



Meeting of the OSU Board of Trustees

January 16, 2026

3:00 – 4:10 pm

Memorial Union Horizon Room | Corvallis, OR

MINUTES

Trustees present:

Stephanie Bulger, Lauren Camou (*via Zoom*), Kate Carter-Cram, Karla Chambers, Maria Chávez-Haroldson (*vice chair*), Eric J. Gleske, Nikki Gold (*nonvoting member*), Lisa Hale, Román Hernández (*chair*), Grant Kitamura, Toby Luther (*via Zoom*), Greg Macpherson, Julie Manning, Elise McClure, Jayathi Murthy (*ex officio*), Camille Palmer, Julia Phillips

University staff present:

Maxine Agather, Jackie Bangs, Penny Burgess, Jenny Chambers-Taube, Bruce Daley, Kevin Dougherty, Katie Fast, Alix Gitelman, Becca Gose, Roy Haggerty, Carla Ho‘ā, Jen Humphreys, Josh Ingram, Stacy Jeffries, Dan Larson, Deb Mott, Rob Odom, Libby Ramirez, Melanie Rose, Irem Tumer, Scott Vignos

Invited guests:

Penny Atkins (OSU Foundation), Ben Cannon (HECC), Jake Hamblin (Faculty Senate), Whitney McFarlane (ASCC), Masha Mogylevsky (ASOSU), Andrew Valls (Faculty Senate)

1. Call to Order / Roll Call / Declaration of a Quorum / Land Acknowledgement

Board Chair Román Hernández called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Board Secretary Jackie Bangs called the roll and verified a quorum.

Chair Hernández delivered the university’s land acknowledgment statement.

2. Opening comments and reports

a. Chair’s comments

Chair Hernández congratulated Student Trustee Nikki Gold, who was recently named Student Veteran of the Year out of 600,000 student veterans nationwide.

He summarized activities from the prior day’s board retreat and training, which included an exercise on effective governance in high-pressure situations and a public presentation on university communications. He thanked Vice Chair Maria Chávez-Haroldson, Vice President for Mission and Impact Scott Vignos, Vice President for Student Affairs Dan Larson, Vice President for University Relations and Marketing Rob Odom and others for their work.

Chair Hernández provided updates related to board composition and transitions, noting that the process to fill his soon-to-be-vacant seat would continue at the next board meeting. He also

acknowledged that student trustees Nikki Gold and Lauren Camou would graduate before completing their terms and expressed appreciation for their service and contributions.

Chair Hernández described an informal meet-and-greet he hosted in December with regents from Washington State University, which was also attended by Trustee Elise McClure and Board Vice Chair Maria Chávez-Haroldson. He noted that both institutions share land-grant missions and Pac-12 history and indicated opportunities for future collaboration.

b. President's report

President Jayathi Y. Murthy began her report by announcing that winter term enrollment is roughly level with last year and total credit hours are up just over 1%, while first-time new student applications for next fall are nearly 2% higher than a year ago.

She highlighted momentum on the implementation of *Prosperity Widely Shared* and framed OSU's near-term focus as powering Oregon's economy, building institutional resilience and counting down to the launch of a revitalized Pac-12.

The president described OSU's role at the center of state and regional initiatives for innovation and economic development:

- OSU leads the FAST (Frontiers of Advanced Semiconductor Technology) proposal and is among 15 finalists for up to \$160M to expand Oregon's semiconductor ecosystem, workforce, and research. She noted that Governor Kotek joined OSU, UO, PSU and industry leaders for an NSF site visit in Corvallis in December and the team expects a decision by summer.
- OSU is also leading the Pacific Northwest Mass Timber Tech Hub, a \$33M proposal that advanced to EDA (Economic Development Administration) phase 2 and spans the full breadth of forest products from harvest through construction.
- OSU has begun convening public- and private-sector leaders to shape a Southern Willamette Valley Innovation Corridor with the University of Oregon and cities from Corvallis to Eugene/Springfield.
- The president recently joined regional leaders including Papé Group CEO Jordan Papé, UO President Karl Scholz, and Eugene Mayor Kaarin Knudson on an Oregon Business Plan panel to amplify the potential for the Southern Willamette Valley Innovation Corridor.

