

Proposed Meeting Minutes

June 26, 2025

The Western Michigan University Board of Trustees (BOT) Formal Session was called to order by Chair Shelly Edgerton at 12:03PM on *Thursday, June 26, 2025*.

The meeting was conducted in person in the Heritage Hall Ballroom and streamed live through the BOT website. Prior marketing encouraged the public to engage and those interested in providing comment were asked to notify Board Secretary Kahler Schuemann by 5PM, *Wednesday, June 25, 2025*.

Presiding in person were Chair Shelly Edgerton, Vice Chair Alan Turfe, Trustees Kelly Burris, Lynn Chen-Zhang, Jon Hoadley, James Liggins Jr., Lisa Williams, and Kara Wood.

A motion to accept the *June 26, 2025 BOT agenda* was made by Trustee Jon Hoadley with a second by Trustee Kara Wood. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to accept the minutes as exhibited from the *April 17, 2025 and April 23, 2025 BOT Meetings* was made by Trustee Kelly Burris, with a second by Trustee Jon Hoadley, and passed with full support of the voting members.

Remarks were provided by Chair Shelly Edgerton – *Attachment A*, followed by remarks from President Edward Montgomery – *Attachment B*.

Faculty Senate President Amy Naugle, Western Student Association Chief of Finance Bailey McPhillips, and Graduate Student Association President Claire Binford provided comments regarding their respective areas and outlined ongoing activities and initiatives relating to shared governance, promoting student involvement, and academic enrichment.

President Edward Montgomery paid special tribute to the recent Western Michigan University graduates recognizing them for their academic achievements.

Next, President Edward Montgomery introduced Dr. Diane Anderson, Vice President for Student Affairs and Donielle Easlick, Program Manager who presented on the *Montgomery Essential Needs Program*.

There was no indicated public interest in providing commentary regarding any Action Items.

As Action Items, Interim Provost and VP for Academic Affairs, Dr. Chris Cheatham recommended faculty for Academic Tenure and Promotion. A motion to support those recommended for Academic Tenure and Promotion was made by Trustee Kelly Burris, with a second by Trustee Lisa Williams and passed unanimously.

Next, Vice President for Student Services Diane Anderson proposed Student Housing and Meal Rates 2025/26. **A motion to support Student Housing and Meal Rates 2025/26** was made by Trustee Jon Hoadley, with a second by Trustee Kara Wood, and passed with full support of the Board.

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Chris Cheatham next sought approval for Fall 2025 Differential. **A motion to support Fall 2025 Differential Tuition Rates** was made by Trustee Kara Wood, with a second by Trustee Lisa Williams and passed unanimously.

Next, Vice President for Business and Finance Jan Van Der Kley advocated support for the Fall 2025 Tuition and Required Fee Rates. **A motion to support the Fall 2025 Tuition and Required Fee Rates** was made by Trustee Kara Wood with a second by Vice Chair Alan Turfe. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice President for Business and Finance Jan Van Der Kley next proposed the General Fund Fiscal Year 2025/26 Operating Budget. **A motion to support the General Fund Fiscal Year 2025/26 Operating Budget** was made by Trustee Jon Hoadley, with a second by Trustee Lynn Chen-Zhang, and passed unanimously.

Secretary to the Board of Trustees Dr. Kahler Schuemann next advocated for President Emeritus Status for President Edward Montgomery. **A motion to support President Emeritus Status for Edward Montgomery** was made by Trustee Jon Hoadley, with a second by Vice Chair Alan Turfe and passed with full support of the Board.

A motion to approve the Consent Items was made by Trustee Jon Hoadley, with a second from Trustee Lisa Williams. The BOT unanimously approved the following Consent Items as exhibited: Personnel Report; Curriculum Proposals; Liquor License – Multiple Events (October 18, 2025; January 3, 2026; & March 20-21, 2026); Paper Tech Foundation Bylaw Change; Approval of Real Property Lease for WMed; WMU 2026 Board of Trustees Meeting Dates; and Presidential Reimbursement for Moving Expenses.

Rodney Weir addressed the Board in **General Public Comments**.

