



MINUTES OF THE Business Meeting - Feb 17 2026

OF THE HEARTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

HEARTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

1500 W. RAAB ROAD, NORMAL, IL

Community Commons Building - CCB 1406/07

Tuesday, February 17, 2026

6:00 PM

Members Present: Becky Ropp, Aemun Lopeyok, Tom Whitt, Laurie Bergner, Mary Campbell, Josh Crockett, Angell Howard, Janet Hood

Members Absent: None

Others: President Keith Cornille, Nora Dukowitz, Sarah Tipton, Sara Quiceno Sandoval, Nayoka Griffiths, Jessica Pickel, Trevor Hoberty, Steve Fast, Noah Lamb, Amy Pawlik, Sarah Diel-Hunt, Chris Downing, Jen O'Connor, Scott Bross, Jeremy Bachelor, Terrance Bond, Jenny Crones, Zach Petrea, Jason Nelson, Josh Woods, others

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Becky Ropp called the meeting to order at approximately 6:01 pm.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

3. Adopt Agenda

Trustee Laurie Bergner made a motion to adopt the agenda, which was seconded by Trustee Tom Whitt. The motion passed unanimously

4. Public Comment

Sara Quiceno Sandoval gave a public comment on behalf of the Student Government Association with the SGA's recommendation regarding tuition for the next academic year.

5. President's Report

President Keith Cornille gave an overview of the evening's agenda and then introduced Jen O'Connor to give the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) update.

5.1 Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Update

Jen O'Connor gave a summary of the HLC accreditation process. She described what an HLC Quality Initiative was, which is a project that a college does for continuous improvement. Heartland identified "belonging" as a theme for this cycle and also identified that part-time students were less successful than full-time students. The College is identifying strategies to close the achievement gap between part-time and full-time students. Different committee members presented on their parts of the HLC process. Questions and discussion ensued.

5.2 Cabinet Reports (Oral)

Dr. Chris Downing talked about the Alumni Campaign (aka the "100 Grand Campaign") and its progress. He also talked about Richard Casper, an alum and a veteran, and his contribution nationally and locally at Heartland with the Creativets program he founded.

Dr. Sarah Diel-Hunt reported on the JumpStart program, which introduced several young students to Heartland Community College and the opportunities that exist here for them in the future. She also reported on Don Whitman, a teacher in Heartland's Dual Credit program, who recently won Illinois Educator of the Year for the East Central Illinois region.

Dr. Amy Pawlik reported about Heartland's Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT). In the fall, Heartland hosted an event for other BITs across the state, which resulted in a networking group being formed. The effort has been a successful information sharing endeavor. She also reported that the fifth year of data has been closed out for Project RISE, reflecting another great year for the program.

6. Financial Report

6.1 Finance Committee (Oral)

Trustee Janet Hood presented on the activities of the Finance Committee, which included discussing project labor agreements, employee health insurance, and the tuition recommendation for the upcoming academic year.

6.2 Tuition and Fees

Noah Lamb gave a presentation about tuition and fees, defining what they fund and how Heartland's compare to other nearby educational institutions. Administration is recommending a \$5 per credit hour increase for the coming academic year; however, Mr. Lamb did show what the impact would be of a \$3 and a \$4 increase would be on the budget as well. Questions and discussion ensued.

6.3 Preliminary Audit Report

Noah Lamb gave a preliminary audit report. Heartland has received no findings on its single audit (aka compliance or financial aid audit). There will potentially be three findings on the audit in general, though. All issues are procedural and fully correctable with actions already underway.

7. Trustee Reports

7.1 ICCTA/ACCT National Legislative Summit (Oral)

Trustee Tom Whitt reported on the ACCT National Legislative Summit. The Heartland contingent spent a large amount of time meeting with elected officials, in addition to educational sessions and networking.

The next ICCTA event is in Palos Heights in late March. ICCTA Lobby Day is coming up in early May.

The ACCT National Conference is in Chicago in October this year.

7.2 [Student Trustee](#)

Trustee Aemun Lopeyok gave a recap of recent student events, including the Week of Welcome. The first ever Week of

Welcome nighttime event was also very successful with over 100 students participating.

Student organizations and clubs are going strong with many events upcoming. Alternative Spring Break is upcoming. The ICCB SAC meeting is at Heartland on March 6th. The 2026 Advocacy Day is in April, and key topics include securing basic needs and the community college baccalaureate.

