

BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Board of Trustees

Board Meeting

NOTE: Changed to Virtual/Zoom Meeting based on College Closure Related to Weather

MEETING MINUTES

Monday, January 26, 2026

1. Call to Order

The four hundred and twenty-eighth meeting of the Bristol Community College Board of Trustees was held on Monday, January 26, 2026 (virtual meeting). The meeting was intended to be held in person on the Fall River Campus but was changed on 01.25.2026 based on college closure on Monday, 01.26.2026, related to weather. Chair Medeiros called the virtual meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Board Members present: Joan Medeiros, Chair of the Board; Jeffrey Karam, Vice-Chair; Lynn Motta, Secretary; Renee Clark; Pamela Gauvin; Maria Gonzalez; Antonio (Tony) Lima; Steven Martins; John Morris; and Todd McGhee.

Board Members absent: None

Others present: Sedgwick Harris, President; Lucinda Poudrier-Aaronson, Board Liaison; Joyce Brennan; Emmanuel Echevarria; Andrew Fisher; April Lynch; Steve Kenyon; Brianne McDonough; Kate O'Hara; Jo Ann Pelletier; Judi Urquhart; Olivia Hunt; Mark Nataly; Alaina Marcotte; Dorothy Chase; and Stacie Charbonneau Hess.

2. Chair's Remarks

Chair Medeiros began by thanking everyone for pivoting to a virtual meeting as the college is closed today. She noted that since all Trustees are participating remotely today, she asked Board Liaison, Lucinda Poudrier-Aaronson, to proceed with roll-call attendance.

Renee Clark	Present
Pamela Gauvin	Present
Maria Gonzalez	Present
Jeffrey Karam	Present
Antonio (Tony) Lima	Present
Steven Martins	Present
Todd McGhee	Present
John Morris (Alumni Trustee)	Present
Lynn Motta	Present
Chair Joan Medeiros	Present

Chair Medeiros thanked Lucinda.

3. Consent Agenda

- Consideration of Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting for December 1, 2025
- Consideration of Minutes of the Joint Board Meeting for December 1, 2025

- Report of Personnel Actions for December 2025 & January 2026
- Report of Workforce and Community Education Contracts for December 2025 & January 2026

Chair Medeiros stated she hoped that Trustees had the opportunity to review the consent agenda items posted last week electronically. She listed the four Consent Agenda items and asked the Trustees if there were any questions or items that needed to be moved for discussion.

Hearing none, Chair Medeiros stated she was seeking a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented. A motion to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented was made by Trustee McGhee and seconded by Trustee Martins.

Chair Medeiros asked Board Liaison Poudrier-Aaronson to proceed with a roll-call vote.

Renee Clark	Yes
Pamela Gauvin	Yes
Maria Gonzalez	Yes
Jeffrey Karam	Yes
Antonio (Tony) Lima	Yes
Steven Martins	Yes
Todd McGhee	Yes
John Morris (Alumni Trustee)	Yes
Lynn Motta	Yes
Chair Joan Medeiros	Yes

Upon completion of the roll-call vote, the motion to approve the Consent Agenda items as presented was approved unanimously.

Chair Medeiros thanked Board Liaison, Lucinda, and invited President Harris to provide the President’s Report.

4. President’s Report

- President’s Key Goals 2025-2026 – Update & Review
- Community Partnership Highlight
 - Active Shooter/Hostile Event Response (ASHER) training – Mark Nataly, Director Campus Police/Preparedness
- Trustee Talking Points
 - Turning Philanthropy into Infrastructure: A Solar Investment Project – Judi Urquhart, Chief Advancement Officer
 - Changing Lives Through Literature (CLTL) – Stacie Charbonneau Hess, Faculty, School of Languages, Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences Programs
- Financial Update – Steve Kenyon, Vice President, Administration and Finance

President Harris shared it has been a busy week at the college noting that we hosted our annual MLK Breakfast on Monday, January 19th with 150-200 people in attendance. The college’s Opening Day was held on January 20 with 300 Faculty and Staff participating. On Wednesday, January 21 students arrived at all locations to begin the spring term. He also noted that an Opening Day was held on Saturday, January 24th for all Adjunct Faculty.

President Harris thanked Trustees for the confidence expressed in their December vote to approve the Banner/Ellucian SaaS project moving forward. Recognizing there may be remaining questions from the December presentation, he shared a clarifying memo that had been emailed to Trustees and was also included in the electronic material available for today’s meeting. He thanked Trustees and invited them to continue to ask questions and create dialogue.

