Exhibit M -1

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
**Harry E. Brown Community Board Room**
***MINUTES – September 10, 2025***

Board Chair Yvonne Reitemeyer called to order the meeting of the Warren County Community College Board of Trustees at 6:30 pm The meeting was held in the Harry E. Brown Community Board Room, and was advertised on the College's website.

Mrs. Reitemeyer noted that the requirements of the Open Public Meeting Law, PL. 1975, Chapter 231, were satisfied as the date of the meeting had been published stating the place and manner as required by law.

The **Flag Salute** was conducted.

**Roll Call:**

Trustees present were Darnell Joyce, Mrs. Maier, Betti Singh, Peter Schmidt, Mrs. Steinhardt, and Yvonne Reitemeyer.

Others present included Dr. William Austin, President, Ms. Pratt VP Finance/CFO, Dr. Tony Perone, Dr. Marianne Van Deursen, Sarah Van Horn, Recording Secretary.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mrs. Steinhardt, seconded by Mr. Joyce, made a **motion to Approve the minutes of the June 18, 2025, Regular Session Minutes. Roll call**: Mr. Joyce, yes; Mrs. Maier, yes; Mrs. Singh, yes; Mr. Schmidt, yes; Mrs. Steinhardt, yes; Mrs. Reitemeyer, yes. The motion carried.

Mrs. Maier, seconded by Mr. Schmidt, made a **motion to Approve the June 18, 2025, Executive Session Minutes. Roll call**: Mr. Joyce, yes; Mrs. Maier, yes; Mrs. Singh, yes; Mr. Schmidt, yes; Mrs. Steinhardt, yes; Mrs. Reitemeyer, yes. The motion carried.

**Approval of Audit**

Mrs. Maier, seconded by Mr. Joyce, made a **motion to Approve the FY26 Enrollment Audit. Roll call**: Mr. Joyce, yes; Mrs. Maier, yes; Mrs. Singh, yes; Mr. Schmidt, yes; Mrs. Steinhardt, yes; Mrs. Reitemeyer, yes. The motion carried.

**Communication**

Dr. Austin informed the Board that a letter had been received and would be provided to all members in Executive Session.

**Policy and Planning Committee (First Reading Policy)**

Board Chair Mrs. Reitemeyer reviewed the reaffirmation of 102.3.1 Board Member Orientation (Exhibit CP-1). Additionally, Mrs. Reitemeyer read the revisions of policy 405 Distance Education (Exhibit CP-2), 406 Master Syllabus (Exhibit CP-3), and 202.8 Leave Time (Exhibit CP-4). No questions or comments were raised.

**Consent Agenda**

Chair Reitemeyer reviewed the Consent Agenda and informed the Board that Item G would be removed. Item G Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Bid Waiver for Professional Curriculum Development Service from Drone Security Service, LLC, FY26 (Exhibit CO-6). Dr. Austin informed the Board that the vendor for the proposed curriculum development service values the College's relationship and indicated that the item should be set aside for future consideration. Dr. Austin also noted that Drone Security Service, LLC looks forward to continuing to work with the College in the future and will likely meet the Board when discussions resume at a later date.

**Motion to approve items A – K as presented: Minus G**

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| A. | July 2025 Financial Statement | Exhibit CFA-1 |
| B. | President's Personnel Recommendations | Exhibit CO-1 |
| C. | Resolution Authorizing a Bid Waiver for Managed Network Service to Distinctive Voice and Data, LLC | Exhibit CO-2 |
| D. | Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Fair and Open Contract to James Paterson for Media Relations and Consulting (FY26) | Exhibit CO-3 |
| E. | Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Bid Waiver for Professional Consulting Service from Ed Celiano for (FY26) | Exhibit CO-4 |
| F. | Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Bid Waiver for Professional Grant Writing Services from The Grant Lab for (FY26) | Exhibit CO-5 |
| ~~G.~~ | ~~Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Bid Waiver for Professional Curriculum Development Service from Drone Security Service, LLC~~ | ~~Exhibit CO-6~~ |
| H. | T & K Baffour Psychiatric Recovery Center renewal August 1, 2025-July 31, 2026/ $415 per month | Exhibit CO-7 |
| I. | 202.17 Faculty Tenure Plan | Exhibit CP-5 |
| J. | 103.7.1 Public Communication on Behalf of The Board | Exhibit CP-6 |
| K. | 102.2.1 Open Meeting and Deliberation Requirements | Exhibit CP-10 |

