



UNIVERSITY OF  
**NORTHERN  
COLORADO**

## **Board of Trustees**

Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees

December 12, 2025

8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Campus Commons, Multipurpose Hall

Greeley, Colorado

## **MINUTES**

**Trustees Present:** Dick Monfort (chair), Maia Babbs, Brenda Campos-Spitze, Prateek Dutta, Fritz Fischer, Steve Jordan, Annette Martinez, Audra Yocum

**Trustees Absent:** Greg Anton

**University Staff Present:** Andy Feinstein, Darren Dunn, Tamra English, Kirsty Fleming, Keith Humphrey, Jennifer McDuffie, Harmony Newman, Dale Pratt, Lori Riley, Allie Steg Haskett

**Invited Guests:** Kim Black (Associate Provost for Academic Effectiveness), Kamel Haddad (Dean, College of Natural and Health Sciences), Davion Henderson (CSC), Mary Ann Littler (Chair, UNC Foundation Board of Directors), Blaine Nickeson (Associate Vice President for Administration), Audry Stutler (PASC), Kayla Tibbals (Nexus Policy Group, *via Zoom*)

### **I. Call to Order / Roll / Approval of Agenda**

Board Chair Dick Monfort called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. General Counsel Tamra English noted the roll and verified quorum.

Chair Monfort requested an agenda revision to remove Item VI.C. Building Naming Proposal. A motion to approve the revision was made by Vice Chair Steve Jordan, seconded by Trustee Brenda Campos-Spitze, and approved by all Board members present.

Chair Monfort sought a motion to approve the revised agenda. A motion to approve the revised agenda was made by Trustee Maia Babbs, seconded by Vice Chair Jordan, and approved by all Board members in attendance.

### **II. Consent Agenda**

Chair Monfort reviewed the consent agenda.

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Vice Chair Jordan, seconded by Trustee Babbs, and approved by all Board members in attendance.

### **III. Opening Comments and Reports**

#### **A. President's Report**

President Feinstein delivered the report.

Feinstein outlined updates on the budget reduction process, noting that institutions nationwide are facing similar constraints, and thanked the campus community for its commitment to the budget work and to maintaining continued support for students.

Feinstein announced that the UNC College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM) received pre-accreditation status from the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA), noting that the designation confirms the medical college has met or exceeded the commission's standards for educational quality and may officially begin recruiting and admitting students. He also described a comprehensive marketing, communication, and recruitment plan along with scholarships that will be designated for the college with dedicated recruitment and onboarding strategies that include necessary system updates. He expressed gratitude to Founding Dean Beth Longenecker and thanked the COM team for their work in achieving this milestone and their continued commitment.

Feinstein outlined the Fall enrollment and retention information presented at the Finance and Audit Committee meeting and re-emphasized that retention is at an all-time high, with overall undergraduate persistence at 85.8%.

Feinstein noted that the state landscape remains complex with budget shortfalls and uncertainty surrounding the impacts of federal changes, and that higher education funding continues to be affected by rising state expenses. He stated that the Colorado legislative session will begin January 14, 2026, and that meetings with legislators, senators, and representatives are ongoing to advocate for UNC and strengthen relationships in support of higher education in Colorado. He stated that UNC lobbyist Kayla Tibbals will provide additional information on the upcoming legislative session in her report. Feinstein also shared that Governor Polis will visit UNC next week to discuss the College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Feinstein outlined current budget review strategies and noted that the administration continues to evaluate approaches to address rising costs while maintaining transparent, timely, and honest communication with campus stakeholders by engaging shared governance groups. He also outlined recent personnel reductions that will generate savings in the current fiscal year and beyond and noted that non-personnel reductions have also been implemented for this fiscal year, with additional non-personnel cost reductions under continued review.

Feinstein concluded his report by highlighting ways UNC continues the Rowing, Not Drifting theme. He recognized several faculty awards, outlined new UNC certificate offerings, noted cultural center anniversaries and first-generation college celebrations, and outlined a recent campus water conservation project. Feinstein also recognized recent athletic team successes.

Discussion included recognition of the College of Osteopathic Medicine's recruitment, onboarding, and retention strategies.

