



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Board of Trustees **DRAFT** Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2026
1:15 P – 4:30 P

Florida Polytechnic University
Barnett Applied Research Center (BARC)
and Virtual via Microsoft Teams

I. Call to Order

Chair Beth Kigel called the Board of Trustees meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Kristen Wharton called the roll: Chair Beth Kigel, Vice Chair Jesse Panuccio, Trustee Patrick Hagen, Trustee Eliot Peace, Trustee Sumanth Neelam, Trustee Colby Manrodt, Trustee Edwar Romero, Trustee Ilya Shapiro, Trustee Rob Kincart, Trustee Jack Harrell, III, and Trustee Sid Theis were present (Quorum).

Trustees not present: N/A

Staff Present: President Devin Stephenson, Provost Brad Thiessen, Bryan Brooks, Dr. Tanner McKnight, Dr. Cole Allen, Kelli Stargel, Joshua Millikin, Kristen Wharton, David Blanton, and Katie Daniel

Special Guests: Florida State Senator Colleen Burton

III. Public Comment

There was one request for public comment from student Ashlyn Ryan who addressed agenda item 15 on the proposed multi-year operating budget for the Florida Poly Athletics program. She shared her concern regarding expending University auxiliary funds on athletics and requested that auxiliary resources instead prioritize university-wide needs such as student housing, dining, parking, and academic offerings.

IV. Solar Car Team Recognition

The presentation on the Phoenix Racing Solar Car Team was delivered by Lead Advisor Dr. Matt Bohm, Outgoing President Caleb Smith, and Incoming President Logan Abraham. They shared the team's summer competition results, beginning with the Formula Sun Grand Prix (FSGP) held at Brainerd International Raceway in Minnesota, where the team completed 235 laps over three days and placed 5th overall and 2nd nationally out of 39 teams. The team also qualified as one of 19 teams for the 1,550-mile American Solar Challenge (ASC) road race from Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Amarillo, Texas. They completed approximately 1,250 miles, finishing 6th overall in their class and 3rd in the nation. Additionally, recognition was extended to team advisors Mike Coleman (Fabrication Specialist), Dr. Lisa Kames (Mechanical Engineering), and Dr. Tom Jones (Industrial Engineering) for their support and guidance.

V. Annual Review and Endorsement of Statement of Free Expression

Chair Kigel recognized Florida State Senator Colleen Burton, expressing appreciation for her ongoing presence, advocacy, and support on behalf of Florida Polytechnic University.

The Chair reminded trustees of the Board of Governors' recommendation that university boards of trustees annually review and endorse the Statement of Free Expression and commit to the principles of civil discourse. This Statement was provided in the Board's materials for their review.

A motion was made by Trustee Ilya Shapiro to endorse the Board of Governors' Statement of Free Expression. Trustee Sumanth Neelam seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

VI. 2025-2026 Board of Trustees Work Plan

Trustees reviewed the Board of Trustees Work Plan for fiscal year 2027. There was no discussion on this item.

Vice Chair Jesse Panuccio motioned to approve the FY2027 Board of Trustees Work Plan as presented. Trustee Eliot Peace seconded the motion; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

VII. Chair's Remarks

Chair Kigel highlighted several key institutional milestones and achievements for Florida Poly. She noted that the University was named the number one public college in the South by *U.S. News & World Report* for the sixth consecutive year, while also advancing 13 spots to rank 16th nationally among public engineering programs without a Ph.D. Additionally, Florida Poly was recognized as the number one best value public school in the South. Alongside these rankings, the University celebrated a record fall enrollment exceeding 2,300 students, representing a 35% growth over two years.

VIII. President's Remarks

President Devin Stephenson chose to save his remarks for the Board retreat to be held on September 25, 2026.

IX. Faculty Representative Council (FRC) Chairman Report

Trustee Derek Henderson was not present at the time of this report. He presented his report later in the meeting.