Mr. Schmidt, seconded by Mrs. Maier, made a **motion to Approve Consent Agenda Items A-K minus G as presented. Roll call**: Mr. Joyce, yes; Mrs. Maier, yes; Mrs. Singh, yes; Mr. Schmidt, yes; Mrs. Steinhardt, yes; Mrs. Reitemeyer, yes. The motion carried.

**President's Report-** *Dr. Will Austin*

Dr. Austin provided the Board with a copy of the President's Report for September through November 2025, highlighting meetings held on campus, within the county, and virtually.

Dr. Austin introduced Dr. Tony Perone to present on Fall Enrollment. Dr. Perone distributed to the Board the Summer 2025 Enrollment Report and the Fall 2025 Enrollment Report, excluding dual enrollment. Dr. Perone reported that the Summer 2025 enrollment showed a healthy increase, particularly among part-time students. Dr. Perone attributed this growth to the expansion of course offerings, including a greater number of online options, compared to prior years. Dr. Perone outlined outreach efforts to strengthen recruitment, including participation in community events such as Victorian Days, the Warren County Fair, the 4-H Fair, and upcoming events. Chair Reitemeyer suggested expanding course offerings in the future for fall and spring semesters as well, board members concurred.

Dr. Austin provided an update on summer projects and reported on the Bicentennial event hosted on campus. Dr. Austin noted that while attendance was lower than anticipated, the event was well organized, safely managed, and received positive feedback from participants.

Dr. Austin also shared that Warren County Community College provided specialized drone training for the U.S. Air Force flight test squadrons, expanding their operational skills with drone technologies. Additionally, Dr. Austin reported that the College is collaborating with a major Fortune 50 company on advanced drone defense initiatives, reflecting the unique role the College plays in supporting national security.

Dr. Austin informed the board that on August 23, 2025, a private family ceremony was held on campus for the interment of Trustee Mr. Chuck Haytaian.

Dr. Austin provided an update on recent grant activity. Dr. Austin reported that the Drone Department received a $15,000.00 grant from First Energy to support training for first responders. In addition, the House Appropriations Committee, under Congressman Mr. Kean, advanced a proposed $979,000 grant to support the College's Food Processing initiative. Senator Booker has also submitted a $554,000 earmark request on behalf of the College's Counter Drone Program. Dr. Austin emphasized that Warren County Community College is the only community college included in Senator Booker's requests this year, which Dr. Austin described as a significant recognition of the College's impact.

Dr. Austin introduced Dr. Marianne Van Deursen to provide an update on nursing program outcomes. Dr. Van Deursen reminded the Board that a few years ago, the program faced challenges with NCLEX pass rates, which led to the development of an action plan and the implementation of mandatory preparation sessions and a tracking system for practice exams. Dr. Van Deursen reported that these measures have proven highly effective.

**College Report-** *Dr. Will Austin*

Dr. Austin updated the Board on the water main break at the Phillipsburg Education Center that occurred at the start of the fall semester. The incident caused significant flooding and damage within the building. Emergency remediation work was completed by ServPro, who responded promptly and ensured the facility was safely cleaned and stabilized. Dr. Austin reported that competitive quotes were sought for this restoration work. One vendor submitted an estimate of $85,000.00, while ServPro provided a proposal of approximately $28,000.00 to complete the necessary repairs. Based on the urgency of the situation and cost comparison, Dr. Austin recommended that the Board approve an emergency resolution authorizing the award of a non-fair and open contract to ServPro of Warren County Community College for emergency repairs (Exhibit CR-1).

