

The Board of Trustees of the West Virginia College and Jumpstart Savings Programs

Investment Committee Meeting Minutes

315 70th Street, SE – 2nd Floor Conference Room
Microsoft TEAMS Optional

December 3, 2025

9:15 a.m.

The Investment Committee Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the West Virginia College and Jumpstart Savings Programs was called to order on Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at 9:15 a.m. A silent roll call was taken, and a quorum was established. Mr. Chris Heller-Chair, Ms. Clea Harless and Mr. Patrick Smith were in attendance.

The following consultants were present: Mr. Chris Morvant, Ms. Allison Mortensen, and Mr. James Glendon representing Hartford Funds; and Ms. Tiffany Spudich, Ms. Susan Somers and Mr. Corey Waddell representing Capital Cities; and Mr. Todd Erskine representing Dimensional Funds.

The following WVSTO staff members attended: Ms. Betsy Chapman, Ms. Gina Joynes, Mr. Karl Shanholtzer, and Ms. Amy Hamilton.

The agenda consisted of the following:

Call to Order – Silent Roll Call

- I. Consideration of the Minutes of the September 3, 2025 Meeting
- II. Update on Annual Due Diligence Review of Hartford Funds – Capital Cities
- III. Quarterly Investment Report – Capital Cities
- IV. Consideration of Recommendation of Funds for Watch List
- V. Morningstar 2025 Results
- VI. Saving for College Ratings
- VII. Other Business

Adjournment

Call to Order – Silent Roll Call

The Chair noted a silent roll call was taken and a quorum was established.

Agenda Item I. Consideration of Minutes from the September 3, 2025 Meeting

The Chair indicated the first order of business on the agenda was the approval of the minutes from the Investment Committee meeting on September 3, 2025. The minutes were previously circulated with the Board packet. The Chair asked for a motion to accept the minutes as presented. As there were no additions or corrections to the minutes, a motion to accept the minutes was made by Patrick Smith and seconded by Clea Harless. There being no discussion, the members were polled, and the motion carried.

Agenda Item II. Update on Annual Due Diligence Review of Hartford Funds

The Chair recognized Capital Cities to give a report on the annual due diligence review of Hartford Funds. There were ten meetings held on November 5th and 6th at Hartford Funds' office in Wayne, PA. Capital Cities and STO staff attending the meetings in person and virtually. Topics included organization, brand, legal, investments, sales & services, compliance, information technology, operations and marketing. A summary of each meeting may be found in the Board packet under Tab 5. Ms. Spudich did note Capital Cities specifically requested a review of the Hartford MidCap Fund and the Hartford MidCap Value Fund. Capital Cities is continuing to monitor these funds.

Agenda Item III. Quarterly Investment Report -Capital Cities

Moving on, the Chair asked Capital Cities to present the Investment Consultant Report. Mr. Waddell reviewed the report noting the first section of the report, Items for Discussion, includes the onsite due diligence report and personnel changes within several funds. Mr. Waddell continued by recognizing the Hartford Growth Opportunities Fund was downgraded from green to yellow on the Stoplight Report as it fell to the bottom quartile of its peers. Moving on to the Market Overview, Mr. Waddell noted that equities advanced strongly during the quarter. The S&P 500 was up 8%. The AI trades and Mag 7 names have bolstered up the Index performance. Large Cap Growth was up 25%. There has been positive performance internationally. He noted Fixed Income has been behaving as Fixed Income should. Cash is still returning at 4.4% and is expected to trickle down as the Fed continues reducing interest rates. Long term, the Fed may lower the fund rate by three quarters or a percent over the next calendar year to eighteen months, which will drive down overall returns within cash and shorter-term deposits.

Mr. Waddell noted total assets in **The Hartford SMART529** and that the Hartford Growth Opportunities Fund was moved from green to yellow on the Stoplight Report for long-term performance. Moving to page 13, he noted the strong equity market returns and fixed income provided positive results with the Age-Based 0-3 Portfolio returning nearly 6.67% and the 18+ Portfolio at 2.03% for one year. Three-year returns show the Age-Based 0-3 Portfolio at 21.10% and the 18+ Portfolio at 7.04%. Static portfolios show similar performance on the more aggressive side at 6% for the quarter and 21% for three-year performance.

