

COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania 17815

COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES  
Friday, October 11, 2024

The Commonwealth University of Pennsylvania Council of Trustees held their Quarterly meeting on October 11, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. The trustees met in Monty's on the Bloomsburg campus. The public participated via the Zoom Webinar link provided. Those in attendance:

**Trustees Present – Voting Members:**

Ms. Karen Russell – Vice Chairperson  
Mr. Michael K. Hanna, Jr. – Secretary  
Dr. Brian O'Donnell  
Ms. Susan Kefover (via zoom)  
Mr. Patrick Henderson  
Mr. Steve Crawford  
Ms. Angela C. Smith  
Ms. Jessica Dodge  
Ms. Janeyda Ortiz  
Ms. Amy Brayford  
Mr. Krystjan K Callahan (via zoom)  
Mr. Raymond Zaborney (via zoom)

**Trustees Absent:**

Honorable John E. Wetzel – Chairperson  
Mr. Daniel P. Elby – At Large Officer  
Mr. Marvens Ravix

**University Personnel**

Dr. Bashar Hanna, President  
Dr. Michelle Kiec, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Ms. Mary Vezendy, Director of Operations  
Ms. Christa Lamoreaux, Executive Associate  
Mr. Erik Evans, Vice President for University Advancement, BL Campus Administrator  
Dr. Stephen Lee, Vice President for Enrollment Management, LH Campus Administrator  
Dr. Cori Myers, Associate Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness  
Mr. Jeff Peterson, Chief Information Officer  
Mr. Eric Ness, Special Assistant to the President for Facilities and Capital Planning  
Mr. Robert Thorn, Interim Chief Financial Officer  
Mr. Dan Knorr, Executive Director of Economic Development & External Affairs  
Ms. Nikki Keller, Executive Director of Strategic Communications and Marketing  
Ms. Stacy Wagner, Chief Facilities & Safety Officer

**Student Guests**

Isabella Culp, Bloomsburg Senior, Professional Sales & Marketing Major

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**Call to Order**

Trustee Russell called the meeting to order and welcomed all those in attendance. She reported The Council of Trustees met earlier today in Executive Session to discuss personnel issues, legal matters, information related to the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements, and public safety issues. The Council of Trustees also met on Monday, August 26, 2024, Monday, October 7, 2024 and Wednesday, October 9, 2024 in Executive Session/conference/working session to discuss personnel issues.

**Roll Call**

Trustee Russell asked Mary Vezendy to conduct a roll call. Ms. Vezendy conducted a roll call of those in attendance and acknowledged a quorum was present.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

In accordance with House Resolution Number 32 of 1989, Trustee Russell requested everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

**Minutes of the Council of Trustees**

A motion was made by Trustee O'Donnell to approve the meeting minutes of the May 3, 2024 Council of Trustees meetings, seconded by Trustee Smith; the motion was unanimously approved.

**Public Comments**

Trustee Russell opened the meeting for public comment. Professor Brooke Harlow (via zoom) commented to take note of the number of people in the room and on-line to address current concerns.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**APSCUF Remarks**

Trustee Russell introduced Dr. Eric Hawrelak, Professor of Chemistry, Physical and Environmental Sciences at Commonwealth University and Chapter President, APSCUF-Bloomsburg. Dr. Hawrelak gave remarks on behalf of APSCUF.

**Informational Items:**

Trustee Russell introduced Dr. Bashar Hanna, President, to provide the President's Report.

**President's Report (Dr. Bashar Hanna)**

President Hanna reviewed his President's Report with the Trustees. He presented the Fall Enrollment and Student Retention Update along with Dr. Stephen Lee. Other items presented as follows:

- Financial Highlights
- Distance Education Student Survey Results
- University Highlights
  - CU Consolidated Website Launched: [commonwealthu.edu](http://commonwealthu.edu)
  - The dedication of the Eileen G. Jones Honors College was held last month during a ceremony at Commonwealth University-Bloomsburg. This generous \$7



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million gift from Stephen J. Jones '83 and Melanie Sanchez-Jones benefits Honors students all CU students regardless of home campus.