Mr. Schmidt, seconded by Mrs. Singh, made a **motion to Approve Resolution Authorizing the Award of a Non-Fair and Open Contract to ServPro of Warren County Community College for emergency repairs (FY26) as presented. Roll call**: Mr. Joyce, yes; Mrs. Maier, yes; Mrs. Singh, yes; Mr. Schmidt, yes; Mrs. Steinhardt, yes; Mrs. Reitemeyer, yes. The motion carried.

Dr. Austin reported that staffing continues to be one of the College's most significant challenges. Dr. Austin noted that workplace expectations have shifted, with many employees seeking remote opportunities, which are not compatible with much of the College's work. As a result, employee retention has become increasingly difficult, and Dr. Austin emphasized the need to adapt to these changing conditions while recognizing the potential role of technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), in shaping the future workforce. Dr. Austin reminded the Board that the ACCT Congress will be held in New Orleans this year.

Dr. Austin asked Ms. Pratt to update the Board on the Higher Education Capital Facilities Program grant application. Ms. Pratt explained that the State of New Jersey released a new request for Proposals for capital funding. Ms. Pratt said a significant portion of available funds has already been allocated to a state merger project, approximately $100 million remains available statewide through the Higher Education Facilities Trust Fund. Ms. Pratt noted that this program does not require matching funds and is focused on renewal and replacement projects. Ms. Pratt said with Board approval, the College will submit an application for just under $1 million to support HVAC repairs in the East Wing, building on previous HVAC replacement work completed in the main building during COVID.

Ms. Pratt emphasized that while the chances of receiving funding are uncertain, it is important to demonstrate the College's documented needs. Ms. Pratt noted that this application represents one-fifth of the renewal and replacement plan identified in the Colliers Engineering & Design facilities study previously accepted by the Board. Ms. Pratt is requesting a motion to approve the resolution authorizing Warren County Community College to submit a grant application to the Secretary of Higher Education for grant funding under the summer 2025 cycle of the Higher Education Capital Facilities Program for the purpose of providing funding for one or more projects of the institution and authorizing all other necessary actions required in connection therewith (Exhibit CR-2)

Mr. Schmidt, seconded by Mrs. Singh, made a **motion to Approve Resolution Authorizing Warren County Community College to submit a grant application to the Secretary of Higher Education for grant funding under the Summer 2025 cycle of the Higher Education Capital Facilities Program for purpose of providing funding for one or more projects of the institution and authorizing all other necessary actions required in connection therewith. Roll call**: Mr. Joyce, yes; Mrs. Maier, yes; Mrs. Singh, yes; Mr. Schmidt, yes; Mrs. Steinhardt, yes; Mrs. Reitemeyer, yes. The motion carried.

**Internal Auditors Report-** *Barbara Pratt*

Ms. Pratt reviewed the results of the recent internal audit and shared related updates. Ms. Pratt reported that the State of New Jersey once again classified the College as low risk in its financial assessment, reflecting the College's strong financial position, ample resources, and lack of debt. Ms. Pratt also noted that the State is currently conducting an audit through the Higher Education Student Assistance Fund (HESAA). Ms. Pratt said while additional documentation has been requested, the Financial Aid Office does not anticipate any issues, and the College is confident in a favorable outcome.

**Middle States-** *Barbara Pratt*

Ms. Pratt provided an update on Middle States accreditation preparations. Over the summer, the College focused on gathering and analyzing data, including annual reports and IPEDS information, with special attention to dual enrollment students. Ms. Pratt noted that dual enrollment students are now entering with more credits on average, closer to 11, compared to 9 previously, which has contributed to higher two-year graduation rates. The College's researcher, Ms. Allison Witucki, has been compiling longitudinal data to strengthen reporting for the Middle States review.