President Murthy cautioned that the university is preparing for constrained funding as tight federal budgets and potential state reallocations create headwinds. She previewed the launch of the Strategic Resource Renewal (SRR) initiative to improve core operations and sustain long-term financial health of the university.

In Athletics, she announced the hiring of JaMarcus Shephard as head football coach after a national search, citing his competitive background, commitment to student-athlete success and energizing leadership. She recapped a recent Sports Business Journal Intercollegiate Athletics Forum panel, where she shared OSU's enthusiasm for designing a modern, student-centered Pac-12 athletic conference.

Murthy reported sustained legislative outreach in Salem ahead of the February short session. She noted OSU's renewed Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement and spotlighted the university's 2025 APLU C. Peter McGrath Community Engagement Scholarship Award.

She provided an overview of the statewide impact of OSU Extension and highlighted a fall visit to the Klamath Basin Research and Extension Center, noting that nearly half of all frozen potato production in North America traces back to varieties developed and distributed through Klamath Basin efforts, generating over \$1B in gross farm revenue.

The president announced late-February/early-March travel to Vietnam, Indonesia, and Taiwan in partnership with the OSU Foundation and INTO OSU to meet with alumni, incoming students and their families and institutional/industry partners in semiconductors and agriculture.

She closed by again congratulating student trustee Nikki Gold on being named Student Veteran of the Year, commending their leadership and service to the OSU community.

c. Associated Students of Oregon State University Report

Associated Students of Oregon State University (ASOSU) President Masha Mogylevsky delivered her report.

She announced that ASOSU distributed hundreds of free helmets in partnership with the Valley Library and continued the 24-hour library program during finals, which drew significant student participation. She highlighted the popularity of the International Community Hour and described additional engagement activities.

She gave an overview of cultural and wellness-focused events for winter and spring and announced that ASOSU had expanded student resources by offering know-your-rights cards in multiple languages and a safer-sex supply box in the ASOSU office.

Mogylevsky reported that ASOSU is preparing for its spring advocacy trip to Washington, D.C., with priorities centered on higher education funding, immigration justice, cost of living and protections for marginalized students. She added that ASOSU representatives met with multiple Oregon legislators during recent visits to Salem.

Mogylevsky mentioned growing student anxiety related to immigration enforcement and noted student participation in a protest earlier that day. She urged the board to review OSU's responses to pending state immigration justice legislation and emphasized the importance of shared governance and meaningful student inclusion.

Chair Hernández thanked Mogylevsky for her leadership and affirmed the board's commitment to student safety.

d. Associated Students of Cascades Campus report

Associated Students of Cascades Campus (ASCC) President Whitney McFarlane delivered her report.

She announced that OSU-Cascades is now accessing basic needs grant funds that were previously available only to the Corvallis campus. She stated that OSU-Cascades has developed a funding model in collaboration with university partners to expand services, including the food

pantry, emergency food assistance, emergency and transitional housing, transportation resources and programming for student parents. She noted that the grant will also fund a new student employee position for a basic needs navigator responsible for outreach and resource coordination.

McFarlane informed the board that the Student Fee Committee (SFC) finalized its incidental fee recommendation on January 7 and ratified it unanimously on January 15. She said next steps include drafting the committee's narrative and submitting the recommendation to campus leadership.

She reported that ASCC elections opened on January 5, with student voting scheduled for March 7–18 and results to be announced on March 20.

