

LANDER UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Lander University
Greenwood, South Carolina

Wednesday, December 17, 2025
10:00 a.m.

Presiding: Don Lloyd

Other Members of the Board in Attendance:

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

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; Brian Reese, Director of Athletics; Todd Gambill, Vice President for Enrollment and Access Management; Amanda Darden, Vice President for Student Experience and Quality Assurance; Brian Apfel, Vice President for University Marketing and Communications; Matt Braaten, Assistant Vice President for Planning Analytics and Decision Support; Sadie Erwin, Executive Assistant to the President; Madison Herig, Governmental Relations Coordinator and Assistant to the Vice President.

Guests: Mya Atten, of the Index-Journal

Chair Lloyd called the meeting to order. He introduced Ms. Kathy Taylor as the newest member of the Lander University Board of Trustees.

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

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

The next board meeting will be Tuesday, March 3, 2025.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Bob Sabalis made the motion to approve the September 9, 2025 board meeting minutes; seconded by Peggy Makins.

The board meeting minutes from September 9, 2025 were approved by unanimous vote.

II. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Academic Affairs

Robert Barber was recognized to share updates from the Academic Affairs Committee Report. Mr. Barber asked Provost Jim Colbert to summarize the report for the Academic Affairs Committee. The committee brought forward 7 action items:

1. **Accounting, B.S. degree** (Pending CHE approval. SACSCOC approval is not required.) Lander University currently offers a B.S. in Business Administration (BSBA) with a concentration in accounting. This proposal elevates Accounting to an independent degree, completing the restructuring of the College of Business and

Technology following the creation of the B.S. in Management and B.S. in Marketing. The new B.S. in Accounting will increase the visibility of the program, strengthen student recruitment, and qualify for the STEM enhancement of Palmetto Fellows and LIFE Scholarships. This program supports Lander's mission to offer high-demand, market-driven programs.

2. **Financial Services, B.S. degree** (Pending CHE approval. SACSCOC approval is not required.) Lander University currently offers a B.S. in Business Administration (BSBA) with a concentration in Financial Services. This proposal elevates that concentration into a standalone B.S. in Financial Services, completing the restructuring of the College of Business and Technology following the creation of the B.S. in Management, B.S. in Marketing, and B.S. in Accounting degrees. The new B.S. in Financial Services will increase the program's visibility and enhance student recruitment. This program supports Lander's mission to provide high-demand, market-driven programs that strengthen South Carolina's workforce.
3. **Entrepreneurship, B.S. degree** (Changing B.A. to a B.S. Pending CHE approval. SACSCOC approval is not required.) The College of Business and Technology is proposing to transition the current B.A. in Entrepreneurship to a B.S. in Entrepreneurship and Small Business. The university is changing the curriculum to bring this program into closer alignment with industry norms and student expectations.
4. **Business Administration, B.S. degree** (Program Termination, along with its concentrations. Notification to CHE and SACSCOC.) Lander University's School of Business is restructuring its Bachelor of Science in Business Administration program by replacing all concentrations with stand-alone degrees and phasing out the Business Administration major. A Bachelor of Science in Marketing and a Bachelor of Science in Management, which includes multiple concentrations, were launched in the 2025–26 academic year. The implementation of a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and a Bachelor of Science in Financial Services represents the final stage of this restructuring.
5. **Early Childhood Education, M.A.T. degree** (Pending CHE approval. SACSCOC approval is not required.) The College of Education proposes a new Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in Early Childhood Education to provide a pathway at the graduate level for training high-quality teachers certified in PK-3rd grades. This program is intended to support Lander University students in non-teacher certification undergraduate programs who determine that they would like to pursue teaching young children at the conclusion of their education, recent graduates that are seeking a graduate degree for teacher certification in early childhood education, and community members or current school district employees who have a bachelor degree and would like to achieve teacher certification in early childhood education while concurrently employed.
6. **Secondary Education, B.S./B.A. degree** (Pending CHE approval. SACSCOC approval is not required.) The College of Education is proposing a new Secondary Education program with concentrations in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Chemistry, and Social Studies. While Lander University currently offers bachelor's degrees that prepare teacher candidates in each of these content areas, the programs are housed within their respective academic departments. The proposed program restructures these offerings by updating the CIP codes and relocating the secondary education teacher preparation programs to the College of Education under the Department of Teacher Education.
 - a. Secondary Education, Chemistry (B.S.)
 - b. Secondary Education, English Language Arts (B.A.)
 - c. Secondary Education, Mathematics (B.S.)
 - d. Secondary Education, Social Studies (B.S.)

