

Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education
KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES MEETING
April 23, 2026

The Council of Trustees met on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. in the McFarland Student Union Building, Room 250.

PRESENT:

Mr. Dennis Giorno, Chair	Harrisburg
Mr. Robert Grim, Esq	Kutztown
Ms. Payton Mentzer, Student Trustee	Reading
Mr. Guido Pichini	Wyomissing Hills
Mr. James Ludlow	Fogelsville
Ms. Sandy Green	Kutztown
Ms. Dianne Lutz	Wernersville

ABSENT:

Mr. Kevin Harden, Jr., Esq., Vice-Chair	Philadelphia
Mr. Phillips Armstrong, Secretary	Lehigh County

ALSO PRESENT:

Dr. Phil Cavalier, University President
Ms. Natalie Einsig, PASSHE, Legal Counsel
Ms. Yuko Casanova, Student Speaker
Ms. Pam Rex, Senior Executive Associate to the President
Mr. Bryan Salvatore, Executive Director of Communications
Mr. Matthew Santos, Vice President, University Relations and Athletics
Dr. Rebecca West Burns, Dean, College of Education
Dr. Brad Shope, Dean, College of Visual & Performing Arts
Mr. Alex Ogeka, Executive Director of KU Foundation
Mr. Matt Assad, Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance
Mr. Cade Herndon, Student Government Board President
Ms. Alexis Willingham, Student Government Board Secretary
Ms. Des Reasoner, Vice President for Student Affairs
Dr. Lorin Basden Arnold, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs
Dr. Lisa Frye, Senate President
Dr. Anne Carroll, Dean of the College of Business
Mr. Bradley Davis, Executive Director of Equity and Compliance
Mr. Scott Stamm, Electronic Systems Technician
Dr. Carl Sheperis, Vice Provost for Extended & Lifelong Learning & Dean of Graduate Studies
Dr. Karen Rauch, Dean of University College
Dr. Laurie McMillan, Dean, College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Dr. Stephen Rupprecht, Assistant Vice President & Dean of Students
Dr. Amy Pfeiler-Wunder, Associate Dean, College of Visual & Performing Arts
Ms. Mandi Volkert, Executive Director of Health & Wellness
Ms. Lisa Kowalski, Executive Director of KUSSI
Ms. Rylee Burke, Graduate Student
Ms. Sydney Holderman, Graduate Student
Ms. Kaitlyn Macauley, Student Trustee Nominee

1. **Call to Order**

At 3:00 p.m., Chairman Giorno called the meeting to order. He noted that an Executive Session took place earlier today and personnel matters were discussed but no formal actions were taken.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those in attendance.

3. **Roll Call of Council Members**

Attendance was taken at the direction of Chairman Giorno which established that a quorum of the Council was present.

4. **Remarks by Mr. Dennis Giorno, Chair**

“Good afternoon, and welcome to the April public meeting of the Kutztown University Council of Trustees.

It has been an exciting few weeks since we last met, highlighted by the inauguration two weeks ago of our 13th president, Dr. Phil Cavalier. What an amazing couple of days, and I want to congratulate the entire KU community on making our campus shine.

In my welcoming remarks at the installation ceremony that Friday, I noted that the inauguration marked a new chapter in a story that began 160 years ago. That generations of students have walked these grounds with hope in their hearts, trusting that this university would open doors for them. The Student Showcase on Thursday night inauguration proved that same spirit is alive and well. Our students shared their talents, their research, their passions—each one a reminder of why this institution matters. And on Friday we welcomed President Cavalier as a leader who understands both where we’ve been and where we can go.

With that in mind, the April meeting is always one of the most rewarding of the year for the KU Council of Trustees as we approve our spring 2026 graduating class, which will walk across the stage on May 15th and 16th at O’Pake Fieldhouse. As is our tradition, student trustee Payton Mentzer, who will be graduating with her master’s degree that Friday night, will make the motion to approve the 2026 graduating class shortly.

I would also like to congratulate Kaitlyn Macauley, a business administration major from Allentown, who was approved by the State System Board of Governors last week, to succeed Peyton as our new student trustee.”

Remarks and Moment of Silence on the Passing of Jack Wabby-Mr. Dennis Giorno, Chair

“I had the privilege of serving on the Council of Trustees alongside Jack Wabby for many years—though “alongside” hardly captures it, because Jack was here long before many of us arrived and remained a steady presence throughout. When I think of Jack, I picture him coming into meetings without fanfare, prepared as always, quietly greeting colleagues, ready to do the work. Jack never sought the spotlight. He believed stewardship was not about being seen, but about being responsible.

