

WASHBURN UNIVERSITY OF TOPEKA
BOARD OF REGENTS
MINUTES
September 10, 2026

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Sourk called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. in the Kansas Room of the Memorial Union on the Washburn University campus.

II. Roll Call

Present were:

Regent Buhler
Regent Dicus
Regent Dietrick
Regent Duncan
Regent Fisher
Regent Jeffrey **by Zoom*
Regent Nave
Regent Romero
Regent Sourk

III. Fiscal Year 2026 Revenue Neutral Rate Hearing

Chair Sourk described the process that would be followed and then declared the hearing open for public comment at 3:31 p.m. Chair Sourk asked if anyone present wished to speak at the open hearing. Secretary Fried announced no one had signed up to speak in advance. Chair Sourk opened the hearing at 3:32 p.m. One person, Jack Calcutt, a candidate for Shawnee County Commissioner, registered to speak at 3:33 p.m. and addressed the Board in regard to the rising costs of property taxes. Mr. Calcutt asked the Board to consider another source to raise revenue.

With no one else requesting to speak, the hearing closed at 3:35 p.m. It was moved by Regent Buhler and seconded by Regent Romero to approve the revenue neutral rate published. A roll call vote was taken, and the results were as follows:

Regent Buhler – Yes
Regent Dicus – Yes
Regent Dietrick – Yes
Regent Duncan – Yes
Regent Fisher – Yes
Regent Jeffrey – Yes

Regent Nave – Yes
Regent Romero – Yes
Regent Sourk – Yes

Motion passed.

IV. Fiscal Year 2026 Public Budget Hearing

Chair Sourk described the process that would be followed and then declared the hearing open for public comment at 3:36 p.m. Secretary Fried announced that no one had signed up to speak at the hearing.

Chair Sourk asked if anyone present wanted to make remarks. No one responded. Chair Sourk closed the public hearing at 3:37 p.m. Motion by Regent Nave and second by Regent Dicus to approve the Fiscal Year 2027 public budget. Motion passed.

The regular meeting resumed at 3:37 p.m.

V. Officer Reports

A. Chair's Report

Chair Sourk shared the Board held an all-day Retreat on August 12. Representatives from Core Education Services engaged with the Board and are working towards a strategic planning process. Chair Sourk noted the October Board meeting has been moved to October 15. Board members will attend a reception this afternoon to meet with faculty and staff to discuss the work they have accomplished on Shared Governance.

B. President's Report

President Mazachek reported the campus is off to a roaring start. Students have been on campus for four weeks. They are experiencing record attendance at events, and this is the first class that went to high school uninterrupted by COVID. Fall sports have kicked off and are going great. The President recently hosted new faculty at the Ross House.

President Mazachek shared the enrollment census is tomorrow and will be officially released the end of September. The new Kansas Board of Regents CEO, Dr. Jenn Bonds-Raacke, recently met with the President and toured campus including the Tech campuses. There were great conversations and shared vision.

President Mazachek introduced two important members of her cabinet. Steve Bryant-Collier, Acting Vice President for Strategic Enrollment Management. Steve has served Washburn for more than four years and brings nearly 20 years of higher education leadership and administrative experience to the position. Dr. Zach Frank,

Acting Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, joined Washburn in 2011 as director of the Physical Therapist Assistant program. He transitioned to the Master of Health Care Education program in 2018, became associate dean of the School of Applied Studies in 2019, served as acting dean in 2021 and appointed dean in 2022.

VI. New Business

A. Consent Agenda

- 1. Approval of Minutes of the August 11, 2026 Special Meeting**
- 2. Approval of the Minutes of the August 12, 2026 Board Retreat Meeting**
- 3. Liquidated Claims – May 2026**
- 4. Liquidated Claims – June 2026**
- 5. Liquidated Claims – July 2026**

Motion by Regent Romero, and second by Regent Dietrick to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed.

B. Action Items

1. Eminentes Universitatis

Dr. Zach Frank, Acting Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, noted Washburn University awards the Eminentes Universitatis designation to long-term employees who meet the following requirements: employed as a technical instructor, staff employee or equivalent for a period of ten years or more; and retire in good standing. The University will recognize two employees today.

Debra Mikulka began at Washburn on September 1, 2010, as a grant facilitator. She held several different grant related positions during her time with Washburn, including Project Director for the statewide KanTRAIN grant which was nationally recognized. She later served as the Director of Sponsored Projects, and was instrumental in facilitating the advancement of Washburn's sponsored projects. Ms. Mikulka retired on June 30, 2026.

