



Foundation Board of Directors Meeting (Wednesday, April 23, 2025)

MINUTES FOR APPROVAL

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

1.1 Roll Call: Barbara Foster Monachino, Barbara Fromm, Bill Chunowitz, Carol Fragen, Christine Anderson, Dale Landon, Diane Rubin, Donna MacMillan, Ed Gubman, Elisabeth Dick, Jaishri Mehta, Jane Saltonstall, Jenell Vandembos, Jim Greene, Joan Lamb, Marge Dodge, Norma Castaneda, Paul Hinkes, Ramraghi Fuller, Rob Moon, Shari Stewart, Tom Minder, Phillip Niblo, Alvin Schonfeld. NON-VOTING: Val Martinez Garcia, Corbyn Wild, Chip West, Mary Jane Sanchez-Fulton, Juan Falcon

Voting Members Absent: Carol Fragen, Jaishri Mehta, Jenell VanDenBos

Non-Voting Members Absent: Val Martinez-Garcia, Corbyn Wild, Mary Jane Sanchez-Fulton, Juan Falcon

Non-Voting Members Present: Chip West, Christopher Martinez (on behalf of Juan Falcon)

Recorder: Juli Maxwell

2. AGENDA

Procedural: 2.1 Pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2(b)(2), the Board may take action on items of business not appearing on the posted agenda, upon a determination by a two-thirds vote of the members of the legislative body present at the meeting, or, if less than two-thirds of the members are present, a unanimous vote of those members present, that there is a need to take immediate action and that the need for action came to the attention of the local agency subsequent to the agenda being posted as specified in subdivision (a)

2.2 Confirmation of Agenda: Approval of agenda for the Foundation Board of Directors Meeting of April 23, 2025, with any additions, corrections, or deletions.

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. MINUTES

3.1 Approval of the March 26, 2025 Foundation Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Joan Lamb noted a typo in the agenda, the word "plan" should be changed to "planned". Agenda was approved with changes.

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Information: 4.1 Public Participation and Public Comment: In person and remote public participation is allowed and will be accepted in person, by email to codfoundation@collegeofthedesert.edu and submitted for the record during public comment or by using the raise your hand function by joining the Zoom link <https://collegeofthedesert.edu.zoom.us/j/julimaxwell?pwd=b0tLbzNRWWWhyL284NH02MmtnUXE5UT09&omn=89926983480>. There is a time limit of three (3) minutes per person. All comments must be submitted or brought forward prior to the end of the public comments section. Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities: Persons with disabilities may make a written request for a disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, in order to participate in the Board meeting. All requests should be directed to the Foundation Office in advance via email to codfoundation@collegeofthedesert.edu.

There were no public comments.

Individual headshots were taken of the board.

The Foundation Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 2:05pm. New board members were welcomed, with Dr. Alvin J. Schonfeld introducing himself and raised questions about student awareness of foundation opportunities and potential housing support.

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5. SPECIAL ITEM

Discussion: 5.1 Amanda Augustine as Foundation Board Member- First Read

A first read for a proposed new board member, Amanda Augustine, is presented, highlighting her background as a tribal chairwoman and her potential contributions to the board. The meeting then pauses for a group photo before resuming.

6. REPORT ITEMS

6.1 Board of Trustee Liaison Report - Mary Jane Sanchez-Fulton

Not in attendance.

6.2 Acting Interim Superintendent/President Report - Val Martinez Garcia

Not in attendance.

6.3 Chip West - Interim VP of Administrative Services

Chip West, VP of Administrative Services, reports on campus improvements including landscaping upgrades, infrastructure enhancements, and sustainability efforts. He highlights the upcoming fall semester registration and commencement preparations.

6.4 Student Representative ASCOD Vice President - Juan Falcon

Christopher Martinez, representing the Associated Students of College of the Desert, reports on recent student activities and upcoming events. He highlights the successful Club Olympics and annual Drag Show, and invites board members to the final Roadrunner Rodeo on May 7th at Ranchers Park. Christopher also mentions the College Corps program's accomplishments, including 18,000 hours of community service. He concludes by thanking the COD Foundation for providing graduation regalia for this year's graduating students.

6.5 Board Chair Report - Diane Rubin

Diane Rubin, in her final chair report, expresses gratitude to the board and staff for their support and dedication to the COD Foundation's mission.

6.6 Executive Director Report - Catherine Abbott

Cathy Abbott thanks Diane for her leadership as outgoing chair, acknowledges the committee chairs' contributions, and welcomes Tom Minder as the incoming chair.

6.7 Directors' Reports (Reports may be submitted by emailing the Foundation at codfoundation@collegeofthedesert.edu)

Rob Moon reported on President's Circle success and upcoming events like the Farm Tour.

