

**MINUTES**  
**POLK STATE COLLEGE**  
**District Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Monday, May 19, 2025 – 4:00 p.m.**  
**Polk State Lakeland Campus, LTB 1100**

Dr. Angela M. Garcia Falconetti called May 19, 2025, District Board of Trustees meeting to order at approximately 4:05 p.m.

**Members Present:** Ms. Ashley Bell Barnett, Mr. Greg Littleton, Ms. Teresa Martinez, Ms. Cindy Hartley Ross, and Mr. Ashley Troutman

**Members Absent:** Ms. Ann Barnhart

**Special Recognition: Dr. Angela Garcia Falconetti**

- a. President Garcia Falconetti introduced Dr. Steve Warner, Vice President for Resource Development & Executive Director, Polk State College Foundation to introduce today's special recognition. Dr. Warner introduced Mr. Chip Tucker, President, Tucker Paving, who established a \$55,000 endowment for his employees' children to attend Polk State College, the Tucker Paving Employee Scholarship. Mr. Tucker briefly addressed the Board to share that the first scholarship will be awarded this fall with an applicant whose father and grandfather both work for Tucker Paving.

**Public Comment:**

Chair Cindy Ross asked Ms. Christine Lee if there were any public comments. Professor Aaron Morgan requested to address the board about faculty concerns.

General concerns were as follows:

- A perceived lack of faculty involvement with the Faculty Compensation Study conducted by Evergreen Solutions, LLC.
- A perceived violation of Rule 2.24 pertaining to shared governance.
- Administration did not allow the faculty to select all representatives for the Resource Team. The administration selected five of the seven members, and the faculty and the Faculty Senate were not afforded involvement although this was offered on multiple occasions.
- Without faculty involvement, administration created the request for proposals, viewed incoming proposals, selected and hired a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, and then established the study parameters and timeline.
- Evergreen Solutions, LLC presented a detailed presentation of faculty compensation study methodology without proper notification in the agenda.
- Evergreen Solutions, LLC is not meeting expectations of deadlines. During the presentation, Evergreen provided a recommendations timeline for December 2024, but this was not accomplished.
- Faculty could not attend the Evergreen survey results meeting but only submit questions via text.

- Survey results reflect dissatisfaction: 67% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with pay, 72% dissatisfied with administration's adherence to faculty step system.
- 74% of faculty state that overload is a critical need for financial stability.
- Questions regarding the study were raised during March, April, and May Faculty Senate meetings but were never answered.

Professor Morgan asked Trustee Bell Barnett if she wanted his notes and Trustee Bell Barnett responded in the affirmative.

**Agenda:**

Ms. Bell Barnett moved, seconded by Mr. Troutman, to approve the agenda for May 19, 2025. All members voted affirmatively.

**Consent Agenda Items: Ms. Tamara Sakagawa and Ms. Cindy Baker**

- Polk State College Personnel Actions Report for April 2025** – Approved on consent agenda. Board action is required.
- Polk State College Salary Schedule Changes for May 2025** – Ms. Tamara Sakagawa – Approved on consent agenda. Board action is required.
- Tangible Personal Property Deletions for May 2025** – Ms. Cindy Baker – Approved on consent agenda. Board action is required.

Ms. Bell Barnett moved, seconded by Mr. Troutman, to approve the consent agenda items for April and May 2025. All members voted affirmatively.

Those items included under the Consent section are self-explanatory and are not expected to require discussion before action. Items will be enacted by one motion. If discussion is desired by any Board member on any item, the item should be identified and removed from the Consent agenda for separate action.

**Approval of Board Minutes**

**a. April 28, 2025, Regular Board Minutes**

Ms. Martinez moved, seconded by Mr. Littleton, to approve the April 28, 2025, Regular Board minutes. All members voted affirmatively.

**President's Report – Dr. Angela Garcia Falconetti**

- President Garcia Falconetti highlighted select items from the Positively Polk State Report.
- President Garcia Falconetti provided a copy of the current consulting and legal contracts for the Board's information and as requested by two Trustees.
- Enrollment Report
  - To provide context to the enrollment report, a news article on Pasco-Hernando State College that noted Polk State was at -13.6% FTE Enrollment per the Florida College System's Enrollment Estimating Conference for fundable FTE.