She spoke about the upcoming legislative short session, reporting that OSU-Cascades' top priority is securing funding for land remediation related to the Student Health and Recreation Center. She noted the upcoming participation in OSU-Cascades Day at the Capitol on February 16. McFarlane also updated the board on Legislative Concept (LC) 139 concerning student government autonomy, noting that ASCC leadership does not support the current draft due to concerns about increased autonomy without appropriate accountability structures.

Vice Chair Chávez-Haroldson asked how McFarlane and ASOSU President Masha Mogylevsky collaborate across campuses to support students. McFarlane responded that the two student governments meet frequently and stay connected through their policy and advocacy teams. Mogylevsky joined McFarlane at the presenters' table to affirm their partnership.

Trustee Manning asked for clarification regarding the process for filling student trustee positions, referencing anticipated student trustee vacancies. Mogylevsky explained her recent review of governing documents and stated that the ASOSU president is responsible for recommending nominees to the Governor's Office in consultation with ASCC and CGE (Coalition of Graduate Employees). Board Secretary Bangs added context about the Governor's appointments process.

e. Faculty Senate Report

Faculty Senate President Jake Hamblin delivered his standing report to the board.

He acknowledged the work of his predecessor, Andrew Valls, and noted that Faculty Senate discussions continue amid a national climate of heightened scrutiny of higher education, including federal proposals affecting the U.S. Department of Education, SNAP-Ed, federal research funding and DEI programs, adding that conditions have created significant faculty anxiety.

Hamblin reported that the senate recently debated endorsing an Inter-Institutional Faculty Senate resolution opposing any federal compact that conditions funding on political requirements, noting that debate centered less on policy merits and more on concerns about potential retribution for taking a public stance.

He emphasized the extent to which the past year has stoked a culture of fear and anxiety among faculty and students at OSU and elsewhere. He shared faculty discomfort about any

effort by governmental bodies to take control of university curriculum. He added that, despite these challenges, he is fortunate to be surrounded by people of goodwill who respect one another and are united in the goal of making sure OSU is an outstanding place to work and engage students.

Hamblin outlined Faculty Senate priorities, including increasing senator engagement with a new opt-in model for service; implementing the new Core Education curriculum; and addressing faculty apprehension about teaching courses in difference, power and oppression.

He stated that promotion and tenure guidelines are being updated to align with OSU's Quality Teaching Framework and mentioned the elimination of three tenured positions in Family and Community Health due to the loss of SNAP-Ed funding.

He noted increased activity in the Administrative Appointments Committee, which is recommending faculty participation for six to seven upcoming executive-level searches, and emphasized relationship building with new administrators in the year ahead.

He concluded by highlighting collaborative policy work with ASOSU to ensure student representation on every Faculty Senate committee, underscoring a shared commitment to inclusive governance.

Trustee Gleske mentioned his own familiarity with the IFS (Interinstitutional Faculty Senate) conversation and emphasized the faculty senate's crucial role in major institutional decisions, including OSU's transition to an independent governing board. He urged the board to continue listening closely to faculty.

Trustee Chambers asked Hamblin for his observations about student engagement, noting OSU's record enrollment. Hamblin responded that the student body has changed significantly during his tenure, with more out-of-state and Ecampus students, and described students as eager and engaged.

Vice Chair Chávez-Haroldson commented on the complexity of issues facing the Faculty Senate. She spoke appreciatively about the courage required to lead through such challenges.

Chair Hernández requested to address the Faculty Senate at one of their meetings before his term ends in July to personally convey his appreciation for the transformative impact faculty have on students' lives.

f. OSU Foundation report

Penny Atkins, immediate past chair of the OSU Foundation Board and liaison to the OSU Board of Trustees, joined the meeting by Zoom to provide an update on foundation activities.

She began with an overview of the mission of the OSU Foundation, which includes engaging the community, inspiring investment in Oregon State and stewarding resources to support the university's priorities in alignment with *Prosperity Widely Shared*.

Atkins announced that OSU had achieved the best December fundraising total in Foundation history, with donors committing \$108.5M toward the Foundations' \$160M fiscal year goal since July 1, representing a 26% increase over the average mid-year total for the prior five years.

