

SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
MICHAEL J. GRANT CAMPUS, BRENTWOOD, NY  
BOARD ROOM, LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER  
SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

The meeting was held on Thursday, September 21, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room of the Learning Resource Center, in Brentwood, NY.

PRESENT:

E. Christopher Murray	Chair
Gordon Canary	Vice Chair
Shirley Coverdale	Vice Chair
Gemma deLeon-Lopresti	Secretary
Theresa Sanders	Trustee
Belinda Pagdanganan	Trustee
Priscilla Zarate	Trustee
Samantha Portillo	Trustee
Dr. Edward Bonahue	President
Ashley Pope	General Counsel
Alla Brodsky	Deputy General Counsel
Sara Gorton	Interim V.P. of Business and Financial Affairs
Mary Lou Araneo	V.P. for Institutional Advancement
Shady Azzam-Gomez	V.P. for Information Technology Services
Dr. Liesl Jones	V.P. for Academic Affairs
Dr. Patty Munsch	V.P. for Student Affairs
Kaliah Greene	Interim V.P. / Executive Director, Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Angelica Rivera	V.P. for Human Resources

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The meeting of the Board of Trustees was convened at 9:03 a.m.

Chair Murray requested a motion to enter into executive session to discuss the collective negotiations pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law; proposed, threatened, current or pending litigation and to seek legal advice, which is made confidential by law. Trustee Coverdale so moved, Trustee Canary seconded, the motion was approved unanimously. (*Where upon the meeting was adjourned from 9:03 A.M. to 10:37 A.M.*)

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The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Trustee Canary.

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Chair Murray moved to recognition of guests. Ms. Wickliffe-Campbell introduced Comptroller John Kennedy; Legislator Leslie Kennedy; Legislator Trish Bergin, Maria Barbara, representing Presiding Officer Kevin McCaffrey; Tim Rothang, representing Legislator Mazzarella; Greg Ackerman, representing Legislator Bontempi; and Nick DeBello from the AME Executive Board, and Tom Lupo from the Comptroller's Office. Two students were also in attendance, but had to leave for class; they were Ethan Rothberg, the SGA president from the Ammerman Campus and Tamiko Patterson, Business and Accounting Club Vice President at Grant Campus.

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Chair Murray moved onto Public comments and introduced Dante Morelli, President of the Faculty Association. Dr. Morelli, referred to the stipulation of agreement between the Faculty Association, the County and the College and thanked the board for their consideration. He thanked Dr. Bonahue, for his leadership in the process and putting together the negotiating team. He also thanked Lou Petrizzo, Mark Harris, Angelica Rivera, Ashley Pope, Ben Zwirn, Drew Biondo and Suffolk County Director of Labor Relations, Jennifer McNamara, and the Faculty Association for their contributions during the negotiating process.

Chair Murray announced that they had received a request from County Legislators Kennedy and Bergin, to address the Board. Since it was past the required 48 hours advance notice, pursuant to the Board's Bylaws, the Board would need to take a vote as to whether or not they should be permitted speak. He added that he would be abstaining from resolution number 2023.53 and would turn over the meeting to Vice Chair Coverdale during any discussion regarding resolution 2023.53. Prior to recusing himself he commented in reference to recent statements regarding the Board of Trustees. He expressed his disappointment regarding controversial statements made by Legislator Bergin, adding they were false accusations that have created tension and has diverted attention from providing the services to the College and its students. *(Upon which Chair Murray and Trustee Sanders recused themselves from the meeting)*

Vice Chair Coverdale called for a motion to allow Legislators Kennedy and Bergin to make public comments. Trustee deLeon-Lopresti so moved, Trustee Canary seconded, the motioned carried with six votes.

Legislator Kennedy thanked the board for allowing them to speak. She expressed her concerns as a Legislator and alumni, over things she's been reading in the press, and how they could possibly affect the College's reputation. She asked the Board not to pass resolution 2023.53, excusing the absence of a board member.

Legislator Bergin thanked the board for allowing her to speak and noted she was also an alumnus of the College. She then addressed her comments and concerns in regards to Chair Murray and Trustee Sanders given the current news. She asked that the Board give serious consideration to whether to approve resolution 2023.53 excusing the absence of a Board member. She added that if they were to approved the resolution

then she would exercise the County Charter Section C23-9 that allows the Legislature to have a hearing to remove Trustees the Legislature appointed.

Ms. Pope then provided an overview of resolution 2023.53. The Executive Committee, with Chair Murray abstaining and removing himself from that portion of the meeting, conditionally approved the resolution to excuse the absence of Trustee Sanders on August 17, 2023, and to designate it as an excused absence, such that the Bylaws would not result in removal of Trustee Sanders from the Board. Pursuant to the Bylaws, any conditional approval from the Executive Committee is subject to confirmation by the Board of Trustees as a body, which is why it is on the agenda this month.

