

**VIRGINIA WESTERN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**Local Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**  
**Meeting No. 300, March 19, 2026**  
**STEM Building, ST112, 11:30am**

**Members Present:** Valerie Brown, Roanoke City  
Leslie Carter, Franklin County  
Penny Hodge, Roanoke County  
Michael Maxey, Salem City  
Dr. Ken Nicely, Roanoke County  
Todd Putney, Roanoke City – Chair  
Dr. Beth Quinn, Roanoke City – Vice Chair  
Tim Rowe, Roanoke County  
Chad Scott, Roanoke City  
Dr. Jason Wheeler, Craig County

**Members Absent:** Kate Lawrence, Botetourt County

**Faculty/Staff Present:** Dr. Laura Treanor, College President/Board Secretary  
Amy Balzer, Assistant to the College President  
Carrie Duckwall, Assistant to the College President  
Dr. Jolene Hamm, Assoc. Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness  
Jenifer Kurtz, Faculty Senate Chair  
Jennifer Pittman, Assoc. Vice President of Human Resources  
Lisa Ridpath, Vice President of Financial and Administrative Services  
Jamie Snead, Dir Marketing/Strategic Communications  
Bryan Walke, Staff Senate Chair  
Dr. Elizabeth Wilmer, Vice President of Academic and WF Solutions  
Kevin Witter, Director of Facilities Planning & Development

**I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Putney called the meeting to order at 11:35a.m., welcoming guests, board members, and college employees. Mr. Putney noted that Ms. Battle and Ms. Herbert-Ashton were excused and Ms. Jamie Snead will present the Educational Foundation action item. Mr. Putney noted that quorum was present and reiterated the new meeting format to streamline the meeting to allow discussion topics.

***Mr. Scott made the motion to approve the minutes of the January 15, 2026 meeting of the Local Advisory Board. Ms. Brown seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.***

**I. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no public comments.

### III. REPORT FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Treanor thanked everyone for attending reported on the following:

- College enrollment is currently trending upward at approx. 5.5% in headcount and 5.8% in FTE as compared to Spring 2025.
- The Workforce division responded in a collaborative, creative, and compassionate manner to the recent closing of the Yokohama plant, representing one of the largest layoffs our region has experienced in recent times.
  - Amy White was acknowledged for coordinating the efforts of her team, which included participation in career fairs, Rapid Response sessions, on-site engagement and hosted special office hours to support affected employees.
  - President Treanor noted pride and appreciation for VWCC showing up as ‘one institution’ working together to support and encourage these individuals during their difficult transition.
- The College programs have also been aligned to workforce needs, gaining recognition across our region and stand as a powerful example of VWCC fulfilling its mission through service, responsiveness, and collaboration.
- President Treanor is concluding the campus listening sessions, structured around employee satisfaction with Western; what we are doing well and what opportunities there are for improvement. She also asked forward-looking questions about leadership’s understanding of the employee experience and what success looks like over the next 2-3 years.
  - The insights gathered from these sessions will directly inform both the employee satisfaction survey and the development of the next strategic plan.
- President Treanor reported on the continued development of the Virginia Western VIBE, representing Visionary Innovation and Bold Engagement, shaping the next chapter of the college.
  - The Four key areas to focus on are teaching and learning; operational effectiveness; workforce development; and community partners.
  - The College has contracted with Academic Impressions to strengthen both innovative thinking and our capacity to lead change. 35 academic leaders have been selected to participate in this professional development.
    - President Treanor thanked Ms. Ridpath for her expertise and patience in navigating the challenging procurement process for this initiative.
    - In parallel, VIBE teams will be launched, focusing on identifying and advancing top priorities in the four key areas previously mentioned. The goal is to position VWCC to lead change to positively impact our students, employees and community.
- President Treanor’s Investiture Ceremony has been scheduled for September 25<sup>th</sup> at 10am at the Jefferson Center in downtown Roanoke. Board members are invited to attend the ceremony and celebratory lunch that will immediately follow the ceremony. The inauguration week will include many celebratory activities. Save the Date information will be shared soon.
- Lastly, President Treanor thanked the Board members for supporting the mission and success of VWCC. She also invited them to follow her and VWCC on LinkedIn to stay connected to the great things happening across the college.

#### IV. COLLEGE REPORTS AND ACTION ITEMS

##### Financial and Administrative Services

Ms. Hodge shared the FY 2026 Financial Reports update noting funding sources are all on track for this reporting cycle.

*Ms. Hodge presented the motion and second on behalf of the Finance Committee to recommend Board approval of the Fiscal Year 2026 Local Fund Financial Report for the period of July 1, 2025, through February 28, 2026, with noted adjustments. With no discussion or objection, the motion was unanimously approved.*

*Ms. Hodge presented the motion and second on behalf of the Finance Committee to recommend Board approval of the Proposed 2026-2028 Auxiliary Parking Plan. With no discussion or objection, the motion was unanimously approved.*

Ms. Ridpath requested everyone to review the capital projects update included in the meeting packets as prepared by Mr. Witter. She acknowledged Mr. Witter for the huge lift and problem solving required for the upcoming project-related staff relocations.

