Council of Trustees

Shippensburg University
1871 Old Main Drive
Shippensburg, PA 17257-2299

ship.edu

Office: (717) 477-1301
Fax: (717) 477-4005

Council of Trustees
Friday, September 25, 2026

Public Meeting Minutes **ACTION**

The Council of Trustees of Shippensburg University met on Friday, September 25, 2026 at 11:00 AM at Shippensburg University in Old Main Chapel, Shippensburg, PA as well as visible through a live stream.

Attendance: Trustees George McElwee, Matthew Steck, Doug Harbach, Moriah Hathaway, Glen Grell, Henry Mohl, Bryan Lowe and President Patterson were in attendance.

Absent: Ashley Loper.

Call to Order
Chairperson George McElwee called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM and welcomed everyone attending the meeting.

Public Comments – No public comment.

Board Action Items

ACTION: Published Agenda - The published agenda was motioned for approval by Trustee Harbach and seconded by Trustee Hathaway. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION: Meeting Minutes - The Meeting minutes from May 15, 2026 meeting was motioned for approval by Trustee Mohl and Seconded by Trustee Hathaway. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION: COT 2027 Meeting Dates – Trustee Meeting dates for 2027 was motioned for approval by Trustee Harbach and Seconded by Trustee Hathaway. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION: Trustee Bylaws – Trustee Grell motioned for the approval of the updated Trustee Bylaws that were circulated in advance of the minimum 30-day notice to today's meeting. Trustee Steck seconded the motion. Mr. Grell explained the new provisions within the bylaws to align with PASSHE recommendations along with the student trustee selection process. Terms for current trustee officers will effectively now last until September 2027 Trustee Annual meeting. At that time, all officers will be up for election where they will be eligible for a two-year term. This action acted on today's action item for Presentation and Approval of Board Officers. The motion passed unanimously.

President Patterson provided the following remarks:

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I will provide several brief updates on work underway across the University.

Census

A census report is being distributed to campus, but I wanted to highlight some data. Our enrollment is largely stable - not growing but not declining. Headcount is up from 5302 in Fall 2025 to 5308 in Fall 2026, an increase of only 6 students, but our FTE has increased from 4399 to 4457, or an increase of 1.3%, and total credit hours increasing from 64,428 in Fall 2025 to 64,785 this Fall.

Board of Governors

First, I am pleased to share that Shippensburg University will host the Board of Governors of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education in fall 2027. We look forward to welcoming the Board to campus and showcasing the University, our students, and the progress taking place across Ship.

Kriner Hall Entrepreneurship Hub

Today marks an important milestone with the ribbon cutting for the Entrepreneurship Hub at Kriner Hall. I hope you will join us there at 1:00 p.m.

The renovated facility brings together the Diller Center for Entrepreneurial Leadership and Innovation, the Morgan Makerspace, and the Small Business Development Center to advance entrepreneurship, workforce development, and student engagement with businesses and organizations throughout the region.

I am also pleased to announce that the Cumberland County Area Economic Development Corporation has supported a grant submitted by the Shippensburg University Foundation. The additional $97,000 will fund equipment for the Morgan Makerspace, including interactive tables, state-of-the-art 3D printers, CNC machines, laser engravers, and other resources.

The project demonstrates what is possible when private philanthropy, state and federal partnerships, and the University work toward a shared purpose.

Strategic Planning

Work continues on the University's next strategic priorities. This planning is focused on the issues shaping our future, including enrollment, financial sustainability, our academic portfolio, workforce alignment, student success, and the areas in which Shippensburg can distinguish itself.

We are aligning this work with the Middle States accreditation process so that these efforts reinforce one another. We are currently seeking campus-wide feedback on the first phase: revising the University's mission statement. A reminder was sent today. I encourage you to review that communication and provide feedback during this and future phases as we share progress with the campus community and stakeholders.

Financial Sustainability

We continue to take deliberate steps to align recurring revenues and expenditures structurally to address a persistent $3.5M structural deficit.

These actions include the 10-10-10 budget-management approach, a 90-day position pause, sunsetting positions where appropriate, reductions in operating budgets and contracts, and continued management restructuring.

As part of this work, six management positions have been affected through financial furloughs, and four additional positions are not being refilled. Together, these actions represent approximately $1 million in annual savings.

We are also closely monitoring institutional aid while implementing the PASSHE Promise, managing the academic portfolio through program moratoria where appropriate, using temporary faculty strategically, consolidating selected departments through appropriate governance processes, and continuing to reduce our physical footprint.