President Harris provided updates and status of the key goals and performance indicators shared previously.

Chair Medeiros thanked President Harris and invited Chief Mark Nataly to highlight an important Community Partnership. Chief Nataly shared that ASHER Training (**A**ctive **S**hooter **H**ostile **E**vent **R**esponse) is scheduled for June 2026 and was being hosted on the Fall River campus. He noted this is a 2-day training, and the participants will include Bristol Campus Police, the Fall River Police Department, and the Fall River Fire Department. He noted this would be a live exercise, and shared several benefits of this conducting and hosting this training including:

- Strengthens our community partnership with FRPD & FRFD
- Prepares first responders to address these types of events using best practices
- Combines law enforcement response (i.e. "Stop the killing") with Fire/Medic response (i.e. "Stop the dying")

Chief Nataly shared the live training would be announced and publicized in advance to the campus and local community to mitigate fears or concerns about first responders' presence on campus. He noted that while unfortunate, we must continue to talk about the realities and necessity of this type of training.

Chair Medeiros thanked Chief Nataly and invited Chief Advancement Officer, Judi Urquhart, to provide the first of two Trustee Talking Points today.

CAO Urquhart described a donor supported investment project that involves installing 264 kW solar panel system on Building A (the Learning Resource Center). She shared the concept that was initiated by a donor who is highly committed to renewable energy projects and sought to help Bristol take advantage of the federal Clean Energy Tax Incentives (30% direct pay rebate) and the state SMART (Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target) program. She noted that program eligibility includes educational institutions, 501c3 orgs, and religious organizations. Other project eligibility requirements must be a zero-emission electricity generating facility, such as solar photovoltaic panels, and that we must begin construction by July 4, 2026, *or* be placed in service by December 31, 2027, to qualify for the solar credit.

CAO Urquhart shared that college was partnering with RISE Engineering as the general contractor and shared the project timeline:

Project Timing

Planned Milestone	Target Date
Final Permitting	3/1/2026
Materials arrive	6/1/2026
Receive 1 st gift from the donor (First 1/2 of total donation)	By June 30, 2026 (FY26)
Project Completion and Connection to the Grid	10/1/2026 (FY27)
Receive 2nd gift from the donor (Second 1/2 of total donation)	By June 30, 2027 (FY27)
Apply for IRS Tax Incentive (subsequent fiscal year)	11/15/2027 (FY28)
Receive 30% Direct Pay Incentive	2/15/2028 (FY28)



CAO Urquhart provided the financial details for this project including a combined \$1.7M cash and credit to the college over 20 years. The project's initial investment, less the federal and state incentives, was \$413K and would be paid by the college donor committed to renewable energy projects and who wished to remain anonymous.

Chair Medeiros thanked CAO Urquhart and invited Professor Stacie Charbonneau Hess to provide the second Trustee Talking Point.

Professor Charbonneau Hess began by sharing that Changing Lives Through Literature (CLTL) is an alternative sentencing program that's been proven to reduce recidivism rates in participants. She noted that at Judi Urquhart's urging, she applied and was accepted last fall and had just completed her training last week. Professor Charbonneau Hess shared she now has her own "class" of juvenile offenders. She noted that she will be in the New Bedford Court House on Wednesday afternoons for five weeks this semester, and that after this, she can teach anywhere (hopefully on campus).

She noted that CLTL began in 1991 and was created by Dr. Robert Waxler at UMass Dartmouth and now is a state-wide program run through the Justice Department in Boston. She shared that each facilitator (usually college faculty in English or Education) sits with the Judge, the Parole Officer, and either people who are incarcerated or on parole and talk about stories that have themes of: violence, racism, and poverty. The idea is that through stories participants learn to view their own struggles in context and consider making different choices.

Professor Charbonneau Hess stated the program requires some training for the Faculty Facilitators, and the current program Coordinator is John Plotz at Brandeis University. She shared that ideally, and eventually, the hope was to move the program to campus locations, if we have willing faculty and enough participants to warrant a cohort.

She noted that the state pays the Faculty Facilitators, and the rate is lower than what adjuncts get from the current DCE contract, but she thinks for the right person who is interested in this program —whether full or part time — that won't matter.

Trustee Lima introduced himself to Professor Charbonneau Hess and shared he is familiar and supportive of the CLTL program through his work in the Massachusetts Commission of Probation. He invited her to contact him if there was anything he could do to support her and the CLTL effort.