The BOT meeting ended at 1:34PM following **a motion to adjourn** made by Trustee Jon Hoadley with a second by Trustee Chen-Zhang, and unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,



Kahler B. Schuemann, Ph.D.
Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Western Michigan University

Proposed Meeting Minutes

August 13, 2025

The Western Michigan University Board of Trustees (BOT) Formal Session SPECIAL BOARD MEETING was called to order by Chair Shelly Edgerton at 1PM on *Wednesday, August 13, 2025*.

The meeting was virtual and streamed live through the BOT website.

Presiding were Chair Shelly Edgerton, Vice Chair Alan Turfe, Trustees Kelly Burris, Jon Hoadley, Lisa Williams, and Kara Wood. Trustees Lynn Chen-Zhang, and James Liggins Jr. made prior arrangements to be absent.

A motion to accept the *August 13, 2025 SPECIAL MEETING BOT agenda* was made by Vice Chair Alan Turfe with a second by Trustee Kara Wood. The motion passed unanimously.

Remarks were provided by Chair Shelly Edgerton – *Attachment C*, followed by remarks from President Russ Kavalhuna – *Attachment D*.

For the SPECIAL BOARD MEETING Action Item Vice President for Business and Finance, Jan Van Der Kley proposed for trustee consideration the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees' Union (AFSCME) Wage Agreement. **A motion to support the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees' Union (AFSCME) Wage Agreement** was made by Vice Chair Alan Turfe, with a second by Trustee Kelly Burris and passed unanimously.

Congratulatory remarks were then offered by AFSCME President Bryan Sutton.

The BOT meeting ended at 1:14PM following **a motion to adjourn** made by Vice Chair Alan Turfe with a second by Trustee Jon Hoadley, and unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,



Kahler B. Schuemann, Ph.D.
Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Western Michigan University

ATTACHMENT A

WMU Board of Trustees Chair Edgerton's Remarks June 26, 2025

Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining us for the final Board of Trustees meeting of the academic year. We appreciate you taking the time to attend as we discuss important University matters. I hope you're all finding ways to stay cool during this stretch of extreme heat.

We have several important action items on today's agenda, but first I'd like to take a moment—on behalf of the board—to congratulate the nearly 1,000 Summer 2025 graduates. In just two days, we will celebrate their achievements during the 9 a.m. and noon ceremonies as they cross the stage during commencement, poised to begin their next chapter.

We're proud of the commitment they've made to their education and the foundation they've built for a successful future. I look forward to joining my colleagues, Trustees Hoadley, Liggins, and Wood, as we wish them well. Saturday's commencement ceremony also holds special significance because it marks President Montgomery's 24th and final graduation exercise as Western's ninth president.

I'd also like to congratulate those faculty members who were recognized during the annual Academic Tenure and Promotion reception this morning, where we had the pleasure of celebrating them. Faculty are the foundation of WMU's academic community, and we take great pride in their professional growth and accomplishments. I want to express gratitude for their many contributions to the Bronco community, to their research and scholarship and to their students.

We'd also like to congratulate the WMU employees who received degrees during the Spring 2025 commencement ceremony in April! President Montgomery conferred 33 degrees upon these outstanding employees, whom he will formally acknowledge later in today's meeting.

Please join me in a round of applause for our employee graduates, our Summer 2025 graduates and for our faculty up for tenure and promotions this academic year.

We have a full agenda today—in addition to considering approval of faculty candidates for Academic Tenure and Promotion, the board will take action on several business items, including Student Housing and Meal Rates, Differential Tuition Rates, Tuition and Required Fee Rates and the 2025-26 General Fund and Operating Budget.

As stewards of the University's mission and its resources, the board is committed to ensuring Western's long-term financial sustainability while keeping academic excellence and student success at the forefront. Tuition and required fees continue to support two essential priorities for Western—maintaining a high-quality learning environment and preserving financial accessibility for our Broncos.

In preparing the University's budget and setting tuition rates, we carefully balance our mission to provide holistic, Experience-Driven Learning, and we're proud of our role in expanding equitable access to higher education. Even with this pricing adjustment, we expect to remain one of the most affordable public institutions in the state.

