

Miles Community College
Board of Trustees
Minutes
April 28, 2025

The Board of Trustees of Miles Community College met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. April 28, 2025, in room 106. The following Trustees were present: Tara Andrews, Jenna Janshen, Jeff Okerman, and Jamie Ogolin via telephone. The following Trustees were excused: Garret McFarland, Debbie Morford, and Ryan Jones. Also present were President Ron Slinger, Candy Laney, Kylene Phipps, Erin Niedge, Richard DeShields, Nancy Aaberge, Sandra Barclay, Jerry Olson, Molly Magestro, and Dirk Schmidt, the MCC Men's Basketball Team, and Coach Tait.

Chair Andrews called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No Public Comment was given.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The Men's Basketball Team was introduced to the MCC Board of Trustees. President Slinger invited everyone to the HiSET graduation on Thursday, May 1, in the Centra, Nurses Pinning on Friday, May 2, at 4:00 p.m., Distinguished Alumni on Friday, May 2, at 6:00 p.m. at the T&C Club, and Graduation on Saturday, May 3.

REPORTS:

- A. Enrollment Services:** In addition to the written report included in the Board packet, Vice President of Enrollment and Educational Support Services Erin Niedge provided additional updates: Graduation rehearsal is scheduled for Friday, May 2, at 12:00 p.m. in the Centra. During this event, we will also be announcing the recipients of the Faculty and Staff Excellence Awards. The team has concluded a successful recruitment season and is now shifting its focus to SOAR preparations and Fall registration planning. Summer enrollment currently stands at an FTE of 80, surpassing last summer's record numbers. Fall registration trends are also highly encouraging, with current figures reflecting a 26% increase in FTE and a 40% increase in headcount compared to the same time last year. Special recognition was given to Danielle Dinges for her outstanding work with financial aid, particularly in facilitating the distribution of Pell Grants.
- B. Student Engagement:** In addition to the written report included in the Board packet, Vice President of Student Engagement & Auxiliary Services Richard DeShields provided the following updates: Housing numbers have increased since the initial report was submitted. We are currently up by 29 students, with a total of 115 residents—an increase of 20 students compared to the same period last year. Due to the upcoming sewer line project scheduled for this summer, the Café will be closed temporarily. To help incoming students become familiar with the facility, BeKa Stein Phipps, Director of Marketing and Communications, will produce a video showcasing the Café. This video will be shared during SOAR sessions throughout the summer. All Student Senate positions for the upcoming academic year have been successfully filled. Additionally, the recent Etiquette Dinner, hosted by Kim Gibbs in partnership with the Young Farmers and Ranchers Club, was well attended and received positive feedback.
- B.a. Athletics:** In addition to the written report included in the Board packet, Athletic Director Jerry Olson provided the following updates: Athletics are beginning to wind down for the season. Baseball concluded its regular season with a strong 35–15 record. The team will travel to Williston this week, where they must win all three games to advance further in postseason play. Softball wrapped up the regular season at 30–14, becoming only the second team in program history to reach 30 wins. They will head to Dawson for their next round of games, with a chance to move on to Regionals pending their performance. This past weekend's MCC Rodeos were highly successful, and Volleyball hosted a well-attended camp on Sunday. In addition to their athletic achievements, student-athletes continue to make a positive impact through their community service efforts. Appreciation was extended to IT Manager Dirk Schmidt for his outstanding work in filming the Rodeo, Baseball, and Softball events, helping to share these moments with the broader community.
- C. Administrative Services and HR:** In addition to the written report included in the Board packet, Vice President of Administrative Services and HR Kylene Phipps provided the following updates: The upcoming search for the Vice President of Academic Affairs was discussed, with plans to formally begin the process in August. The goal is to have a new individual in place by January 2026. Katrina Luther will be stepping back from her full-time faculty role in the Nursing program and will continue to contribute as a part-time adjunct instructor. Vice President Phipps expressed her gratitude for Katrina's dedicated service and ongoing commitment to the college. It was also reported that the college is currently operating with two vacant custodian positions.
- D. Academic Affairs:** In Vice President Kratky's absence, no report was given.

- E. **President's Report:** In addition to the written report included in the Board packet, President Ron Slinger provided the following updates: NWCCU has reached out regarding setting the dates for our mid-cycle visit, which will be April 20 & 21, 2026.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Trustee Janshen moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Trustee Ogolin seconded the motion.

Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- A. **Carnegie Classification:** President Slinger shared that the Carnegie Foundation, in partnership with the American Council on Education, has introduced a new classification as part of its national evaluation of colleges and universities. This new category, the *Student Access and Earnings* classification, assesses institutions based on student access and post-graduation earnings, using a standardized data comparison across institutions. Miles Community College has been recognized as an *Opportunity College and University* under this classification—an honor that reflects both high levels of student access and strong post-graduation earnings outcomes. MCC was ranked in the top 16% nationally within this classification. This achievement will be formally announced to media outlets following graduation, and President Slinger plans to highlight the recognition during the graduation ceremony

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

- A. **Chair Report:** Trustee Ogolin reported that the committee reviewed the current budget status and confirmed that we remain on track with expenditures aligning appropriately with the percentage of the year completed and the budget remaining. We were updated on the Legislative session. The action item being presented is the proposed Tuition and Fee increases. These increases are aligned with inflation and have been thoroughly discussed and endorsed by the Student Senate. As such, a request is being made to waive the second reading of the resolution to allow for timely submission. Per protocol, the proposed increases must be submitted to the Montana Board of Regents. While the Board of Regents does not approve these changes, they are required to formally accept them. Final approval authority rests with the locally elected Board of Trustees. The timing is critical, as the Regents' meeting is scheduled for one week prior to our May Board meeting. The proposal includes a 3.08% tuition increase and a \$7 fee increase for FY 2026, followed by a 3.05% tuition increase and a \$5 fee increase for FY 2027. The Student Senate expressed strong support for these adjustments, and their official letter of endorsement is included in the meeting materials.

B. **Old Business:**

- a. Permissive Medical Levy Resolution (second reading):

Trustee Okerman moved to approve the Permissive Medical Levy Resolution. Trustee Janshen seconded the motion. Motion passed.

C. **New Business:**

- a. FY2026 and FY2027 Tuition & Fees Resolution (first reading):

Trustee Ogolin moved to waive the second reading of the FY2026 and FY2027 Tuition & Fee Resolution. Trustee Janshen seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Trustee Janshen moved to accept the FY2026 and FY2027 Tuition & Fees Resolution as presented. Trustee Okerman seconded the motion. Motion passed.

HUMAN RESOURCE COMMITTEE:

- A. **Chair Report:** Trustee Okerman shared that the committee reviewed current staffing matters and received an update on the Jenzabar system. Additionally, two action items are being brought forward for the Board's consideration.

B. **Old Business:**

- a. Hazing Policy (second reading)

Trustee Janshen moved to accept the Hazing Policy as presented. Trustee Ogolin seconded the motion. Motion passed.

C. **New Business:**

- a. Faculty Master Agreement (first reading): Vice President Phipps gave a high-level overview of the changes made to the Master Agreement.

QUALITY AND ADVOCACY:

- A. **Chair Report:** Trustee Janshen said the committee members did not meet as a group but met one-on-one with President Slinger.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. Consent Agenda: President Slinger discussed the items on the Academic Consent Agenda.

Trustee Okerman moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Trustee Ogolin seconded the motion.

Motion passed.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

- A. **NWCCU Accreditation Cycle:**

Adjourned the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

The next regular Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Monday, May 19, at 5:30 p.m. in room 106.

Vice Chair

Secretary