



Quarterly Meeting
9:00 a.m.
March 20, 2026
Kyle Hall, Room 340, Radford VA
Minutes

Board Members Present

Mr. Tyler W. Lester, Rector
Ms. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, Vice Rector
Mr. Dale Ardizzone
Ms. Jeanne Armentrout
Ms. Joann Craig
Ms. Callie Dalton
Dr. Betty Jo Foster
Ms. Mary Anne Holbrook
Mr. George Mendiola, Jr.
Mr. David A. Smith
Mr. James C. Turk
Dr. Matthew Close, Faculty Representative
Ms. Dominika Butler, Student Representative to the Board

Board Members Absent

Ms. Betsy Beamer*
Mr. William C. Davis*
Mr. Jonathan Sweet

Others Present

Dr. Bret Danilowicz, President
Dr. Dannette Gomez Beane, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Strategic Communications

Dr. Rob Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration
Dr. Angela Joyner, Vice President for Economic Development and Corporate Education
Ms. Susan Richardson, University Counsel
Dr. Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs
Dr. Bethany Usher, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Ms. Penny Helms White, Vice President for Advancement and Alumni Relations
Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Assistant Vice President of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives
Dr. Ryan Bowyer, Chief of Staff
Dr. David Perryman, Associate Vice President for Strategic Communications

Call to Order

Rector Tyler Lester called the meeting to order at approximately 8:57 a.m. in Kyle Hall, 340.

Approval of Agenda

Rector Lester requested approval of the agenda. The approval of the agenda was motioned by Mr. David A. Smith, seconded by Dr. Betty Jo Foster, and approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Rector Lester requested approval of the minutes from the September 2025 quarterly meeting. Dale Ardizzone noted an adjustment to the minutes which were adopted. The September 2025 minutes were motioned by Mr. David A. Smith seconded by _____ and approved unanimously.

Strategic Planning 2026-2031 Update

Strategic Planning Committee co-chairs Dr. Sharon Roger Hepburn and Dr. Angela Joyner presented a wrap up on the planning process and strategic plan launch, which occurred in January, 2026. The launch was attended by more than 200 people. A special resolution, motioned by Vice Rector Gilbert and seconded by Ms. Callie Dalton, was presented to both on behalf of the board, commemorating their work in stewarding this strategic planning process. A copy of the resolution is presented as Attachment A of these full Board minutes.

Strategic Planning Tracking and Dashboards

Dr. Ryan Bowyer presented an overview of how Board members can access the transparent, visible dashboards at both the governance and management levels. He noted that dashboard links are available on Board Effect, the [strategic planning](#) website, and the [Board of Visitors](#) website. Hyperlinks have been added above to the relevant places.

President's Report

President Bret Danilowicz provided a report on recent Radford University activities and performance. A copy of the President's remarks are attached as Attachment B and are made a part hereof.

Government Relations Update

Ms. Lisa Ghidotti, Assistant Vice President of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives, provided of Radford University's legislative priorities for which she advocated for at the 2026 General Assembly. Further, Ms. Ghidotti updated the Board on the current state budget negotiations. Finally, Ms. Ghidotti gave an update on the current bills which have the potential to directly impact the Board of Visitors, governance at Radford University, or the institution at large.

Government Relations Interns Presentation

Rector Lester asked Assistant Vice President of Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives, Lisa Ghidotti, to introduce the Government Relations Interns, Ms. Alivia Turner and Ms. Taylor Plapp. They discussed the internship, the application process, their perceptions before and after the internship, and how they connected their experience to their future careers. They acknowledged what a powerful experience the internship was for them.

Committee Reports

Prior to committee reports, Rector Lester noted that he made two additional committee appointments. Ms. Mary Anne Holbrook was appointed to the Student Affairs and Athletics Committee and Mr. Dale Ardizzone was appointed to the External Engagement Committee.

Report from the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee

Dr. Betty Jo Foster reported that the committee met on March 19, 2026.

Dr. Foster reported that discussion centered on the Academic Points of Pride and the now-launched six-year strategic plan. She noted that SCHEV had approved Radford University's new mission statement. Radford has been recognized as an Opportunity College.

Dr. Matt Close gave an update on behalf of the faculty senate, concentrating in part on the general education implementation process.

Two attachments were presented: A) faculty promotions and B) resolution for ten (10) faculty to receive tenure. The motion for tenure was made Ms. Callie Dalton, seconded by Jeanne Armentrout, and approved unanimously.

Full minutes may be found in the committee report.

