

LANDER UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Lander University
Greenwood, South Carolina

Wednesday, December 10, 2024
10:00 a.m.

Presiding: Don Scott

Other Members of the Board in Attendance:

Robert Barber
Holly Bracknell
Linda Dolny
Ray Hunt
Marcia Hydrick
Catherine Lee
Don Lloyd
Peggy Makins
Terry Pruitt
Robert Sabalis
Jim Shubert
DeWitt Stone
Angela Strickland
Mark Taylor
Anne Walker

Absent: John Craig

Others in Attendance: President Richard Cosentino; Dr. Jim Colbert, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Joe Greenthal, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Adam Taylor, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff; Matthew Hammett, Executive Director of the SC Institute for the Prevention of Sexual Violence on College Campuses, and Interim Dean of Students; Brian Reese, Director of Athletics; Todd Gambill, Vice President for Enrollment and Access Management; Robyn Hoffman, Vice President of University Advancement; Matt Braaten, Assistant Vice President for Planning Analytics and Decision Support; Megan Price, Assistant Vice President of University Relations and Publications; Sadie Erwin, Executive Assistant to the President; and Graham Duncan, Project Coordinator for University and Governmental Relations.

Guests: Mya Atten, of the Index-Journal; Frank Rainwater, Executive Director of the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office.

Chair Scott called the meeting to order.

The chair then recognized Adam Taylor, Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

Adam Taylor stated for the record that appropriate publicity had been disseminated in order to comply with the Freedom of Information Act, and that the meeting was in compliance with that Act.

Adam Taylor also reminded trustees that the next meeting of the Lander University Board of Trustees would take place Tuesday, March 4, 2025. Adam Taylor also reminded board members that Commencement Ceremonies would take place Thursday, December 12.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Anne Walker made the motion to approve the September 10, 2024 board meeting minutes; seconded by Bob Sabalis.

The board meeting minutes from September 10, 2024 were approved by unanimous vote.

II. SPECIAL REPORT: FRANK RAINWATER

The Board of Trustees welcomed Frank Rainwater, Executive Director of the South Carolina Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office, to discuss the important role his office plays in forecasting the State of South Carolina’s economic and population growth. Frank Rainwater provided the Board of Trustees with an outlook for South Carolina’s projected revenue and population over the next decade.

III. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Due to time constraints, only committees with action items were called upon to present items to the full Board of Trustees for approval. Other committees provided written reports to the full Board of Trustees.

A. Finance, Facilities, and Audit / Governmental and Strategic Initiatives

Don Lloyd shared updates with the Board of Trustees from the Finance, Facilities, and Audit / Governmental and Strategic Initiatives Committee report. The committee brought forward the following action items:

1. Tuition/General Fees for FY 2025/26

The proposal would keep tuition at its current rate for the 2025-26 academic year, which would mark the tenth consecutive year of frozen tuition at Lander. General fees would also remain locked-in for the ninth consecutive year. A roll call vote is required. The results were as follows:

Roll Call

Robert Barber	Yes
Holly Bracknell	Yes
John Craig	Absent
Linda Dolny	Yes
Raymond Hunt	Yes
Marcia Hydrick	Yes
Catherine Lee	Yes
Donald Lloyd	Yes
Peggy Makins	Yes
Terry Pruitt	Yes
Robert Sabalis	Yes
Donald Scott	Yes
Jim Shubert	Yes
DeWitt Stone	Yes
Angela Strickland	Yes
Mark Taylor	Yes
Anne Walker	Yes

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

2. Approval of Permanent Improvement Projects

The following projects were presented to the board of Trustees, in accordance with the Permanent Improvement Projects proviso included in the State of South Carolina General Appropriations Bill each year. Institutional boards must approve projects valued between \$1 million and \$2 million. The committee presented the following list of projects that display how the campus intends to utilize its 2024-25 Capital Appropriations:

- **Graduate School - Online and Academic Support Building - Phase II**
- **Cambridge Hall Renovation**
- **Paving and Sealing of Parking Lots and Road Ways Across Campus**
- **Health and Wellness Center Renovation/Expansion**
- **Grier Student Center - Electrical Panel and Selective Back-up Generation**
- **Campus Modernization Project**
- **Education and General Area Bathrooms**
- **Grier Student Center and Other Building - Fire Alarm Systems and Sprinkler Upgrades**
- **Grier Student Center - EIFS and Envelope Repair**
- **Learning Center - HVAC Rooftop System Upgrades/Repair**

The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

3. Financial Audit Report FY 2023-24

The Board of Trustees also received the results of the scheduled Financial Audit Report for FY 2023-24, as required by law, and voted to accept the results of the audit. The audit was completed with an unmodified opinion, or “clean audit.”

