

**RIO GRANDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINUTES**

FEBRUARY 23, 2026

BOB EVANS FARMS HALL, RM 216

5:00 P.M.

I. CALL TO ORDER – Mr. Mick Davenport, Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:02pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Mr. Mick Davenport, Chair - present

Ms. Kat Rinehart, Vice Chair - absent

Mr. Troy Howdyshell - present

Ms. Mary Lynne Jones - present

Mr. Paul Reed - present

Ms. Taylor Rose - absent

Ms. Debbie Saunders - present

Mr. Christian Scott - present

Mr. Jeff Simmons - present

Mr. Ryan Smith, President of the University of Rio Grande and Rio Grande Community College was present.

Staff present included: Ms. Rebecca Euton, Chief Operating Officer; Dr. David Lawrence, Provost; Mr. Jeremy Heffernan, RGCC Interim Treasurer; Mr. Tom Sutton, Associate Vice President of Administration; Mr. Michael McCorkle, Director of Marketing; Ms. Riley Klaiber, RGCC Staff Accountant, Ms. Elizabeth Bynum, Fiscal Services Specialist.

Other Attendees present: Ms. Cherokee Ruby, URG Chief Financial Officer

III. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 8TH MEETING MINUTES (P. 5)

Ms. Saunders shared how she wasn't the trustee that made the motion to approve the October meeting minutes. It was discussed and decided that Ms. Jones was the one that made the motion.

Mr. Simmons made a motion to approve the December 8th meeting minutes with the necessary update. Ms. Saunders seconded the motion. Mr. Davenport called for a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. CHAIRMAN UPDATE

Mr. Davenport expressed gratitude to the staff for all of the work that goes into the agenda packets. He appreciated the time and hard work that goes into preparing for the board meetings.

The Rio Trivia question was from the book, "University of Rio Grande and Rio Grande Community College," written by Mr. Jacob Bapst and Mr. Ivan Tribe. On page 102 there is a picture of six Civil War re-enactors in Spring 1977. One person was dressed up like President Abraham Lincoln wearing a tall hat. This person was associated with Rio for a long time. Who is the person in the picture? The book was then passed around the room. Mr. Scott gave the correct answer of Mr. Earl Thomas. Mr. Thomas taught and coached basketball at Rio for years. Further noted, Ms. Rebecca Euton is his daughter.

V. NEW STAFF ACCOUNTANT INTRODUCTION – MS. RILEY KLAIBER

Mr. Heffernan introduced Ms. Klaiber to the trustees, noting that she is a Rio alum. He further shared that she worked previously for the State Auditor's Office.

VI. RGCC FINANCIAL UPDATE (P. 17)

Mr. Heffernan pointed to his 6-month financials update on pages 20-22. He shared how in his narrative he explains the variances. He anticipates the months between payments on the new contract will increase interest earnings on the checking account, we have \$1.2 million more in the account than we had in December. They will meet on Friday this week to go over the true-up necessary for the current contract between RGCC and URG regarding revenue sharing.

Mr. Reed inquired of what was involved in the true-up. Ms. Ruby shared how we are looking at revenue (student charges) and subtracting both the unfunded scholarships and how much has not been paid to date (accounts receivables).

Mr. Reed inquired of the \$4.3 million in receivables the University owes the Community College. Ms. Ruby shared that it won't change initially, but that money will still be owed. Mr. Reed wondered about her projection for when it would be paid. Ms. Ruby explained that it would not be paid in one lump sum, but it will be paid. She confirmed that it is still owed to the Community College. Mr. Reed inquired if there was a timeline for payment. Ms. Ruby shared how they hope to meet and establish a schedule for repayment before the next Community College Board meeting. President Smith added how they had decided to get through the first year with the new contract, then figure out a reasonable amortization schedule. President Smith also added that the receivable was included in the audit as an accounts receivable amount to confirm even further that it won't go away until it is paid.

Mr. Reed made a motion to approve the following resolution. Mr. Howdysshell seconded the motion. Mr. Davenport called for a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2.23.26(1)

WHEREAS, the revenue, expenditure, and fund balances for the six-month period ending December 31, 2025 have been presented, and

WHEREAS, the said statements appear to be a reasonable reflection of the current financial operations and position of Rio Grande Community College,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the statements for the period ended December 31, 2025, be approved as presented.