Our latest Career Outcomes Report indicates that 93% of our Broncos participate in an experience-driven learning opportunity and 95% of them are working full time in their field, building a strong future for their families, for Michigan and around the world.

These outcomes are a direct correlation to the value we strive to deliver through budgeting and strategic planning. In a few moments, we will hear rate and budget recommendations from Vice President Diane Anderson, Interim Provost Chris Cheatham and Vice President Jan Van Der Kley. We appreciate the considerable work that went into developing these action items.

ATTACHMENT B

WMU Board of Trustees President Montgomery's Remarks June 26, 2025

As Chair Edgerton mentioned, the 344th commencement ceremonies are this Saturday. We're honored to confer more than 600 bachelor's degrees, nearly 300 master's degrees, nearly 50 doctorates and 19 specialist degrees.

We look forward to celebrating alongside our graduates and their families. These students—now part of a proud community of more than 250,000 Western alumni—have broadened their perspectives, sharpened their skills here and are now prepared to step confidently into meaningful careers and fulfilling lives. We couldn't be more proud. If you'll be joining us for commencement at 9 a.m. or noon in Miller Auditorium, we look forward to seeing you there to celebrate the graduates' achievements.

Earlier today, as Chair Edgerton remarked, we had the pleasure of celebrating with our outstanding faculty during the annual Academic Promotion Tenure reception. Congratulations to each of them.

Speaking of exceptional faculty, I'd like to extend congratulations to the second class of Experience-Driven Learning venture grant recipients. In alignment with our Strategic Plan, these grants are one of many ways we are aiming for every student to have the opportunity to engage in enhanced learning, shaping our students' professional purpose and empowering their future success. This newest class includes nine impressive projects that span many disciplines and exemplify experiential learning at its best. A few highlights include:

Paid internships for aspiring teachers from underrepresented populations; creation of an immersive audio lab for students in Multimedia Arts Technology; funding for the Bronco Challenge for Sustainable Impact, where our Broncos tackle real-world sustainability challenges. Last year's winning team developed a concept to promote ethical consumer purchasing decisions, earning them a grand prize award of \$10,000. We saw excellent projects emerge in the first round of venture grants, and we're excited to see what this next group will accomplish. Congratulations to all involved.

We also celebrate the global impact of our faculty. Dr. Shannon McMorrow, associate professor in the School of Interdisciplinary Health Programs, recently was awarded a Fulbright Specialist Program award to support a public and global health initiative at Naresuan University in Thailand.

Through this prestigious program, Dr. McMorrow will engage in education and training efforts this summer that promote knowledge exchange and lasting international partnerships. Similarly, Greg Jasperse, associate professor of applied jazz voice at the Irving S. Gilmore School of Music, recently traveled to South Africa, where he taught jazz, led vocal improvisation sessions and coached the University of Witwatersrand's first jazz ensemble. Both faculty members are part of the distinguished 2024-25 class of Fulbright recipients, representing WMU with excellence in academic achievement and leadership on the global stage. We applaud their accomplishments.

Closer to home, students from the Haworth College of Business were recently named world champions in the 2025 Digital Marketing Competition. After completing 11 weeks of intense work, our students placed first among nearly 200 teams from around the world. Even more impressive—three of the six finalist teams were from WMU and coached by Dr. Scott Cowley, associate professor of marketing. What an incredible achievement!

And finally, if you're driving along Michigan Avenue at the Campus Pointe shopping center, you will notice a vibrant new WMU-focused mural celebrating Bronco spirit at 2618 West Michigan Avenue. Guest artist Heidi Weiss (a two-time WMU graduate) and students in her summer murals course teamed up with Brad Zenz, also an alum, to bring new artwork near campus.

Brad is mentoring the students this summer. The work captures the essence of Western, including larger-than-life Western athletes, cheering fans, the iconic Seal and Gathering Tree and a vintage logo.

Speaking of the Seal and Gathering Tree, it's currently surrounded by construction fencing as the new Pedestrian Green Space area takes shape. West Michigan Avenue is undergoing an exciting transformation. Stretching from Henry Hall to Ring Road, this central corridor area is being reimagined as a pedestrian-only mall. This campus beautification project will feature expansive walkways, outdoor seating, landscaping and a signature gateway entrance that welcomes all our future Broncos and guests. It is set to be completed this fall.

