East Stroudsburg University
Council of Trustees Minutes
June 4, 2026
In Person & Via Zoom

1. **Call to Order:**
   The regular meeting of the East Stroudsburg University Council of Trustees was called to order at 4:12 p.m. by Chair Pat Ross.

2. **Roll Call:**
   Completed by Recording Secretary Marcy L. Cetnar, the following members were present:

Mr. Frank Epifano (via zoom)	Ms. Tina Nixon (via zoom)	Mr. John Pekarovsky, III
Mr. Thomas Grayuski	Ms. Elizabeth O'Brien	Mr. Pat Ross
Ms. Ainslee Green	Ms. Tameko Patterson	Mr. Paul Shemansky

   The following members were not present:
   Mr. Edward Abraham

3. **Public Comment:**
   None

4. **Approval of Minutes:**
   Trustee Patterson made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 26, 2026, meeting; Trustee O'Brien seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.

5. **President's Report:**
   President Long reported that although the Spring semester concluded a few weeks ago, we have had very little pause as we transition into summer operations and begin preparing for the upcoming academic year. At the same time, we anxiously await the outcome of our Middle States reaccreditation later this month.

   President Long provided a brief update on what has happened since the June meeting. ESU celebrated Commencement on May 8 and 9 with three ceremonies, awarding 1,182 degrees. We welcomed alumni Dr. Christopher Hunt and Dr. Zachary McDowell as keynote speakers, alongside outstanding student speakers Rosie Santos for the graduate and doctoral service, and Vera Renshof and Natasha Merchant for the two undergraduate ceremonies. I believe this was the best line-up of speakers for commencements in my time as President. If you didn't know otherwise, you would have thought they shared their speeches in advance. Even the remarks from the Council Chair and Alumni Board fit right in. It was truly inspiring and represents the very best of ESU.

   Our students continue to perform at a high level, with nearly 2,000 named to the Dean's List and strong participation across honors programs, research, and experiential learning. Programs like Nursing and Education continue to prepare graduates to meet critical workforce needs.

   This past year marked the first full year of our 2025–2028 Strategic Plan, focused on student success, belonging, technology, and workplace engagement, which continues to guide our work.

   Campus life remained energetic, with students actively engaged in conferences, performances, and community initiatives both on and off campus.

Our athletic programs had another outstanding year, finishing third in the Dixon Trophy standings for the third consecutive year. Several teams captured conference championships, and multiple programs advanced to postseason and national competition. Women's lacrosse finished the regular season undefeated and advanced to the NCAA semifinals. Most importantly, our student-athletes continue to excel in the classroom.

We are also making steady progress on key facilities projects. The University Center is essentially complete, the tennis courts are now finished, and planning continues for future capital improvements, including library renovations and additional athletic and academic facilities.

Shortly after the semester ended, we hosted the 13th Annual Economic Outlook Summit, continuing our role as a regional leader and convener. The ESU Foundation also held a successful Scholarship Dinner, bringing together donors, alumni, and students in support of our mission.

Looking ahead, we remain encouraged by our enrollment momentum and are preparing for another strong incoming class, despite the demographic challenges facing higher education in our region.

Across campus, our faculty, staff, coaches, administrators, and even students remain fully engaged in recruitment, planning, and program development.

The Fall semester begins on August 24, with several major events already on the calendar, including Official Grand Opening Celebrations of the New University Center, Family Weekend, Homecoming, and the Board of Governors meeting, which ESU will host for the first time.

That concludes my report.

6. **Chair's Report:**
   Trustee Ross reported that this year's Economic Summit, attended by more than 300 people, was the best he had attended. He noted that the speakers were highly relevant and informative, and the Economic Scorecard was outstanding. He also recognized the Secretary of Transportation for his participation and presentation.

   Chair Ross reported that this year's Commencement ceremonies were very successful, noting that the three student speakers and two keynote speakers were outstanding. He also commended the speakers at the Foundation's Scholarship Dinner, who were also exceptional.

   Chair Ross concluded by stating that the information presented at today's committee meetings demonstrates the University's continued success in providing an excellent education and meaningful experiences for its students.

7. **Secretary's Report:**
   No Report

8. **Committee Reports**
   A. **University Affairs Committee:**
      Trustee Ross reported that Dr. Margaret Ball, Dr. Robert Smith, and Dr. Omar Mayyasi provided an update on the Comprehensive Planning Process, emphasizing sustainable enrollment growth through both recruitment and retention. Student FTE is projected to grow from 5,319 in Fall 2025 to 5,752 by Fall 2028, while first-year persistence is targeted to increase from 75% to 80%. To support these goals, ESU is expanding transfer pathways, adult learner recruitment, advising, Success Coaches, strategic scholarships, and other student support initiatives.

The presenters noted that enrollment growth is strengthening the University's financial position, with increases projected in both tuition revenue and net tuition revenue per FTE. At the same time, ESU continues to address cost pressures while funding the new University Center through reserves rather than additional debt. Key financial indicators will continue to be closely monitored.

Academically, ESU's strategy focuses on strengthening existing high-demand and workforce-aligned programs rather than adding new ones. Efforts include reviewing low-demand programs, expanding transfer and adult learner opportunities, and improving scheduling efficiency to support student success, program sustainability, and operational effectiveness.