X. Student Government Association President's Report

Trustee Colby Manrodt presented the Student Government Association (SGA) President's Report, outlining major student initiatives and campus engagement updates. SGA assisted Residential Life with fall move-in and hosted Purple Fire Week, which drew 1,750 attendees. Active Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) expanded to 58, representing 30 new organizations this year, with SGA assuming operational oversight of campus intramural sports funded through Activity & Service fees. In preparation for career fairs, SGA organized professional development workshops and partnered with Career Services to introduce a refurbished Career Closet. Additionally, all 30 student senate seats were filled, and SGA launched the APEX (*Ambition, Purpose, and Excellence*) student leadership initiative. Trustee Manrodt was also recognized for his statewide election as Internal Vice Chair of the Florida Student Association (FSA).

XI. Consent Agenda

A. Academic Enterprise, Research, and Student Success Committee

- 1. Approve the 2026-2028 AERSS Committee Charter**
- 2. Approve the Annual Textbook and Instructional Materials Report**
- 3. Approve the Foreign Influence Annual Report**

B. Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee

- 1. Approve the 2026-2028 Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee Charter**
- 2. Approve the Audit and Compliance Charters**
- 3. Approve the UAC Risk Assessment and Audit Plan FY27**
- 4. Approve the UAC Compliance and Ethics Program Plan FY27**
- 5. Approve the Performance-Based Funding (PBF) Data Integrity Audit Scope and Objectives**
- 6. Approve the Evaluation Instrument for President's Annual Review FYE26**

C. Finance and Facilities Committee

1. Approve the 2026-2028 Finance and Facilities Committee Charter
 2. Approve the FY27 University Carryforward Spending Plan and Fixed Capital Outlay Budget
 3. Approve the Athletics Program Budget
 4. Approve the Campus Master Plan 2030: Five-Year Review
 5. Approve the Parking Lot Expansion Proposal
 6. Approve the Budget Amendment: Pre-Development Work on the Housing/Dining Project (Gilb
 7. Approve the Gary C. Wendt Engineering Center 2nd Floor Project
 8. Approve the Operational Louvre Arms (OLA) Proposal for Repair
- D. Ad Hoc Land Development Committee
1. Approve the Ad Hoc Land Development Committee Charter
- E. Board of Trustees
1. Approve the Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from May 22, 2026
 2. Approve the Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from June 30, 2026
 3. Approve the Board of Trustees Meeting minutes from August 11, 2026

As each of the consent agenda items comes before the Board with unanimous approval from the respective Committees, there is no need for a second. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

XII. Committee Reports

A. Academic Enterprise, Research, and Student Success Committee

Committee Chair Patrick Hagen reported for the Academic Enterprise, Research and Student Success Committee, highlighting reports on academic progress, foreign influence compliance, record enrollment numbers of 746 first-time-in-college students and 186 transfer students, and an audit by the State Auditor General with zero findings.

B. Finance and Facilities Committee

Committee Chair Jesse Panuccio delivered the Finance and Facilities Committee report, detailing year-end revenues of \$105.5 million against expenses of \$81.7 million, capital project updates, and approved consent items including the carry-forward spending plan, campus master plan updates, a \$4.3 million pre-development budget for public-private housing and dining facilities, and additional laboratory vent hoods in the Wendt Engineering Center.

C. Governance, Audit, and Compliance Committee

Committee Chair Sidney Theis delivered the Governance, Audit and Compliance Committee report, summarizing audit and compliance plans, full compliance with all 21 accreditation standards under the Commission for Public Higher Education, GLBA cybersecurity compliance, and a review and approval of the presidential evaluation instrument for FYE2026.

D. [Ad Hoc] Land Development Committee

Committee Chair Eliot Peace presented the Land Development Committee report, detailing ongoing coordination with the Central Florida Innovation District Committee and regional land discussions with neighboring property owners, including the Williams Company.

XIII. NASA Team Recognition

Dr. Alexander Murphy and student team members Adrian Santos, Ronaldus-Merman, and Cole Rhodes presented their work on NASA's Micro-G NExT Challenge. The team designed and fabricated the Passive Capture Dual Dock, a single-handed, single-fault tolerant drill receptacle mechanism for astronauts to use during spacewalks on the International Space Station. They passed the physical prototype among the trustees for hands-on review. Chair Kigel then announced a 10-minute break, allowing trustees to continue inspecting the device and speaking with the student engineers.