Vice Chair Coverdale requested a motion for approval of college resolution number 2023.53. After extensive conversation Vice Chair Canary asked for a motion to table 2023.53. Trustee deLeon-Lopresti seconded. The motion to table was approved with six votes. *(Whereupon Chair Murray and Trustee Sanders returned to the meeting).*

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Chair Murray requested a motion to approve the minutes of the August 17, 2023 Board of Trustees meeting. Trustee deLeon-Lopresti so moved, Trustee Coverdale seconded. The motion to approve the minutes was approved unanimously.

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Chair Murray introduced Sara Gorton, Interim Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs, to present the College Budget and Financial report. Ms. Gorton reported that FY'23 budget ended on August 31st, 2023. They continue their work to prepare to close the books for the audit. The final update will be available in October when they get ready to prepare the State report. In regards to revenue budget, overall variance in revenue ended up about \$2.4M, 1.2% above the adopted revenue budget. Total student tuition was approximately \$100,000 less than budget. Student fees exceeding the budget at approximately \$365K and interest and rental income exceeding the budget at \$2.4M. She thanked and acknowledged John Bullard for his work. In regards to the expenditure budget, the College is closing within \$100,000 of budgeted expenditures. There are some overages and savings, the most significant in equipment and supplies. The College was able to save about \$2.3M. This offset the increases from EMHP, and increases in required retirement contributions. The anticipated fund balance when the College prepared the budget was going to be use of \$13.6M, and will now be only about \$11M, saving about \$2.4M of fund balance usage. Estimated fund balance at the end of the fiscal year for 2023 should be about \$32.8M.

In regards to FY'24, full-time fall revenue is slightly over budget by \$165K. Part-time fall revenue is \$2.3M (18.2%) under budget (Beacon and Late Start enrollment is still in progress). The approved budget contains \$12.9M in fund balance usage. Based on the results of FY '23, that would leave a projected fund balance of about \$19.6M at the end of 2024, or about 9.5% of the total operating budget, which is just about the level that Middle States recommends. Average monthly cash outlay is about \$17M.

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Chair Murray called for a motion to approve resolutions 2023.54 to 2023.60. Trustee Coverdale so moved, Trustee Pagdanganan seconded, the motion to approve resolutions 2023.54 to 2023.60 were approved unanimously.

**ITEM 1**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023.53 - Confirming Action by the Executive Committee**

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Article V (F) of the College Bylaws, subsequent to the August 17, 2023 meeting, the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees approved the Excused Absence by a Member of the Board of Trustees, as reflected on *Attachment I*, annexed hereto, be it therefore

**RESOLVED**, that the conditional approval by the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees on the Excused Absence by a Member of the Board of Trustees, as reflected on *Attachment I*, is hereby confirmed in all respects.

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**ITEM 2**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023.54 - Approving Monthly Sponsor Services for Suffolk County Community College**

**WHEREAS**, the State University of New York Regulation No. 602.7 requires Suffolk County Community College Board of Trustees to review and approve all Sponsor provided services and their estimated value in advance of the service being rendered, and

**WHEREAS**, the regulation also requires the approval of the payment of each Sponsor Service satisfactorily performed, and

**WHEREAS**, health insurance is considered a Sponsor Service, be it therefore

**RESOLVED**, that the health insurance payment to the County of Suffolk in the amount of \$3,172,602.18 for the month of August 2023 (*Attachment II*) is hereby approved by the Board of Trustees.

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**ITEM 3**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023.55 - Accepting a Grant Award from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for Collaborative Research: Integrating Fluorspar Ages and Geophysical Models to Constrain the Timing and Mechanisms of the Collapse of the Cordillera in SW North America**

**WHEREAS**, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant award in the amount of \$111,760 from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for Collaborative Research: Integrating

Fluorspar Ages and Geophysical Models to Constrain the Timing and Mechanisms of the Collapse of the Cordillera in SW North America, for the period of September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2027, and

**WHEREAS**, the College will use the funding to develop a pathway to expose students to research in the geosciences. Building on successful NSF-funded programs at SCCC called GeoCore and at SBU called GeoPath, we intend to develop workshops and remote seminars, as well as in-person field and lab experiences for SCCC students, and

**WHEREAS**, matching funds are not required, be it therefore

**RESOLVED**, that the College President, or his designee, is authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including a contract, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, accepting a grant award in the amount of \$111,760 from National Science Foundation (NSF) for Collaborative Research: Integrating Fluorspar Ages and Geophysical Models to Constrain the Timing and Mechanisms of the Collapse of the Cordillera in SW North America, for the period of September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2027.

