

Proposed Meeting Minutes – June 25, 2026

The Western Michigan University Board of Trustees (BOT) Formal Session was called to order by Chair Alan Turfe at 12:08PM on *Thursday, June 25, 2026*.

The meeting was conducted in person in Heritage Hall 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 Stacy Thinnes by 5PM, *Wednesday, June 24, 2026*.

Presiding in person were Chair Alan Turfe, Trustees Shelly Edgerton, James Liggins Jr, Jon Hoadley, and Lisa Williams.

Presiding virtually was Vice Chair Kelly Burris.

Absent: Trustee Lynn Chen-Zhang and Kara Wood

A motion to accept the June 25, 2026 BOT agenda was made by Trustee Shelly Edgerton with a second by Trustee James Liggins Jr. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion to accept the minutes as exhibited from the April 16, 2026 BOT Meeting was made by Trustee Shelly Edgerton with a second by Trustee Jon Hoadley. The motion passed unanimously.

Remarks were provided by Chair Alan Turfe – *Attachment A*, followed by remarks from President Russ Kavalhuna – *Attachment B*.

Faculty Senate President Dr. Jan Hahn, Western Student Association Speaker of the Assembly Jillian Kissel, and Graduate Student Association President Luis Jacobo Mejia provided comments regarding their respective areas and outlined ongoing activities and initiatives relating to shared governance, promoting student involvement, and academic enrichment.

President Russ Kavalhuna acknowledged *Western Michigan Employee Graduates* from the Spring 2026 commencement.

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Chris Cheatham acknowledged the faculty that received *Academic Tenure and Promotion*.

There were no public comments regarding Action Items.

As Action Items, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Chris Cheatham recommended faculty for Academic Tenure and Promotion. **A motion to support those recommended for Academic Tenure and Promotion Approval** was made by Trustee Jon Hoadley with a second by Trustee Shelly Edgerton. The action passed unanimously.

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Chris Cheatham sought approval for Fall 2026 Differential Tuition Rates. **A motion to support the Fall 2026 Differential Tuition Rates** was made by Trustee Shelly Edgerton with a second by Trustee James Liggins Jr. The action passed unanimously.

Vice President for Business and Finance Jan Van Der Kley advocated support for the Fall 2026 Tuition and Required Fee Rates. **A motion to support the Fall 2026 Tuition and Required Fee Rates** was made by Trustee Shelly Edgerton with a second by Trustee James Liggins Jr. The action passed unanimously.

Vice President for Business and Finance Jan Van Der Kley proposed the 2026-27 General Fund Operating Budget. **A motion to support the 2026-27 General Fund Operating Budget** was made by Trustee Shelly Edgerton with a second by Trustee Jon Hoadley. The action passed unanimously.

Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Chris Cheatham presented the Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) Labor Agreement. **A motion to approve the Teaching Assistants Union (TAU) Labor Agreement** was made by Trustee Jon Hoadley with a second by Trustee Lisa Williams. The action passed unanimously.

Vice President for Business and Finance Jan Van Der Kley presented the Michigan State Employees Association (MSEA) Labor Agreement. **A motion to support the Michigan State Employees Association (MSEA) Labor Agreement** was made by Trustee Shelly Edgerton with a second by Trustee Jon Hoadley. The action passed unanimously.

Chair Turfe, asked for support of the President's Annual Review/Compensation/Contract. **A motion to support the President's Annual Review/Compensation/Contract** was made by Trustee Shelly Edgerton and second by Trustee Liggins. The action passed with one abstention by Trustee Jon Hoadley.

General Council Keith Hahn, presented the Memorandum of Understanding – WMU and WMU Foundation. **A motion to approve the Memorandum of Understanding – WMU and WMU Foundation** was made by Trustee Jon Hoadley with a second by Trustee Shelly Edgerton. The action passed unanimously.

A motion to approve the Consent Items was made by Trustee Shelly Edgerton with a second by Trustee Jon Hoadley. The BOT unanimously approved the following Consent Items as exhibited: Personnel Report; Permanent Easement Request from City of Kalamazoo for Valley Oaks; Liquor License – West Hills - Multiple Events; Annuity and Life Income Funds Performance Report; and the Operating Cash Investment Report.

There was one **General Public Comment** made by AFSCME President Bryan Sutton.

The BOT meeting ended at 1:26PM following **a motion to adjourn** by Trustee Jon Hoadley with a second by Trustee Lisa Williams.

Respectfully submitted,

Stacy Thinnies
Secretary to the Board of Trustees
Western Michigan University

ATTACHMENT A

WMU Board of Trustees

Chair Turfe's Remarks June 25, 2026

Before we move into today's business, I would like to recognize a couple of my colleagues on some major achievements over the past several weeks.

Congratulations to Trustee James Liggins, an attorney at Warner Norcross + Judd LLP, on receiving the prestigious 2026 Michael Franck Award, an annual award that recognizes an attorney for outstanding contributions to improving the profession through a commitment to ethical practice, public service and community leadership.

I would also like to recognize Trustee Lynn Chen-Zhang, who recently, alongside her husband, Bronco alumnus Charles Zhang, received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, one of the most prestigious recognitions of contributions and service to this country. The

Zhang's share this recognition with several past U.S. presidents along with the likes of Rosa Parks, Muhammed Ali and Oprah Winfrey.

