VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Meeting Number 344
Tuesday, November 10, 2026
Location: ADM Boardroom

The Virginia Highlands Community College Board convened at 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 10, 2026. Lunch was at noon, and the business portion of the meeting immediately followed at 1:17 p.m. in the ADM Boardroom.

Members Present

Dr. Doug Arnold, Washington County
Charlie Fugate, Washington County
Pamela Hill, Smyth County
Kalen Hunter, City of Bristol
Beth Rhinehart, City of Bristol

Members Absent

Gwen Beattie, Smyth County
Neal Osborne, City of Bristol
Dan Smith, Washington County
Tonya Triplett, Washington County

Staff Present

Dr. Adam Hutchison, President and Secretary to the Board
Jessie O'Quinn, Executive Assistant to the President
Christine Fields, Vice President of Finance and Administration
Dr. Susan Lowe, Vice President of Institutional Advancement
Dr. Derek Whisman, Vice President of Instruction and Student Services

Call to Order

Dr. Doug Arnold, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Approval of Revised Agenda

A revised agenda was proposed with two new items being added, which requires Board approval. Board Member Kalen Hunter made the motion to approve revised agenda. Board Member Beth Rhinehart seconded, and the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Board Member Pam Hill made the motion to approve the minutes for August 11, 2026 Minutes No. 343. Board Member Kalen Hunter seconded, and the motion carried.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

College Updates

Instruction and Student Services

Vice President Dr. Derek Whisman presented to the Board an enrollment update. Fall enrollment data shows FTE is up by 1%, not counting Dual Enrollment (DE) students. DE numbers show a decrease of 5% in FTE compared to last year.

Institutional Advancement and Educational Foundation

Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Dr. Susan Lowe, shared with the Board some highlights from her department. The 2026 Golf Tournament raised more than $40,000. New SWAG has been added to Wolf Grounds Coffee Shop recently. A Giving Tuesday campaign is being organized, with a goal of raising $3,500 for the Phil Station and emergency funds. The newly established River's Fund to support Nursing students has raised almost $5,000. VHCC held its first Day of Service at the 4-H Center. Dr. Lowe also mentioned a few upcoming events as listed in the attachment.

Finance and Administrative Services

Christine Fields, Vice President of Finance and Administration, asked the Board to approve the transfer of 2025-2026 Bookstore Income and transfer of Parking Fee Revenue. The first transfer would take $43,748 from the Bookstore Commissions and move $20,000 into the President's Discretionary Fund and move $23,748 into the Campus Improvements – Clearing Fund. She also requested that the Parking Fee revenue of $32,749 be transferred into the Parking Auxiliary Capital Outlay Fund. Board Member Beth Rhinehart made the motion to approve the two transfers. Board Member Pam Hill seconded the motion, and it carried with all in favor.

Ms. Fields continued by asking for approval of the 2026-2027 Vending Commission and Student Activity Fee Budget. Board Member Beth Rhinehart made the motion to approve the budget. Board Member Charlie Fugate seconded, and the motion carried with all in favor.

Ms. Fields also asked for approval of the 2027-2028 Localities Appropriation Fund Budget Request. The total operating budget request is $160,750. The total request that VHCC is asking from all three localities is $236,750. Board Member Charlie Fugate made the motion

to approve the budget request. Board Member Pam Hill seconded, and the motion carried with all in favor.

Lastly, Ms. Fields gave a few brief updates of current campus projects.

President's Office

Dr. Hutchison began his address to the Board by discussing VCCS legislative priorities and updates. The three VCCS funding requests to the General Assembly are:

- $33 million for DE
- $10 million for Career and Technical education
- $4 million for FastForward

The Gatton Building (formerly LRC) renovation project is currently awaiting approval at the Governor's office with anticipation that it will be included in the December budget.

Dr. Hutchison also presented the Workforce Development report. Workforce Development is expanding partnerships, including the regional police academy and customer service training with Food City and the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). The VHCC FastForward Wage Summary report provided by the VCCS indicates high completion rates and significant wage increases for students.

Closed Session

Board Chair Doug Arnold began by asking the Board to enter into closed session. Board Member Beth Rhinehart made a motion to enter into closed session for the purpose of discussing a personnel issue, in accordance with the personnel exemption at Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia. Board Member Charlie Fugate seconded, and the motion carried with all in favor.

After reconvening to open session, Dr. Arnold took a roll call vote certifying that to the best of each member's knowledge (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act were discussed, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered in the meeting by the public body.

Dr. Doug Arnold, AYE
Gwen Beattie, absent
Charlie Fugate, AYE
Pam Hill, AYE
Kalen Hunter, AYE
Neal Osborne, absent
Beth Rhinehart, AYE
Dan Smith, absent
Tonya Triplett, absent

The public meeting continued with the remainder of the agenda.

Board Chair Address

Board Chair Doug Arnold mentioned that the local board chairs and vice chairs have been invited to a virtual meeting hosted by the VCCS to discuss the vision for the colleges and to strengthen the connections between the State Board and the local boards.

Adjournment

Board Member Pam Hill made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Member Beth Rhinehart seconded, and the Board unanimously approved adjournment at 2:54 p.m.

Submitted By: _____
Dr. Adam Hutchison, President

Approved By: _____ _____
Dr. Doug Arnold, Chair Date