

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
FREDERICK COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**February 18, 2026
Regular Meeting**

The Board of Trustees of Frederick Community College met in **regular session** on Wednesday, February 18, 2026 in the Conference Center (E126AB). A virtual option to participate was provided. Participating in person were: Trustees Theodore Luck, Chair; Carolyn Kimberlin, Vice Chair; Dr. Carmen R. Hernandez; Tracey McPherson; and Dr. William Reid. Trustee Jan H. Gardner was unable to attend. Former Trustee Myrna Whitworth's position is currently vacant. Also attending in person were President Dr. Annesa Payne Cheek, Secretary/Treasurer of the Board; Janice Spiegel, Special Projects Manager/Budget Office Frederick County Government; and Adam Konstas, PK Law, College legal counsel.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Luck at 4:31 p.m.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no conflicts of interest expressed by Trustees.

BOARD & CEO COMMENTS

Chair Luck acknowledged Trustee Myrna Whitworth's resignation from the Board due to retirement and expressed appreciation for her many years of service to the Board of Trustees and the FCC Foundation, noting her commitment to student success and wishing her well in retirement.

Trustee McPherson commented positively on the recently announced \$150,000 workforce grant awarded through the Employment Advancement Right Now (EARN) Maryland program, administered by the Maryland Department of Labor, and noted that Trustee Whitworth will be missed.

Trustee Reid shared observations from recent advocacy activities in Annapolis, noting Student Advocacy Day and the value of students engaging with elected officials and observing the legislative process.

Trustee Hernandez concurred with comments regarding the \$150,000 EARN Maryland workforce grant and encouraged attendance at the culinary scholarship dinner scheduled for April 2, 2026 at the Monroe Center.

President Cheek reported that the College recorded its largest spring enrollment in history, driven by strong returning student engagement and growth in dual enrollment, while noting modest softening in some non-dual populations and ongoing analysis to support long-term sustainability.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

On a motion made by Trustee McPherson, the Board approved the following item 5-0-1, as presented, with Trustee Gardner absent:

- January 21, 2026 regular meeting minutes

REQUIRED APPROVALS AGENDA

On a motion made by Vice Chair Kimberlin, the Board approved the following items

5-0-1, as presented, with Trustee Gardner absent:

- Navigate360 Contract Renewal and Expansion
- Award of RFB 26-TLSS-01 for Biotechnology Lab Equipment
- Piggyback Contract with Blackwood Inc. for Firewalls and Related Services

INFORMATION/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Ownership Linkage Updates – Chair Luck reported that the remaining engagements for FY 2026 have been scheduled for early March. The Board will reflect on emerging themes from these sessions at the March Board meeting.

Fiscal YTD Financial Report through December 31, 2025 – Scott McVicker, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and Vice President (VP) for Administration, went through the report in detail with the Board.

MONITORING BOARD PERFORMANCE:

Policy Survey Results for GP-12 Handling Operational Complaints – Chair Luck reported on the results of this survey.

Policy Survey Results for GP-13 Handling Alleged Policy Violations – Chair Luck reported on the results of this survey.

Board Policy Review of GP-0 Global Governance Commitment – The Board reviewed this policy for currency. There were no suggested revisions.

Board Policy Review of GP-8 Governing Style – The Board reviewed this policy for currency. There were no suggested revisions.

Board Policy Review of BCD-6 President Compensation – The Board reviewed this policy for currency. There were no suggested revisions.

ACTION ITEMS

Board Direction on Legislative Testimony Regarding SB 534/HB 839 – Chair Luck reported that the pending state legislation titled “*Frederick Community College Board of Trustees Meeting and Training Requirements*,” was introduced as Senate Bill 534 and House Bill 839 following approval by the Frederick County Delegation. He outlined testimony options available to the Board, including submitting written informational testimony reaffirming the Board’s January position, describing current governance and transparency practices, and noting potential fiscal impacts associated with compliance requirements. He also noted that the Board may designate a Trustee to provide oral testimony, that individual Trustees may testify in a personal capacity, and that the Board may elect not to provide testimony. The Senate hearing is scheduled for March 11, with testimony due by March 9. The House hearing date has not yet been scheduled.

Trustees discussed response options and the effectiveness of written versus oral testimony. Trustees expressed concern that the legislation does not add substantive transparency requirements beyond current Board practices and that the proposed requirements would apply only to Frederick Community College rather than uniformly across all community colleges. Trustees emphasized the importance of clearly communicating the Board’s position to legislators.

Trustee Reid moved that the Board provide both written and oral testimony to the Maryland General Assembly in support or opposition regarding the pending legislation and that multiple Trustees attend the hearings.

There was further discussion regarding Board representation for oral testimony, including whether the Chair should serve as the Board's spokesperson and whether the Chair should designate which Trustees would attend and testify. Trustees also discussed the appropriate number of Trustees to be present at the hearings and noted that having multiple Trustees in attendance could strengthen the Board's message to legislators.

Chair Luck called for a vote on the motion.

The Board approved the motion 5-0-1, with Trustee Gardner absent.

During subsequent discussion, the Board determined that the initial motion did not explicitly state whether the Board supported or opposed the legislation. A corrective motion was offered to clarify the Board's intent.

On a motion made by Trustee Reid, the Board approved to oppose the pending legislation through both written and oral testimony to the Maryland General Assembly 5-0-1, with Trustee Gardner absent.