Jack had a remarkable way of listening fully before speaking. And when he did speak, it was never to fill the room—it was to guide it. When conversations grew complicated or difficult, Jack grounded us with a simple question: What decision best serves Kutztown University for the long

term? That perspective—clear, principled, and forward-looking—defined his leadership and set the standard for this board.

That clarity came from a lifelong relationship with this institution. As a proud member of the Class of 1968, Jack never viewed Kutztown as something in his past. For him, Kutztown was a responsibility—one he honored through more than three decades of service on the Council of Trustees, including two terms as chairman. Few individuals have shaped this university with such quiet consistency and deep commitment.

Jack approached trusteeship not as an honor, but as a duty. He asked thoughtful questions. He respected differing viewpoints. And above all, he kept students—present and future—at the center of every decision.

Jack's devotion to Kutztown was evident in every corner of campus life. From his days as a Golden Bear student-athlete to his induction into the Inaugural KU Athletics Hall of Fame class in 1977, and later as a founding supporter of the Golden Bear Football Legacy Club, Jack's generosity of time, wisdom, and resources strengthened the university he loved.

But what we will remember most is not a title or an award. We will remember Jack's integrity. His humility. His steady belief that this institution matters—and that it deserves careful, principled leadership.

Jack Wabby helped shape the Kutztown University we see today. May we honor his legacy by leading with the same care, loyalty, and long-term vision that he modeled for all of us.

Thank you.”

5. Remarks by Mr. Cade Herndon, Student Government Board President

“Good afternoon, everyone! As always, it is a pleasure to be here with you all.

As we near the end of the semester, the Student Government Board has officially concluded its general board and executive board election cycle. That being said, I am proud to announce that our next Student Body President is Alexis Willingham. Please join me in congratulating Alexis. I have full faith that she will be an effective and empathetic leader.

Even as the semester is winding down, the work that we do to improve our campus community and represent students continues. As always, we are committed to working with our peers, and we have continued building stronger relationships with student organizations on campus. This is an initiative that Alexis and the rest of next year's student government board have committed to continuing.

On Monday, we will be going to Harrisburg. We plan to share our stories and advocate for funding for PASSHE.

Many of our college representative groups have wrapped up their feedback tables and have begun presenting data to their respective deans.

We have also been focused on two exciting initiatives. The first, our annual SGA Day event, was held earlier today. The purpose of this event was to show appreciation for the student body and provide them with a fun event as they continue their hard work.

The second event is our second annual student film festival, held on April 28th at 7 PM on the Schaeffer lawn. I am proud to share that our VPA representatives obtained 30 student films for the event. This is a significant increase from last year.

Financially, our budget and finance committee has been working very diligently through appeal hearings, and the final student organization budget for the 2026-27 academic year will be passed on April 28.

Throughout this year, SGB remained committed to representing our student body and being good ambassadors for the university. Thank you for allowing students to have a voice and for representing the best interests of the university. And on a personal note, thank you for allowing me to share the stage with you all this year. I am and always will be proud to call KU home.”

6. Remarks by Dr. Phil Cavalier, University President

“Thank you to Ms. Sandy Green and Mr. Matt Santos for their leadership as chairs of the Inauguration Committee, and to the full committee for delivering an outstanding Inauguration. I also want to extend my appreciation to Dr. Amy Pfeiler Wunder, Ms. Melinda Quinones, and their team for the success of the Student Showcase.

Kutztown University is proud to announce that the Middle States Commission on Higher Education has officially reaffirmed the university's accreditation. The action, taken during the Commission's March 2026 meeting, marks the successful conclusion of a multi-year self-study and peer-review process. Accreditation confirms that an institution's mission is being fulfilled and that students are receiving a high-value education that meets federal and regional standards. This is a testament to the dedication of our faculty, staff and students. I am deeply grateful to the steering committee, led by Dr. Karen Rauch, and the many stakeholders who participated in this rigorous self-study process. The Commission's recognition of our high-impact practices and our strong retention rate validates our collective commitment to student success. This milestone ensures that KU continues to serve as a premier regional institution that provides an affordable, high-quality education.

Kutztown University was awarded a \$40,000 grant from the Shapiro Administration and the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the It's On Us PA program in 2026. The grant will be used to help combat sexual assault on campus through ongoing partnerships with the KU Women's Center, Safe Berks, New Student Orientation, Multicultural Services, the LGBTQ+ Resource Center, Greek Life's Hazing prevention training, Title IX awareness programs and bystander intervention training.

