction, and manufacturing, where retirements are outpacing the number of new workers entering these fields. To address this challenge and encourage more students to pursue careers in the trades, SPS is proposing the construction of a Trades High School located on the SCC campus. The school would allow students to earn both a high school diploma and an associate degree in a technical program, giving them access to both a high school and college experience simultaneously.

Mr. Kerwien noted that the Trades High School would operate as a full-day program, distinguishing it from existing skills centers elsewhere in Washington State. The proposed model would be a dual-credit pathway, significantly reducing the time required for students to earn credentials and providing early exposure to

post-secondary education. President Martin also indicated that the program has the potential to become self-supporting over time.

President Martin clarified that SPS would finance the construction of the Trades High School and would be responsible for operating the facility, while SCC would retain ownership of the land. The proposed location is adjacent to the Technical Education Building on the SCC campus, a site that would have minimal impact on core campus operations and would not interfere with other planned capital projects.

Mr. Kerwien shared that, based on anecdotal feedback from the Together Spokane bond process, the Trades High School generated the highest level of public engagement. The target opening date for the school is fall 2028.

Ms. Hanna and President Martin formally requested the Board of Trustees' support for entering into a long-term ground lease with SPS to facilitate the project. Ms. Hanna noted that peer institutions have successfully implemented similar lease agreements.

Chancellor Brockbank commented that formalizing the partnership through a long-term agreement is important to ensure its durability over time. While personal relationships are valuable, a formal agreement ensures continuity regardless of changes in personnel.

Trustee Franklin asked how SPS would ensure that students attending the Trades High School maintain a strong high school culture and are appropriately supported and protected, particularly given that some students may be as young as ninth graders. Mr. Kerwien responded that SPS is committed to replicating successful models and plans to hire a planning principal to ensure the partnership is implemented with appropriate structure, care, and oversight.

Trustee Franklin also asked whether the Trades High School would be accessible to a diverse group of students, including those in foster care. Mr. Kerwien affirmed SPS's commitment to access and equity and stated that the program is intended to be open to all students who wish to participate.

Trustee Woodard inquired about outreach efforts to younger students, noting that research shows middle school students often begin forming career interests at an early age. Mr. Kerwien responded that SPS plans to establish a formal outreach structure. Trustee Woodard also asked whether the program would include

additional technical education pathways. Mr. Kerwien explained that the Trades High School would emphasize a broad technical education rather than requiring students to commit to a narrowly defined career pathway too early.

Trustee Franklin asked whether current SCC students would be involved in the Trades High School. Mr. Kerwien stated that he would need to review the request for proposals (RFP) to provide additional details.

A motion to approve the resolution related to Spokane Community College's request to ground lease campus property to Spokane Public Schools for construction of the Trades High School was made by Glenn Johnson, seconded by Anna Franklin, and approved unanimously by the Board. The full resolution is included as Exhibit A to these minutes.

### **Proposed Fiscal Year 2026-27 Tuition Schedule and Waiver Proposal**

At the March 2026 meeting of the Board of Trustees, Chief Financial Officer Linda McDermott presented the first draft of the proposed Fiscal Year 2026–2027 tuition and waiver schedules. Ms. McDermott requested formal Board approval at this meeting. She explained that approving the proposal in April would allow Spokane Colleges to update tuition and fee schedules in advance of early registration, which begins on May 5. This timing would ensure that students see the updated tuition and fees at the point of registration and are aware of their costs ahead of time. Once approved, the updated tuition and fee information would be posted to the Spokane Colleges website as soon as possible.

Trustee Woodard asked how current students would be notified of the tuition increase. Ms. McDermott responded that approving the tuition schedule in April would ensure students are informed of the increased rates during the registration process.

Trustee Woodard also asked whether the Financial Aid and Counseling departments were aware of the proposed changes. Ms. McDermott confirmed that both departments had been informed early in the process, noting that tuition changes have a significant impact on their services.

Trustee Glenn Johnson requested that the Spokane Colleges Foundation be notified so that any available scholarship funds could be made accessible to students. Trustee Woodard added that this would also be an appropriate opportunity to raise awareness of the student emergency fund.

A motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2026–2027 tuition and waiver schedules as presented was made by Glenn Johnson, seconded by Kelly Fukai, and approved unanimously by the Board.

### **Budget Update**

Ms. McDermott provided an update on budget planning for Fiscal Year 2027. She reported that the Washington State Legislature adopted its FY27 supplemental budget on March 12, 2026. Typically, supplemental legislative sessions focus on minor adjustments; however, due to the state’s projected revenue shortfall, Spokane Colleges had anticipated a 1.5% reduction to their allocation. That reduction was not adopted. Despite this, Spokane Colleges continues to face rising costs related to partially funded cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), increasing staff and faculty salaries, and higher costs for goods and services.

Ms. McDermott also noted that changes to the SBCTC allocation model will begin affecting Spokane Colleges on July 1, 2027. As a result, the college expects to receive approximately \$7.75 million less in state funding over the next six years.

Ms. McDermott shared that Spokane Colleges recently conducted budget hearings and asked units to identify potential budget reduction ideas totaling 2%.

Trustee Franklin asked whether the 2% reduction target was applied across all areas of Spokane Colleges. Ms. McDermott confirmed that the 2% figure was a proportional target distributed across all units.