VII. DELEGATION OF SIGNATORY AUTHORITY

It was noted that this resolution was last approved at the April 2025 meeting. The following resolution updates the signatory authority to Mr. Heffernan and removes Ms. Ruby.

Ms. Jones made a motion to approve the following resolution. Mr. Scott seconded the motion. Mr. Davenport called for a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2.23.26(2)

WHEREAS, The Rio Grande Community Board of Trustees has statutory authority to oversee Rio Grande Community College operations and finances, and

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande Community College Board of Trustees desires to delegate signatory authority on Rio Grande Community College financial instruments including certified deposits, checks, vouchers, notes, remittances, and other types of commercial paper to the Treasurer and Chief Operating Officer, and

WHEREAS, all entity policies are abided by and all transactions are in compliance, and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Trustees hereby delegate signatory authority to the Treasurer, Mr. Jeremy Heffernan and/or Chief Operating Officer, Ms. Rebecca Long.

VIII. AUDIT UPDATE (P.23)

Ms. Ruby shared how this audit was for fiscal year 2025 while she was CFO of RGCC, so she wanted to come to the meeting to discuss and answer any questions. She explained how the drafted financial statements have been audited and there was a finding. We had a grant that we thought was state funding, that turned out to be federal funding.

This has caused us to have a single audit. She explained how there will be another single audit next year due to the dollar amount of grant funding that will need to be spent.

Ms. Ruby explained how there was a change on a payment to the University that pulled from institutional dollars and it should have come out of an instructional fund account. We also had to pull out the lease and list it separately. That made three changes, so they gave us a finding. She also noted that we didn't have beginning balances due to the ERP change, but that's resolved. Ms. Ruby let them know she got a 30-day extension.

Mr. Reed inquired of President Smith in regards to page 34 about economic factors that affect the future. He wanted to know if there was concern over the potential change in property taxes. President Smith shared how there are two things happening in that bill. One removes all permanent levies and the other is the change of property taxes in Ohio. He noted that our levy is a permanent levy, so it is concerning if that would go away. He also shared how it is definitely concerning to lose property tax income as well for all the different areas those funds pay for, such as law enforcement. He shared how it would be a destabilizing force if it passes. He also expressed that if people hear they can pay less taxes it would be easy for them to vote for it to reduce their out of pocket expenses. It was discussed how the public needs to be informed and educated about how local governments will suffer if that is passed.

Mr. Reed inquired if the funds that exceed \$250,000 in the banks are backed. Mr. Heffernan confirmed that yes, they are backed by Ohio Pooled Collateral.

Mr. Reed pointed out the pension liability from 2026 through 2029 on page 52. It fluctuates from \$ 94,925 to \$147,462 by year end 2027, then changes to \$51,693 and \$16,834 credit balances in future years 2028 and 2029. He wanted to confirm those were expenses. Ms. Ruby confirmed that they are planned expenses, but they could fluctuate. She further explained the amounts are based on the last 10 years, so they are estimates of what could happen. Mr. Reed wondered if we have been faced with any surprises due to poor recommendations. Ms. Ruby didn't believe we had been given any bad recommendations to her knowledge. She noted there was one year we ended with an asset, but it was only one year.

IX. RGCC \$10 TUITION INCREASE - EFFECTIVE FALL 2026

President Smith explained how the potential to increase tuition was discussed a couple of meetings ago. He pointed to a couple of handouts he distributed to the trustees that contained information about utility costs and how they have increased the past few years. Then he shared how everyone's electric bills have gone up and these charts show over a 3-year period. We are up by \$350,000 in increased utility costs. He wanted to share how that was part of the inflationary costs we have been dealing with and this didn't include other areas such as Mid-America Cleaning expense for cleaning services on campus. This is why he wanted to bring the potential to increase tuition costs by \$10

per credit hour.

Ms. Euton shared a handout that showed where Rio ranks in comparison to other community colleges. We are one of the most affordable in Ohio. She expressed how they were surprised when they saw the cost of Southern State Community College, because they are very comparable to Rio in a lot of ways. Ms. Euton shared how the amount of the Pell Grant annually is \$7,395. If you assume the student takes 30 credit hours in a year they would still have an overage leftover of roughly \$495, depending on their other fees. They wouldn't have to take out loans or pay out of pocket.