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

IV. PRESIDENT’S REPORT

President Cosentino shared a report with the Board of Trustees. His report included the following action item:

1. Approval of Strategic Plan Pillars

President Cosentino asked the members of the Board of Trustees to review and approve the Institutional Strategic Pillars of Lander University. Iterative input from members of the Lander University community, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, donors, legislators, and other university boards, yielded a total of 22 potential strategic pillars. Further evaluation and deliberation resulted in the following six key pillars:

- **ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING, SCHOLARSHIP, AND SERVICE:** Provide a supportive environment that fosters academic excellence through a teacher-scholar model. This model ensures effective teaching, explorative and creative activities, research, and service to our community. These areas of focus ensure that Lander will always remain distinctive and relevant.
- **STUDENT SUCCESS:** Create an educational environment that fosters forward progress of all Lander students, designed to achieve a measurable increase in retention and graduation rates. Develop graduates who are broadly educated and prepared to continue their education or launch their careers as valuable, influential members of the workforce.
- **SHARE THE LANDER STORY:** Successfully articulate the value of Lander University to faculty and staff, current students, future students, parents, alumni, donors, K-12 educators, and elected officials.

- **CREATE A UNIVERSITY CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:** Utilize the talent and resources of the university to maximize the efficient use of facilities, financial resources, and human capital to achieve Lander University’s mission.
- **ESTABLISH THE INSTITUTE:** Establish the South Carolina Institute on the Prevention of Sexual Violence on College Campuses to reduce the prevalence of interpersonal violence on college campuses in South Carolina through a collaborative, unified approach.
- **DATA READINESS FRAMEWORK:** Develop a comprehensive data readiness framework that ensures high-quality, readily accessible data to support decision-making and comply with all external reporting requirements. Data will be well-governed, interoperable, and traceable, enabling advanced analytics, reliable reporting, and operational efficiency.

Ray Hunt made the motion to approve the Strategic Plan Pillars as presented to the Board of Trustees; seconded by Bob Sabalis.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

President Cosentino’s report also included the following updates:

Data Retreat: The president asked Matt Braaten to give a report on the recent data retreat that was held with key University officials whose divisions are responsible collecting and storing important data.

AI in Recruitment: The president asked Dr. Todd Gambill to demonstrate “Sammy” a new AI-powered tool used in some interactions with prospective Lander students. The Office of Admissions has been responsible for the setup and maintenance of “Sammy,” named for Lander’s founder, Rev. Samuel Lander. The tool can be updated with new information and unique responses based on common questions and interactions among prospective students.

Marketing Strategy: The president asked Brian Apfel to give a brief report on the upcoming updates to Lander University’s brand and style guide. Among the changes are a modified, Lander-specific color palette that ensures the various entities across campus are using the same color scheme when communicating on behalf of Lander University.

SCIP: The president asked Dr. Matthew Hammett to update the Board of Trustees on the South Carolina Institute for the Prevention of Sexual Violence on College Campuses, and how it partners with colleges and universities in South Carolina. Among its many initiatives, the Institute has awarded sexual violence prevention grants to several peer institutions throughout the state.

Campus Engagement: The president asked Dr. Amanda Darden to provide the Board of Trustees with an update on key campus engagement initiatives, including the Holiday Tree Lighting held in November of 2024, and updates to programming for the Fall 2024 Commencement ceremonies. Dr. Darden commended the campus community on their assistance in improving the programming of these two campus events.

Focus on Workforce Development: The president asked Dr. Jim Colbert to share a report on Lander University’s reaccreditation timeline with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Lander University will complete its ten-year reaffirmation in 2027, which will require a new Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). Current plans are to focus

Lander's QEP for 2027 on workforce development, emphasizing Lander's leadership in ensuring each graduate's education leads to rewarding careers in their fields.

University Restructuring: The president also shared with the Board of Trustees an overview of the planned restructuring of Lander's academic colleges and departments. The proposed restructuring is aligned with the University's focus on workforce development. A chart was provided to board members that outlined the restructuring. The president noted that the restructuring would likely take effect for the Fall 2025 semester.

V. OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Faculty Senate

Dr. Kerry Hansknecht shared updates with board members found in the Faculty Senate report.

B. Staff Senate

Taylor Haigler shared updates with board members found in the Staff Senate report.

VI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The chair entertained a motion to enter into executive session to discuss the employment, compensation, promotion, discipline, or release of an employee, student, or person regulated by Lander University.

Ray Hunt made the motion to enter into executive session; seconded by Don Lloyd.

The motion was passed by unanimous vote. The Board of Trustees entered into executive session and returned at the call of the chair.

No action was taken in executive session.

The Board of Trustees returned to open session.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made by Ray Hunt to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Anne Walker.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.