Atkins reported that donors had contributed \$25.45M to OSU Athletics through December 31, representing more than 50% above the five-year mid-year average despite a disappointing football season. She described this generosity as evidence of deep donor loyalty and continued confidence in OSU's athletic programs.

Atkins then reported that the Foundation's endowment market value reached \$1.07B at the end of November, the highest in OSU Foundation history.

She highlighted progress in engagement, noting that the winter issue of the *Oregon Stater* reached 210,000 households – a new circulation record. She reported that the Foundation also launched a search for a new director of volunteer engagement, a role intended to grow the number of alumni and donor volunteers who serve on committees, boards and task forces. She added that volunteer leaders accounted for over 31% of dollars raised for the Believe It! campaign, despite representing only 5.7% of donors.

Trustee Macpherson emphasized the success of OSU's endowment surpassing \$1B and the Foundation's consistent outperformance of prior fundraising goals. He highlighted these outcomes as a testament both to Atkins' leadership and broad support for Beaver Nation.

Trustee Chambers asked about trends driving the 26% mid-year fundraising increase, specifically inquiring whether donor interests were changing. Atkins confirmed that donor priorities closely align with university strategies, notably the Finish in Four initiative (aimed at achieving an 80% graduation rate) and Athletics, which saw notable increases this year.

g. Higher Education Coordinating Commission report

Ben Cannon, executive director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), joined the meeting by Zoom to deliver his standing report.

He announced that his presentation would focus on the HECC's newly adopted report, produced in response to a legislative directive to evaluate spending and efficiency across Oregon's public universities.

Cannon said the report concluded that Oregon's seven public universities are efficient and well-managed institutions, performing strongly compared to national peers. He stressed that institutions operate effectively despite very low levels of state investment, and that rising costs (especially those linked to PERS, health care, and wages) are pressures shared across public entities and not the result of mismanagement by universities.

He cautioned that the system faces significant long-term challenges tied to enrollment trends; limited prospects for major increases in state funding; and a cost structure largely outside institutional control. He emphasized that all seven universities are vital to their communities and to the state's future.

Cannon clarified that the HECC report does not recommend recreating a centralized state system of higher education or absorbing smaller institutions into larger ones. He emphasized that additional public investment and long-term cost reforms are essential.

He outlined the HECC's key recommendations, which include:

- Exploring deeper levels of institutional integration and partnership
- Creating a state role in ongoing academic program review

- Creating a state salary pool to help universities meet required increases for public-sector employees
- Pursuing state investment in shared IT infrastructure
- Supporting sustainability and modernization investments that could yield long-term savings.

Chair Hernández described the recommendations as disappointing and noted that OSU appears to be grouped together with institutions facing more severe financial challenges. He asked why institutions should not independently determine integration opportunities rather than being directed by a third party. He also noted that integration also affects the jobs of people who support degree programs, adding that the university has collective bargaining agreements with multiple classes of employees. Cannon responded by reiterating that the HECC seeks collaboration, not top-down control, and that universities could and should lead integration proposals.

Vice Chair Chávez-Haroldson asked what guardrails the HECC would use to prevent prescriptive operational directives that could compromise institutional autonomy or mission differentiation. Cannon answered that under existing law, the HECC has no authority to direct operational activity and is not seeking such authority. He clarified that the recommendations concern program review and renewal, not operational management, and that the state's role would need to be defined collaboratively.

Trustee Chambers urged Cannon to revisit the reasons Oregon eliminated its unified state higher education board a decade earlier and cautioned against bringing back challenges the state intentionally moved away from. Chambers pointed to OSU's strong financial audit, successful enrollment strategies and robust internal controls as evidence that the university is well managed. She urged the HECC to focus on cost drivers outside university control, such as PERS and state budgets, rather than on new regulatory burdens. Cannon responded by affirming his support for the independent board governance model and emphasizing that his responsibility is to the entire statewide system of 24 institutions, which includes those in more precarious circumstances. He expressed concern that increasing competition for a shrinking pool of students may destabilize some universities.