Mr. Davenport inquired if there is a ball park figure for the cost of books. Dr. Lawrence explained that it varies by program. Ms. Ruby added how we have done things to help offset the cost of books for students. She shared about how there are some inclusive classes that include the cost of books in with the tuition. There is also a First Day option available for some classes and Ohio Link is able to give an option to borrow books for free for some courses. There are multiple things in place to help with book costs, but not all programs fall into one of those categories. It was noted that Nursing courses are typically more expensive and aren't able to use the First Day option due to needs that are specific to them, such as scrubs.

It was discussed that the table on Ms. Euton's handout showed the tuition costs of the current Spring Semester. It does not show what their plans are for Fall 2026. This is the most current information we can see at this point. It was also noted that tuition cost is one of the only items we can control. If the levy money goes out the door or if they decide to cut SSI funding, it's outside of our control. Increasing the tuition cost helps to protect us a little bit and once the opportunity is missed for the increase we don't get it back.

The discussion turned to how important the cost of tuition is for students who are trying to decide on which college to attend. It was discussed that it was important, but it isn't always the top concern. If a college offers a lower tuition rate, but it is located a good distance away the student would have to move into the dorms. That would make it less cost efficient for the student if they have a lower rate of tuition, but higher cost due to dorm expenses. In that scenario the lowest price on the list wouldn't be a top consideration, because their overall cost would be more. Some of the other concerns are size of the classes and the safety of the campus. Many students probably compare us to Hocking and Southern State, because they are the most comparable with the closest proximity to Rio.

Mr. Simmons made a motion to approve the following resolution. Mr. Howdysshell seconded the motion. Mr. Davenport called for a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2.23.26(3)

WHEREAS, the current tuition for Rio Grande Community College students is \$151 per credit hour, and

WHEREAS, Rio Grande Community College would like to increase tuition by \$10 per credit hour, effective Fall 2026,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rio Grande Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves to increase tuition from \$151 per credit hour to \$161 per credit hour, effective Fall 2026.

X. COURSE FEES (P. 82)

Mr. Heffernan shared how the list of course fee changes is much smaller this year. He went over each change from page 83. Essentially all of the fees will be pass through amounts. It was clarified that this will be effective starting Fall 2026.

Ms. Saunders made a motion to approve the course fee adjustments listed on page 83 of the agenda. Ms. Jones seconded the motion. Mr. Davenport called for a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously.

XI. LATE FEES

Modification to how late fees will be applied to student accounts

In the past, student have been assessed a late fee on overdue outstanding balances. This fee was calculated as 1.5% of the outstanding balance. These fees would need to be applied individually to a student's account creating an operational burden. The tier-based fee structure proposed balances fairness with administrative efficiency, allowing fee application to be applied in batches with the current ERP system.

Proposed Tier Structure

- Tier 1: Balance \$201–\$999 → Late Fee \$10
- Tier 2: Balance \$1,000–\$2,499 → Late Fee \$25
- Tier 3: Balance \$2,500–\$4,999 → Late Fee \$50
- Tier 4: Balance \$5,000–\$9,999 → Late Fee \$100
- Tier 5: Balance \$10,000–\$14,999 → Late Fee \$175
- Tier 6: Balance \$15,000–\$20,000 → Late Fee \$250

Mr. Heffernan shared how this modification to how late fees are applied will make it easier to apply in batches. Therefore, making it a more efficient process and reducing the risk for human error. It was clarified that this will be effective immediately if approved.

It was discussed how this will be helpful for collections to apply it this way, because it will be applied to the students account in a more timely manner. It was noted that we

still use the Attorney General's Office for collections.

Mr. Reed made a motion to move from the percentage structure to the tier structure, effective immediately. Mr. Simmons seconded the motion. Mr. Davenport called for a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously.

XII. ENROLLMENT REPORT (P.84)

Mr. Heffernan shared that as of today we are at 1,010 CCP for the current Spring 2026 Semester. It went up since the report was printed. The FTE went up to 464 CCP. He further explained how 38% of the CCP students are being taught at the high schools at a discounted tuition rate per credit hour.

Mr. Heffernan expressed how we are doing well in comparison to other schools. He noted that our traditional student headcount has increased 10.5% since last Spring.

