

Miles Community College
Board of Trustees
Minutes
February 23, 2026

The Board of Trustees of Miles Community College met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. February 23, 2026, in room 106. The following Trustees were present: Jamie Ogolin, Debbie Morford, Jeff Okerman, and Ryan Jones. The following Trustees were excused: Tara Andrews, Jenna Janshen, and Garret McFarland. Also present were President Ron Slinger, Kylene Phipps, Erin Niedege, Richard DeShields, Dimitria Harding, Nancy Aaberge, and Star Reporter Hunter Herbaugh.

Trustee Okerman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No Public Comment was given.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: President Slinger reported that the Nursing Disaster Drill is scheduled for February 25–26. Dolly Ferris and I will be attending the CASE (Council for Advancement in Support of Education) conference in March. Additionally, next month I will be traveling to Ronan to attend the Board of Public Education meetings.

REPORTS:

- A. Enrollment Services:** In addition to the written report included in the Board packet, Vice President of Enrollment and Educational Support Services Erin Niedege provided additional updates: Our Recruiter, Kyleigh Heberle, has traveled extensively over the past several weeks, completing several productive visits. In March, she will be attending and traveling to various Career and Technical Student Organization events.
- B. Student Engagement:** In addition to the written report included in the Board packet, Vice President of Student Engagement & Auxiliary Services Richard DeShields provided additional updates: Housing occupancy for the spring semester currently stands at 77.5%. There are seven boilers in the housing facilities, all of which are original to the buildings. To begin the life-cycle replacement process, three individual boilers will be replaced. Funding for this project will come from housing reserves. The total cost is estimated at \$54,000; however, the work will be completed as three separate projects. Additionally, we have begun the recruitment process for new Resident Assistants (RAs) and Health Educators for the Student Senate.
- B.a. Athletics:** In the absence of Athletic Director Jerry Olson, VP DeShields provided the following updates: An update was provided on recent softball and baseball games, and appreciation was expressed to everyone who supported the Buckaroo Bash this past weekend. Men's and Women's Basketball will begin postseason play this Sunday. Both teams currently hold records of 6–6. We will host the first postseason games here, with the women playing Glendive at 1:00 p.m. and the men playing Lake Region at 3:00 p.m. in the Centra. As previously announced, following Athletic Director Olson's retirement, Coach Tait has been named Athletic Director. The Head Basketball Coach position will be posted within the next week. In addition, we will begin the process of reviewing applications and interviewing candidates for the Head Softball Coach position.
- 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: Several transitions are currently taking place as we navigate internal opportunities and upcoming retirements. Carrie Preller has announced her retirement as our HR Coordinator, effective July 15. Additionally, Facilities did not include the resolution for the 1977 ¾-ton pickup in this report; however, it will be addressed in the Finance Committee materials.
- D. Academic Affairs:** Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dimitria Harding, provided the following updates: Last week, we were on the agenda for the State Board of Nursing regarding the variance report, which was accepted. We are very optimistic about what our pass-rate numbers will look like this semester. Preliminary testing indicators suggest that our students are performing significantly better than they did last year. Work also continues on expanding our transfer pathways. We recently held an initial meeting with MSU Bozeman to discuss developing an additional articulation agreement that would support students transferring from our associate degree programs into bachelor's degree programs.
- E. President's Report:** In addition to the written report included in the Board packet, President Ron Slinger provided the following updates: Preparations are underway for the mid-cycle visit scheduled for April 21. As part of this process, we are completing the final review and edits of the report that will be submitted prior to March 9. Next month's Close the Loop presentation will focus on the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) cycle. Planning for the Board retreat with the ACCT consultant is also moving forward. The next step will be a

meeting with President Slinger and Chair Andrews. Following that meeting, the consultant will reach out to each Trustee individually to schedule Zoom meetings in order to gather your input on what you would like to gain from the retreat. Additionally, President Slinger was recently appointed to serve on the Presidents Academy Executive Committee of the AACC (American Association of Community Colleges).