Trustee McClure highlighted OSU's proactive work to align expenditures with revenues, modernize administrative systems and invest in students, teaching and research. She cautioned that integration efforts may require substantial upfront costs and urged careful analysis before commitments are made. Cannon agreed, noting that other states pursuing integration have discovered significant startup costs and that Oregon must enter any such process with realistic expectations.

Chair Hernández closed the exchange by asking Cannon to convey the board's concerns to the HECC commissioners and reiterating OSU's preference for a university-led, rather than state-directed, approach to integration.

3. Consent agenda

a. **Minutes of the October 23, 2025, Meeting of the Board of Trustees**

The chair sought a motion to approve the consent agenda. A motion was made, seconded and approved by all voting board members in attendance: Trustee Bulger, Trustee Carter-Cram, Trustee Chambers, Trustee Chávez-Haroldson (*vice chair*), Trustee Gleske, Trustee Hale, Trustee Hernández (*chair*), Trustee Kitamura, Trustee Macpherson, Trustee Manning, Trustee McClure, Trustee Palmer and Trustee Phillips. The motion carried.

4. Action Items

a. **Capital Project Stage Gate II: Field Sports Building**

Finance and Administration Committee (FAC) Chair Elise McClure presented the first of two capital projects at stage gate II to the full board. She noted that the FAC met that morning and recommended that the board approve advancing the Field Sports Building to construction. She added that the project is included in the ten-year capital forecast and received stage gate I approval in April 2024.

McClure noted a capital budget of \$25M, emphasizing that all funds are private gifts raised by the OSU Foundation, which has secured the full amount. She added that the budget includes contingencies to mitigate risks such as escalating construction costs.

She gave an overview of the project, a one-story, 15,000-square-foot facility that will provide top-tier training, wellness and support spaces serving five OSU sports with the goal of attracting and retaining high-performing student-athletes.

There being no discussion and no public comment on this agenda item, the chair sought a motion to approve advancing the Field Sports Building to the construction phase with a capital project of \$25M. A motion was made by Trustee Chambers, seconded by Trustee Manning and approved by all voting board members in attendance: Trustee Bulger, Trustee Carter-Cram, Trustee Chambers, Trustee Chávez-Haroldson (*vice chair*), Trustee Gleske, Trustee Hale, Trustee Hernández (*chair*), Trustee Kitamura, Trustee Macpherson, Trustee Manning, Trustee McClure, Trustee Palmer and Trustee Phillips. The motion carried.

a. **Capital Project Stage Gate II: Sinnhuber Aquatic Research Laboratory (SARL) Modernization**

FAC Chair McClure presented the capital project for the Sinnhuber Aquatic Research Laboratory (SARL) Modernization to the full board, noting that the committee had engaged in robust discussion about the project that morning and recommended that the board advance it to the construction phase.

McClure reminded the board that the project was approved at stage gate I in March 2024 and is intended to significantly expand one of OSU's most productive biomedical research facilities.

She described the modernization scope, noting that the project will renovate approximately 3,500 square feet of the existing aquatic research facility to support OSU's high-impact zebrafish research enterprise.

McClure further explained that the project was not originally included in the university's ten-year capital forecast, but the award of a \$7.5M grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) elevated the priority of the modernization for the College of Agricultural Sciences. She reported that the NIH award was expected to be finalized within weeks and significantly offsets project cost to make the upgrade both feasible and timely.