Our balance sheet remains an important strength. Shippensburg has no Education and General debt, and the University is reducing its auxiliary debt obligations through a $16 million defeasance investment expected to generate more than $500,000 in first-year savings.

We continue to be committed to reducing the structural deficit within our annual budget and advancing our efforts to address the changing demographics that surround higher education. As such, through these efforts, we will reduce the $3.5M structural deficit to approximately a little over $600,000.

Personnel: ROTC

We welcome Lieutenant Colonel Jake Phillips as our new Professor of Military Science. He joins us from Dickinson College, where he previously served in the same role, and will continue through the next year until a new Professor of Military Science is appointed in summer 2027.

Our Raider Battalion has also expanded its mission in the last year and now serves students from Dickinson College, Franklin & Marshall College, Gettysburg College, Messiah University, Millersville University, Penn State Harrisburg, Penn State Mont Alto, and Shippensburg University, which is the Host Institution for our many partner institutions.

Personnel: Dean Searches

I want to thank John Kooti for his 16 years of service to Shippensburg University. Dean Kooti has announced his intent to retire effective January 2027.

We will conduct national searches for the next deans of the John L. Grove College of Business and the College of Education and Human Services.

Middle States

Our Middle States accreditation work also continues. The evaluation team chair will be on campus in October, followed by the full evaluation team visit in the spring. This remains an institutional priority, and the University is preparing carefully for the review.

SU Foundation and Philanthropy

I also want to recognize an exceptional year for the Shippensburg University Foundation.

During fiscal year 2025-2026, donors contributed $8.85 million in support of Shippensburg University, exceeding the Foundation's fundraising goal by more than $1.8 million. This was the fifth-highest fundraising year in the Foundation's history and included a record $3.16 million Annual Fund.

Those resources are already supporting our students and the University. The Foundation distributed an all-time high of $6.71 million for scholarships, academics, athletics, research, equipment, professional development, and other University priorities. More than $2.46 million directly supported students through scholarships and loans.

The Foundation also added $3.33 million to its endowment, strengthening its ability to support Shippensburg students well into the future.

The transformation of Kriner Hall into the Entrepreneurship Hub is one of the most visible examples of this partnership, and we are pleased to celebrate it today.

These results represent much more than fundraising. They reflect the confidence alumni, donors, and friends place in Shippensburg University and our students. I am grateful to the Foundation staff, its Board, and especially our donors for the impact they continue to make in the lives of our students.

Conclusion

These updates reflect a common objective: positioning Shippensburg University to remain academically strong, financially sustainable, responsive to our students, and connected to the needs of the Commonwealth and the communities we serve.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my remarks, and if the Chairman approves, I'll move to my one action item.

Action Item

The Order of Succession is reviewed annually to ensure continuity of executive leadership in the event the President is temporarily unavailable or otherwise unable to perform the duties of the office.

The proposed Order of Succession for your approval remains unchanged and is as follows:

- Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Vice President for Administration and Finance
- Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

No revisions to the current Order of Succession are being recommended at this time and I would ask for a motion for approval of the Order of Succession.

ACTION: COT 2026-27 Order of Succession –President Patterson provided the Proposed Order of Succession to the Council of Trustees in an order of Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Administration and Finance then Vice President of Student Affairs.

Order of Succession was motioned for approval by Chair George McElwee and Seconded by Trustee Harbach. The motion passed unanimously.

Thank you and that concludes my time.

Division of Academic Affairs –Interim Provost Nicole Hill provided the following remarks:

Thank you for the opportunity to make remarks at the Public Forum for the Council of Trustees. I want to ground us in the framework that President Patterson shared with us at the University General Meeting one month ago, because I think it's powerful as we think about our collective success. We are one university, one mission, one ship, and this commitment focuses us on our shared mission and the many ways in which we come together to support our students and our community and our campus. As we look forward to this year, we have four strategic priorities driving our academic mission. The first two, President Patterson highlighted as well. I just want to emphasize with our Middle States accreditation process, it's such an invitation for us as a university to engage in thoughtful self-reflection and identify areas of ongoing improvement, and to celebrate things that are going well.