Ms. Pratt added that a steering committee meeting is scheduled for next week, at which members will receive their charges. Ms. Pratt noted that the working groups will then begin drafting their respective sections, using a standardized format aligned with the accreditation standards. Ms. Pratt concluded that the College is making steady progress and remains in good standing as it prepares for the next Middle States evaluation.

**Foundation Report-** *Dr. Will Austin*

Dr. Austin provided an update on the Foundation in the absence of Mr. Elbassiouny. Dr. Austin noted that while fundraising remains an ongoing challenge, efforts continue to strengthen this work. Dr. Austin shared that Mr. & Mrs. Maier organized a fundraising day at the Land of Make Believe, which will result in a contribution to the Haytaian Scholarship. Dr. Austin noted that Warren County differs from neighboring regions in terms of business and industry presence, making large-scale contributions less likely. Dr. Austin also noted that community giving tends to be more personalized and grassroots in nature. Dr. Austin reminded the Board that although other counties may see multimillion-dollar donations, Warren County's strength lies in smaller, more direct efforts that reflect the community's values and culture. Dr. Austin acknowledged that the Foundation must continue to refine its strategies to build long-term sustainability and expand support for scholarships and college initiatives.

**Motion to Enter Executive Session**

At 7:11 PM, Mrs. Singh, seconded by Mrs. Steinhardt, made a **motion to enter the Executive Session.** The motion carried.

At 7:24 PM, Mr. Schmidt, seconded by Mrs. Maier, made a **motion to exit Executive Session. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Other Business, Announcements, Ad-Hoc Actions, and Actions required since Committee Meeting**

Dr. Austin provided an update on recent Federal changes impacting GED, Title III, and ESL grants. Dr. Austin noted that Federal guidelines were only released today, and the new state guidelines are expected to follow. Dr. Austin informed the Board that the grant year began on July 1st. Dr. Austin emphasized the importance of not delaying potential hiring decisions until late fall. Dr. Austin also explained that while the grant funding supports English as a second language programming, eligibility restrictions may affect participation levels, and program details remain uncertain until further guidance is issued.

Dr. Austin also noted that the GED component of the program continues to serve an important community need; however, staff turnover has left the College starting fresh in the area. Dr. Austin noted that approving the motion would help ensure the College does not lose access to available funding and can continue providing critical services to the community once State and Federal guidelines are finalized. Motion authorizing the College President to hire staffing complement for ABE/GED grant, once both State and Federal guidelines are finalized. Hiring will be ratified at the subsequent Board Meeting after initial hire of any personnel. This motion sunsets on January 1, 2026 (Exhibit OB-2).

Mr. Schmidt, seconded by Mrs. Singh, made a **motion to Approve Resolution Authorizing the College President to hire staffing complement for ABE/GED grant, once both State and Federal guidelines are finalized. Hiring will be ratified at the subsequent Board Meeting after initial hire of any personnel. This motion sunsets on January 1, 2026. Roll call**: Ms. Gittins, yes; Mr. Joyce, yes; Mrs. Maier, yes; Mrs. Singh, yes; Mr. Schmidt, yes; Mrs. Steinhardt, yes; Mrs. Reitemeyer, yes. The motion carried.

Dr. Austin addressed the topic of Board leadership and term limits. Dr. Austin noted that Board members should contact one another directly if they are interested in leadership positions, rather than reaching out to the President's Office. Dr. Austin stated that he is committed to working productively with whichever leadership team the Board selects. Dr. Austin also commented on the current Chair, Mrs. Reitemeyer, and officers, noting that the past four years have been highly successful and marked by significant accomplishments. Dr. Austin added that, consistent with tradition, recognition for the outgoing Chair will take place at the December meeting.

**Comments from the Public**

No comments from the public

Mr. Schmidt, seconded by Mrs. Steinhardt, made a motion to adjourn at 7:29 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Betti Singh

Betti Singh, Board Secretary
Warren County Community College Trustees