There being no discussion and no public comment on this agenda item, the chair sought a motion to approve a capital project budget of \$13,528,453 for the Sinnhuber Aquatic Research Laboratory and advance the project to the construction phase. A motion was made by Trustee Gleske, seconded by Trustee Phillips and approved by all voting board members in attendance: Trustee Bulger, Trustee Carter-Cram, Trustee Chambers, Trustee Chávez-Haroldson (*vice chair*), Trustee Gleske, Trustee Hale, Trustee Hernández (*chair*), Trustee Kitamura, Trustee Macpherson, Trustee Manning, Trustee McClure, Trustee Palmer and Trustee Phillips The motion carried.

b. Amendments to OSU Investment Policy

FAC Chair McClure presented proposed amendments to the OSU Investment Policy to the full board.

She outlined a revision to the portfolio construction approach that adds minimum-maximum allocation bands and introduces target allocations for each asset class across defined sub-accounts, clarifying policy language and enabling clearer discipline and flexibility.

McClure highlighted a specific expansion of the asset allocation strategy in the bond repayment portfolio by introducing a 20% target allocation to fixed-income securities, a change designed to better balance risk and return for this long-horizon sub-account.

She noted the addition of a new sub-account policy to guide OSU's administration of the Oregon Paid Family and Medical Leave Plan trust account, specifying that assets collected from employees are to be held separately in short-term Tier 1 investments to preserve capital and meet expected liquidity needs.

There being no further discussion and no public comment on this agenda item, the chair sought a motion to approve the proposed changes to the OSU Investment Policy. A motion was made by Trustee Hale, seconded by Vice Chair Chávez-Haroldson and approved by all voting board members in attendance: Trustee Bulger, Trustee Carter-Cram, Trustee Chambers, Trustee Chávez-Haroldson (*vice chair*), Trustee Gleske, Trustee Hale, Trustee Hernández (*chair*), Trustee Kitamura, Trustee Macpherson, Trustee Manning, Trustee McClure, Trustee Palmer and Trustee Phillips The motion carried.

c. Board Officers Election or Re-election

Board Secretary Jackie Bangs summarized the recommendations forwarded by the Executive, Audit, and Governance Committee (EAGC), noting that the committee had followed the process outlined in the Board Officers Policy and moved a slate of nominees forward for the board's consideration. Nominees are Board Vice Chair Maria Chávez-Haroldson and Trustee Karla Chambers for board chair and Finance and Administration Committee Chair Elise McClure for vice chair. Chair Hernández invited the nominees to address the board, beginning in alphabetical order.

There being no discussion and no public comment on this agenda item, Chair Hernández requested a vote by ballot and asked for a second to the request, which was provided by Trustee Macpherson.

Ballots were distributed to trustees present in the room and the procedure for submitting email ballots was explained to trustees participating remotely. Bangs then read each vote aloud by trustee name, as required for transparency.

Votes for Maria Chávez-Haroldson were cast by Trustee Gleske, Trustee Carter-Cram, Trustee Chávez-Haroldson and Trustee Camou.

Votes for Karla Chambers were cast by Trustee Phillips, Trustee Chambers, Trustee Manning, Trustee McClure, Trustee Bulger, Trustee Hale, Trustee Kitamura, Trustee Palmer, Trustee Macpherson and Trustee Luther.

Secretary Bangs announced the final tally as 4 votes for Vice Chair Chávez-Haroldson and 10 votes for Trustee Chambers as board chair, with all trustees voting for Trustee McClure as vice chair.

There being no further discussion and no public comment on this agenda item, the chair sought a motion to elect Trustee Karla Chambers as board chair and Trustee Elise McClure as vice chair for a term beginning July 1, 2026, and concluding June 30, 2028. A motion was made by Trustee Macpherson, seconded by Trustee Manning, and approved by Trustee Bulger, Trustee Carter-Cram, Trustee Chambers, Trustee Chávez-Haroldson (*vice chair*), Trustee Gleske, Trustee Hale, Trustee Hernández (*chair*), Trustee Kitamura, Trustee Luther, Trustee Macpherson, Trustee Manning, Trustee McClure, Trustee Palmer and Trustee Phillips. The motion carried.