So as we're in the throes of work connected to the Middle States, accreditation process, I think there's some real positive benefits and outcomes from that process for us. Our university strategic plan, President Patterson mentioned as well, that, invitation for campus-wide feedback is publicly available on our website, so, please check that out, and we'll have a landing page there that'll provide updates as we move through the process. Third strategic priority is focused on new educational pathways. We successfully launched our online pathways in Psychology, Marketing, and Business Management, and are committed to actively learning from our process as we continually improve. We will stand steadfast in our commitment to the Liberal Arts Foundation that gives our graduates the capacity to think critically, communicate effectively, adapt to change, and understand complexity. We will continue to ask ourselves how our general education curriculum needs to continue to evolve. We'll invest in our graduate programs and actively pursue partnerships and innovations that solidify their sustainability.

We will also expand access to career-relevant education for working adults by providing flexible, affordable, non-credit education. We have to have this more expansive thinking as we think about our academic portfolio. Our educational innovation includes an ongoing focus on economic mobility and career-anchored education. Work-based learning, micro-internships, internships, credit for prior learning, employer partnerships, and career mapping are critical parts of our educational mission. They prepare our graduates to be able to not only know the content and discipline-specific knowledge that they need but also have the skills to be successful in the world of work. Fourth, student success and closing retention gaps with particular attention to first-generation and Pell-eligible students. We know that talent is distributed widely, opportunity is not. Our responsibility as an institution is to ensure that a student's background does not determine whether they can successfully navigate our institution.

I want to recognize Jen Haughie, Michelle Foreman, Margaret Light, and the team who worked diligently and aggressively on our Title III grant submission last spring. We've been awarded a nearly $3 million 5-year… long federal Title III grant, with $685,000 supporting implementation in the first year. The initiative will strengthen support for first-generation Pell recipient and Pell-eligible students through expanded academic and student success supports. textbook and access card assistance, work-based learning, and career readiness opportunities. So, congratulations, this is really a game changer for the university. I just want to highlight my gratitude to the faculty and staff. Any of these strategic priorities are moving us forward because of their dedication and hard work, and it really does take our collective commitment and an openness to growth and innovation.

I also want to provide congratulations to the three-faculty last year that were promoting to Associate Professor. That's Chris Carlton, Miranda Fisher, and Shannon Raines. And then to the six faculty who were

promoted to full professor, Sean Cornell, Tom Krishunas, Allison Fedrow, June Pham, and Jordan Windholz. And I would like to end with a commitment to, the future of the university that we're building together, one partnership, and to echo President Patterson, one mission and one university. Thank you.

Division of Administration and Finance – Vice President Jolinda Wilson

Vice President Jolinda Wilson presented the following items for action:

ACTION: 2026 -27 Budget - The 2026-27 Budget was motioned for approval by Finance Committee Chair Trustee Grell. The motion was seconded by Trustee Steck. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION: 2027-28 Housing Cancellation Fees – The 2027-28 Housing Cancellation Fees was motioned for approval by Trustee Steck and Seconded by Trustee Grell. The motion passed unanimously.

Division of Enrollment Management and Marketing – Vice President Megan Luft provided the following remarks:

Good morning, Chairman and members of Council of Trustees. Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on enrollment management and marketing in the Lors Performing Arts Center. As we look at Fall 2026, I want to emphasize three things. Where we are, where we are growing, and where we are being intentional about the future. Our enrollment work continues to be focused on both recruitment as well as the long-term health of the university. The Fall 2026 data provide important indicators of the composition of our incoming class, our transfer population, the decline in graduate enrollment, and the changing demographics of our students.

Our five-year trends also help us understand not simply where our enrollment is today, but where we need to continue to begin building momentum. One area that I am particularly encouraged by is the continuing development of new markets as well as delivery models. Our fully online undergraduate efforts are moving forward, and we are also beginning to market degree completion opportunities designed specifically for adult learners. These initiatives allow Shippensburg to reach students who may not have considered a traditional residential experience and create additional pathways to degree completion and graduation. At the same time, we recognize that the environment in which students make enrollment decisions is becoming more competitive.

We are reviewing and updating our approach in admissions, financial aid, orientation. Our work no longer ends on May 1st but rather continues to be supportive and preventing MELT during the summer, and that is an indicator of how we work through the funnel for our students. Financial aid continues to be a significant concern, and we monitor that closely. We are navigating continued issues, with PHEAA, with delays from the PA state grants, as well as other funding disbursements, as we continue to support our students in these efforts.

Significant changes to the federal financial aid and borrowing began this year, but we are hopeful for the impacts of the changes and encourage that the FAFSA is already open this year, the earliest it's been in the past couple years, and hopefully navigating these changes with the OB3 bill, and working more closely with our families and across the campus to ensure our students are being successful. From a marketing perspective, our goal is not simply to generate applications, but it is to make sure that our message reaches the right students in the right markets at the right time, and that the value of Shippensburg education is clear.