Applications for SGA officer positions have opened.

On March 6th, it will be the Hawks Food Drive first birthday. A celebration is in the works.

7.3 [Calendar of Events](#)

8. [Consent Agenda Action Items](#)

Trustee Laurie Bergner made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Trustee Angell Howard seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8.1 [Bills](#)

8.2 [Minutes:](#) Board Workshop and Business Meetings - January 20, 2026

[Board Workshop - Jan 20 2026 - Minutes - Public.docx](#) 

[Business Meeting - Jan 20 2026 - Minutes - Public.docx](#) 

8.3 [Travel Expenditures](#)

8.4 [Semi-Annual Closed Session Minutes and Recordings](#)

9. **Non-Personnel Action Items**

9.1 [AY2026-2027 Tuition and Fees Recommendation](#)

Trustee Janet Hood made a motion to approve the tuition and fees recommendation, which was seconded by Laurie Bergner. The motion passed; however Trustees Mary Campbell, Aemun Lopeyok, and Tom Whitt voted against it.

10. Closed Session: Negotiations – Section 2(c)(2) of 5 ILCS 120 and Personnel - Section 2(c)(1) of 5 ILCS 120 

Trustee Janet Hood motioned to go into Closed Session, which was seconded by Trustee Tom Whitt. The motion passed unanimously Closed session began at approximately 8:05 pm.

Trustee Tom Whitt motioned to end Closed Session, which was seconded by Trustee Angell Howard. The motion passed unanimously and Closed Session ended at approximately 8:11 pm.

Trustee Tom Whitt motioned to return to Open Session, which was seconded by Trustee Mary Campbell. The motion passed unanimously and Open Session started again at approximately 8:11 pm.

11. Personnel Action Items

11.1 Monthly Personnel Actions Monthly Personnel Actions 

Trustee Josh Crockett motioned to approve the Monthly Personnel Actions, which was seconded by Trustee Laurie Bergner. The motion passed unanimously.

11.2 Tenure Recommendations 

Trustee Angell Howard motioned to return to Open Session, which was seconded by Trustee Josh Crockett. The motion passed unanimously.

12. Adjournment

Trustee Tom Whitt motioned to adjourn, which was seconded by Trustee Josh Crockett. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 pm.



[Becky Ropp \(Mar 25, 2026 14:19:17 CDT\)](#)

Becky Ropp, Board Chair



[Josh Crockett \(Mar 30, 2026 12:08:09 CDT\)](#)

Josh Crockett, Board
Secretary

Business Meeting Minutes - Feb 17 2026

Final Audit Report

2026-03-30

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Created: | 2026-03-25 |
| By: | Natalie Van Norman (natalie.vannorman@heartland.edu) |
| Status: | Signed |
| Transaction ID: | CBJCHBCAABAAmhjh88qIHMdA5cqmq5y0SrWWSaW6ClVw |

"Business Meeting Minutes - Feb 17 2026" History

 Document created by Natalie Van Norman (natalie.vannorman@heartland.edu)
2026-03-25 - 5:20:51 PM GMT

 Document emailed to Becky Ropp (rebecca.ropp@heartland.edu) for signature
2026-03-25 - 5:20:56 PM GMT

 Document emailed to Josh Crockett (josh.crockett@heartland.edu) for signature
2026-03-25 - 5:20:56 PM GMT

 Email viewed by Becky Ropp (rebecca.ropp@heartland.edu)
2026-03-25 - 5:21:00 PM GMT

 Email viewed by Josh Crockett (josh.crockett@heartland.edu)
2026-03-25 - 5:21:01 PM GMT

 Document e-signed by Becky Ropp (rebecca.ropp@heartland.edu)
Signature Date: 2026-03-25 - 7:19:17 PM GMT - Time Source: server

 Email viewed by Josh Crockett (josh.crockett@heartland.edu)
2026-03-27 - 5:25:16 PM GMT

 Email viewed by Josh Crockett (josh.crockett@heartland.edu)
2026-03-29 - 5:24:42 PM GMT

 Document e-signed by Josh Crockett (josh.crockett@heartland.edu)
Signature Date: 2026-03-30 - 5:08:09 PM GMT - Time Source: server

 Agreement completed.
2026-03-30 - 5:08:09 PM GMT