Chair Medeiros thanked Professor Charbonneau Hess for her work and the presentation. She invited Steve Kenyon to present the college's Financial Update.

VP Kenyon shared that from a financial perspective everything continues to fall into place. He noted that enrollment for the spring semester that had just started was about 13% higher than a year ago. For those Trustees that have been on the board a while, he shared that the college's enrollment is back to where we were in 2017 and noted that our state appropriation has increased about \$12M over that same period.

He shared the most recent budget update shows a projected surplus of \$3.7M while the original operating budget approved by the board projected \$1.2M. VP Kenyon noted the increase was a result of our enrollment for both fall and spring being over the 6% increase we budgeted.

VP Kenyon stated the one current concern is a planned receivable from the state for free community college in the amount of \$2M. He noted that he reported a similar amount to you last year, and that the state came through late in the year with a supplemental budget to make the schools whole but just wanted the Board to be aware of this information. He noted this impacts our ability to manage summer enrollment when that opens in a couple of months sharing that the projected surplus is on an accrual basis so includes the \$2M owed by the state.

VP Kenyon shared that the college's new Comptroller, Sandra Bartolo, started in late December and that the transition is going great. He noted that he will introduce you to her at our next meeting when we can meet in person. He said we have a good candidate pool for our Assistant Comptroller position and interviews are starting very soon.

He noted that our investment portfolio continues to perform well this fiscal year. We currently have \$2.4M unrealized gain on our Fidelity portfolio.

VP Kenyon stated it remains unclear if there will be a federal shutdown when the federal government budget expires at the end of January noting that we have been through this scenario many times. He shared we have been in communication with our federal budget liaisons and will continue to monitor.

VP Kenyon shared that our police officers started wearing body cameras at the beginning of the month. He noted this has been in the planning stages since last April and is going smoothly thus far. He stated we do have impact bargaining scheduled with the union for later next month. He also noted that we have done an assessment of our security camera inventory in terms of coverage. He stated that we verify daily that all the cameras are operational but that our recent assessment yielded a need for about 40 more cameras to be added to the existing 125 we already have. VP Kenyon shared that the cost will be about \$100K and we are currently applying for a few state and federal grants to cover this expense.

At the conclusion of the finance and administration update, Chair Medeiros thanked President Harris & college leadership for providing this information to Trustees. She then invited Dorothy Chase, Dean of Health Sciences and Nursing, to provide a presentation to the board.

5. Evening & Weekend Nursing Program Update – Dorothy Chase, Dean, Health Sciences and Nursing

Dean Chase shared the goals of the Evening & Weekend Nursing Program is to expand access to nursing education by meeting the growing demands for flexible pathways designed for today's students. In addition, increasing the opportunities for students in turn increases equity across the nursing student body.

Dean Chase shared that in the Spring of 2025, the college launched a pilot program, and we are now applying the lessons learned to expand access. Initially designed as a part-time option, the pilot faced challenges with student enrollment and financial aid sustainability. She shared that the revised structure, launched in Spring 2026, mirrors the long-standing hybrid nursing curriculum,

maintaining the academic rigor and standards which define the Bristol Nursing program. She noted the key differences include a Spring start rather than Fall, and lab and clinical experiences offered exclusively during evening and weekend hours.

Dean Chase shared that in December 2025, the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing (MA BORN) unanimously approved the launch of an evening and weekend cohort beginning in Spring 2026 at Bristol Community College. She noted that the program will enroll an initial cohort of 16 students, with planned growth to a full cohort of 24 students by Spring 2027. She shared with continued expansion anticipated, dedicated faculty have been identified, and additional faculty have been hired to support the program start.

She shared the college currently offers multiple pathways for students to enter the nursing program, including a Fall start in traditional face-to-face education (72 students), a hybrid education option (24 students), and entry for licensed practical nurses (LPN) through either a challenge or bridge program. She noted that the hybrid pathway, launched in 2012, has successfully supported 24 students per cohort. Dean Chase shared that this new pathway maintains the program's academic rigor while strengthening the foundation and long-term sustainability of our offerings by addressing students' needs for greater flexibility in scheduling lab and clinical experiences. She stated that this new pathway matches the hybrid modality with all labs and clinical experiences but will be exclusively offered during the evenings and on weekends.

