CAMPUS PLANNING & FINANCE COUNCIL

Minutes of 21 April 2026

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Campus Planning & Finance Council was called to order at 3 p.m. on 21 April 2026, via Webex, by LuMarie Guth, chair.

Members Present: Todd Barkman, Cheryl Bruey, Shonda Buchanan, Lynne Heasley, Nicholas Rowe, Colleen Scarf, Wayne Stitt, Jan Van Der Kley, Sara VanderVeen
Members Absent: Mia Breznau, Kristhyna Fermin, Kim Ganzevoort, Brittani Jackson, Valerian Kwigizile
Advisory Members Absent: Sara Nelson, Jeff Spoelstra
Ex Officio: Osama Abudayyeh
Guests: Dan Bartholomae, VP and Director of Athletics; Steven Bertman, School of Environment, Geography and Sustainability; and Pete Michell, Sr. VP Rockford Construction.

Quorum

A quorum was present with nine members in attendance, of the eight needed to establish a quorum.

Agenda

[MOTION] It was moved by Bruey, seconded by Buchanan, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Stitt, seconded by Buchanan, to approve the minutes of 16 December 2025, 17 February 2026, and 17 March 2026 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Guth reported on the preparation of the Council Year-end Report, the upcoming presentation at the 30 April 2026 Faculty Senate meeting, and ongoing discussions regarding the Council's role and expectations.

Ex Officio Abudayyeh reported that there would be a different Ex Officio next year.

Action Items

Due to the anticipated loss of quorum, action items were postponed to the next meeting date.

[MOTION] It was moved by Rowe, seconded by Bruey, to approve the Campus Planning & Finance Council Year-end Report. The motion carried.

[MOTION] It was moved by Van Der Kley, seconded by Heasley, to approve the Role Change Report regarding council scope and expectations. The motion carried.

Ex Officio Abudayyeh left the meeting at 4:15 p.m., resulting in loss of quorum.

Reports of University Representatives

Van Der Kley provided the Business and Finance report that included a continued decline in enrollment. Financial modeling is currently projecting a 3% to 4% decline in tuition revenue, which exceeds the university's predicted 1% to 2% decline. It is expected to have a notable institutional impact. Additionally, the state is experiencing lower revenues, with increased appropriations directed toward community colleges. It was noted that Michigan's public universities represent a relatively small interest group within state funding considerations. While House, Senate, and Governor proposals for higher education support remain under negotiation, there is currently no capital outlay and no base support. Tuition constraint language remains in place, though not significantly higher than normal. One-time funding allocations continue to be the prevailing trend, which does not bode well for higher education in the state of Michigan.

VanderVeen reported on a new planning study for Waldo Library, which will serve as a follow-up to the 2018 study. The project is being conducted in partnership with Perkins & Will and will include a steering committee. The study will begin in May. In addition, VanderVeen reported a strong response rate from the College of Health and Human Services related to upcoming projects.

Reports of Council Standing Committees

Sustainability Committee Chair Bertman provided the report of the Sustainability Committee, noting substantial progress on the committee's first charge, some progress on the second charge, and the initiation of the first STARS report in several years. The committee has also been working with IT on SharePoint and other information-sharing and workflow possibilities for both internal committee operations and public-facing communication.

New Business

Pete Michell, Sr. VP of Rockford Construction, and Dan Bartholomae, VP and Director of Athletics, provided multiple updates on Kalamazoo Event & Athletic Performance Center/Hockey Arena. The report included information on arena capacity (approximately 6,000 seats without boxes, depending on event configuration), premium seating offerings, transportation and parking plans, projected event usage, and financial and operational considerations, including revenue structure and agreements. It was also noted that Western Michigan University holds three of the four primary tenant roles for the center and is expected to host 52 home events.

Additional discussion covered a range of considerations related to a proposed event center and its broader institutional and community impact.

- Community benefits and engagement: A potential Community Benefit Agreement tied to the Northside Neighborhood, including workforce development opportunities in construction, design, and food and beverage sectors.

- Campus and academic use of space: Questions about faculty and alumni "concourses" or dedicated areas during events, as well as opportunities for deans to rent space.
- Financial structure: Discussion of revenue sharing and identifying the "revenue home," particularly in relation to the Athletic Department.
- Safety and operations: Planning for transportation, safety, and security for athletes, students, faculty, and staff, with Bartholomae and Mitchell expected to circulate a final operating agreement and address additional safety questions in advance.
- Risk and liability: Consideration of risk management responsibilities, security oversight, and liability insurance coverage.
- Workforce and utilization: Questions about how many WMU employees would be located at the facility and how the space would be actively used by the university.
- External and internal programming: Opportunities for WMU to use the center for events, alongside planned use by Greenleaf for conferences and community programming.
- Facilities benchmarking: Acknowledgment of the strong need for a facility that better aligns with the university's stature as a Division I institution, noting that current facilities are not comparable to peer institutions in the conference.

Barkman and VanderVeen reported on the Office Space Task Force, which operates under the auspices of the President of the University. They noted that the university currently lacks adopted forward-facing guidelines for office space, including standardized best practices, space allocation protocols, and clear parameters for relocating departments or addressing underutilized space due to retirements and shifting needs. As part of its work, the task force developed a comprehensive database of all campus spaces, supported by ground-truthing efforts. The central component of the forthcoming (not yet approved) policy framework will be an ASF square footage range tied to an occupant's role within the institution. A benchmark occupancy target of 85% has been established, and units are encouraged to monitor utilization with that goal in mind. Discussion highlighted questions around flexibility, creative space solutions, accommodation for part-time and graduate use, and the role of vacancy audits. It was also noted that this work will provide a valuable structure for organizing campus space resources. The full document is expected to be completed by the end of the spring semester.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:03 p.m. The Campus Planning & Finance Council will meet in the fall semester of 2026.

Approval

Submitted by LuMarie Guth, chair.

Minutes were approved on 8 September 2026.