5. Discussion items

a. Strategic Resource Renewal

Provost and Executive Vice President Roy Haggerty and Vice President for Finance and Administration and CFO Carla Ho‘ā introduced the Strategic Resource Renewal (SRR) initiative.

Ho‘ā explained that SRR is a coordinated effort led by academic and administrative leadership to ensure that OSU remains financially resilient, mission-aligned, and positioned to thrive amid sustained external uncertainty. She emphasized that SRR is not a budget reduction exercise, but rather a disciplined, data-informed approach to grow and align resources with the university's highest priorities and deliver the greatest possible impact for students, research and the people of Oregon.

Haggerty emphasized that the initiative supports shared governance in making thoughtful choices to strengthen what differentiates OSU and ensuring that administrative and financial structures enable academic excellence.

Ho‘ā and Haggerty provided an overview of the three-phase initiative:

- Phase 1: Diagnostic and Opportunity Identification: This phase uses OSU data, benchmarking, and targeted engagement to create a broad set of potential opportunities. The focus is on insight and options, not decisions.

- Phase 2: Solution Design & Business Cases: Here, the university will evaluate which opportunities to pursue. Robust consultation with leaders and governance partners is integral.
- Phase 3: Implementation & Change Management: This phase emphasizes sequenced execution, timelines, metrics and change-management support. The board will receive updates as items move from design into action.

Haggerty emphasized that the work is jointly guided by academic and administrative leadership with broad, structured engagement of deans, vice presidents, faculty leaders, staff and governance partners. He added that transparency, pacing, communication and inclusion are essential to cultivate understanding and buy-in and manage risks.

Ho‘ā explained that OSU selected McKinsey & Company’s higher education practice as the preferred partner to support SRR after a competitive RFP (request for proposals), noting their experience in the national higher-ed sector. Haggerty emphasized that the effort will be university-led, with McKinsey tasked with bringing structured analysis, benchmarking and facilitation – not dictating outcomes.

Trustee Phillips asked about the timeframe for the initiative. Haggerty said that phase 1 is expected to last about eight weeks and run through roughly the end of March; phase 2 will align with spring term and focus on business-case design; and phase 3 will consider implementation over the next academic year.

Trustee Bulger asked what long-term means in this context, given volatility, and asked if McKinsey had offered guidance. Ho‘ā emphasized that OSU would make decisions regarding what is long-term. She added that phase 2, which has not yet been contracted, would focus on the long-term value being created for the university and what investment is required.

Trustee McClure asked Ho‘ā to elaborate for the full board on her prior experience leading a similar effort. Ho‘ā explained that while each organization’s approach is unique, she led a comparable initiative at a prior public institution, which generated significant financial value and strengthened the ability to make data-informed choices. She added that much of the value came from revenue generation alongside cost savings and cost avoidance.

b. Board Assessment Results

Board Chair Hernández explained that the assessment reflects an annual practice intended to strengthen the board’s governance, effectiveness and collective understanding of its fiduciary duties.

He emphasized several priorities emerging from trustee feedback, including encouraging more in-depth discussion during board meetings; enhancing trustees’ understanding of their legal and strategic responsibilities; nurturing a sense of community among board members; and strengthening engagement with the complex issues facing the university.

Board Secretary Jackie Bangs clarified that the assessment process had been referenced during earlier agenda discussions, and that its purpose is to continually refine board performance and reinforce best practices.

c. Legislative Update

Katie Fast, executive director of Government Relations, provided a legislative update to the board.

Fast gave an overview of the upcoming 2026 Oregon Legislative Session, noting it is a compressed 35-day session beginning February 2, with strict limits on the number of bills committees and individual legislators may introduce.

She reported that Oregon enters the session facing significant statewide budget constraints. She said that state agencies, including the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), have been directed to submit 2.5% and 5% budget reduction scenarios. She added that higher education remains vulnerable in this environment, despite growing recognition of the chronic underfunding of Oregon's universities.