## **B. Faculty Senate Report**

Faculty Senate Chair Harmony Newman delivered the report. She provided an overview of the Faculty Senate's purview and highlighted recent committee discussions. She outlined several topics currently under discussion, including graduate enrollment status, credit hour definitions and clarifications, syllabus and catalog recommendations, the use of AI in higher education, the academic appeals process, faculty evaluation processes, review of Senate and Senate committee bylaws, budget priority guidelines, faculty morale, institutional risks, and faculty compensation. Newman noted ongoing faculty advocacy efforts, including collaboration on advising, support for faculty engagement with student organizations, and a continued commitment to shared governance. She thanked the Board and administration for their continued support and collaboration.

## **C. Student Government Association Report**

Student Trustee Audra Yocum delivered the report and outlined funding and scholarship opportunities as well as current SGA projects. She also summarized ongoing discussions related to structural, constitutional, and bylaws changes. She noted that the SGA is working to increase representation in additional areas, including club sports, and to further strengthen student connections, including efforts to enhance collaboration with the Campus Recreation Advisory Board and the University Center Advisory Board. Yocum also stated that the student trustee role will continue to work on increased visibility of student government to strengthen the student voice on campus and will continue close collaboration with the Board and administration.

## **D. Classified Staff Council Report**

Classified Staff Council Chair Davion Henderson delivered the report and outlined CSC priorities to include increased community involvement, strengthened campus relationships, and greater awareness of the Council's impact on campus. He noted that the Council continues to collaborate with the shared governance groups across campus. He also shared that CSC continues fundraising efforts and highlighted upcoming bake sales benefiting the Bear Pantry and Cultural Centers. Additionally, the Council continues to recruit new members due to the recent layoffs and explore initiatives to improve campus morale.

#### **E. Professional Administrative Staff Council Report**

Professional Administrative Staff Council Chair Audry Stutler delivered the report. She acknowledged the challenges posed by the recent layoffs and commended her colleagues for their resilience, compassion, and strength. She highlighted the Council's continued progress and accomplishments, noting efforts to raise awareness and strengthen communication across campus through partnerships with governance groups, guest speaker events, participation in the new employee fair, community relations, fundraising, scholarships, and support of the Bear Pantry. She concluded by thanking the Board, administration, and the campus community for their continued partnership.

#### **F. University of Northern Colorado Foundation Board Report**

UNC Foundation Board of Directors Chair Mary Ann Littler delivered the report. She acknowledged the importance of ongoing partnerships with the Board of Trustees and the university, noting that Trustee Annette Martinez continues to attend the Foundation Board meetings. Littler stated that the Foundation Board aims to have 12 members and will add three additional members in the next round of meetings. She provided an overview of the Foundation Board responsibilities including management of the investments to include approximately \$2M in supplemental scholarships awarded annually. She also outlined University Advancement funding for personnel and program activities as part of the recent restructuring process. Additional updates included management of the Weld Trust payment schedule and formation of a task force to review the structure, the provision of a bridge loan for COM, and oversight of a pool of unrestricted funds. She emphasized the value of Vice President Dale Pratt's participation in the Foundation investment and finance committees, citing his understanding of the Foundation's investment processes. She concluded her report by reporting on elections and officer updates, noting Brian Davidson will serve as the vice chair and Lisa Horn will serve as secretary.

#### **G. Colorado Trustee Network Report**

Trustee Maia Babbs delivered the report. She outlined the origin, purpose, and processes of the Colorado Trustee Network (CTN), emphasizing its role in advocating for and monitoring policies affecting higher education. She noted the importance of addressing shared challenges through collaboration and commended President Feinstein for the strong relationship already established with CEOs across Colorado institutions. She stated CTN hosts several events each year, including presentation and panel discussions focused on challenges and opportunities in higher education, such as enrollment pressures, policy changes, and the competitive landscape in Colorado and nationally. She stressed the need for institutions to remain clear about their mission and strategies in the current environment. Babbs also highlighted a recent CTN event attended by Governor Polis, who spoke about post-secondary talent development and integration of the

Department of Labor and the Department of Higher Education. She also announced an upcoming CTN Zoom event to occur in early January which will focus on learning more about the challenges within the Department of Higher Education. Additionally, she shared that the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) National Conference on Trusteeship will be held in Denver this year and will feature Trustee Steve Jordan as a panel speaker with emphasis on collective action. She noted that Trustee Jordan was asked to speak because Colorado is the only state with a trustee network serving all higher education institutions and has a strong network for coordinated advocacy on behalf of higher education.