Dean Chase added that we will continue to evaluate the data to adjust and expand possibilities if/when possible. She also conveyed support for advancing equity with this Evening & Weekend Program from Kathy and Brian Maclean and the Charlton Foundation.

Chair Medeiros thanked Dean Chase and invited the college's Director of Financial Aid Counseling, Alaina Marcotte, to provide a presentation related to financial aid at the college.

6. Overview of Financial Aid at Bristol Community College – Alaina Marcotte, Director of Financial Aid Counseling

Director Marcotte began by providing a FAFSA overview noting that FAFSA is required for all federal and state aid including free community college. She shared that FAFSA submissions have increased at Bristol by nearly 28% since AY2023-2024 (pre-FreeCC). She noted that AY2025-2026 filings have already exceeded the total for all AY2024-2025, with six months remaining. She attributed this growth to Bristol's proactive financial aid strategy:

Bristol's Proactive Financial Aid Strategy

- Increased appointment availability in multiple modalities
- College Navigators & Enrollment Counselors cross training
- Monthly JumpStart events with extended hours
- Strengthening relationships with sports coaches
- On demand financial aid support with our advising team
- Navigate 360 outreach campaigns
- Improving financial literacy with clear, student-centered materials



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Director Marcotte also conveyed enrollment growth and affordability outcomes including:

- Enrollment increased ~15% from Fall 2024 to Fall 2025
- Average student age (Fall 2025): 27
- Pell recipients increased from 42% (pre-FreeCC) to 52% in Fall 2025
- 72% of students attend tuition-free (47% are fully covered by Pell and other federal/state aid, excluding FreeCC)

She also shared additional financial aid facts and figures related to both federal and state funds. She noted that a major area of focus will be related to loan borrowing awareness and initiatives to minimize the need for federal student loans. Director Marcotte noted several strategic considerations related to federal and state funding challenges, as well as college-level challenges looming.

Chair Medeiros thanked Director Marcotte for providing this information and invited Kate O'Hara to provide an update related to the current Student Trustee vacancy.

7. Student Trustee Report – *Kate O’Hara*, Vice President Student Services and Enrollment Management

VP O’Hara shared the Student Trustee position was currently being pursued by way of a special student election at the start of the Spring semester. Currently, the self-nomination period is open with a deadline of January 29, 2026. The election period will run from February 3-9, 2026, with intention to have a new Student Trustee named before the next board meeting on February 23.

Chair Medeiros invited Trustee Gauvin to provide the Risk Committee Report.

8. Report of the Risk Management Committee – *Trustee Pam Gauvin*

Trustee Gauvin reported that the Board Risk Management Committee met on November 24, 2025. The Risk Management Committee discussed the following topics and standing agenda items:

- Employee Settlements & Judgements Report Update
- Strategic Risk Assessment Update
- Quarterly Risk Report
- Risk Metrics

The next meeting of the Risk Management Committee is expected to be in February 2026.

Chair Medeiros thanked Trustee Gauvin and invited Trustee Motta to provide a report of the Finance/Budget Committee

9. Report of the Finance/Budget Committee – *Trustee Lynn Motta*

Trustee Motta reported that the Finance/Budget Committee met on December 2 for our quarterly meeting. She noted we reviewed the Annual Trust Fund report that is required by state statute. She shared that this is a detailed report of the College’s trust fund activity for the fiscal year. She explained trust funds are primarily tuition and fees but also include revenue from noncredit instruction, commissions from the bookstore operation along with cafeteria and vending.

Trustee Motta reported there were no major variances in the year-to-year comparison. She did share that there was a notable increase in cash which was reflected in the audited financial statements approved last month.

She stated the Committee also reviewed the First Quarter Trust Fund report for fiscal year 2025, and being the first quarter there was no budget to actual variances to discuss.

She noted the Committee discussed several of the larger transactions including over \$400K for computer replacements.

Trustee Motta shared that the Committee reviewed a report on the college’s investments noting CD rates declined a bit with some renewals. However, she also noted that in our Fidelity investment account, we budget \$400K each year for unrealized gains, but we were up more than \$1M after the first quarter.

She shared the Committee spent time reviewing the quarterly income statement. She noted with strong enrollment we are over budget for tuition and fees for summer/fall and expect the same for spring. She reported that increased enrollment created a situation where we are over budget in adjunct salaries by approximately \$3M for the year, but that expense was more than offset by the increase in revenue.

Trustee Motta reported that some concern remains from a cash flow perspective as we are unsure when we will receive the excess funding for awarding MassEducate and MassReconnect beyond our initial allocation.

