

The Ohio State University at Newark – Board Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, January 15, 2026

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Location: Reese Center Executive Conference Room 255

Board Members Present: Jeff Cox (Chair), Olivia Biggs, Lee Heckman, Tara Houdeshell, Marc Lyons, Matt Miller, Alexa Robinson O’Neill, Brad Shumaker, Chelsea Shipley (Student Representative), Ginny Grady (Newark Representative to the Alumni Advisory Council), Andrew Guanciale (COTC Board Chair)

Absent: No Absences

Faculty/Staff Present: Brian Boehmer, Melissa Buelow, David Brillhart, Cory Brown, John Davenport, Sanath Kumar, Kim Manno, Jackie Parrill, Jamie White

1. Call to Order

Chair Jeff Cox called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the October 16, 2025 meeting were approved as presented.

3. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved without changes.

4. Public Comments

- Matt Smith introduced Dr. Andy Roberts, Associate Dean for Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering, highlighting his expanded leadership role and service to the Newark campus.
- Andrew Guanciale, Chair of the COTC Board and a member of the Guanciale Group with Coldwell Banker Realty, was introduced and will represent COTC at OSU Newark board meetings going forward, succeeding Rob Montagnese in this role.

5. COTC Board Report: Andrew Guanciale

- Andrew Guanciale provided an update from the COTC Board, reporting that Spring 2026 enrollment totals 3,467 students, with overall enrollment remaining stable compared to last year.
- Andrew noted that faculty union negotiations are nearing conclusion following SERB filings.
- COTC and Ohio State Newark have launched a year-long campaign celebrating the 55th anniversary of their partnership, alongside ongoing employer-focused community outreach luncheons to support workforce development and regional engagement

6. **Faculty Assembly:** The Faculty Assembly report was deferred to a future meeting
7. **Alumni Advisory Council Update:** Ginny Grady
 - Ginny Grady provided an update from the October meeting of the Alumni Advisory Council, which focused on athletics and its role within the university's broader strategic framework. She shared highlights from presentations by Athletic Director Ross Bjork and President Walter "Ted" Carter, noting that athletics is viewed as a key driver of visibility and engagement for the university.
 - President Carter emphasized the university's financial stability, the importance of regional campuses, and his intent to visit all regional campuses in 2026. He also discussed long-term priorities including enrollment trends, workforce needs in healthcare, artificial intelligence fluency for future graduates, and continued investment in academic and athletic infrastructure.
 - Ginny noted that the Alumni Advisory Council will continue to serve as a conduit for feedback and communication between alumni leadership and the university, and she offered to share additional updates following the Council's April meeting if requested.
8. **Student Representative update:** Chelsea Shipley
 - Student Representative Chelsea Shipley shared observations from the student perspective, highlighting several strengths on campus, including increased student engagement opportunities, improved campus programming, and strong student-faculty interaction. She noted positive feedback regarding the addition of an activities manager and expanded campus events that support student well-being and connection.
 - Chelsea also provided an update on the campus food pantry, reporting increased student utilization and expanded offerings, including dietary-specific options and non-food essentials. She noted that demand has grown significantly and that planning is underway to identify additional space to support continued expansion of services.
 - She identified areas of concern related to course availability for smaller upper-division cohorts, student employment opportunities, and the impact of low enrollment on course delivery. Chelsea encouraged continued attention to these issues to ensure students can complete their degrees on the Newark campus and remain financially supported.
9. **Scholarship fund update:** Kim Manno
 - Kim Manno provided an update on Advisory Board-supported scholarships, including the Ohio State University Foundation scholarship and the Newark Campus Development Fund scholarship. She reported that both funds continue to support students annually and shared that the recipients for the current year are primary education majors.
 - Kim noted the cumulative value of the scholarship funds and highlighted the long-term impact these awards have on students and the broader community. She also indicated that information on contributing to the scholarship funds can be shared with Board members who express interest.

10. **Dean's/Director's report:** Matthew J. Smith

- **55th Anniversary Celebration of Partnership** - Dean Smith noted that the 55th anniversary campaign is underway and that President John Berry and he have begun sharing the presentation with community groups, including a recent Rotary presentation. He thanked staff for preparing the campaign materials and coordinating logistics to support community outreach throughout the year.
- **Strategic Planning Update** - Dean Smith reported that campus strategic planning continues to align with the university's strategic framework, Education.for.Citizenship. 8690, as articulated by President Ted Carter. He noted that the campus strategic plan has undergone several refinements to ensure alignment with university priorities and expectations, including increased emphasis on financial sustainability and implementation planning. Dean Smith indicated that a draft is being prepared for review with university leadership, after which the plan will be shared with the Board.
- **Housing** - Dean Smith provided an update on housing planning and shared that university partners are actively engaged in exploring additional housing options for the Newark campus. He noted that the process is in a due-diligence phase focused on determining the appropriate number of beds needed and ensuring long-term financial viability, with involvement from facilities, business, and student life leaders. He shared that, once approved, additional housing is expected to be a multi-year project and emphasized that planning is moving forward with the appropriate university stakeholders.
- **Enrollment Update and Regional Campus Commitment** - Dean Smith reported that the enrollment director position is currently vacant and that university enrollment partners are providing interim support during the search for a successor. He noted that applications are up year-over-year and that interest in the Regional Campus Commitment continues to support demand for the Newark campus, despite anticipated declines in optioned students due to changes in university testing requirements. The campus expects an incoming class comparable in size to the current record cohort and is planning targeted investments in faculty, advising, and student support as part of the upcoming budget process.
- **Additional Update** - Dean Smith noted that planning is underway for a potential special visitor to campus and that details will be shared with the board once confirmed.

11. **New Business**

- No formal new business items were brought before the Board. Jeff encouraged Board members to remain engaged and responsive as the campus continues to navigate significant opportunities and changes, and to be willing to provide guidance, feedback, and support as requested by the Dean and administration.
- The Board was informed that an Ohio State student-athlete from the women's hockey program has been selected to represent the United States on the Olympic team. The student is also a social work major, and the Board expressed pride in this achievement.

- Jeff proposed that the March 19, 2026 Advisory Board meeting be held as a “field trip” at The Works, specifically in the SciDome. The meeting will begin at the regular time of 9:00 a.m. with a presentation by Dilu Divaratne, who leads the Learning Lab initiative encompassing the SciDome, Newark Earthworks, and Dawes Arboretum. The Board will convene following the presentation to conduct remaining business.
- No additional items of new business were raised.

12. **Next Board Meeting:** March 19, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Note location change: The SciDome at The Works, 55 South 3rd Street, Newark

13. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. by Jeff Cox.

Respectfully submitted by

Nichole Lenglé
Executive Assistant to the Dean and Director
The Ohio State University at Newark