Dr. Lorna Hunter provided enrollment management updates on the summer recruitment and events planned for interested and incoming students. We also looked at the fall 5-year enrollment comparisons for undergraduate and graduate students, which indicate a 3.8% increase for undergraduate students and a 26.9% increase for graduate students. The new financial aid calculator has supported both recruitment and yield. Grow PA has been well received by our students and is expected to expand over time.

Mr. Dennis Shores updated the committee on the East Stroudsburg Borough approval of the university center and the much-needed certificate of occupancy; however, we are still waiting for the borough's approval. PASSHE Legal is reviewing the documents and preparing the borough's proposal. Phase II will begin as soon as we receive the CO. Mr. Shores also shared the prioritized list of capital projects through 2030 that PASSHE submitted for funding.

Mr. Frank Gay updated the committee on the University's Parking Management Plan, noting that parking utilization has increased significantly, with occupancy rising from 55% in 2022 to 82% in 2025. Despite fewer available spaces, the University continues to maintain adequate parking capacity.

Parking enforcement activity has also increased as demand has grown. Ongoing efforts include evaluating parking expansion opportunities, promoting perimeter parking and shuttle services, and improving real-time parking monitoring. Future initiatives will focus on technology-based enforcement solutions, tiered parking programs, and addressing repeat violations to better serve students, employees, and visitors.

President Long identified the current collective bargaining agreement expiration dates and the upcoming negotiations for new contracts.

All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed. That concludes my report.

B. **Campus Environment Committee:**

Trustee O'Brien reported that Gerard Roeder provided an update on residence hall occupancy, housing strategy, and recent changes to the residential experience. Residence hall occupancy has steadily rebounded since the pandemic, growing from 1,686 students in Fall 2021 to 2,685 students in Fall 2025, with 2,716 students projected for Fall 2026. Several residence halls, including Hawthorn, Hemlock, Sycamore, and University Ridge, are operating at or near full occupancy, reflecting continued student demand for on-campus housing.

ESU discontinued its Residential College (RC) model after data showed it did not significantly improve student retention or GPA. The change created 183 additional suite-style housing spaces for continuing students. ESU has adopted a seniority-based housing approach in which:

New students are primarily assigned to traditional residence halls. Students transition to suite-style and apartment-style housing as they advance academically. Early enrollment commitments improve students' chances of securing preferred suite-style housing options. Overall, the report highlighted strong residential occupancy trends and a revised housing model designed to better align housing options with students' progression through their college experience.

Athletic Director Dr. Allen Snook and Associate Athletic Director Sarah Ross provided an update on intercollegiate athletics, and I am pleased to share that this has been one of the strongest years in ESU Athletics history academically, competitively, and in our community impact.

Academically, our student-athletes posted a department GPA of 3.323, with women's teams earning an impressive 3.503. As the report notes, '14.6% of student-athletes had a perfect 4.000,' the second-highest ever. More than half of all student-athletes earned a 3.5 or higher, setting a new record.

Competitively, our teams delivered exceptional results. We earned 81 PSAC All-Athlete honors, 56 All-Region selections, and a department record 24 All-Americans. 18 of 20 PSAC sports reached postseason play, and 15 teams advanced to NCAA competition. We finished 3rd overall in the Dixon Cup and achieved a 25th-place Learfield Cup winter ranking, the best in ESU history.

Beyond competition, our athletes contributed 7,836 hours of community service and donated over 2,100 food items to the Warrior Food Pantry. We also welcomed more than 52,000 visitors to campus through camps and clinics.

All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed. That concludes my report.

C. **Finance Committee:**

Trustee Pekarovsky reported that Richard Santoro, Director of the ESU Foundation, stated that, while this has been a challenging year for fundraising due in part to staff vacancies and broader economic uncertainty, activity levels remain high and are expected to produce positive results over time. As fiscal year-end approaches, the Foundation remains focused on a strong year-end fundraising push. Scholarships remain a top priority. The Foundation set an ambitious goal of establishing 25 new scholarships this year; to date, 16 have been secured, with several additional commitments in progress that are expected to close before year-end. Progress also continues on both the Track & Field Renovation Campaign and the Soccer Stadium Campaign. The Track & Field campaign is currently in the public phase and is $140,000 short of its revised goal of $1.2 million. The Soccer Stadium campaign has reached $5.2 million toward its revised goal of $5.5 million. The Foundation also highlighted several recent and upcoming events that support donor recognition and community engagement and align with FY 26 goals. The report concluded with a staffing update.

Dr. Omar Mayyasi updated the committee on ESU's Comprehensive Planning Process (CPP-27), outlining the University's financial outlook through FY 2028-29. The plan projects steady enrollment growth, with annualized FTE increasing from approximately 5,806 students in FY 2026-27 to nearly 5,939 by FY 2028-29.