## **H. Legislative Update Report**

University of Northern Colorado lobbyist, Kayla Tibbals delivered the report. She provided a brief overview of the governor's proposed budget, which was presented to the Joint Budget Committee (JBC) on October 31, 2025, and explained the Governor's rationale that was provided for the budget decisions amid broader State budget challenges resulting from federal actions. She noted that the JBC process will conclude in late March/early April. She also reviewed the State reserve requirement considerations.

Tibbals outlined the Pinnacle Assurance ballot proposal and highlighted areas facing reductions, including impacts from Senate Bill 24-230 related to oil and gas fees, which will directly affect Weld County. She also discussed Medicaid reform. She noted that Medicaid spending is a key component in the Governor's budget due to significant increases in program costs. She outlined how the proposed budget items relate to higher education, stating that overall, higher education did not incur additional cuts, but should remain vigilant in ongoing advocacy efforts.

Tibbals noted the President Feinstein continues to meet with the JBC members and legislators to prioritize the ongoing budget conversations. She also noted recent legislative membership changes due to the passing of a member and resignation of a member, which will prompt additional vacancies.

Lastly, she highlighted an announcement by Governor Polis made this week outlining his vision for higher education and workforce development following an executive order. The initiative focuses on consolidating agencies, creating clear educational pathways, streamlining employer engagement with future employees, and aligning student education and training with workforce needs. She also noted that Governor Polis is scheduled to visit UNC on December 16 to observe collaboration efforts involving the UNC College of Osteopathic Medicine, Weld Trust, and Banner Health.

## **I. Board Chair's Comments**

Chair Monfort welcomed new Chief of Staff, Jennifer McDuffie who joined UNC in November 2025. He also expressed appreciation to fellow trustees and university leaders, thanking them for their continued service and leadership.

#### **IV. Reports of Committees of the Board**

##### **A. Finance and Audit Committee**

Chair Monfort delivered the report for Finance and Audit Committee Chair Anton and provided a brief overview of the December 11, 2025, Finance and Audit Committee meeting. He reported that the committee heard updates on the FY2025 audits and preliminary financial statements, FY2025 annual debt management report and composite financial index, the FY2026 first quarter forecast, FY2027 financial drivers and outlook, and strategic enrollment management.

#### **V. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

#### **VI. Action Items**

##### **A. Head Coach Contract, Men's Wrestling**

General Counsel Tamra English presented the action item and outlined contract term, salary, and compensation, and recommended Board approval of the employment contract for Head Wrestling Coach Ware.

Trustee Martinez and Athletic Director Dunn spoke in support of the recommendation, highlighting Coach Ware's wrestling background, experience, and positive influence on the student athletes.

Chair Monfort sought a motion to approve the contract proposal. Vice Chair Jordan made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Campos-Spitze and approved by all Board members in attendance.

##### **B. Placing Old Man Mountain Property into a Conservation Easement**

Associate Vice President for Administration Blaine Nickeson presented the action item and recommended that the Board of Trustees authorize the President or designee to negotiate the placement of a conservation easement on the Old Man Mountain property in Estes Park, and if negotiation is successful, execute all necessary documents. He outlined the proposal, including the property location, how UNC acquired it, and the current use. He also noted that the university is working closely with the Estes Valley Land and Trust (EVLTL) on the conservation easement proposal which would ensure the property is preserved in its current state. EVLTL has submitted an offer to "purchase" the conservation easement for \$1.25M to account for the diminished market value of the property once the easement is placed. He explained that UNC and EVLTL would designate a footprint around the existing retreat site to be excluded from the easement, allowing UNC to

retain ownership of the property and continue to benefit from its use. Nickeson also disclosed a title defect and deed restrictions on the property. He stated that proceeds from the easement purchase would be placed in the UNC capital reserve fund.

Chair Monfort sought a motion to approve the request that the Board of Trustees authorize the President or designee to negotiate the placement of a conservation easement on the Old Man Mountain property in Estes Park, and if negotiation is successful, execute all necessary documents. Vice Chair Jordan made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Campos-Spitze and approved by all Board members in attendance.

### **C. Building Naming Proposal**

Chair Monfort noted that this agenda item was voted to be removed earlier in the meeting.