Mr. Reed inquired if you can get an entire degree online. It was explained that you can take a lot online, but you will still need some hybrid or in person courses to complete your degree. The discussion moved to whether we should discuss the online courses more, because we created the Centers before online learning was so popular. It was noted that there have been discussions on how we can better use the physical buildings more. There are some courses that are being offered during lunch hours to bring students into the buildings. We are also trying to use the technology we currently have to do more. It was shared how the online courses are not necessarily students from across states, but rather there are a lot that are students who live in the dorms or come to campus to use technology. They are still present on campus, but choose to take online courses. Mr. Reed wondered if more information could be provided about how many students are taking online classes along side of face to face courses. Ms. Euton responded that she would be able to get more information for the trustees.

The discussion then turned to how are we using the facilities we currently have to provide community interaction. Covid changed how people interact, with many going to online methods. We live in a world where a lot of meetings happen online and students prefer online options. It was discussed if revenue decreases when students have face to face courses. President Smith shared how he felt McArthur needed a new building, but he doesn't feel any more new building projects are necessary. Some programs require hands on learning facilities. Ms. Euton shared how Rio is shifting the role and focus of the Directors to be more positioned for business development creating connections with local businesses. It was briefly mentioned that students will sometimes pick online options believing they will be easier, but you must be very self-disciplined to do well.

XIII. CONSTRUCTION UPDATES (P. 86)

Ms. Euton shared from her agenda report. She did note that the substantial completion

date for the new McArthur Center is March 26th. However, it has been requested to extend that date by a couple of weeks to give allowance for the delays weather caused. They will discuss the date with attorneys, but it is possible we will be able to start our summer classes in the new building in June. The furniture should arrive in about 6 weeks.

It was discussed how there will be a couple of partners leasing space from Rio in the new McArthur building and it will be a multi-use building. Mr. Simmons shared how the facility is nice and very impressive. Ms. Euton shared how she felt Randy Evans Construction has done a good job with the building and she will let the trustees know once a ribbon cutting is scheduled.

Ms. Euton briefly went over the remainder of her report. One other notation she made was the estimated amount for the Kidd Math/Science Building repairs to stabilize the building came in today from the engineers at \$385,000.

XIV. CURRICULUM APPROVAL PROCESS (P. 89) – TABLED

It was discussed that this agenda item needed to be tabled and brought to the next meeting. It is necessary to further revise the process before the trustees vote on it.

Ms. Jones made a motion to table the following resolution until the next meeting. Mr. Scott seconded the motion. Mr. Davenport called for a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2.23.26(4)

WHEREAS, H.B. 96 (136th General Assembly) enacted Ohio Revised Code §3345.457, requiring the board of trustees of each state institution of higher education to adopt a curricular approval process for establishing and modifying academic programs, curricula, courses (including general education), certificates, and degree programs; the statute requires that the process (1) grant the faculty senate or comparable body the opportunity to provide advice, feedback, and recommendations; (2) clarify that such feedback is advisory; and (3) retain the Board's final, overriding authority to approve or reject any establishment or modification of academic programs, curricula, courses, general education requirements, and degree programs; and

WHEREAS, the Office of the Provost has developed a Curriculum Approval Process that meets the requirements of O.R.C. 3345.457 by (i) delineating faculty consultation and committee review steps (School, Curriculum Subcommittee, Academic Policy, and Faculty Assembly), (ii) confirming the advisory nature of faculty recommendations, and (iii) specifying that the Provost submits items to the RGCC and URG Boards for final approval; the process also clarifies required submissions to the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), and the U.S. Department of Education when applicable, and provides for the Registrar's posting of approved credentials to student transcripts;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Rio Grande Community College Board of Trustees that:

It hereby adopts the Curriculum Approval Process presented by the Office of the Provost, which governs the establishment and modification of academic programs, curricula, courses (including General Education), certificates, and degree programs at Rio Grande Community College. The adopted process is consistent with O.R.C. 3345.457.

XV. STAFF REPORTS

- **PRESIDENT'S REPORT - MR. RYAN SMITH (P. 93)**

President Smith went over his report included in the agenda packet.