That same philosophy extends to the Lors Performing Arts Center. We are excited to welcome Kelly Kozlowski as our new director. She joined us in June, and she and the team are already looking ways to strengthen the Center's financial and operational performance. The 25-26 season did experience some significant revenue pressures, from cancellation, rising production and touring costs, and softer ticket demand for some performances. While we are encouraged by Kelly's new, refreshed ideas, we are excited about hoping to make sure that we are being a positive operating margin, and that we are going forward, we are more careful looking at programming, rental partnerships, marketing, and sponsorship opportunities to continue to grow Lore's already 21 years of experience here on Shippensburg. Ultimately, the work of enrollment management, marketing, and lawyers is connected to one larger objective, the long-term strength and sustainability of Shippensburg University. We're focused on attracting students, supporting them through the enrollment process, and expanding the way students can access Shippensburg education, communicating our value clearly, and being responsible stewards of the university's resources. There is a great deal of work ahead, but I am proud of the work that our teams are doing, and the momentum that we continue to build. Thank you, Chairman.

Division of Student Affairs – Vice President Lorie Sheetz provided the following remarks:

Earlier today, I shared information on housing occupancy data, where at freeze, we were at 99.4% planned occupancy. I highlighted, information on our first year of our full non-traditional student housing in Mowery, and that was a great initiative that we took on this past year. Additionally, information was shared, including seeing trends with financial aid and finances affecting students and their housing choices. And in May, we'll be coming back to the Trustees with, not increasing our housing rates, but keeping them stable instead. Information was also shared on how we are interweaving the health and wellness promotion themes into the entire campus, so thank you to all the faculty, the staff, the students that are including it into everything. We included it in our SGA meeting this past week. Currently, our current theme is on sleep, and I encourage all students to make sure that they're getting the solid sleep that they need so that it's not an academic barrier, as your handout would state. The next theme is stress. That will be coming up right around the midterm timeframe. Information was also shared about the Almond Gambling app that we're going to be kicking off here at SHIP on October 6th.

APSCUF Report – Professor Aaron Dobbs provided the following remarks:

Happy Friday, September 25th. For those of us who pay attention to social media, we, you know, we get lots of thumbs up for that over there. But nice to see you guys today, thank you for coming, and thank you for inviting APSCOF again to give some remarks. So I'm looking forward to seeing you again in about an hour at the Kriner Entrepreneurship Hub ribbon cutting. Everyone's going. Okay, no pressure. Alright, so entrepreneurship is about curiosity, exploration, and new ways to do things. Your Shippensburg faculty continue to use this approach to do several things, to improve the student experience, and learning, to bring knowledge, old and new, to a new generation of students in new ways that connect with them and then explore new ways to keep the ship afloat. Right, I mean, that's kind of a big priority around here. So, speaking of keeping the ship afloat, what are you doing Monday? So, on behalf of APSCUF and our 20-plus higher education union partners, I would like to encourage everyone here Especially our trustees, our chancellor, our president, anyone who can make it. I encourage you to join us in Harrisburg at noon for an Affordable College Now rally. To support the following ideas. A 15% increase to state appropriations for all higher education from PASSHE, Community Colleges, state-related, and all different higher education. appropriation bodies across the state from the legislature, approval and implementation of the Pennsylvania Promise, which is a last dollar program to close, funding gaps experienced by many students, and then, just to highlight that Pennsylvania students, graduate with the third highest student debt load out of all 50 states, which is not a competition. We want to be that close to the top. In. Just to end on a preposition there. But I hope to see you in Harrisburg if you can make it, and… But please help us, either, even if you can't make it, please, when you speak to the legislators, please support improved higher education funding initiatives, both

to keep the ship afloat and to make the debt load on our students, which is the priority, lower. I would love… I would love to be able to have students graduate with no student debt, but that's… that's hard to do in the current environment. Thank you.

AFSME Report – Mr. Steve Bucher provided the following remarks:

Thank you for the opportunity to, speak and attend this meeting. I'd like to highlight, the hard work, the committed, diligent work of our ASCME staff. They work year-round to make SHIP happen. And, I liken our staff to… I'm a football fan, so I liken our staff to the offensive line. The offensive line doesn't get a lot of accolades. That always goes to the quarterback, or the running back, or wide receivers, whatever, but the… without the offensive line. The offense doesn't go anywhere. So, I, I, thank our staff and, and know how committed they are and how hard they're working. So, just wanted to share that with you all. Thank you.

