

CHEMEKETA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**BUDGET COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

April 1, 2026

A. CALL TO ORDER

Diane Watson, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm in the Board Room, Building 2, Room 170, at the Salem Campus.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was recited.

C. CHEMEKETA LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Diane Watson read the land acknowledgement.

D. ROLL CALL

Members in Attendance: Chris Brantley; Betsy Earls; Scott Engel; Jackie Franke; Betty Hart; Ken Hector; Neva Hutchinson; Eric Palo; Matthew Reynolds; Jaime Rodriguez; Birgitte Ryslinge (Zoom); and Diane Watson. Excused Absence: Iton Udosenata, Mike Stewart.

College Administrators in Attendance: Jessica Howard, President/Chief Executive Officer; David Hallett, Vice President, Student and Academic Affairs; Alice Sprague, Vice President, Governance and Administration; Aaron Hunter, Vice President College Support Services/Chief Financial Office; and Brian Knowles, Director of Budget and Finance.

E. WELCOME OF BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Diane Watson welcomed the Budget Committee members, and thanked them for being part of this important process.

F. ELECTION OF BUDGET COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Diane Watson opened nominations for Budget Committee chair. Chris Brantley made a motion to nominate Scott Engel, Betsy Earls seconded the motion, and nominations were closed.

Chris Brantley: yes; Betsy Earls: yes; Scott Engel: yes; Jackie Franke: yes; Betty Hart: yes; Ken Hector: yes; Neva Hutchinson: yes; Eric Palo: yes; Matthew Reynolds: yes; Jaime Rodriguez: yes; Birgitte Ryslinge: yes; and Diane Watson, Chair: yes.

The motion CARRIED. Scott Engel was declared chair of the Chemeketa Budget Committee for the 2026–27 proposed budget.

Diane Watson opened nominations for Budget Committee vice chair. Ken Hector made a motion to nominate Neva Hutchinson, Betsy Earls seconded the motion, and nominations were closed.

Chris Brantley: yes; Betsy Earls: yes; Scott Engel: yes; Jackie Franke: yes; Betty Hart: yes; Ken Hector: yes; Neva Hutchinson: yes; Eric Palo: yes; Matthew Reynolds: yes; Jaime Rodriguez: yes; Birgitte Ryslinge: yes; and Diane Watson, Chair: yes.

The motion CARRIED. Neva Hutchinson was declared vice chair of the Chemeketa Budget Committee for the 2026–27 proposed budget.

Board Chair Diane Watson turned the meeting over to Budget Committee Chair Scott Engel. Scott thanked the Budget Committee members for the honor of serving as chair. Budget Committee members introduced themselves.

G. DUTIES OF THE BUDGET COMMITTEE

Aaron Hunter, Vice President/Chief Financial Officer, welcomed the Budget Committee members, thanked them for serving, and reminded them to ask questions or make comments during the presentation. Aaron thanked everyone who was part of the collaborative budget process, and gave a special thanks to Brian Knowles, Director of Budget and Finance, and Allison Stewart Hull, Management Analyst, for their work on preparing the materials and assisting staff.

Aaron provided a summary of the primary Budget Committee duties and responsibilities, noting that the committee needs to meet publicly to review the proposed budget; the budget should not be discussed outside of the public meetings; there must be a quorum; and the public will have an opportunity to ask questions or comment on the budget on Wednesday, April 15. A public hearing on the budget will be held at the May meeting of the Chemeketa Board of Education as well. Aaron reviewed and discussed changes to the budget materials, and noted that they meet accessibility requirements. The materials from this meeting will be posted to the public website on April 2.

H. PRESENTATION OF BUDGET MESSAGE

President Jessica Howard thanked the Budget Committee for its work and service to the college and shared highlights from her budget message, which was contained on pages 6–8 of the spiral-bound Proposed Budget Fiscal Year 2026–2027 book. Jessica noted that the college is in a good place overall, but is operating within a context of change and unpredictability at state and national levels.