She also noted we are waiting for a supplemental budget from the state to fund contractual increases in January with that amount being about \$1M.

Trustee Motta noted that the remainder of the meeting was a presentation of the audited financial statements by Withum. She reminded all that the board subsequently received a shorter version of the report at the December 1, 2025, board meeting.

Chair Medeiros thanked Trustee Motta for providing the Finance/Budget Committee Report.

10. Annual Board Assessment (complete tool) – *Joan Medeiros*, Board Chair

Chair Medeiros stated that each year the Board is asked to review and assess its collective work. She noted that in the board meeting material available electronically is the Board’s Annual Self-Assessment Tool. She also shared that after tonight’s meeting, Board Liaison Poudrier-Aaronson, will send an email request to Trustees asking you to complete the Annual Board Self-Assessment.

Chair Medeiros asked that Trustees complete the self-assessment tool before the next board meeting on February 23, 2026. If not received prior to that meeting, she stated that we will ask you to stay after that meeting to complete the tool. She shared that Trustees may complete the assessment electronically or print a hard copy and complete it. She asked that Trustees send or bring completed assessments to Lucinda directly. Chair Medeiros noted that Lucinda will compile for our review at the Spring half day retreat scheduled for March 18th.

She asked if there were any questions or thoughts related to the Annual Board Self-Assessment process. Hearing none, she asked if there were any Old Business items to come before the Board tonight.

11. Old Business

Hearing no items for Old Business, Chair Medeiros invited any items for board consideration as New Business in addition to the one policy for Board review and approval noted on the agenda.

12. New Business

- Policy(s) for Review and Approval – *Emmanuel Echevarria*, Chief Human Resources Officer
 - **01** Affirmative Action Equal Opportunity and Diversity v3

Hearing no additional items for consideration as New Business, Chair Medeiros invited Chief Human Resources Officer, Emmanuel Echevarria, to provide the policy details for our review and approval.

CHO Echevarria provided an overview of the *Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity & Diversity Policy* and a summary of changes. He also noted the impact of national and political input to dial back Title IX changes under the previous administration including the U.S. Department of Education’s reversion back to the 2020 Title IX policy.

He shared the purpose of this policy is to document Bristol Community College’s required elements for an effective *Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity & Diversity Policy* with the understanding that a successful policy requires more than the knowledge of laws, regulations and current government requirements. He noted that this Policy applies to all Bristol community members, including, but not limited to students, employees, visitors, and vendors.

He noted that the current college policy review has resulted in non-material changes including a policy contact change from Human Resources to Johanna Biewlawski, Title IX and Affirmative Action Officer, and a change in Stakeholder from “all employees, students, visitors, and vendors” to Human Resources.

CHO Echevarria invited questions or discussion.

Hearing none, Chair Medeiros stated she was seeking a motion to approve the *Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity & Diversity Policy* as presented. A motion to approve *Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity & Diversity Policy* as presented was made by Trustee Clark and seconded by Trustee Lima.

Chair Medeiros asked Board Liaison Poudrier-Aaronson to proceed with a roll-call vote.

Renee Clark	Yes
Pamela Gauvin	Yes
Maria Gonzalez	Yes
Jeffrey Karam	Yes

Antonio (Tony) Lima	Yes
Steven Martins	Yes
Todd McGhee	Yes
John Morris (Alumni Trustee)	Yes
Lynn Motta	Yes
Chair Joan Medeiros	Yes

Upon completion of the roll-call vote, the motion to approve *Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity & Diversity Policy* as presented was approved unanimously.

Chair Medeiros thanked Board Liaison Poudrier-Aaronson and asked if there was any other business to come before the board this evening. Hearing none, Chair Medeiros asked for a motion to adjourn the board meeting at 5:21 p.m.

13. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:21 p.m. was made by Trustee McGhee and seconded by Trustee Clark.

Chair Medeiros asked Board Liaison Poudrier-Aaronson to proceed with a roll-call vote.

Renee Clark	Yes
Pamela Gauvin	Yes
Maria Gonzalez	Yes
Jeffrey Karam	Yes
Antonio (Tony) Lima	Yes
Steven Martins	Yes
Todd McGhee	Yes
John Morris (Alumni Trustee)	Yes
Lynn Motta	Yes
Chair Joan Medeiros	Yes

Upon completion of the roll-call vote, the motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:21 p.m. was approved unanimously.