President Smith shared how he has been in contact with the Governor and the Chief of Staff about the capital bill that is coming up. He shared how we need to update the science labs, they are over 40 years old. The Governor wants to help. President Smith believes we need \$2.5 million for Kidd-Math Science, \$2 million for Davis Career Center, and \$2 million for the roof and HVAC on Lyne Center, because it is a very large building. He further shared how there might be some Super Rapids Grant funding available to help with some of the supplies we need; such as a forklift, skid steer, manlift, and replacement chairs for those that are falling apart. He also hopes to repave one or two of the parking lots every year.

President Smith shared if we could come out with \$5 or \$6 million he would be happy. The total request will be \$7.5 million from the Governor, but we will have to wait and see what we are able to get. It will be May or June before we know. He would like to reshape the campus so that students will come to updated classrooms. President Smith expressed how he feels good about it. He clarified that there will be no new builds, but plenty of projects as we go forward.

- **PROVOST'S REPORT – DR. DAVID LAWRENCE (P. 96)**

Dr. Lawrence went over his report included in the agenda packet. He also thanked the trustees for tabling the Curriculum Approval Process.

- **CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER'S REPORT - MS. REBECCA EUTON (P. 100)**

Ms. Euton shared from her agenda report.

She also explained how Admissions is taking a deep dive to see if we are being efficient now that we are fully onboard with Anthology. We want to

use our resources better and meet students where they are at. We are looking to see if the tradition college visits are still effective.

Ms. Euton shared how Ms. Tracy Rice resigned as the Director of the Pike Center. We have started a taskforce for Pike to see what we can do better to increase enrollment and it was a very productive meeting with lots of great ideas. She shared how they changed Ms. Kristen Mershon to Director of both the Jackson Center and the Pike Center. She expressed how excited she was to have Ms. Mershon at both Centers and believes she will do well in Pike.

- **DIRECTOR OF MARKETING – MR. MIKE MCCORKLE (P. 112)**

Mr. Mike McCorkle shared from his PowerPoint on the projector screen.

XVI. CREDIT CARDS HOLDERS & LIMITS (P. 121)

House Bill 312 requires a list of active credit cards to be presented quarterly to the political subdivision's legislative authority.

Ms. Bynum shared how there was only one update and that was the addition of the credit card they voted on at the October meeting.

XVII. CREDIT CARD REWARDS – 2025 ANNUAL REVIEW (PP. 123)

- **HB 312 requires the board to review the purchases made with the credit card reward points once a year.**

- Items purchased in 2025 (P. 124)
- Point balance as of 2/17/2026 was 41,843.
- Points for reference. A very basic, microwave is valued at 43,620 points and a coffee maker is valued at 16,155 points.

Ms. Bynum read over the 3 items that were purchased with points in calendar year 2025 listed on page 124.

XVIII. OLD BUSINESS

- **ACTION MATRIX (P. 125)**

Ms. Euton shared how they have already discussed the tuition increase, so it can be removed from the action matrix going forward.

Ms. Euton shared how they will discuss the property for Mr. Mark Porter in Executive Session.

XIX. OTHER BUSINESS

No official discussions were presented.

XX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made at 6:44pm by Mr. Howdyshell to enter into executive session to discuss the creation of a new public position and the sale of real estate property. The motion was seconded by Ms. Saunders. President Smith, Ms. Euton, Mr. Heffernan, were invited to join the trustees in executive session.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Mick Davenport	YES
Mr. Troy Howdyshell	YES
Ms. Mary Lynne Jones	YES
Mr. Paul Reed	YES
Ms. Debbie Saunders	YES
Mr. Christian Scott	YES
Mr. Jeff Simmons	YES

Executive Session ended at 6:57pm.

Mr. Simmons made a motion to approve the following resolution. Mr. Howdyshell seconded the motion. Mr. Davenport called for a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously

Resolution 2.23.26(5)

WHEREAS, Rio Grande Community College wishes to establish a new position, and

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande Community College trustees would like to add a position of Student Success Coach as a Community College position,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Rio Grande Community College Board of trustees approves the addition of the new position of a Community College Success Coach.

XXI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Reed made a motion and Mr. Scott seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:59pm. Mr. Davenport called for a voice vote. The motion to adjourn was passed unanimously.



Mr. Mick Davenport, Chair



Ms. Elizabeth Bynum, Fiscal Services Specialist