

LANDER UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Lander University
Greenwood, South Carolina

Tuesday, September 9, 2025
2:00 p.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

Absent: 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; Megan Price, Assistant Vice President of University Marketing & Communications; Sadie Erwin, Executive Assistant to the President; Graham Duncan, Director of Communications; Madison Herig, Strategist for University Marketing & Communications.

Guests: Mya Atten, of the Index-Journal; Dr. Jason Lee, Faculty Senate Chair; Brittany Brissey, Staff Senate Chair; Brittany Chadwick, Staff Senate Chair-Elect.

Chair Lloyd 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 to comply with the Freedom of Information Act, and that the meeting was in compliance with that Act.

Adam Taylor announced that Lander University will hold its fall commencement exercises on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, with ceremonies at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The next board meeting will be Wednesday, December 17, 2025.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Terry Pruitt made the motion to approve the June 24, 2025 board meeting minutes; seconded by Don Scott.

The board meeting minutes from June 24, 2025 were approved by unanimous vote.

II. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chairman Lloyd announced that John Craig has retired from the University Board of Trustees. The chairman thanked Mr. Craig for his many years of service.

A. Dean of Students / Intercollegiate Athletics

Terry Pruitt was recognized to share updates from the Dean of Students / Intercollegiate Athletics Committee report. Mr. Pruitt invited Brian Reese, Director of Athletics, to recognize coach Liam Worley, and team members Garrett Smith and Andrew Blanton of the Lander Club Bass Fishing Team who recently won the National Championship tournament in July. The committee brought forward no action items.

B. Academic Affairs

Robert Barber was recognized to share the updates found in the Academic Affairs Committee report. The committee brought forward no action items.

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 no action items.

E. Institutional Advancement

Holly Bracknell was recognized to share updates from the Institutional Advancement Committee report. She introduced Taylor Cook who recently joined Lander as the new Vice President for University Advancement and Executive Director of the Lander Foundation. 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 two action items:

1. Hearing Conservation (LP 4.21)

This policy describes a hearing conservation program at Lander University that has been established to ensure a safe and healthful working environment and to act as a performance standard for all employees.

2. Crane and Hoist Safety (LP 4.22)

This policy describes a program at Lander University that has been established to ensure a safe and healthful working environment and to act as a performance standard for all employees. The guidelines contained in this policy are designed to help reduce employees' occupational exposure to the hazards of operating and/or working with, or near, cranes and hoists.

Robert Sabalis suggested that the board to vote to pass both policies as a package. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

III. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

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

The President introduced Dr. Stephen Bismarck who was recently named the Dean of the College of Education.

Growing and Scaling: The president announced Lander University's record-breaking enrollment for the 2025-26 academic year. Enrollment is expected to exceed 4,600 students for the academic year. He expressed his appreciation for the Enrollment & Access Management team for their hard work. The president also announced that the retention rate for returning students reached 73%. He expressed his appreciation to the Student Experience and Quality Assurance team for their hard work.

State Appropriations: The president announced that the University has received over \$60 million in new state appropriation since 2022. These funds have been used to update, renovate, and build new structures on the University campus. Many of Lander's residence halls have been recently updated and the University will soon investigate the potential the cost of building a new residence hall. There are currently 19 open projects within the University.

Capital Campaign: The president introduced Taylor Cook, Vice President for Advancement, to the board. Mr. Cook spoke to his plan for developing a capital campaign which is planned to begin in July of 2026.

Undergraduate Research: The president praised members of the Lander faculty for their willingness to mentor students in their academic research. Going forward, preparing students to present their research at regional and national conferences, and funding travel to these conferences, will be a focus of the University.

Social Media and University Branding: The president asked Brian Apfel, Vice President of Marketing & Communications, to share an update on the University's marketing and branding. Mr. Apfel shared plans to update the executive boardroom to reflect additional Lander branding. Mr. Apfel also shared that the University's social media channels had generated 1.5 million impressions in the month of August and had the highest percentage of follower growth amongst our competitors.

Artificial Intelligence: The president announced that he plans to develop a center for artificial intelligence. Its goal will be a place to educate faculty and students on how best to use AI tools.

K-12 Education in South Carolina: The president spoke on the challenge of staffing K-12 schools within the state of South Carolina. He stated that he would like to request funds for a new College of Education building next year. The president stated that Lander intends to expand its education degree programs and work to provide more teachers for the state of South Carolina.

Self-Regional Healthcare: The president spoke with leadership at Self Regional Healthcare (SRH) to determine any needs within their workforce. He is working with SRH to help it in developing its workforce to include patient care skills needed in the Greenwood region. The president has also met with leadership at the University of South Carolina and SRH to explore the option of partnering to offer doctoral programs in physical and occupational therapy at Lander. He stated that this opportunity would allow us to strengthen our partnerships with these stakeholders and fill a gap in the workforce.

Faculty/Staff Growth and Retention: The president announced that the University 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 approximately \$30 million in non-recurring capital funds from the state legislature in the upcoming year. This includes requests for funds to renovate and repair the Grier Center and Chandler Center, parking lots, etc. Tuition mitigation funds will also be requested.

New School of Nursing Building and Information Commons: The president shared that construction for the new Nursing Experiential Learning Center is well underway. Construction is estimated to be complete in early 2026. The president announced that the new Information Commons groundbreaking is planned for December 2025.

Housing: The president announced that expanding University housing will be one of the biggest priorities in the coming years.

South Carolina Institute for the Prevention of Sexual Violence on College Campuses (SCIP): The president announced that SCIP has been awarded several grants to assist with its programming. Through Lander, SCIP is offering two professional development courses to higher education professionals across the state of South Carolina. These courses cover topics such as Title IX and Greek Life. Currently 44 individuals are enrolled from 30 institutions. The institute has also hired a major gifts officer.

Accreditation Governance: The president made the board of trustees aware that SC, TN, GA, TX, NC, and FL are looking into creating their own accrediting body for colleges and universities. There is limited information at this time, and he will share more as it becomes available.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Faculty Senate

Dr. Jason Lee shared updates with board members found in the Faculty Senate report.

B. Staff Senate

Brittany Brissey shared updates with board members found in the Staff Senate report.

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Holly Bracknell to enter executive session; seconded by Bob Sebalis.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The Lander Board of Trustees returned from Executive Session. No action was taken in Executive session and the Board returned to open session.

Robert Barber made a motion to extend President Cosentino's contract by 3 years. This would extend the contract until June 20, 2032. After completion of the contract through June 30, 2032, there would be an additional 3-year option should President Cosentino wish to continue employment. Mr. Barber also made a motion to increase President Cosentino's compensation by \$75,000. A request will be sent to the Agency Head Salary Commission requesting an increase to the extent allowed and any remainder would be funded by the Lander Foundation.

The motion was seconded by Holly Bracknell.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The motion was made by Terry Pruitt to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Jim Shubert.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.