Fast noted that the HECC budget proposals include 2–5% reductions to the Public University Support Fund and state programs administered by OSU, with disproportionate cuts (totaling up to \$14M) proposed to OSU statewide public service programs including Extension, the Agricultural Experiment Stations and the Forest Research Laboratory.

She reported that OSU programs administered in partnership with state agencies (Outdoor School, STEM hubs and certain research programs) also face risks due to agency level reduction proposals.

Fast reported that the next state revenue forecast, expected February 4, is anticipated to be flat or slightly up, but reductions in the 2–3% range remain likely even under an improved forecast.

She gave an overview of several key policy bills expected during the session:

- Legislation requiring notification of campus communities in the event of immigration enforcement activity
- A proposal mandating a 3-credit civics course for all bachelor's degrees, representing a significant legislative incursion into curricular matters and posing cost and implementation concerns
- A bill modifying the legal structure of student governments, removing institutional oversight of incidental fees
- Legislation directing the Oregon Department of Energy, in consultation with OSU, to conduct a nuclear energy feasibility study.

Fast also noted that HECC would present its Efficiency and Spending study to legislators in early February, expressing concern about the study's recommendations related to institutional integration and state-directed academic program review. She emphasized that any legislative action must preserve OSU's land grant mission and research role.

In conclusion, Fast said this may be one of the most consequential sessions for higher education in Oregon due to the combination of budget reductions and structural policy proposals. She said she would keep trustees informed of advocacy opportunities.

Trustee Chambers emphasized the need for OSU trustees to be engaged advocates during the session and asked Fast to advise when trustee involvement would be beneficial.

Trustee Manning asked whether the HECC study's recommendations aligned with the original legislative scope and whether OSU should coordinate with other public universities in preparing a response. Fast explained that the consultation required in the budget note had been interpreted differently by HECC and the institutions, and that universities are beginning discussions on shared strategy while also approaching the issue from varying institutional positions.

Trustee Kitamura voiced strong concern about the proposed 7% cuts (up to \$14M) to OSU statewides, noting the legacy impacts of past reductions on rural counties. Fast acknowledged the seriousness of these reductions, noting federal and county funding pressures compound the issue for Extension and related programs.

Trustee Bulger noted the recommendation for a state salary pool and asked if Fast could provide clarification. Fast explained that the salary pool is a proposal for the state to fund mandatory union salary increases (primarily SEIU) like it does for state agencies so that universities aren't forced to absorb these costs alone.

Trustee Chambers highlighted long-term demographic declines in K12 enrollment and the resulting overcapacity in higher education nationwide. She cautioned against returning to centralized state governance and urged recognition of OSU's demonstrated financial stewardship. Fast responded that OSU is reviewing other states' experiences to better prepare for policy discussions.

6. Public comments

Senior Instructor in Communication Studies Amanda Granrud provided comments on the timing of the public comment period and expressed concern that moving public comments to the end of the day on a Friday could negatively affect public participation.

Dr. Gene Eakin provided comments on OSU's land grant responsibility and the need for expanded mental health and school counseling services, especially in rural Oregon.

Professor Joseph Orozco, president of the United Academics of OSU, provided comments on the Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education and expressed concerns about academic freedom.

Catherine Alexander, CEO of Red Alder Group, provided comments on the Oregon Outdoor School and urged the board to advocate for funding.

Administrative Program Assistant Michael (Mikey) Dunn provided comments via Zoom about leadership practices within the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and the Division of Enrollment Management, expressing concerns about staff morale and turnover risk.

Admissions staff member Kathie Stutzman provided comments via Zoom expressing concerns about the decision to end all remote and hybrid work arrangements within the Office of Admissions.

7. Adjournment

With no further discussion or business before the board, Chair Hernández adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,



Stacy Jeffries

Executive Assistant, Office of the Board of Trustees