Related to changes in the environment, Chemeketa is very grateful to district voters who approved a \$140M General Obligation Capital Projects bond measure last May, which will result in updated and modernized college facilities. Specifically, it will allow us to address deferred maintenance and create student-focused environments and flexible programming to meet the changing workforce needs of the service district and spur enrollment over the longer term. Planning and construction has already begun on a number of these initiatives, and work will continue for the next five to six years.

The budget message touched upon the General Fund Revenue and Expenditures, and Major Initiatives and Efforts. Jessica shared the following highlights on college initiatives:

- Notable efforts include the College's leadership role in developing applied baccalaureate degrees to fill critical workforce gaps (the second one, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, will open for students this fall); innovative short-term training with community partners in high-demand fields; promising co-requisite teaching approaches to accelerate progress and student success in math and writing; and realizing capacity and functionality with new technology to significantly improve the student experience. In addition, the College continues to win grants that reflect well upon existing operations and provide more opportunities to create student success.

- For several years now, the College has created new bodies and processes to invigorate strategic planning and encourage employee engagement. In April of 2025, Chemeketa received a mid-accreditation-cycle visit from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. It resulted in the fulfillment of all recommendations from the 2022 comprehensive visit and showcased the College's recent improvements in data infrastructure, creation of new general education outcomes, and continuous improvement design.

The College has weathered recent challenging years but has grown, adapted, and remains innovative and committed to students, academic quality and continuous improvement. Chemeketa has adequate reserves to manage the volatility of General Fund revenues, fund technology and equipment, and ensure the repayment of long-term debts. Chemeketa will continue to employ prudence and a strategic approach moving forward, and the college will continue to increase in relevance and impact well into the future for communities we are privileged to serve.

I. PRESENTATION OF 2026–2027 PROPOSED BUDGET

Aaron discussed Slides 5-20, giving an overview of the financial environment and touching upon current conditions and looking ahead, enrollment trends and outlook, key budget issues, the 2026–2027 budget approach, and the 2027–2028 budget outlook.

Neva Hutchinson asked why flat enrollments are a safer way to project the future than doing the 2.4 percent. Aaron said regarding flat enrollment it's usually better to budget conservatively because the college is better off fiscally if targets are exceeded.

Chris Brantley referenced the slide showing a 31 percent reduction in FTE and the slide showing an upward trend in costs, and asked why there isn't a cost reduction since the FTE is less. Aaron said many of the costs are fixed costs, and costs for personnel have increased over time. Neva asked where PERS fits in, and Aaron said it is included in the position cost.

Jaime Rodriguez asked about the average years of service of full-time faculty. David Hallett said most full-time faculty are on the top level of pay, have been here awhile, and the retention of full-time faculty is good. Jaime also asked what the current ratio between faculty and adjunct is. David said there are approximately 180 full-time faculty, and approximately 400 part-time and adjunct faculty.

Aaron referred to Slide 22, Total Budget All Funds, showing a total of \$385,116,779 for all funds for FY 2026–2027 (excluding transfers between funds). Slide 23, Budget Assumptions and Decisions Resources, shows the proposed budget to be based upon the state funding level of \$854 million for the 2025–2027 biennium, flat enrollment from 2025–2026, a \$3 tuition increase, 4.5 percent projected growth for property taxes, a decrease to interest revenue, indirect and miscellaneous revenue slightly up, and a decrease of \$1 million to the beginning fund balance.

Slide 24, General Fund Resource Changes, shows the changes to revenue sources resulting in the proposed budget for 2026–2027 of \$122,244,640.

Slide 25, General Fund Resources FY 2026–2027, contains a chart showing resources by percentage. Slide 26 covers Budget Assumptions and Decisions Expenditures, which included a

step increase and estimated salary schedule adjustments for classified, faculty, and exempt; a 3 percent increase in employer-paid health insurance for classified, faculty, and exempt; targeted investments, offset by reductions; targeted inflationary increases to materials and services, and the contingency/ending fund balance reflects the return to the policy range of 10-15 percent of resources. Slide 27, General Fund Expenditure Changes, shows budget changes within the expenditure categories. Slide 28, General Fund Expenditures FY 2026–2027, shows expenditure percentages by category.