##### Institutional Advancement

Ms. Snead, in the absence of Ms. Herbert-Ashton, noted the Institutional Advancement update was provided in the meeting packet. She then brought attention to the request for Local Board approval for the naming opportunity of the STEM building on campus.

*After a brief discussion, Mr. Rowe made the motion for the Virginia Western Local Advisory Board to approve the naming opportunity for the STEM building in acknowledgment of an aggregate \$6 million gift to the college in support of the Virginia Western Forward Permanent Endowment Fund. The donor wishes to remain anonymous until the naming is executed. Ms. Brown seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.*

#### V. DISCUSSION ITEM

Dr. Treanor first thanked Mr. Putney for creating space in the meetings for discussion topics, providing valuable input from the Board. Dr. Treanor then posed the question:

**When people in our community think about us, what do you believe they truly see and what do you wish they saw instead?**

The following remarks were shared by Board members:

- Dr. Quinn noted that the ALICE report was very enlightening and added relevance to this discussion.
- College is visually impressive and an asset for the surrounding community, however, customers may be unsure of how to gain access to college and offerings. It may be intimidating for some.
- Businesses may assist in 'uncovering' the college and resources available. It was suggested to allow businesses to utilize campus for events/meetings thus creating exposure opportunities.

- Insider effect and stigma of community college could be factors in potential students being intimidated and/or reluctant to apply. College needs to find ways to reach underserved populations.
- Community college may be a quick solution for those who have fallen on hard times. It can be a gateway for career placement with short programming/training for certifications/skill sets.
- College needs to foster a 'campus mindset' and being known as something like the 'people's place'. Find ways to integrate the campus to create comfort level and be less intimidating. Perhaps being a community hub with increased access via campus events.
- Opening campus to events will bring more foot traffic and create awareness of resources for all.
  - Dr. Treanor noted that leadership is currently working to build a framework for assessing the right balance between allowing events and the utilization of limited campus resources in support of those events.
- The large campus can be intimidating, so perhaps create a 'welcome center' that allows potential students to learn about the college without having to navigate the complexities of the actual campus.
- Rotate marketing of program features and promote in small bites, and include highlights from workforce training and transfer opportunities.
- Data shows VWCC transfer students have higher success rates at 4-year colleges than traditional students.
- Recognition of the community college as an affordable bridge to 4-year colleges, especially in rural areas.
- Increase outreach and partnerships with K-12, churches, and communities. Does the college provide faculty/staff outreach opportunities? One noted that the college immerse faculty/staff in the community.
  - The College has ambassadors/advisors in the participating localities' schools and community events on a regular basis. The College also hosts STEM Day in which a large potential student audience interacts with faculty/current students of highlighted programs.
- Roanoke City's diverse population can be challenging. VWCC works hard to reach underserved populations.
- What is the college doing to serve ALICE students?
  - Examples would be the Envision Center, Excel Center, and non-profit partnerships such as Tap.
- A virtual welcome center was suggested. Many class modalities are available so not all students need to come to campus.
- A suggestion was made to provide a one-page info sheet for board members to promote the college. What would the president like the board members to share about the college?
- Lastly, it was noted that alumni can be a great resource for college promotion.

## **VI. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR**

Mr. Putney announced that attendance for this portion was optional for non-Board members, so employees were welcome to leave if desired. Mr. Putney shared the 2026 meeting schedule with key dates for Board activities and Commencement.

Mr. Putney noted the extended Board gathering would be to discuss the officer and Finance Committee member vacancies and the process of filling them. With several new board members, the

full Board participation in the nomination process would be beneficial to all members.

Mr. Putney then provided the suggested slate of nominees for 2026-2028 Board Officers and/or Finance Committee Members with an effective date of July 1, 2026. Once approved, the slate of nominees will be presented as an action item for the May meeting.

**Full Board Chair and Vice Chair Nominations:**

2026-2028 Chair: Dr. Beth Quinn (Board Chair Elect)  
Vice-Chair: Tim Rowe (most tenured Board member with Finance Comm. experience)

**Finance Committee Membership and Chair Nominations\*:**

2026-2027\*: Dr. Ken Nicely, Committee Chair  
2026-2028: Dr. Beth Quinn (Full Board Chair)  
Tim Rowe (Full Board Vice-Chair)  
Chad Scott (expressed interest, new appointment)  
Valerie Brown (expressed interest, new appointment)

\* Board is requesting one year extension for Dr. Nicely to remain on the Finance Committee due to committee experience benefiting onboarding new members. A single seat on the Finance Committee will need to be filled next May (2027).

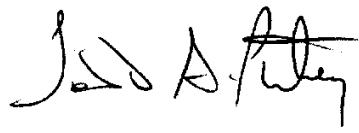
Mr. Putney asked for any additional nominations from the floor. No new nominations were put forth.

***With no new nominations, Dr. Wheeler made the motion for the Board to approve the 2026-2028 Board Officer and Finance Committee Member nominations as presented with a special request for Dr. Nicely to remain on the Finance Committee for one additional year to provide continuity and experience. Ms. Hodge seconded the motion, and the motion was unanimously approved.***

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:45pm.

Minutes submitted by Amy Balzer

Approved:



Todd Putney, Board Chair

May 21, 2026  
Date