Following the recess, the Board moved back to Agenda Item 9, where Trustee Derek Henderson presented

the Faculty Representative Council Report. Trustee Henderson highlighted the positive evolution of student culture and constructive shared governance dialogue between faculty and administration. He reported on Florida Poly's active re-engagement with the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates and discussions surrounding Board of Governors guidance on artificial intelligence in higher education, focusing on ethical workforce preparation, project-based assessment, and research data security. The council is also advancing proposals regarding department chair selection procedures, faculty evaluation enhancements, committee streamlining, and a collaborative rewrite of the faculty handbook.

XIV. Fall 2026 Enrollment Management Report

Vice President Bryan Brooks, Dr. Andy Oguntola, Samantha Lane, and Rachel Casey presented the Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications report. Overall enrollment surpassed 2,340 students, running two years ahead of strategic projections, with student retention rising to over 76% and institutional selectivity tightening to 36% while maintaining an average incoming profile of a 4.1 GPA, 28 ACT, and 1245 SAT. Dr. Oguntola discussed significant local enrollment gains, strong transfer matriculation, and the award-nominated three-dimensional interactive acceptance packet. Samantha Lane and Rachel Casey detailed marketing initiatives, including I-4 corridor billboard campaigns, high-yield digital advertising, social media growth, FAA Part 107 drone integration, upgraded digital displays in the IST and BARC buildings, and the premiere of the new brand commercial.

XV. Florida Poly Athletics Program Multi-Year Operating Budget

VP Brooks presented the multi-year operating budget for the Florida Poly Athletics program pursuant to Board of Governors Regulation 9.013. Brooks outlined the background of the athletics initiative, noting that eight varsity sports were established, an athletic director and coaches were hired, a facility use agreement was executed at Lake Myrtle Sports Complex, and student athletes currently maintain an average 3.87 median GPA. He presented the proposed operating budget for FY2027 through FY2029, starting with a \$2.6M dollar budget supported primarily by an auxiliary transfer of \$2.45M dollars in year one, with the objective of transitioning toward corporate sponsorships, foundation support, and long-term self-sustainability as the program pursues NAIA membership .

The Board engaged in extensive discussion regarding financial risk, auxiliary reserve levels, long-term fundraising expectations, and projected revenue streams. Vice Chair Jesse Panuccio and fellow trustees emphasized the need for regular financial reporting to ensure rigorous fiscal monitoring.

Trustee Colby Manrodt moved to approve the multi-year operating budget for fiscal years 2026-2027, 2027-2028, and 2028-2029, subject to annual reassessment and review by the Board of Trustees. The motion was seconded by Trustee Jeff Beelaert; a vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

XVI. ITS Presentation: AI Demonstrations and Guardrails

Chair Kigel announced that this agenda item is deferred to the November 2026 Board of Trustees meeting due to time constraints.

XVII. StAC Design Presentation

David Calhoun, AVP Facilities and Safety Services, alongside design partners Michael Borg from HOK and Michael Underwood from Skanska USA Building, presented the architectural and construction planning for the new Student Achievement Center. The planned 140,000 square foot facility on the east side of campus is designed to serve as the cornerstone of campus life, featuring a welcome center, student support services, dining options, and a central gathering forum that honors Santiago Calatrava's master plan. Skanska outlined the target value design process and cloud-based cost modeling to ensure the project remains on schedule and within budget. Skanska also detailed plans to integrate Florida Poly engineering students into the construction process through job-site learning, coursework integration, and capstone projects, working toward a scheduled opening in fall 2028.

XVIII. Board of Trustees Meeting Calendar

Chair Kigel reviewed the upcoming Board calendar noting that the next round of Committee and Board meetings will occur in November 2026. The next formal in-person Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 18, 2026, preceded by the Florida Poly Foundation *Thankful Celebration* honoring donors on the evening of November 17, 2026. Trustees were also encouraged to attend the Board of Governors annual Trustee Summit scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2026, at Florida International University in Miami.

XIX. Board of Governors Meeting Calendar

Chair Kigel shared that the next Board of Governors meeting will be held November 13, at Florida International University, Miami.

XX. Closing Remarks and Adjournment

With no further business to discuss the meeting adjourned at 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:
Kristen Wharton
Corporate Secretary