## **VII. Discussion Items**

### **A. Rowing, Not Drifting 2030, Phase III**

Feinstein provided a progress update and highlights for Phase III of the strategic plan, noting advances in innovation and curriculum research, including attainment of R2 status, the launch of the College of Osteopathic Medicine, and realignment of Extended Campus under Enrollment Management. He also outlined progress in strengthening external partnerships, citing the launch of the new UNC website, the creation of the President's Hispanic Advisory Council, and engagement with Aims Community College leadership to enhance collaborative efforts to increase postsecondary participation. Feinstein thanked Trustee Campos-Spitze for her partnership and leadership in supporting the creation of the President's Hispanic Advisory Council.

### **B. College of Osteopathic Medicine – Pre - Accreditation**

Feinstein referenced his earlier report on the College of Osteopathic Medicine highlighting the pre-accreditation designation, comprehensive marketing and recruitment plan, and next steps.

### **C. Artificial Intelligence**

Assistant Provost for Academic Effectiveness Kim Black provided an overview of generative artificial intelligence, including UNC's current position, key lessons learned, and opportunities to align FY2026 priorities with the existing strategic plan while preparing for the future of AI. She explained that UNC established a task force to oversee AI-related findings, ethical use and accountability, policy gaps, faculty, staff, and student perceptions, usage, and readiness. The task force also examined academic innovation, workforce alignment, and preparation for the future of AI. She outlined institutional priorities that include coordinated strategies,

low-cost/high-impact approaches, consistent student experience, and the development of an innovation hub.

College of Natural Health Sciences (NHS) Dean Kamel Haddad presented an overview of current AI-related initiatives within the college to include increasing faculty AI literacy, exploring changes in teaching with emergence of discipline-specific AI, navigation of appropriate AI use, identifying short-term and long-term goals, and facilitating unit level discussions. Haddad also noted the appointment of a Faculty Associate to the Dean (FAD) for AI, who will lead unit discussions and develop a position statement on assessment, pedagogy, and curriculum. Additional efforts include exploring funding opportunities, researching AI platforms, addressing ethical considerations such as academic dishonesty, equity and bias, environmental impacts, intellectual property, and potential misuse. He also highlighted historical parallels to previous technological shifts in education, including calculators, word processors, the internet, smartphones, and tablets.

Haddad outlined priorities of the UNC AI Advisory Council to include updating community partners on progress in AI, sharing advances and usage across industries and sectors, and soliciting external feedback. The AI Advisory Council feedback emphasized the importance of increasing awareness of AI-assisted tools, prompt engineering, and critical analysis of AI-generated output. He outlined NHS next steps to include developing discipline-specific position statements, creating an AI hub for instruction, submitting grant proposals, micro-credential pathways, creation of an AI fellows program, a student AI leader corps, and regional outreach and training through summits and teaching institutes.

Haddad also provided examples of bias in ChatGPT, illustrating inconsistencies in large language model (LLM) outputs and how prompting can introduce bias. Additionally, he discussed environmental impacts, particularly the energy demands of AI data centers.

Discussion included historical reactions to new technologies and stages of adoption, embracing technological advances, how UNC can lead in integrating emerging technologies in coursework, the impact of technology beyond higher education, the importance of equity when assessing the cost of new technologies, maintaining critical and contemplative thinking among students during AI integration, necessary pedagogical changes for effective AI use, facilitation of advanced learning, remaining current through progressive research, ensuring consistency in AI integration among faculty, staff, and students, creating pathways to support campus adaptation, addressing AI misuse in the classroom, emphasizing student involvement in AI research and decision-making, balancing innovation with traditional learning approaches, and examples of research related to effective AI prompting.



## **VIII. Executive Session**

With no further discussion or business, Chair Monfort asked General Counsel English to make the following announcement to move the Board into executive session:

"Pursuant to §24-6-402(3)(a)(II), C.R.S., the University of Northern Colorado Board of Trustees will go into Executive Session to receive legal advice regarding pending legal issues and personnel issues pursuant to C.R.S. 24-6-402(3)(b)(I)."

Chair Monfort sought a motion to take the Board into executive session. Vice Chair Jordan made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Campos-Spitze and approved by all Board members in attendance. The Board invited President Feinstein and relevant staff members to join the executive session. The Board entered executive session at 11:45 a.m.

Following executive session, General Counsel English provided a public record of affirmation regarding the executive session and reconvened the regular meeting at 12:32 p.m.

## **IX. Adjourn**

With no further discussion or business, Chair Monfort asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved by all Board members in attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 12:34 p.m.