SCUPA Report – Kyle Miller provided the following remarks:

I had a very witty, happy Dolly Parton Day pun ready. Go ahead, say it anyway. Nope. Aaron stole it. But also, happy first meeting of the year. It has been an eventful start to the academic year, as we welcomed the Class of 2030, but also focused on some difficult challenges and choices related to the sustainability of SHIP. The strength of our workforce remains a consistent concern for SCUPA, as our workers find themselves on the front lines of increasingly complex student issues that are presenting new challenges every day. A reminder of the need to balance institutional fiscal sustainability with maintaining a strong workforce that can carry us forward. As Erin mentioned, on Monday, 21 higher education unions from across the Commonwealth will be gathering in Harrisburg for a rally on affordable college housing and really focusing on two key priorities that Aaron talked about earlier, a 15% increase in public higher education and pulling us from the bottom of public funding in the, country. As well as the last dollar grant program through PHEAA, the PA Promise, that also, in its current form, would have critical support structures built in for housing and food security. Two key elements, to the success of our students and students across the state. And then the last thing I will mention is Homecoming 2026 is coming up in a few weeks. Our members will be powering a whole bunch of events all weekend long, Wednesday through Sunday, and we hope to see you at some of them. Have a great weekend.

Alumni Affairs Report – Lori Smith provided the following remarks on behalf of the Alumni Association:

Good morning. The Alumni Association president for this board year is Taylor Mason, Class of 2017-2018 Masters. Taylor's an archivist with the House of Representatives in Harrisburg. She has an aggressive agenda for this board year that includes focusing on alumni engagement and philanthropy. The Alumni Board of Directors, which includes 6 newly elected directors and 1 returning director, just met last weekend for their first board meeting of the year. As part of their board of directors meeting, they hosted alumni, families, and students for the annual Alumni Legacy Pinning that's held during Family Day here at SHIP. At the pinning last weekend, 50 alumni pinned 38 primarily first-year students, with 165 in attendance for the pinning program. It's definitely a favorite event for many of our Alumni board of directors. Also last weekend Alumni Relations hosted the annual Alumni Association Golf Tournament at Iron Valley Golf Club in Lebanon. While expenses are not finalized, we were able to raise approximately $7,000 for the Alumni Board Legacy Scholarship and the Alumni Association. Next up, Alumni Relations and the Alumni Board are now gearing up to host alumni and friends at Homecoming 2026 on October 16th and 17th. I do encourage everyone to come out to the alumni tents behind Seth Grove Stadium on Saturday to participate. Thank you.

Student Government Association Report: Student Government Association, Student Government Vice President of Finance Ryan Mills provided the following written remarks:

Alright, hi everybody, my name is Ryan Mills, I am the SGA Vice President of Finance. Unfortunately, President Winarski was unable to be here, so I'm going to be here talking to you guys today. So just to start

off, SGA recently hosted their Fall 2026 elections, which concluded on 9-24, An email was actually just sent out at 11 with the election results to the student body. Following that, SGA is excited to participate in the Homecoming Parade on October 17th, where they will be sponsoring 3 SGA members on the homecoming court. Myself, Chase Garrison, who is the SGA Vice President of Student Groups, and President Emily Wojnarski as well. As a reminder, all groups who would like to participate in the parade or tailgate must register to do so in advance and adhere to all guidelines set by the Alumni Relations Office. SGA will also be holding their Fall President's Hour on November 10th, 2026. in Orndorf theater from 7 to 8 p.m. We are hopeful that this year's event will have a higher turnout as we plan to increase our marketing on this year's event. Thanks.

New Business:

Trustee Chair McElwee informed the Council of the next meeting scheduled for November 13th, 2026.
He also provided the following comments:

Before I adjourn, I want to thank everyone on behalf of the Council of Trustees, all the work that has been done at every corner of the university, and we're very appreciative of that. I also want to thank the Chancellor for being here today for the Entrepreneurship Hub ribbon cutting, but also for you to be here and listen to what we're doing. So, I want to thank you for being here.

Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn by Trustee Hathaway and seconded by Trustee Mohl. The motion passed unanimously.
The meeting adjourned at 11:43 AM.
Submitted by: Drew Alosi
Reviewed: George McElwee, Chair, Council of Trustees

George McElwee, Chair, Council of Trustees

Ashley Loper, Secretary, Council of Trustees