Kutztown University has been awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Education to help address the statewide shortage of special education teachers. The funding will support a new 4+1 Graduate Special Education Intern Pathway, launching in the 2026-27 academic year. 20 students will earn their special education certification in just one year after completing their bachelor's degree and initial general teacher certification. Partnering school districts will cover tuition costs and commit to hiring students as paid interns, creating a direct pipeline from college preparation to classroom employment. Five school districts are partnering with Kutztown University for the program's first year: Kutztown Area, Brandywine Heights, Schuylkill Valley, Antietam, and Tulpehocken.

13. **Counseling Internship Agreements with Various Institutions and Kutztown University**

Mr. Jim Ludlow presented internship agreements which establishes a relationship whereby students may participate in practical experience outside the traditional classroom setting.

- Dana M Greene PC *New*
 - Adolescent Transitions *Renewal*
 - Clear Water Wellness, LLC *New*
 - Pennsylvania Counseling Services *Renewal*
 - High School of the Future *New*
 - Whitehall High School Counseling *New*
 - Yaqub Counseling Services *New*
- (5 new, 2 renewals)**

Mr. Jim Ludlow moved to present items 11, 12, and 13 as one action item for approval as presented. Mr. Guido Pichini seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The motion was approved.

14. **May 2026 Candidates for Degree**

Ms. Payton Mentzer moved to present the May 2026 Candidates for Degree for approval as presented in Tab 7. Mr. Jim Ludlow seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The motion was approved.

15. **New Degree Program Proposal – B.S. Earth, Atmosphere, & Marine Sciences**

Mr. Jim Ludlow moved to approve the New Degree Program Proposal – B.S. Earth, Atmosphere, & Marine Sciences as presented in Tab 8. Ms. Sandy Green seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The motion was approved.

16. **Summary of Discussions: Council Committee on Finance, Property & Audit**

Mr. Guido Pichini reported on the committee discussions.

17. **Purchases and Contracts**

Mr. Guido Pichini noted the purchases and contracts were reviewed as presented in Tab 9 with no further comment.

18. **Capital Spending Plan**

19. **Auxiliary Budgets & Fees**

20. **Tuition Technology Fee**

21. **Miscellaneous Fees**

22. **International Student Services Fee**

23. **Undergraduate Tuition, Non-Pennsylvania Residents**

24. **Graduate & Doctoral Tuition, Pennsylvania & Non-Pennsylvania Residents**

*Mr. Guido Pichini moved to present items 18-24 as one action item for approval as presented.
Ms. Dianne Lutz seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The motion was approved.*

25. **Summary of Discussions: Council Committee on Human Diversity**

Ms. Sandy Green reported on the committee discussions.

26. **Summary of Discussions: Council Committee on University Relations & Athletics and Advancement**

Mr. Robert Grim reported on the committee discussions.

27. **Appointment of Nominating Committee – Mr. Dennis Giorno**

Mr. Dennis Giorno
Mr. Guido Pichini
Ms. Dianne Lutz
Mr. Robert Grim

28. **2026-2027 Council of Trustees Meeting Schedule – Mr. Dennis Giorno**

*Mr. Dennis Giorno moved to approve the 2026-2027 Meeting Schedule as presented in Tab 17.
Ms. Dianne Lutz seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The motion was approved.*

29. **PACT UPDATE – Ms. Sandy Green**

“PACT held its annual conference and business meeting on April 15 in Harrisburg, aligning with the Board of Governors meeting to provide an opportunity for trustees to connect with board members, university presidents, the chancellor and his team, and other key stakeholders across the system.

At the business meeting, the proposed 2026-2027 budget and the slate of officers presented by the nominating committee were reviewed; however, due to the absence of a quorum, formal approval is being conducted via electronic vote, with responses requested no later than the end of the day on April 27.”

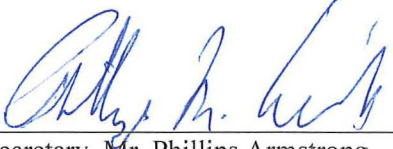
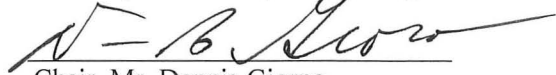
30. **As May Arise** - None

Adjournment

Mr. Dennis Giorno adjourned the meeting at 3:45pm.

4/4/26
Date

4/4/26
Date


Secretary, Mr. Phillips Armstrong

Chair, Mr. Dennis Giorno