Report from the Business Affairs and Audit Committee

Ms. Jeanne Armentrout reported that the Business Affairs and Audit Committee met on March 19, 2026.

Ms. Armentrout reported that Mr. David Rasnic, Audit Director, Higher Education Programs, gave an update on the annual audit procedures of the FY25 financial statements. Ms. Margaret McManus, University Auditor, gave an overview of internal audit on discretionary spending.

Ms. Armentrout reported that Dr. Rob Hoover, Vice President for Finance and Administration, gave an overview of the financial picture of the University. He discussed, in depth, the tuition and fee recommendations.

Three action items were presented to the Board. The first was a recommendation certifying compliance with the Radford University's debt management policy. This motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously. The second was a recommendation for the approval of tuition and fees. This motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously. Finally, the third action item was a resolution to extend the temporary Norfolk-Southern easement for construction purposes. This motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

Full minutes may be found in the committee report.

Report from the Enrollment Management and Brand Equity

Ms. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert reported that the committee met on March 19, 2026.

University Communications Plan Update: Dr. David Perryman shared the finalized strategic communications plan. In addition, he shared that new brand saturation campaign elements were getting ready to be implemented and released.

Enrollment Update: The committee reported that enrollment goals have been exceeded, including enrollment stabilization. Retention rate raised to 94% among Pell eligible students. A record number of prospective and admitted students were attending the next day's Highlander Day.

No action items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.

Full minutes may be found in the committee report.

Report from the External Engagement Committee Report

Mr. George Mendiola, Jr., Vice Chair, reported that the committee met on March 19. He presented highlights of external engagement and partnerships from the Division of Economic Development and Corporate Education, in particular noting the five areas where the division has aligned their work with the strategic plan. He stated that at the core of the work is partnership.

Mr. Mendiola then gave updates on Advancement and Alumni Relations. The division refined priorities around five focus areas. Total giving to this point in the fiscal year is \$9.2 million, well above the \$6 million goal. RAD48 raised nearly \$170,000 from more than 1,200 donors. A highlight is the \$2.5 million gift from the Virginia Credit Union to establish the Financial Success Center.

No action items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.

Full minutes may be found in the committee report.

Report from the Student Affairs and Athletics Committee

Mr. David Smith, Chair, reported that the committee met on March 19. He presented highlights from the meeting, which included a robust presentation from the Student Government President, Mr. Owen Starr. Mr. Starr discussed participation in Advocacy Day. Mr. Smith then reported that student representatives to the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) then gave highlights on their experiences throughout the year, which included participating in meetings throughout the year and discussion on key topics impacting the student body. Mr. Smith then reported that Susan Trageser, Vice President for Student Affairs, and Mr. Robert Lineburg, Director of Athletics, gave updates from their respective areas. Other specific information regarding these updates may be found in those committee minutes.

No action items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.

Full minutes may be found in the committee report.

Foundation Report

Mr. George Mendiola, Jr., Board Liaison to the Radford University Foundation, provided an update. He reported that the foundation showed continued growth in the endowment.

No action items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.

Full minutes may be found in the committee report.

Executive Committee Report

Rector Lester stated that by-laws discussion would continue over the spring and summer in light of the potential changes needed pending action by Governor Spanberger.

Rector Lester put forth a resolution to update the March 2027 meeting date in order to avoid potential post-season basketball play. This was motioned by Ms. Jennifer Wishon Gilbert, seconded by Mr. David Smith, and approved unanimously.

Student Representative Report

Ms. Dominika Butler (“Dom”), Student Representative to the Board, provided an update on her initiatives focused on improving student communication, promoting campus resources, and strengthening engagement with the RUC campus.

No action items were presented by the committee for Board vote and approval.

Closed Session

Dale Ardizzone motioned that the Board of Visitors of Radford University convene a closed session, pursuant to section 2.2-3711 sub part A, items 1, 2, 8 and 9 under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act for the discussion of personnel matters, more specifically related to the President’s performance plan, the discussion of scholastic records, more specifically interviews of student representative candidates and related to personnel matters involving a public officer, for consultation with legal counsel, and for discussion of gifts and fund-raising activities, more specifically related to athletics.

The motion carried, and the Board entered closed session.

Reconvened Session and Resolution of Certification

Upon return to the open session, the Board approved the Resolution of Certification affirming that only matters lawfully exempted under FOIA and identified in the motion were discussed in closed session. The resolution passed by roll call vote.

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Board, Rector Lester adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ryan Bowyer, Ed.D.

Chief of Staff