The board voted on action items #1-6 as a group. The motion passed unanimously.

7. The Faculty Handbook amendments below are submitted to the Board of Trustees for review and vote of approval:
 - Faculty Evaluations for Mid-year Hires
 - Reappointment Notification
 - Tenure and Promotion Procedures and Policies
 - Decision Calendars and Tables

The motion passed unanimously.

C. Enrollment and Access Management / Student Experience and Quality Assurance

Angela Strickland was recognized to share updates from the Enrollment and Access Management / Student Experience and Quality Assurance Committee report. The committee brought forward no action items.

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

Don Lloyd was recognized to share the updates found in the Finance, Facilities, and Audit, and Governmental and Strategic Initiatives Committee reports. The committee brought forward four action items.

1. FY 26/27 Undergraduate and Graduate Tuition Rates

The proposal would keep tuition at its current rate for the 2026-27 academic year, which would mark the eleventh consecutive year of frozen tuition at Lander University.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

2. Permanent Improvement Projects

The following projects were submitted to the Board of Trustees, in accordance with 2024 Act No. 214, Section 2-47-52 Permanent Improvements Projects included in the State of South Carolina Code of Laws, institutional Boards must approve projects valued up to \$2.5 million.

- a. Proviso 118.22 Supplemental:
Marion Carnell Learning Center Renovation - \$8,000,000
- b. Proviso 118.22 Supplemental:
Willson Street Pedestrian Spine - \$1,100,000
Art Annex HVAC and Windows - \$400,000
Amphitheatre Renovation - \$225,000
Campus Paving and Sealing - \$275,000
- c. State or Revenue Bond Option - \$40,000,000
300-Bed Residence Hall

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

3. Approval of FY 26/27 Off-Campus Student Housing Proposal

Lander University requests approval to enter into a lease agreement with CORT Accommodation Services and/or Greenwood Hospitality, LLC dba Baymont Inn and Suites, to provide off-campus student housing for the 2026-27 academic year to address increased demand and ensure adequate residential capacity. The proposed lease will provide 100-200 additional beds in nearby, fully furnished units which will support enrollment growth and provide cost-effective flexibility while long-term housing plans are evaluated.

Approval is requested to proceed with finalizing and executing the lease agreement in accordance with the State of South Carolina procurement and legal requirements.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

4. Presentation of June 30, 2025 Financial Audit

The Board of Trustees also received the results of the scheduled Financial Audit Report for FY 2024-25, 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 with a unanimous vote.

E. Institutional Advancement

Jim Shubert was recognized to share updates from the Institutional Advancement Committee report. The committee brought forward no action items.

F. Policy

Robert Sabalis was recognized to share updates from the Policy Committee report. The committee brought forward four action items:

1. Telecommuting and Remote Work (LP 5.36)

The purpose of this policy is to define Lander University's telecommuting program and the rules under which it will operate. This policy is designed to assist Lander University supervisors and employees to understand telecommuting and its ramifications. This policy does not address informal, intermittent, temporary, or emergency-related remote work.

2. Board of Trustee Conflict of Interest (LP 1.5)

In carrying out its public trust, the Lander University Board of Trustees has adopted this policy to enhance public confidence in the board on matters related to actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest.

3. Use of the University Seal (LP 1.6)

The Lander University seal is intended for official university use only. The university seal is the property of Lander University; its use is reserved only for the purposes outlined in this policy as authorized by the Board of Trustees or the university president.

4. Senior-Level Administrator Evaluations

The responsibilities of senior-level administrators at Lander University are broad in scope and focused on the strategic direction and decision-making of the university.

All policies were approved with a unanimous vote.