With those well-deserved recognitions, we will now turn to our agenda.

We have several important recommendations before us, including the University's 2026-27 general fund operating budget, the 2026 tuition and required fee rates and the 2026 differential tuition rates.

As we consider these actions, we are mindful of the financial realities students and families face. The Board remains committed to ensuring Western Michigan University is both financially accessible and excellent.

In preparing this budget and setting tuition, we strike a careful balance between keeping a high-quality education within reach and sustaining the resources it takes to deliver that education. With this in mind, later in the meeting, under action items, we will hear from Vice President Jan Van Der Kley on the 2026-27 operating budget and the tuition and required fee rates recommendations. We will also hear from Interim Provost Chris Cheatham regarding consideration of the differential tuition rate recommendation.

Also under action items, we will consider two important labor agreements. Interim Provost Cheatham will present the proposed contract agreements between WMU and Teaching Assistants Union, and Vice President Van Der Kley will present the agreement between WMU and the Michigan State Employees Association.

Each year, Western Michigan University recognizes faculty who receive academic tenure and promotion. This tradition represents their scholarly achievements, dedication to teaching and service to our students and the community. It is an important milestone in an academic career and a moment of

pride for all of us celebrating you today. We look forward to Dr. Cheatham's presentation coming up in just a few minutes.

We will also recognize Western's spring employee graduates today. It's always a pleasure to see that those who mentor and guide our students also make time in their own lives to continue advancing their education, modeling lifelong learning.

To round out the action items, we will consider the President's performance and contract extension, a Memorandum of Understanding between this Board and the WMU Foundation Board and we will consider several consent agenda items, including a

personnel report, a permanent easement request from the City of Kalamazoo for Valley Oaks, a liquor license at West Hills and two reports.

ATTACHMENT B

WMU Board of Trustees

President Kavalhuna's Remarks June 25, 2026

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate being here at the End of this Fiscally year.

My colleague to my right is Lisa Williams. She's a graduate of Western Michigan University, but in her day job, she's a principal at a high school in Detroit. I had the pleasure of visiting that high school and trying to recruit some of her students. And you can understand why they're worthy of recruiting. Just this last year, 71 graduates came through her high school. And if you counted up all of the scholarships those students received from higher education institutions, you'd be at over \$9 million being awarded to the students this Bronco leads every day in Detroit.

I want to congratulate one of your colleagues, Mr. Chairman, who himself has now got at least one point on the board for an enrollment effort, recruiting efforts. It is no one other than our own colleague, Trustee Liggins, who has recruited his son to enroll at WMU.

We're having another commencement here, very soon. We'll celebrate 10,000 degrees being conferred two days from now.

I also want to make note of something I announced very recently and that is the search for the senior vice president of budget and finance and chief financial officer. I do want to thank my teammates Dan Bartholomae, the athletic director and Chris Cheatham the Interim Provost who are leading up that search and it is now live. So, if you have anyone who wants to be the chief financial officer for the best university on the planet, please send them to us.

Valley Oaks is the new residence hall that we're all really excited about that we're going to cut the ribbon on July 29th.

Interim Provost Cheatham delivered a really impactful agreement that we recently celebrated trustees and that is if you're going to Kalamazoo Valley Community College and you think you want to be a Bronco, you don't any longer have to wonder do I have to apply and will I get in and whether my credits will transfer. Through the work in Vice President Cheatham's office, we've been able to say to all those students at Kalamazoo Valley Community College, you're welcome here. You're already admitted. And in fact, actually at a spring football game we had a couple of students who were doing that transition from Kalamazoo Valley Community College to Western Michigan University. We had them down on the field and they played a game where if they threw a football through a certain hole in a blowup, they would get a certain amount of money.

I want to congratulate my colleague and teammate faculty member D. Sherwood who is a professor in the School of Social Work who received the Maryland Steenberg Award given to AAP members who demonstrate concern for courage, persistence, and collaborative bargaining skills.

Seven students from Western's Jazz Studies program brought home eight national honors from the prestigious Downbeat Magazine Student Music Awards. They're under the direction of Dr. Andrew Rathbun. He's the head of Jazz Studies in the Irving S. Gilmore School of Music.

It's been a great year. I'm very excited to be here and I'm very optimistic about where this university is going, particularly because of the challenges we face.

My plan is to outline what I've heard from you all and from our community about what Western Michigan University can continue to be and what it can grow into in the future to win what is going to be a more competitive environment. Western has to play to win, and our foundations are really strong. And we're going to win more attention and enrollment. We do not aim to replicate what happens in other big universities that do research. We actually want to carve out our own research enterprise that distinguishes us.

I will be here as long as you have me and I'll be working as hard as I can because this place means so much to me.

Thank you for your partnership, your support, and your belief in what Western can become.

I would like to recognize my teammates (34 graduates) who received one of the more than 2,100 degrees conferred during the Spring commencement exercises in May.

Some of them are here today. Thank you for taking the time to come today and be recognized for your accomplishment. I'm going to read the names and ask anyone here with us today to stand. We will acknowledge all of you with a round of applause after everyone has been named.