CONSENT AGENDA:

Trustee Ogolin moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Trustee Morford seconded the motion. Motion passed.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

- A. Spring Enrollment Update:** Vice President Niedege presented end-of-term data and provided an update on spring enrollment. As of today, the year-over year FTE stands at 554.03, representing a 5.6% increase over last spring on this date. Current headcount is 1,234, a 16.75% increase compared to the same period last year. It is anticipated that the spring semester will conclude with an FTE increase of approximately 4.3% and a headcount increase of 14.5% over last spring. She also highlighted notable growth in other terms, including a 16% increase in summer enrollment and an 11.7% increase in fall enrollment. Additionally, the fall Montana resident FTE increased by 13%. For the spring term, the institution expects a 4.3% increase in total FTE and a 6% increase in total resident FTE. Vice President Niedege noted that much of this growth has been driven by participation in Quottly and the expansion of dual enrollment programs. Overall, the institution is projecting an 8% increase in total annualized FTE and nearly a 9.5% increase in annualized Montana resident FTE. Unduplicated headcount is expected to increase by 26%, with total and resident headcounts remaining very close. Term-specific headcount growth includes a 17% increase in summer headcount, nearly a 30% increase in fall headcount, and an anticipated 14% increase in spring headcount. As of today, the total annualized unduplicated headcount is 1,927, and the total annualized unduplicated FTE is 559.6. Of these totals, 1,760 are Montana residents, accounting for 477 annualized FTE.

FINANCE COMMITTEE:

- A. Chair Report:** Trustee Ogolin reported that the committee discussed the budget and noted that, with the strong enrollment numbers, the institution is in a very positive financial position. Two resolutions are being brought forward this evening. Due to the timing associated with each resolution, a waiver of the second reading is being requested
- B. Old Business:** None
- C. New Business:**
- a. Property Disposal Resolution:** Vice President Phipps discussed the proposed disposal of the 1977 pickup that has primarily been used at the AAC. Due to the age of the vehicle, the cost of ongoing repairs has exceeded its value. Therefore, we are requesting a waiver of the second reading so the vehicle can be advertised on social media and made available for purchase as soon as possible..

Trustee Jones moved to waive the second reading of the Property Disposal Resolution. Trustee Morford seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Trustee Ogolin moved to accept the Property Disposal Resolution as presented. Trustee Morford seconded the motion. Motion passed.

- b. Centra Electrical and Light Fixture Update Resolution:** Vice President DeShields discussed the planned replacement and upgrade of the lighting and wiring in the Centra. A waiver of the second reading is being requested to allow us to proceed with procurement based on the bid we have received..

Trustee Morford moved to waive the second reading of the Centra Electrical and Light Fixture Update Resolution. Trustee Jones seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Trustee Morford moved to accept the Centra Electrical and Light Fixture Update Resolution as presented. Trustee Ogolin seconded the motion. Motion passed.

HUMAN RESOURCE COMMITTEE:

- A. Chair Report:** Trustee Okerman reported that the committee received a briefing on staffing and was informed that faculty contracts for the 2027 academic year have been distributed. The employee satisfaction survey is scheduled for distribution in March. Additionally, Trustees Jones, McFarland, and Ogolin have been elected to

the Board of Trustees by acclamation. The committee also received an update on Jenzabar.

B. Old Business: None

C. New Business: None

QUALITY AND ADVOCACY:

A. Chair Report: Trustee Okerman reported that the committee received a briefing on the budget, reviewed the two resolutions presented this evening, and was provided with an update on early enrollment figures..

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS CONSENT AGENDA:

A. Consent Items: Dr. Harding discussed the recommendations from the Academic Standards Committee concerning proposed changes to the I Grade Policy and associated form.

Trustee Jones moved to approve the Academic Consent Agenda as presented. Trustee Morford seconded the motion. Motion passed.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

Adjourned the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

The next regular Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Monday, March 23, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in room 106.

Chair

Secretary