Regarding **SMART529 Select**, Mr. Waddell noted the total assets on page 15. There are no changes to the Stoplight Report and all funds are in good standing.

On page 20, he noted total assets in **SMART529 WV Direct** along with no changes to the Stoplight Report.

Moving to page 32, Mr. Waddell noted Capital Cities is continuing to add data for review and will continue to update this section quarterly. It provides an update of the reconciliation of where each one of the portfolios began the quarter, asset flows in and out and the ending market value as a gain or loss along with participant data on the right-hand side.

The following update provides details on total SMART529 plan assets and the Stoplight status of any portfolio which has been escalated to yellow, black or red on the Stoplight Report for the quarter ending September 30, 2025.

The Hartford SMART529

Assets: \$1,894,021,274

Fund Name	Color	Stoplight Status
Hartford Checks & Balances	Yellow	Short-Term Performance, Long-term Performance
Hartford Equity Income 529 Fund	Yellow	Short-Term Performance
Hartford Growth Opportunities Fund	Yellow	Long-Term Performance (<i>newly added</i>)
Hartford MidCap 529 Fund	Black	Qualitative Review, Short-Term Performance, Long-Term Performance
Hartford MFS Global Equity 529 F	Yellow	Short-Term Performance, Long-Term Performance
Hartford Equity Income Fund	Yellow	Short-Term Performance
Hartford Small Cap Growth Fund	Yellow	Short-Term Performance, Long-Term Performance
Hartford Capital Appreciation Fund	Yellow	Short-Term Performance, Long-Term Performance

SMART529 Select

Assets: \$745,925,069

All funds in good standing.

SMART529 WV Direct

Assets: \$594,618,788

All funds in good standing.

Agenda Item IV. Consideration of Recommendation of Funds for Watch List

Next, the Chair asked if any members wish to recommend to the full Board, any investment option be escalated to the Watchlist. Having heard no recommendations from the Investment Committee, the Chair moved to the next agenda item.

Agenda Item V. Morningstar 2025 Results

The Chair recognized Betsy Chapman for a review of the 2025 Morningstar Ratings. Ms. Chapman stated Morningstar released their national ratings of fifty-nine 529 plans on November 10, 2025. Of the three plans under the SMART529 umbrella, only The Hartford SMART529 plan has sufficient assets to be rated by Morningstar. The full write-up is under Tab 2 of the Board packet.

The Hartford SMART529, maintained a Neutral rating overall with the People and Parent pillars receiving a Positive score, the Process pillar receiving a neutral score, and the Price pillar receiving a Negative score.

It is important to note ours is one of the more affordable advisor-sold plans. I'll mention a few highlights of the analyst's official write-up:

- Hartford’s multi-asset solutions team earns an Above Average People rating for its thoughtful approach and original research on education savings which informs portfolio decisions.
- Oversight from the West Virginia's State Treasurer’s Office supports an Above Average Parent rating. The plan benefits from multiple layers of governance, including a Board of Trustees and an Investment Committee composed of professionals with relevant experience.
- Encouragingly, the state now offers clean share classes that exclude distribution and maintenance fees.

In conclusion, Ms. Chapman said collaboratively, we will continue to strive to improve our Morningstar rating.

Agenda Item VI. Saving for College Ratings

The Chair asked Ms. Chapman to provide a report on the Saving for College Ratings. Ms. Chapman gave an update on rankings of Savingforcollege.com, an industry website that provides ratings of 529 plans. Each of the three SMART529 plans continue to receive a score from 1 to 5 caps (similar to stars used by hotels and restaurants). She reported that all SMART529 plans were rated at 4.5 to 5 stars and all three plans received “Top of the Class” awards and had the highest rating of “Best” for state resident benefit.

Agenda Item VII. Other Business

The Chair advised the next meeting of the Investment Committee will be announced in accordance with the Open Meetings Act once the date and time has been determined. The Chair asked if there was any further business to be brought before the Investment Committee. Hearing none, Mr. Heller made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Patrick Smith. The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Prepared by Amy Hamilton
Committee Approval Date: 3/4/26

Submitted by:



Chris Heller, Chair
Investment Committee