Chris Anderson reported on Legacy Leaders events.

Marge Dodge reported for Academic Angels on the upcoming Spring into Summer lunch on May 1.

Paul Hinkes had no report as the Finance Committee had not met. Kirstien gave an update on Ferguson Wellman.

Chris Anderson reported for Legacy Leaders. There will be an event on May 17th at the McCallum Theatre, featuring a champagne reception and the COD presentation of Jesus Christ Superstar.

Barbara Fromm did not have a report for Parliamentarian.

7. DISCUSSION ITEMS

7.1 Board Member Resignations

The board recognizes the significant contributions of two departing members, Marge Dodge and Rob Moon. Marge is praised for her extensive involvement in various foundation activities over 12 years, while Rob is acknowledged for his leadership in advancement, stewardship, and event hosting. Both are awarded emeritus status and express their intention to continue supporting the foundation's mission, though not as board members.

7.2 Development Team - Year End Report

The development team then presented a year-end report, highlighting successful campus tours that have resulted in new donations, President's Circle memberships, and strengthened donor relationships. The team reported that the President's Circle membership has reached 42 lifetime members, 84 paying members, and 16 payroll members. The President's Circle has raised \$190,307 this year, exceeding the \$172,032 raised in 2024. The membership levels have been restored to 2016 levels, which was the peak year. The President's Circle has also introduced a new initiative, the President's Business Circle, which is a dynamic network of business leaders and community influencers committed to fostering a stronger relationship between mobile industries and education at College of the Desert. The President's Business Circle has raised \$105,000 for the 2025 fiscal year. The foundation is also working on a complete rebrand of all marketing materials and is launching a new podcast called "All Things Foundation." The foundation has also created a new giving portfolio with inserts of areas of giving to tailor make experience for each donor. The foundation has also introduced a new initiative called "Legacy Leaders," which is a group of visionaries who can see the future of College of the Desert and are willing to help fund that future from their estate plans. The foundation has also had a staff giving day, which raised a total of just under \$7,300, a record for their employee giving day.

8. ACTION ITEMS

8.1 Approval of 990's

Paul Hinkes made a motion to approve the 990's, Jim Greene seconded.
Motion carried.

8.2 Approval of 2025/26 Operating Budget

Kirstien Renna reported that the budget shows a revenue of \$2,998,000 and expenses of \$2,969,000, resulting in a net increase of \$29,000. Kirsten explains that despite lowering the revenue projection due to economic factors, the overall budget has increased due to growth in investment activities and management fees.

Tom Minder made a motion to approve the 2025/26 Operating Budget, Barbara Foster Monachino seconded.
Motion carried.

8.3 Election and Swearing in of Officers

The board then proceeds to elect new officers, with Tom Minder as chair, Barbara Foster Monachino as chair-elect, Shari Stewart as secretary, and Paul Hinkes as treasurer. The board meeting included a formal swearing-in ceremony for new executive committee members and board directors, led by Eve Fromberg-Edelstein. Tom Minder is introduced as the new chair and given a personalized gavel.

Tom Minder then addressed the board with his statement. "It is truly an honor to stand before you today as the new Chairperson of the COD Foundation. I want to take a moment to thank my predecessor, Diane Rubin, for her dedication and leadership, which have helped shape this foundation into the force for good that it is today. As we all know, education changes lives. Our mission-to support the students of COD-is not just noble; it is necessary. Every dollar we raise, every scholarship we fund, and every program we support is an investment in the future of our students and, ultimately, our community. That being said, I won't sugarcoat the reality we are facing. We know that philanthropy flourishes in environments where trust, collaboration, and shared purpose thrive. Unfortunately, recent challenges-some of which have been placed in our path rather than stumbled upon-have made it more difficult to secure the support we know is out there. These obstacles have, at times, tested our patience and our resolve. But if there is one thing I know about this foundation and the people in this room, it's that we do not back down from our mission just because the road gets a little rough. We are not here for politics, for egos, or for distractions. We are here for students. And I am confident that, despite the headwinds, we will continue to find ways to move forward, to engage those who believe in the power of education, and to ensure that this foundation remains a strong and unwavering pillar of support for COD. I look forward to working with each of you to overcome these challenges, build new partnerships, and reinforce the importance of what we do. Thank you for your dedication, your generosity, and, most of all, your commitment to the students who are counting on us. Let's get to work.

9. MISSION MOMENT

9.1 LGBTQ+ Pride Center

The meeting featured a "mission moment" highlighting the efforts of donors supporting LGBTQ+ students through the Desert Sparkles Fund. Several Pride Center student leaders share their experiences, and donors Tony Ogden and Lucio Bernard speak about the impact of their contributions.

10. ADJOURNMENT

10.1 Next Meeting: September 24, 2025

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03pm.