

**Pennsylvania Western University  
Council of Trustees, Regular Meeting**

Thursday, March 28, 2024  
2 p.m.  
PennWest Clarion – Gemmell Student Center  
840 Wood Street, Clarion, PA

**Meeting Minutes**

The Council of Trustees of Pennsylvania Western University met in regular session on Thursday, March 28, 2024, at the PennWest Clarion campus at 840 Wood Street. The meeting began at 2 p.m.

**ATTENDING**

**Council of Trustees:**

P	Mark Bellini	P	Donna Oberlander
P	JD Dunbar	P	Kathy Pape
P	Danny Jones	A	Larry Pickett
P	Patricia Kennedy	P	Sarah Seader
P	Rachel Kister	P	Neil Weaver
P	Barbara Logue	A	Mohamed Yamba
P	Larry Maggi	P	Sonia Yost
P	Barry Niccolai		

Attendance was taken at the direction of Chair Pape and established that a quorum of the Council was present.

**Also present were:**

Lorraine Bernotsky, Interim President	Peter Kuvshnikov, PennWest Faculty Senate (Virtual – joined late)
Sam Claster, Local APSCUF President, PennWest Edinboro	Mario Majcen, Local APSCUF President, PennWest California
Susanne Fenske, Vice President for Student Affairs and Institutional Effectiveness	Joyce Overly, Local APSCUF President, PennWest Clarion
Mike Ferguson, University Legal Counsel (Virtual)	Marcella McConnell, PennWest Faculty Senate
Jim Fisher, Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs	Fawn Petrosky, Vice President for Finance
Sarah Freed, Interim Vice President for Enrollment	Kelly Repinski, Vice President for University Affairs and Advocacy
James Geiger, Vice President for Advancement	Sydney Spang, SGA President, Clarion
Eric Guiser, Senior Associate Vice President for Human Resources	Robin Weaver, PennWest Faculty Senate
Garrett Hannah, SGA President, Edinboro	

**COUNCIL CHAIR REPORT** (Full report in video archive)

Chair Pape reported on the formation of an ad-hoc committee on advancement, which she will chair. Trustees JD Dunbar, Patricia Kennedy, and Barry Niccolai were appointed to serve on the committee. Additionally, the committee will include foundation, alumni and faculty members.

Chair Pape also informed the board that the Nominating Committee is currently accepting nominations for the upcoming officer elections in the fall. Trustee Neil Weaver chairs this committee, with Trustees Bellini and Logue serving as members.

Furthermore, Chair Pape recognized student trustee Sarah Seeder, presenting her with a certificate of appreciation for her dedicated service on the council. Sarah will graduate from PennWest California in May 2024.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** (Full comments in video archive)

Sandra Trejos, a professor at PennWest Clarion, provided comment.

**REMARKS BY APSCUF LEADERS** (Full comments in video archive)

Dr. Joyce Overly, local APSCUF president, PennWest Clarion  
Dr. Mario Majcen, local APSCUF president, PennWest California.  
Dr. Samuel Claster, local APSCUF president, PennWest Edinboro.

**FACULTY SENATE REMARKS** (Full comments in video archive)

Dr. Marcella McConnell provided remarks on behalf of Faculty Senate.

**STUDENT TRUSTEE REPORTS** (Full reports in video archive)

Student trustees Rachel Kister (Clarion), Sonia Yost (Edinboro), and Sarah Seader (California) reported on activities at their respective campuses.

**PACT UPDATE** (Full report in video archive)

Trustee Bellini provided updates on PACT activities.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair Pape requested a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

- Meeting Minutes 1-25-2024 Regular Meeting
- Meeting Minutes 2-5-2024 Special Meeting

The motion was made by Trustee Niccolai, seconded by Trustee Seader, and passed unanimously after a voice vote.

**MIDDLE STATES UPDATE** (Full report in video archive)

Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Student Affairs, Dr. Susanne Fenske, provided an update on the Middle States Self Study timeline and progress.

**ENROLLMENT UPDATE** (Full report in video archive)

Dr. Sarah Freed, Interim Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management, provided an update on enrollment status and activity.

**STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE** (Full reports in video archive)

Trustee Dunbar, co-chair of the committee, provided an update on committee activity.

**STUDENT PRESENTATION** (Full report in video archive)

Garrett Hannah, SGA President Edinboro, and Sydney Spang, SGA President Clarion, provided an update on the integration of the Student Government Associations, which will be effective on July 1, 2025.

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE** (Full remarks in video archive)

Trustees Jones and Logue, co-chairs of the committee, provided an update on committee activity.

**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE** (Full reports in video archive)

Trustee Maggi, co-chair of the committee, provided an update on committee activity.

Vice President for Finance and Administration, Fawn Petrosky, explained the capital spending plan for the fiscal periods 2024-2025 through 2028-2029 and recommended that the Council approve the capital spending plan, as presented.

Trustee Bellini asked Vice President Petrosky about the timeline for repairing the Mike S. Zafirovski Sports and Recreation Dome on the Edinboro campus. He also asked if the repairs could be completed before the fall semester. Vice President Petrosky indicated that the repair timeline will be contingent upon the specific requirements of the project and a full scope of the work will be forthcoming in the coming months.

The following motion was made by Trustee Oberlander, seconded by Trustee Kennedy, and passed unanimously after a voice vote.

**THE COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES APPROVE THE CAPITAL SPENDING PLAN PROPOSED FOR FISCAL YEARS 2024-2025 THROUGH 2028-2029.**

**PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE** (Full report in video archive)

Trustee Maggi, chair of the Presidential Search Committee, provided an update on presidential search.

Trustee Oberlander asked Trustee Maggi for clarification regarding the protocol for candidate selection. Specifically, she inquired whether the Council of Trustees has the right to reject all candidates offered and continue the search if the initial group of candidates does not meet the desired criteria. Trustee Maggi affirmed that the COT has the right to reject all candidates and continue to accept applications.

Chair Pape informed the board that an additional search committee member had been appointed to the committee. The council had obtained a waiver from the Chancellor to add a SCUPA (State College and University Professional Association) representative to the search committee. SCUPA appointed Todd Spaulding as its representative. Consequently, the Council must ratify the addition of Todd Spaulding to the Presidential Search Committee

The following motion was made by Trustee Weaver, seconded by Trustee Niccolai, and passed unanimously after a voice vote.

**THE COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES RATIFY THE ADDITION OF TODD SPAULDING TO THE PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE REPRESENTING THE STATE COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH COMMITTEE AND COMMENCING THE PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH.**

**UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT REPORT** (Full report in video archive)

Vice President for Advancement, Jim Geiger, provided an update on advancement activities.

**UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT'S REPORT** (Full report in video archive)

Interim President Bernotsky extended gratitude to the dedicated faculty and staff for their steadfast commitment to the students. She expressed anticipation for the upcoming commencement scheduled for May 4, 2024 across all three campuses. Additionally, she conveyed her optimism and confidence in PennWest and its future.

Chair Pape announced that the next regular meeting will be held on June 20, 2024, at PennWest Edinboro.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING.**

Trustee Bellini moved to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Seader seconded the motion, which passed unanimously after a voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

Meeting webcast is available [here](#).