Loren Ferre, Director of Athletics, shared Ron Wessel started with Washburn as the equipment manager for Athletics on January 4, 1980. For over 46 years he worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make sure the student athletes and coaches were ready to play. Ron had a positive impact on the student athlete experience. This was highlighted when a former student athlete provided a gift for the conference room within the Sneed Indoor Practice facility to be officially named the Ron Wessel Conference Room. Mr. Wessel retired on June 30, 2026.

Motion by Regent Nave, and second by Regent Dicus to bestow the status of Eminentes Universitatis to Debra Mikulka and Ron Wessel. Motion passed.

2. Strategic Planning Engagement – Core Education

President Mazachek introduced two Core Education items. The President has been working closely with Core Education Services PBC to develop the next strategic direction for Washburn. Core Education services will assist the president in leading a comprehensive strategic planning process from September 2026 through June 2027, with a final plan being presented to the Board for adoption in June 2027. The plan will establish the University's major priorities, initiatives, and investments for the next three years, as well as a three-year implementation roadmap.

President Mazachek shared the engagement will include an environmental scan and market analysis, university community engagement, and a strategic plan development. This engagement will extend from the anticipated start date in September 2026 through June 2027. The total professional fee for the engagement is \$330,000. Washburn will also reimburse travel expenses approved in advance.

Motion by Regent Romero, and second by Regent Dietrick to authorize the President to enter into an agreement with Core Education Services for the strategic planning project in an amount not to exceed \$330,000.

3. Core Education Advisory Services for Enrollment

President Mazachek reported Washburn University has experienced enrollment growth for the past four years and continues to focus on strengthening enrollment and improving the student experience. The tuition revenue accounts for approximately 60% of Washburn University's revenues, and enrollment drives nearly all revenue sources for Washburn Tech. Core Education Services will provide immediate operational and implementation support through the Fall 2027 enrollment cycle. They will also help develop a comprehensive three-to-five-year enrollment strategy. The engagement is organized around two workstreams that combine assessment, strategy, implementation support, and internal capacity-building.

The President shared Core's Senior Vice President of Business Model Transformation will serve as Acting Chief Revenue Officer and will report directly to the President. It will provide executive leadership and coordination for functions that affect enrollment growth and net tuition revenue, including recruitment strategies, financial aid assistance, pricing strategies, marketing investment and performances, and retention initiatives. The agreement will run from the effective date through August 2027. Assuming 12 months of monthly services, the base contract amount will not exceed \$405,000, plus reasonable and necessary travel expenses.

Motion by Regent Dietrick, and second Regent Romero to authorize the President to enter into an agreement with Core Education Services PBC for the enrollment

management transformation project with a base amount not to exceed \$405,000. Motion passed.

4. Renewal of Casualty Insurance

Vice President Luther Lee presented this item and thanked Mark Wilkerson and Sarah Van Ryn with IMA as well as Chris Herera, Washburn Safety Director, for their hard work. They worked with our current market provider on the proposed package. The coverage will run from October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027.

Vice President Lee introduced Sarah Van Ryn, Account Executive with IMA to provide a 2026-2027 insurance market update. She shared workers' compensation continues to be stable in 2026. The property market continues to indicate more positive results. The market results continue to show increase in auto rates. The general liability is more stable than auto but with strong safety protocols and procedures required on tougher exposures. The primary umbrella coverage has seen large rate increases because of higher auto legal settlements.

Motion by Regent Dicus, and second by Regent Nave to approve the renewal of casualty insurance coverage for \$677,913 for fiscal year 2027.

5. Resolution for Authorization of Kansas Municipal Investment Pool Transactions

Vice President Luther Lee reported the university periodically utilizes the State of Kansas Municipal Investment Pool as an alternative to bank deposits. The account must be initiated and authorized by employees designated and approved by the Board. The resolution will allow a new employee, Robynn Barney, to have reconciliation of the account.

Motion by Regent Romero, and second by Regent Dietrick to adopt the attached resolution.

VII. Next Meeting Date

A. Board of Regent Meeting – October 15, 2026

VII. Executive Session

Chair Sourk moved the regular session of this meeting to be recessed immediately following a 5-minute break into executive session for 15 minutes to discuss personnel matters of non-elected personnel. The subject of the executive session will be to discuss situations involving one or more Washburn employees and to protect the privacy of the employee or employees involved. The Chair invited President Mazachek to attend the executive session. Seconded by Regent Duncan. Motion passed.

Executive Session began 4:29 p.m.

Open Session resumed 4:45 p.m.

VIII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Regent Romero and seconded by Regent Fisher. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned 4:50 p.m.