- Fund raising gifts and pledges are exceeding FY 24 goals.
- Commonwealth University faculty, staff, and leadership attended CU-Mansfield's Convocation ceremony at the beginning of the fall semester. This annual tradition celebrates the beginning of the new academic year and is followed by an outdoor picnic lunch with students.
- Commonwealth University-Bloomsburg's Student Veterans Association organized the annual flag display and ceremony on the Academic Quad to honor the memory of September 11, 2001.
- President Hanna was invited to testify before the PA House Education Committee on college affordability last month at Penn State University. The hearing also focused on access to higher education and its impact on the commonwealth.
- Dr. Steve Rier, Commonwealth University Biology faculty and his collaborators at the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University were awarded \$360,000 by the Board of Directors of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation with condition that these funds will be matched by \$365,815.15 in contributions raised by the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University.
- Dr. Kimberly Delbo, Breiner School of Nursing interim undergraduate chair, has received national recognition as one of 10 distinguished thought leaders in nursing and health education by the National League for Nursing and Walden University Social Determinants of Health and Social Change Leadership Academy.
- The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) awarded Commonwealth University \$20,000 as part of a grant program to grow the Commonwealth's next generation of special educators.
- Through a first-of-its-kind partnership between Commonwealth University and the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP), cadets will receive 20 credits at CU upon graduation from the PSP Academy when enrolled in a criminal justice degree program at any CU.
- Former Lock Haven football player, Adam Andrasko '08 is the CEO for USA Artistic Swimming. The team won silver at the 2024 Summer Games in Paris, marking Team USA's first medal in the sport in two decades. Lock Haven Athletics Hall of Famer Sara McMann '03, silver medalist in the 2004 Summer Olympics, coached Amit Elor - the youngest American to win Olympic gold in wrestling.
- The PASSHE Foundation awarded \$13,500 to Commonwealth University as one of four PASSHE universities participating in a regional summer initiative to help/remind students to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- We celebrated the success of 592 Commonwealth University student athletes recognized as Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference (PSAC) Scholar-Athletes following the completion of the 2023-24 academic and athletic year. To qualify, a student-athlete must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or higher for the year. Bloomsburg led the entire PSAC with a school-record 307 scholar-athletes. Lock

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- Haven recorded a school-record 201 scholar-athletes. Mansfield finished the year with a school-record 84 scholar-athletes.
- o CU Team Wins Community Bank Case Study Competition. The team members were Hannah Caccia, an accounting major, and Ariane Rouffignac, a marketing major, both from CU-Mansfield, and Eric Shaw, a finance major from CU-Bloomsburg. Economics faculty member Dr. Benaddi and finance faculty member Dr. Geyfman were advisers.

**Student Spotlight**

Trustee Russell introduced Ms. Isabella Culp, Bloomsburg senior majoring in Professional Sales & Marketing for the Student Spotlight, Ms. Culp gave remarks and a brief presentation.

**Financial Update**

Trustee Russell introduced Mr. Robert Thorn, Interim Chief Financial Officer. Mr. Thorn reviewed the Education and General Budget Request Summary.

Trustee Russell thanked participants for their presentations on information items and moved on to action items.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

**Fiscal Affairs**

**2024-2025 Budget Approval (Mr. Robert Thorn)**

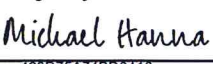
The Educational and General Operations (E&G) Budget Request Summary was presented and referenced as exhibit C in the agenda packet. Trustee Russell made a motion to accept the 2024-2025 budget as presented; second by Trustee Henderson, the 2024-2025 budget motion passed unanimously.

**Other Business**

No other business or comments noted.

**Adjournment**

With no other items to be presented to the Council, Trustee Russell made a motion to adjourn the meeting 4:05 p.m.

Signed by:  
  
1/26/2025  
423D75A74BD0410  
Mr. Michael Hanna, Jr.  
Secretary

DocuSigned by:  
  
1/28/2025  
6030764E9FE640E  
Mary L. Vezendy  
Director of Operations