Ms. McDermott explained that the primary reason Spokane Colleges is losing funding under the SBCTC allocation model is due to changes in the District Enrollment Allocation Base (DEAB). The DEAB is the largest component of the allocation model and is primarily driven by student FTE enrollment. Under the previous model, Spokane Colleges was funded for 12,449 FTEs; for FY26, that figure is projected at 7,960 FTEs.

Trustee Franklin asked for clarification on the acronym “ISC.” Ms. McDermott explained that ISC stands for Institutional Shared Costs, which total approximately \$10.5 million. These costs represent functions that are centralized across the district, such as utilities, to streamline operations and improve efficiency.

Ms. McDermott stated that the Spokane Colleges Cabinet will finalize budget adjustments later this month, with the goal of presenting a balanced budget for adoption in June.

Trustee Woodard thanked Ms. McDermott for her presentation.

Trustee Johnson asked about a rumor that the state legislature is considering reducing the number of community and technical colleges. Chancellor Brockbank confirmed that the rumor is accurate and stated that SBCTC has been directed to eliminate one college in the system. In addition, SBCTC has been asked to prepare an efficiency report for the legislature, due in December 2026. Chancellor Brockbank noted that he has increased his advocacy efforts with regional and state legislators in response.

Trustee Johnson also asked for clarification regarding the exclusion of international students from FTE calculations. Chancellor Brockbank explained that SBCTC determined that counting international students toward FTE targets was not equitable across colleges statewide.

Trustee Fukai asked how much of the Spokane Colleges budget is fixed versus variable. Ms. McDermott responded that more than 85% of the budget is fixed and consists primarily of full-time staff and faculty salaries and benefits. Variable areas include adjunct faculty costs and deferred maintenance.

Ms. McDermott further noted that while higher education funding is an important component of the state budget, it is discretionary. In contrast, K–12 education is constitutionally mandated. As a result, higher education often experiences deeper cuts during times of fiscal constraint.

Trustee Johnson commented that this is a critical time for Spokane Colleges to pursue grant funding, particularly in workforce and trades-related areas.

### **Alert for Tenure Consideration**

Chief Human Resources Officer Fred Davis provided an update on faculty that are going to be reviewed for tenure consideration. Three faculty member are in their 8<sup>th</sup> quarter, and the Board of Trustees will be asked to approve, deny, or extend these faculty members at the June 2026 meeting.

## Workforce Pell

President Martin and Vice President of Workforce Development Julie Parks provided an update on recent changes to the federal Workforce Pell program. The Workforce Pell expansion broadens student eligibility and allows additional short-term workforce programs to qualify for Pell funding.

Eligible programs must be at least eight weeks in length but shorter than fifteen weeks, result in stackable and portable credentials, and be approved by the Governor. Programs will also be evaluated based on student earnings outcomes to ensure that the cost of the program represents a sound investment for students.

Ms. Parks added that, at the state level, a Workforce Pell Cross-Agency Steering Committee has been established. The committee includes representatives from the Governor's Office, SBCTC, workforce training agencies, the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), the Department of Commerce, and other partners. In addition, SBCTC has convened a systemwide implementation group to address operational challenges, including the development and implementation of required technical and compliance elements.

Ms. Parks noted that Workforce Pell does not represent a new or separate pool of federal funding, but rather an expansion of the existing Pell Grant program with modified eligibility criteria. She also noted opportunities to consider non-credit courses and transition them into the state system as state-funded FTEs, which could support additional revenue generation.

Ms. Parks concluded by noting that the public comment period closes the following day. She described Workforce Pell as a significant growth opportunity for Spokane Colleges, particularly for adult learners, including individuals who already hold bachelor's degrees. While acknowledging the opportunities, she also cautioned that there are associated risks, including compliance with the federal "70/70 rule."

Trustee Woodard asked about the auditing process associated with Workforce Pell. Ms. Parks responded that the auditing process presents a risk and will involve multiple stakeholders.

Ms. Parks also noted that implementing Workforce Pell will require a significant shift in institutional culture and mindset and will be highly disruptive for Financial Aid offices.

President Martin emphasized the importance of ensuring that coursework completed through Workforce Pell results in meaningful, countable credentials if a student returns at a later time. She noted that data related to program outcomes is still evolving. President Martin further stated that Spokane Colleges plans to lead a consortium of college partners to develop recommendations for internal processes and procedures related to the state's implementation of Workforce Pell.

Ms. Parks shared that she is advocating for Workforce Pell implementation to include the entire region, rather than a single county. She requested Board support for reviewing and advancing prior learning assessment processes and awarding credit for demonstrated competencies, noting that these changes could help attract more participants to workforce programs. She described this as a philosophical shift for Spokane Colleges and asked for continued Board support in communicating with legislators and the Governor's Office.

Trustee Anna Franklin requested that Spokane Colleges provide talking points to assist Board members in accurately discussing Workforce Pell within their circles of influence. Trustee Franklin also thanked Ms. Parks for her comments regarding credit for prior learning.

Trustee Woodard asked about the implementation timeline. Ms. Parks stated that the program is expected to go into effect on July 1, 2026.

### **Chancellor Report**

Chancellor Brockbank provided a brief update. Spokane Colleges has hired a new Chief Information Officer, Christine Van Winkle, who will start on April 16th. Christine previously worked in a similar role at Eastern Washington University.

The faculty union submitted a letter to the Board of Trustees requesting additional opportunities to provide input on the mission, vision, and values component of the Spokane Colleges Strategic Plan. In response, Chancellor Brockbank has developed a more comprehensive survey and will host open forums in April to solicit broader feedback.

### **Adjournment**

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:32 am.