The presentation noted that the plan assumes flat tuition and state appropriations while accounting for rising personnel, benefit, utility, and financial aid costs. To support operations and the construction of the University Center, the University expects to utilize unrestricted reserves, with unrestricted net assets projected to decline over the planning period. Leadership emphasized that a multi-year strategy is in place to address future structural deficits through financial aid adjustments, academic program review, and

expense management. Following discussion, all questions were addressed. **Trustee Grayuski made a motion to approve the CPP; Trustee Ross seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

Dr. Mayyasi also reviewed proposed clinical fees for select academic programs. A new clinical fee equal to 15 percent of tuition is proposed for the graduate programs in Speech-Language Pathology and Exercise Physiology. These fees would support the specialized instructional, clinical, laboratory, internship, and supervision requirements associated with these programs. The existing undergraduate Nursing clinical fee of 25 percent of tuition would remain unchanged. Overall, the presentation reinforced the University's commitment to balancing fiscal responsibility with its mission of providing access, affordability, and student success while strategically positioning the institution for long-term sustainability. The Committee addressed all questions and concerns satisfactorily. **Trustee Patterson made a motion to approve the new clinical fees in Speech-Language Pathology and Exercise Science; Trustee Grayuski seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

The Committee reviewed the Cash Disbursement Reports for February 01, 2026, through April 30, 2026. The Committee found that all were handled appropriately and were in order. All questions and concerns were answered satisfactorily. **Trustee Grayuski made a motion for the approval of the Cash Disbursement Reports for February 01, 2026, to April 30, 2026; Trustee Patterson seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

The Procurement Activity > $23,200 Report for the period March 1, 2026, through April 30, 2026, was reviewed.

Dennis Shores, Vice President of Facilities, provided a report on the "Active Projects Status Report" list since the last COT meeting. Currently, there are 43 active projects, 7 completed projects, 8 on hold, and 1 canceled. Dennis also reviewed the "Notice to Proceed Report," which contains 6 contracts over $25,000. All questions and concerns were satisfactorily addressed. That concludes my report.

C. **Strategic Initiatives Committee:**

Trustee Grayuski reported that Dr. Edward Arner, Assistant Professor of Sport Management, and two students presented on Industry Exposure Through Experiential Learning: Research, Competition, and Podcast. Kolb's learning spaces were created through students' individuality and the learning environment's attributes. These learning spaces encouraged engagement in volunteering, student clubs, field trips, and networking opportunities. Students had the opportunity to present their research findings at a national conference, where six students presented original research covering varying topics concerning the sport industry; another group created a business plan and won 1st place, and a third group was tasked with creating a sustainability study and crisis management plan, which won 2nd place.

The Sport Professional Podcast is student-driven content and faculty-student research intended to connect students, alumni, and industry professionals. The "On The Rise" segment spotlights current students and recent graduates, and the "Pro Perspectives" segment highlights alumni and professionals sharing career paths and industry insights. Key takeaways included enhancing the learning space, diverse opportunities for involvement within the program, and continuous industry exposure.

Dr. Brooke Langan provided an overview of graduate education at East Stroudsburg University, highlighting enrollment trends, program offerings, and future priorities. She discussed several challenges affecting graduate enrollment nationally, including the anticipated enrollment cliff, potential federal loan reductions, changing recruitment behaviors, and increased demand for clear educational value and return on

investment. ESU currently offers 21 master's degree programs, two doctoral programs, and a variety of post-baccalaureate certifications and endorsements. The presentation also highlighted ESU's accelerated pathways initiative, which provides flexible course options, opportunities for graduate-level coursework, and streamlined pathways for students pursuing advanced degrees. Looking ahead, ESU's priorities for 2026–2027 include establishing program advisory boards with industry partners, aligning curricula with workforce needs, enhancing marketing and website content, and evaluating program return on investment and cost-saving opportunities for students and the university.

President Long presented the recommendations for faculty emeritus/emerita, including Dr. Howard Whidden, 23 years of service in the Department of Biological Sciences; Dr. Gene White, 25 years of service in the Department of Physical Education Teacher Education; and Dr. Jennifer White, 21 years of service in the Department of Biological Sciences. **Trustee Shemansky made a motion to approve the recommended faculty for emeritus/emerita; Trustee O'Brien seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried,**

8. **Old Business:**
   None

9. **New Business:**
   A. **Nominating Committee:** Nominating Committee Chair, Trustee Shemansky, presented the nominated slate of officers for the upcoming academic year. The slate is as follows:
      Chair: Trustee L. Patrick Ross '67
      Vice-Chair: John Pekarovsky '07
      Secretary: Paul Shemansky '96 M '01 & 04

   B. **Election of Officers: Trustee Patterson made a motion to approve the slate of officers and appoint Chair-Trustee Ross, Vice-Chair-Trustee Pekarovsky, and Secretary-Trustee Shemansky for the upcoming academic year; Trustee O'Brien seconded; no abstentions. The motion carried.**

   C. Trustee Ross presented the tentative 2024-2025 Council of Trustees Meeting schedule as follows.
      Thursday, September 24, 2026 Thursday, December 03, 2026
      Thursday, March 25, 2027 Thursday, June 3, 2027

11. **Adjournment:** Trustee Ross adjourned the meeting at 4:42 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Shemansky
Council Secretary

Recording Secretary: Marcy L. Cetnar