- President Garcia Falconetti's stated that her report is to address the Estimating Conference Report, the impact of the transition from the legacy Genesis Enterprise Resource Program (ERP) system to Banner SaaS, and address the differences between the FCS fundable FTE reporting process and the College's weekly internal enrollment report.
- The Florida College System's Enrollment Estimating Conference (EEC) reports are designed to predict and calculate state future fundable FTE for the 28 colleges. Multiple opportunities exist to refine the reporting data until the final deadline of June 13, 2025.
- ERP transitions are multi-faceted – Polk State is one of the early adopters in the state of Banner SaaS and it's positioning the College for enhanced data integrations for years to come.
- Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 were the first time the College entered data and pulled state reports solely from the Banner system.
- The fundable FTE reports are part of a predictive model and are applied to new legislative funding and for developing the Governor's Budget. The reports cover the fiscal year – Summer 2024, Fall 2024, Spring 2025 – and the unit of measure is funded FTE which is based on student semester hours and clock hours.
- The College's internal report is for internal enrollment management and is used for budgetary planning and enrollment tracking. The report covers the academic year – Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Summer 2025 – and is based on headcount.
- The data referenced at the beginning of the presentation stemmed from the March 7, 2025, FTE submission (FTE2 and 3) which included Fall 2024 and beginning of Spring 2025 term data.
- The May 9, 2025, submission of FTE3 which includes Summer 2024, Fall 2024, and Spring 2025 (end of term data), the FCS showed an estimate of being on track for an enrollment decrease from last year's fundable FTE of -6.55% when comparing 2023-24 to 2024-25 at that time.
- June 13, 2025: 2024-25 final report due. Data will continue to be validated to ensure a complete submittal by June 13, 2025.
- Early July 2025: 2024-25 data results to be made available to Polk State and all FCS institutions.
- President Garcia Falconetti commended and expressed gratitude to the employees who are diligently working to verify student enrollment data to ensure that it is in the appropriate categories to be submitted to the state. She recognized that human error exists and that the College is working together to complete this.

Upon the conclusion of the President's Report, Trustee Bell Barnett requested permission from Chair Ross to ask questions. Trustee Bell Barnett distributed a letter to the Board members, Attorney Wilson, and President Garcia Falconetti. She requested Ms. Christine Lee to share the letter with Vice Chair Barnhart, who was absent from today's meeting. Trustee Bell Barnett read her letter to the group:

“I am invested in Polk State College along with all of you, my fellow board members. I have served for seven years because I love this College. I love our students, our faculty and staff, and the mission to bring access and affordable education to our community. Before we begin this civil discourse, let it be known that I am deeply concerned about our college’s success and how we are serving our community.

I have been deeply alarmed ever since a colleague at our sister institution Pasco Hernando State College called me on Thursday, May 1<sup>st</sup>. This person shared that Pasco Hernando State College lost their president on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025, because of the accusation that he concealed FTE data showing a decline of -0.6%. What was alarming to me was that the same data showed Polk State College had a decline of -13.6% FTE, the worst among the 28 State Colleges.

On Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, Dr. Falconetti sent me a text asking me to call her immediately because she had information to share that was, in her words, “critical.” At that point I was told of the impending -13.6% drop in enrollment. Dr. Falconetti advised that she was putting a taskforce together to work diligently on this issue to determine if this data was accurate.

On Tuesday, May 6<sup>th</sup> I called Dr. Falconetti for an update on the FTE data situation and the progress of the task force. At that time she did not have an update. I asked her in that conversation if she would call me daily to keep me up-to-date on the efforts of the FTE taskforce.

On Wednesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, at 6:02 pm, Dr. Falconetti sent out a DBOT text, including Attorney Don Wilson, stating that the -13.6% estimate for decline in FTE enrollment was previously discussed with only Chair Ross and Vice Chair Barnhart, two months earlier “when it was raised to her attention on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025.”

On Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, I sent an Email to Dr. Falconetti and Don Wilson to request the latest update on the 2024-2025 FTE Enrollment and inquired about the -13.6% year over year decrease. If this data is accurate our FTE enrollment would rank PSC 28<sup>th</sup> out of 28 state colleges since 2018-2019, with a decline of -21.5% during that time frame.

On Thursday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Falconetti sent an email indicating that The Florida State College System informed her that as of May 8<sup>th</sup>, the 2025 submission to the completed end-of-term Spring 2025 data – the fundable FTE report – now reflected a decrease of -6.55% as opposed to the -13.6% reflected in the March 7<sup>th</sup> data report. However this email did not reference “whom from the state she spoke with nor did it include any raw data.” Still, year-over-year, we remain 28<sup>th</sup> out of 28 in the Florida State College System.

This past year: 23 schools grew 3% or more, only PSC was down over 1%.

Whether we saw a decline of -13.6% or -6.6%, Polk State ranks amount the bottom of 15% of state colleges, and perhaps even the lowest, since 2018-2019. The inaccuracies are troubling, but the performance is most alarming.

