

# MINUTES

July 2, 2025

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**1. CALL TO ORDER (DETERMINATION OF QUORUM)**

Chair Marc Silva called the special meeting of the District 13 Board of Trustees to order at 5:13 p.m. on Wednesday, July 2, 2025, in the Heritage Room 100 in the Administration Building of Lower Columbia College. The LCC Board of Trustees meeting was also offered virtually via Zoom. When the meeting was called to order, the following individuals were present; there was a quorum.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES:** Marc Silva, Chair  
Bogyeong Kim, Vice Chair  
Liz Cattin  
Alice Dietz

**COLLEGE PRESIDENT:** Matt Seimears

**2. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS** None

Others in Attendance: Nolan Wheeler, Kristen Fennel, Kendra Sprague, Dan Ruiz, Shelley Williams, Tracy Stanley, Tracy Powell, and Laura Sampson (virtual).

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** By Alice Dietz, seconded by Bogyeong Kim,  
That the agenda be approved as presented.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously**

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Alex Brehm, Communications Studies Faculty - LCC, spoke on behalf of self and was in favor of a comprehensive Presidential evaluation.

Seamus Mahoney, a recent LCC graduate, expressed dissatisfaction over a recent staff termination and believes students should have more input in those decisions.

Julia Mitchell, Tutoring Program Manager - LCC, spoke on behalf of self, was in favor of a thorough Presidential evaluation with constructive feedback.

Gina Challed, Director of Vocal Studies-LCC, requested a campus-wide Presidential evaluation to provide the opportunity for constructive feedback. (Written copy of public comment attached).

**5. EXECUTIVE SESSION** - At 5:28 p.m., Chair Marc Silva called for a 30-minute executive session to discuss the Presidential Evaluation Process. He stated an Executive Session may be called for any reason allowed under the Open Public Meetings Act RCW 42.30 and anticipated the session to end at 6:00pm.

At 6:00 p.m., Chair Marc Silva publicly announced that the executive session would be extended for an additional 30 minutes.

**6. ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION** - The public meeting was re-opened by Chair Marc Silva at 6:30 p.m.

**7. ACTION AS A RESULT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION** – Chair Marc Silva designated himself and Liz Cattin to work with Lower Columbia College’s Human Resources Department to conduct a cross-section survey of the College community for the Presidential Evaluation.

**8. ADJOURNMENT** – With no further business, Bogyeong Kim moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:32 p.m., Alice Dietz seconded the motion.

**MOTION:** By Bogyeong Kim, seconded by Alice Dietz,  
That the meeting be adjourned.

**MOTION CARRIED unanimously**



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C. Matt Seimears, Secretary to the Board

## 2-Jul-25

[illegible]

**July 2, 2025, Lower Columbia College Board of Trustees Meeting  
Public Comment by Gina Challed**

Hi everyone, I just want to say thank you for calling this special session and for giving me an opportunity to speak about this issue.

So I'll just jump right in...at the end of the quarter, during a department meeting, several colleagues and I were discussing concerns about how Richard Arquette's layoff had been handled. That conversation naturally led to a broader reflection on leadership and, specifically, the realization that we had not yet had the opportunity to formally evaluate the President, who has now been with LCC for over a year.

Richard's layoff seemed deeply out of sync with the school's mission, the students' needs, and the faculty and staff connection to Richard and what he's done at LCC. And as Alex said, prior to that, I had no real opinion of Matt Seimears. Since this firing and the conversations that have arisen as a result, I can't say the same.

I've been part of this community for 15 years and have had the privilege of working alongside our VPs, Deans, faculty, and staff. For many years, we operated as a well-coordinated team—collaborative, respectful, and interdependent, with a strong sense of autonomy and mutual trust guiding our work.

Recently, I've observed a shift in that dynamic. I've seen colleagues in leadership positions—people I've long respected—begin to feel disempowered and uncertain about their roles. That's deeply concerning to me, and it's why I feel compelled to speak up on their behalf.

From our department meeting, I was asked to take the lead in initiating this evaluation process, something I understood to be routine—as I had participated in similar evaluations with both previous presidents at LCC, so I just assumed this was standard procedure..

Anyway, I wanted to be sure I followed the appropriate channels, so I inquired about the proper chain of command and was directed to begin by contacting the Board Chair, Mr. Silva.

I did so, and was surprised to receive an email that felt a bit like a public reprimand. Mr. Silva copied the President in his response to me, and the President then copied all of my supervisors, which came across as unexpectedly harsh and to be honest, a bit intimidating, especially since my volition was to be respectful and procedural, and I was just following the direction I was given.

To be clear, my only goal was to ask whether or not, the Board would consider conducting a campus-wide evaluation of the President...there was no indication of malcontent from my email.

In my 15 years and have only ever come before the Board to share positive updates, so I'm not someone who raises concerns lightly—only when I believe there is a genuine reason to do so.

And ultimately, that is why I'm here today...to request a campus-wide evaluation, similar to the evaluations that all of our Deans and VP's undergo regularly. I think it's imperative—for all of us to have the opportunity to both give and receive constructive feedback through evaluations, so we can continue to grow and do our best work.

Thank you for your time and consideration.