G. Student Experience & Quality Assurance/Intercollegiate Athletics

Terry Pruitt was recognized to share updates from the Student Experience & Quality Assurance/Intercollegiate Athletics Committee report. The committee brought forward no action items.

III. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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

The president welcomed Ms. Kathy Taylor to the Lander University Board of Trustees.

Growth, Innovation, and Impact: The president thanked Todd Gambill, Vice President of Enrollment & Access Management, and his team for their work in achieving record-breaking enrollment this academic year.

University Marketing & Branding: The president thanked Brian Apfel, Vice President of Marketing & Communications, for his work on the board room updates. He also shared that an updated edition of the Lander Magazine is planned to be published early in the Spring 2026 semester. He invited the board members to walk around campus to see the other branding updates that have recently been installed.

Artificial Intelligence: The president announced that he plans to begin the search for an Associate Provost of Artificial Intelligence in the coming months.

Online Programs: The president stated that Lander's online programs will be reviewed to ensure that Lander University students are receiving the best experience possible. He has asked the deans of each college to provide feedback and updates at the March 2026 board meeting.

K-12 Education in South Carolina: The president spoke on the need to ensure that Lander University K-12-degree programs are of top quality to meet the needs of the education system in South Carolina. The College of Education is working to ensure that its graduates are prepared to take and pass the PRAXIS exam. He announced the plans to request funds for a new College of Education building in the next fiscal year.

Construction Updates/Information Commons: The president announced that a planned groundbreaking for the new Information Commons will be held in March 2026. He also announced that the new student marketplace in the Grier Center is set to open early in the spring semester.

Self-Regional Healthcare (SRH): The president and other members of his cabinet met with leadership at the University of South Carolina and SRH to explore the option of partnering to offer doctoral programs in physical therapy at Lander University. He stated that this opportunity would allow the university to strengthen its partnerships with these stakeholders and fill a gap in the workforce.

Faculty/Staff Growth and Retention: The president announced that the university has hired 19 new faculty members, including several from the recently closed Limestone University. The president also plans to increase faculty research, expand the sabbatical program, and expand online learning opportunities.

2026 Budget Requests: The president announced that the university plans to request \$500k from the General Assembly to fund a student internship program.

South Carolina Institute for the Prevention of Sexual Violence on College Campuses (SCIP): The president announced that Holly Bracknell will serve on the SCIP board.

Low Enrollment Programs: The president announced that he and the academic team are reviewing low-enrollment programs at the suggestion of the Commission on Higher Education (CHE). He is working with Dr. Colbert on this topic.

Workforce Development Taskforce: The president announced that he is working with the Coordinating Council for Workforce Development on ways in which the university can assist to help meet the workforce needs of South Carolina.

Interdisciplinary Studies: The president announced that the university is working to improve its Interdisciplinary Studies program. Faculty member Dr. Lillian Craton is one of the leaders on this initiative.

Cybersecurity: The president announced that the university is working each day to ensure that its infrastructure is safe from cyber-attacks.

Financial Performance: The president announced that the university continues to maintain a very strong financial performance. He also stated that the university will be free of its debt on Centennial Hall in June 2026 and of its debt on New Hall in June 2029.

Accreditation: The president announced that SACSCOC ended its QEP requirement.

Campus Safety: The president recognized Lander University Chief of Police Greg Allen to provide an update on campus security.

Attendance: The president stated that the university is researching technological solutions for tracking student attendance in the classrooms.

Capital Campaign: The president stated that plans for the upcoming capital campaign remain underway. A more detailed update will be given at the March 2026 board meeting.

Then president recognized Adam Taylor, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Chief of Staff, to give an update on governmental relations and the legislative action plan.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Faculty Senate

Dr. Jason Lee was unable to attend to provide an update. A report for the Faculty Senate was shared in the board packet.

B. Staff Senate

Brittany Brissey was unable to attend to provide a Staff Senate update as she is on maternity leave. A report for the Staff Senate was shared in the board packet.

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Cathy Lee to enter executive session; seconded by Don Lloyd.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Lander University Board of Trustees returned from executive session. No action was taken and the public session was resumed.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made by Mark Taylor to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Jim Shubert.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.