Approval of Contract Renewal with SB & Company for Professional Auditing Services for FY 2026 – In March 2021, the Board approved the award of the contract for professional auditing services for the College and the Foundation to SB & Company. This award was for an initial three-year contract with the option to renew each year for an additional three years. Both Frederick County Government and Frederick County Public

Schools are recommending a one-year contract renewal for FY 2026. This will be the final year of the three renewal years per the contract.

On a motion made by Trustee Hernandez, the Board approved the one-year contract renewal with SB & Company 5-0-1, as presented, with Trustee Gardner absent.

Approval of Joint Request for Proposals (RFP) with FCC, FCPS, and Frederick County for Professional Auditing Services Beginning FY 2027 – The College, Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS), and Frederick County Government (FCG) routinely solicit joint proposals for professional auditing services and did so most recently in 2021. Both FCPS and FCG are recommending another joint solicitation with the College for these services.

On a motion made by Vice Chair Kimberlin, the Board approved the joint RFP 5-0-1, as presented, with Trustee Gardner absent.

Prior to the vote on the next three items, President Cheek and Mr. McVicker provided a joint presentation on the FY 2027 Credit Tuition and Fees, FY 2027 Auxiliary Enterprise Bookstore Budget, and FY 2027 Proposed Operating Budget to be submitted to the County Executive.

Approval of FY 2027 Credit Tuition and Fees – The FY 2027 Operating budget proposal includes a 3% increase for in-county, out-of-county and out-of-state tuition and fee rates. In addition, course fees are proposed to offset the rising costs of materials in some programs and to ensure students have the necessary materials at reasonable rates. The proposed FY 2027 credit tuition and fees schedule will be effective for Fall 2026 registration.

On a motion made Trustee Hernandez, the Board approved the FY 2027 Credit Tuition and Fees 5-0-1, as presented, with Trustee Gardner absent.

Approval of FY 2027 Auxiliary Enterprise Bookstore Budget – The Board received revised backup at the meeting to correct a typo in the meeting packet for this item, referencing FY 2025 instead of FY 2026. The Bookstore’s FY 2027 proposed budget reflects a 2.6% increase in revenue compared to the FY 2026 adopted budget. Merchandise and Commissions are the primary drivers of this revenue increase. For FY 2027, the College projects to subsidize the Bookstore in the amount of \$75,000, a decrease of 11.2% or \$9,500 from what was budgeted in FY 2026.

On a motion made by Trustee Kimberlin, the Board approved the FY 2027 Auxiliary Enterprise Bookstore Budget 5-0-1, as presented, with Trustee Gardner absent.

Approval of FY 2027 Proposed Operating Budget to be Submitted to the County

Executive – Operating revenues proposed for FY 2027 total \$83,342,191, including \$2,320,000 in strategic reserves. This represents an increase of \$4,565,873 or 5.5% over the FY 2026 adopted budget and includes \$22,993,414 from tuition and fees (credit and non-credit); State funding of \$23,303,494 in Cade formula aid and \$3,351,000 for State benefits; other income of \$2,875,200 which includes interest income and contract training; and the use of strategic reserves in the amount of \$2,320,000 for one-time initiatives including student success and completion, academic program initiatives, technology projects, and strategic planning and future-proofing. The County funding request of \$28,499,083 includes \$27,755,452 (cash) and \$743,631 (in-kind), which reflects an

additional \$1,500,000 over FY 2026 funding to support institutional sustainability and address additional costs associated with enrollment growth and inflationary pressures.

Operating expenses proposed for FY 2027 total \$83,342,191, including \$2,320,000 from strategic reserves to address strategic, one-time initiatives. This is an increase of \$4,565,873 over the FY 2026 adopted budget, resulting in a structurally balanced budget. Key expense allocations include investments in talent recruitment and retention, health insurance increases of 12.5%, instructional and programmatic support, increases in non-compensation expenses of 13.7%, and an operating contingency.

On a motion made by Trustee McPherson, the Board approved the FY 2027 Proposed Operating Budget to be Submitted to the County Executive 5-0-1, as presented, with Trustee Gardner absent.

Approval of Revisions to Policy GP-5 Board Linkage with Ownership – The Board reviewed this Policy at the October 2025 meeting and revisions were requested related to the use of a facilitator for ownership linkage activities. The revisions were further discussed at the December 2025 board retreat and the January 21, 2026 regular meeting. The revised policy was submitted for approval.

On a motion made by Trustee Hernandez, the Board approved the revisions to Policy GP-5 Board Linkage with Ownership 5-0-1, as presented, with Trustee Gardner absent.

Approval of Revisions to Policy GP-11 Special Rules of Order – The Board reviewed this Policy at the November 2025 meeting and revisions were requested related to review of policies. Additionally, the Board identified at its December 2025 Board retreat

the need to establish in policy how Trustees ask questions. The revisions were further discussed at the January 21, 2026 regular meeting. The revised policy was submitted for approval.

On a motion made by Trustee Hernandez, the Board approved the revisions to Policy GP-11 Special Rules of Order 5-0-1, as presented, with Trustee Gardner absent.

MEETING CONTENT REVIEW

There were no comments.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Board will be held on Wednesday, March 18, 2026.

Dr. Annesa Payne Cheek
Secretary/Treasurer

Prepared by Kari Melvin
Office of the President
Frederick Community College