Jaime Rodriguez asked where the transfers come from. Aaron said these are expenditures, and the transfers are going out to support different college funds.

Aaron pointed out the acronym definitions on Slide 30, Slides 31–32, Strategic Planning, and General Fund Investments by Strategic Themes, which shows the start of the budget planning process, and the investments listed by strategic themes. Slide 33 shows College Support Services Material and Services Changes. There is an annual software move expense from the General Fund to the Universal Fee Fund. Slide 34, College Support Services Personnel Changes shows a reduction in part-time and student hourly. Slide 35, Non-Mandatory Transfer Changes, showed increases in transfers out due to rising costs and aligning expenses. The total for College Support Services is (\$31,106).

Ken asked what the number of personnel is for each of the categories for Slide 34. Aaron said the number is zero, there is not an FTE associated with this.

Alice Sprague, VP of Governance and Administration, said the process has been collaborative within the departments, focusing on the college's mission, prioritizing the college's services, and those of the students. Alice reviewed the areas that are represented under Governance and Administration and the President's Office. Alice discussed Slides 36–37, President's Office and Governance Personnel Changes and Materials and Services Changes, showing a 1.0 overall FTE reduction, licensing, telephone charges, printing and postage cost reductions, and an increase for a software licensing annual rate, and to support learning outcomes assessments. The total for the President's Office and Governance is (\$142,286).

David Hallett, VP of Academic and Student Affairs, thanked the budget committee members for the service they provide to Chemeketa. David said the strategy in his department when looking at the budget is to provide maximum access and opportunity for the College's students with the resources we have; strengthen efforts to retain and support current students; and ensure student success and completion in the most efficient way possible. David referred to Slides 38–41, Academic and Student Affairs Personnel Changes and Materials and Services Changes. Personnel changes to the general fund amounted to an increase in 1.75 FTE, funding movement to support learning outcomes assessment, reductions in materials and services, postage, and professional services. The total for Academic and Student Affairs is \$246,136.

Budget Committee members discussed the great relationship the college has with those in the Prison Education system, asked about programs being offered, and acknowledged the high success rate of those who graduate from Chemeketa programs within the corrections system.

David discussed Slide 42, Student Affairs Budget Realignment, which showed 1.36 FTE moved to the General Fund. The Approximate Net Impact to General Fund is \$317,855.

Jackie asked for an explanation of how the transfer of funds works for positions between grants and the general fund in regards to backfilling. Gaelen McCallister said the positions are not backfilled. However, by moving two positions to the general fund, those savings from the grants can be used for other positions.

Aaron noted the total budget reduction is approximately \$910,000 and the college is backfilling the budget with some self-support money, relieving the general fund. Investments are \$845,000 and the net this year is approximately \$65,000 to the general fund.

Chris Brantley asked if due to the Big Beautiful Bill and other funding from the federal government what might happen over the next five years with grants. Jessica noted the college applied for TRIO and received the grant at a flat level. In addition, the college was also fortunate to win a new TRIO grant. The CAMP grant was not available for reapplication for last year; however, it is now open for colleges to reapply. Her opinion is that things are better than this time last year, but the volatility makes it difficult to plan and retain strong staff if they do not know if the grant will continue.

Jessica commended the budget team; Diane added her thanks and complimented the Grants Department.

Jaime Rodriguez asked if we expect a decline of services due to this budget? Aaron said no.

J. QUESTIONS

Scott asked if there were additional questions.

K. SUMMARY FOR NEXT MEETING

Aaron reminded the Budget Committee that its next meeting is Wednesday, April 15, at 4:00 pm to discuss the Other Funds. To sign up for public comment, one should email budget@chemeketa.edu prior to 5 pm on April 14, or arrive in-person prior to the start of the Budget Committee meeting on April 15, and another opportunity at the board meeting on May 20.

L. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Deuchars
Executive Coordinator

Jessica Howard
President/Chief Executive Officer

Scott Engel
Budget Committee Chair

4-15-2026
Date