On Friday, May 16<sup>th</sup> Dr. Falconetti sent an overview of the President's report, however, it does not include any data estimates. Dr. Falconetti met with Chair Ross and determined that the final presentation and support documents would be given at Monday, May 19<sup>th</sup>'s DBOT board meeting for review. It would have been helpful if the presentation would have been distributed before the board meeting for individual preparation.

Lastly, this is a collective board. Our chair and vice chair are elected by us to preside over meetings, not to give direction or to withhold data (or estimates, as Dr. Falconetti called it) from the full board. It is also not in protocol to share information with a subset of the board, and withhold it from the rest, as was done on March 7<sup>th</sup>.

I have had long-term issues with the way the college is being run and the extraordinary turnover at every level. I have first-hand accounts of dismal moral and questionable leadership. However, this objective data and clear mismanagement along with concealing this issue from the board cannot stand. I don't like what the data shows, and I don't like being surprised. To learn about this from community colleagues and not our President, while the information was known by others on the board months in advance, is a direct act of insubordination."

Trustee Bell Barnett then directed the group to a list of questions she would like President Garcia Falconetti and the entire Board to consider.

Attorney Wilson stated that open government and government in the sunshine certainly creates no prohibition from the President speaking to the Chair of any other Board member and is not a violation of any kind. He also stated that he didn't believe it is reasonable or effective in the context and with no prior notice to try to ask the President to address such a long list of questions. He was sure that if given time, an appropriate response could be provided.

Trustee Littleton commented that all Board members care about these issues, and it is the right of any Trustee to raise questions. He added that it is important to give time to respond to the volume of questions, and to gather all the facts.

Immediate Past Chair Martinez echoed Trustee Littleton's comments and found today's events very damaging to the College.

Trustee Troutman appreciated Trustee Bell Barnett's passion. He agreed with Trustee Littleton's recommendation to give time to respond to the questions and to do so with urgency.

Chair Ross emphasized her own passion for the College and noted that it is the Board's job to do their due diligence.

Trustee Bell Barnett requested receiving clear data and answers to the questions in writing or via a special meeting to occur prior to the June 30, 2025, DBOT meeting.

President Garcia Falconetti recommended that a special meeting should not occur until after June 13 and that she would request the Chancellor to be in attendance to answer any questions the Board may have.

Trustee Bell Barnett recommended delaying the President's annual evaluation for one more month due to the data that has been received and the questions that have not been answered yet. Therefore, she can be evaluated appropriately.

Chair Ross stated "we have already established that and we will reporting that momentarily here I believe."

**Attorney's Report:**

None.

**Business Services Action Items:**

None.

**Business Services Informational Items: Ms. Cindy Baker and Mr. Reggie Webb**

- a. **Investment Interest Comparisons through April 2025** – Ms. Baker presented and reviewed the College's Investment Interest Comparisons through April 2025 for the Board's information. No Board action required.
- b. **Financial Statements for April 2025** – Ms. Baker presented and reviewed the Financial Statements for April 2025 for the Board's information. No Board action required.
- c. **Capital Project Status Report for May 2025** – Mr. Webb presented and reviewed the Capital Project Status Report for May 2025 for the Board's information. No Board action required.

**Items Removed from the Consent Agenda:**

None.

**Academic & Student Services Action Items:**

None.

**Academic and Student Services Informational Items:**

None.

**Collegiate High School Report:**

**a. Polk State Chain of Lakes Collegiate High School 2025 Recruitment and Enrollment Plan – Ms. Patrice Byrant-Thigpen**

Ms. Patrice Bryant-Thigpen presented and reviewed the Polk State Chain of Lakes Collegiate High School 2025 Recruitment and Enrollment Plan for the Board's information. No Board action required.

**First Reading Board Rules (No action required):**

None.

**Second Reading Board Rules (Final Approval):**

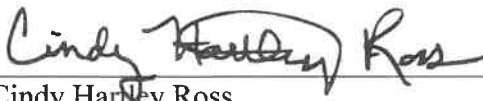
None.


**Board Discussion:**

Chair Ross expressed admiration for all employees who are putting in so much extra time with The next meeting will take place on Monday, June 30, 2025, at the Polk State Winter Haven Campus in LTB 1100. There will be a 3:00 p.m. Budget Workshop, immediately followed by the Regular Board Meeting at 4:00 p.m.

**Adjournment:**

Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:02 p.m.

 6/23/2025  
Ms. Cindy Harley Ross Date  
DBOT Chair

 6/23/2025  
Dr. Angela M. Garcia Falconetti Date  
President