Additionally, this summer you'll see construction continue on the new residence hall, Goldsworth Valley, which will open to more than 1,000 students next fall. Our sincere thanks to the WMU departments working behind the scenes to bring our summer campus construction projects to life.

I'm pleased to announce some exciting news! Western Michigan University has been selected as the winner of Heterodox Academy's 2025 Open Inquiry Award for Community Excellence. The Awards highlight the academy's members and organizations that demonstrate a strong commitment to promoting open inquiry, viewpoint diversity and constructive disagreement.

WMU received the Community Excellence Award in recognition of our leadership in growing campus membership in the academy, our adoption of the Guidelines for Stewarding our Institutional Voice and our exceptional campus programming through WeTalk and other events.

By the way, out of nearly 75 institutions nationwide affiliated with Heterodox Academy, WMU now has the largest membership in the country with 80 active faculty, staff and administrators across a range of disciplines and backgrounds.

That couldn't have happened without the leadership of Jennifer Townsend, executive assistant to the Lee Honors College dean and an adjunct instructor; Jeff Breneman, vice president for the Office of Government Relations; and David Paul, chair of the Department of Philosophy. Their work has focused on fostering open inquiry through community-building, active engagement and impactful programming.

I'm also pleased to share that WMU recently passed an important milestone—we successfully completed the Higher Learning Commission Assurance Review. The review is a required part of the HLC's comprehensive evaluation process, which takes place every 10 years. It helps ensure that institutions like ours continue to fulfill their mission and deliver high-quality educational offerings that align with the commission's standards for accreditation.

Successfully completing the review affirms our ongoing commitment to excellence and student success. I want to extend thanks to Adriana Reyes, associate director of Institutional Accreditation and Planning, Interim Provost Chris Cheatham and all who worked on this project for their extensive work.

This concludes my remarks, and I will turn it back over to Chair Edgerton.

ATTACHMENT C

WMU Board of Trustees Chair Edgerton's Remarks August 13, 2025

Good afternoon, and welcome to the WMU Board of Trustees special meeting being held virtually today. Thank you for taking time out of your schedules to tend to this important matter of the University.

Thank you, again, trustees, for convening virtually. We are here today to consider the ratification of the agreement between Western Michigan University and the WMU American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees' union, an important matter before us.

Before we hear the details of the proposed agreement from Vice President Jan Van Der Kley, I would like to acknowledge the collaborative efforts of the agreement between WMU and AFSCME. As fiduciary stewards of the University, we are pleased to see the communication, hard work and careful negotiating from both parties that has now resulted in a two-year tentative agreement. We appreciate the hours, the days and the weeks of conversation that went into this important step forward.

I also want to express our appreciation to the members of the bargaining unit for taking

ATTACHMENT D

WMU Board of Trustees President Kavalhuna's Remarks August 13, 2025

Good afternoon, Madam Chair, thank you very much. Yes, this is both my first board meeting and virtual meeting. I'm excited to be here with you all. It's a great way to start my tenure as your teammate on this board.

Good afternoon trustees, good to see you all. Teammates from WMU, good to see you as well. President Sutton, thank you for joining us.

As the chair said, this is an exciting and good sign of the collaborative process that has taken place. We've got collective bargaining and administration working together on an agreement that both constituencies have reviewed. The final and most important constituency that needs to approve this is the Board of Trustees.

It's no surprise, trustees, that I recommend you vote in favor of this tentative agreement. I'm really excited that the membership of AFSCME voted in favor of it.

I want to end my comments by thanking two people who deserve much of the credit. A lot of times collective bargaining can be difficult and lead to breakdowns. But this bargaining process did none of those things. It was the result of two people and their teams who wanted to show we can work together:

Vice President Jan Van Der Kley, leading the university's team with respectful proposals, and President Bryan Sutton, elected leader of dedicated employees with decades of service to our mission.

They worked faithfully, and because of that, members trusted President Sutton and voted for the agreement. So, I thank both of them. This is a contract delivered on time, with collaboration, and supported by constituencies. Thank you, Madam Chair.