Project Director: Sean Tvelia, Academic Chair of Physical Sciences

Note: No full-time personnel

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#### ITEM 4

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2023.56 - Accepting a Grant Award from the State University of New York, SUNY Transformation Fund, for a Project Entitled "Suffolk Rise"**

**WHEREAS**, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant award in the amount of \$1,040,000, from the State University of New York, SUNY Transformation Fund, for a project entitled "Suffolk Rise," for the period of September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2026, and

**WHEREAS**, the college will replicate the CUNY ASAP program over three years with a pilot cohort of 150 students. The project will provide students with advising and mentoring, scholarships for outstanding tuition and fees, an allowance for cost of books, and an allowance to cover travel and incidental costs associated with attendance. Students will attend tutoring in English and in Math at least one hour per week for 30 weeks each year. The objectives are to increase pilot cohort retention, allow students to maintain full-time status, and increase the proportion who complete within two years, and

**WHEREAS**, one full-time administrator will be assigned as in-kind match to the project as Program Director for three years for a budgeted \$549,430,

**RESOLVED**, that the College President, or his designee, is authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including a contract, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, accepting a grant award, in the amount of \$1,040,000, from the State University of New York, SUNY Transformation Fund, for a project entitled, "Suffolk Rise," for the period of September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2026.

Project Director: Liesl Jones, Vice President for Academic Affairs

Note: One full-time administrator assigned as in-kind match to the project as Program Director.

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**ITEM 5**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023.57 - Accepting a Grant Award from the State University of New York (SUNY), for a Project Entitled “SUNY Child Care Expansion Funds Ammerman Campus Kids”**

**WHEREAS**, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant award in the amount of \$50,000, from The State University of New York (SUNY), for a project entitled “SUNY Child Care Expansion Funds Ammerman Campus Kids,” for the period of September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, and

**WHEREAS**, the project will provide for staff sign-on bonuses, ads to hire new staff and purchase new equipment as needed to expand capacity up to an additional ten (10) student slots, and

**WHEREAS**, matching funds are not required, and

**RESOLVED**, that a grant award, in the amount of \$50,000, from The State University of New York (SUNY), for a project entitled, “SUNY Child Care Expansion Funds Ammerman Campus Kids,” for the period of September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized to execute a contract, with the administering agency.

Project Director: Linda Crispi, Director Campus Kids Children’s Learning Center

Note: No full-time personnel

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**ITEM 6**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023.58 - Accepting a Grant Award from the State University of New York (SUNY), for a Project Entitled “SUNY Child Care Expansion Funds Suffolk Kids Cottage”**

**WHEREAS**, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant award in the amount of \$100,000, from The State University of New York (SUNY), for a project entitled “SUNY Child Care Expansion Funds Suffolk Kids Cottage,” for the period of September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, and

**WHEREAS**, the project will allow the Suffolk Kids Cottage an additional six (6) student slots with additional hiring of educators and an administrative assistant thereby maximizing the licensed capacity for every room, and

**WHEREAS**, matching funds are not required,

**RESOLVED**, that a grant award, in the amount of \$100,000, from The State University of New York (SUNY), for a project entitled, "SUNY Child Care Expansion Funds Suffolk Kids Cottage," for the period of September 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is authorized to execute a contract, with the administering agency.

Project Director: Vickie Calderon, Director of Suffolk Kids Cottage

Note: No full-time personnel

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### ITEM 7

#### **RESOLUTION NO. 2023.59 - Approving a Major Change Order and Amendment to the Contract for the Construction of LED Entrance Signage on the Ammerman Campus**

**WHEREAS**, Grafton Data Systems, Inc. was awarded a contract ("Contract") Construction of Surround and Structure to House an LED Sign on College Road at the Ammerman Campus, and

**WHEREAS**, power for the signage located at College Road was to be installed under a separate contract, and

**WHEREAS**, Grafton Data Systems, Inc. can install the power for this sign for less cost than the College electrical contractor, and

**WHEREAS**, utilizing Grafton Data Systems, Inc. for this work results in a change order, and

**WHEREAS**, at this stage of the construction the College estimates that sufficient contingency funding remains in the project budget for this work, and

**WHEREAS**, including the additional work described herein increases the contract with Grafton Data Systems, Inc. by more than ten percent, thus constituting a major change order as defined in the College's *Procurement Policy*, and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to such policy, all major change orders require the approval of the Board of Trustees, be it therefore

**RESOLVED**, that a change order in the amount of \$18,050 to the Contract with Grafton Data Systems, Inc. for additional work to be performed for the construction of LED entrance signage on the Ammerman Campus, is hereby approved, and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the College President is authorized and empowered to execute the necessary documentation, as approved by the College General Counsel, reflecting the change order and the nature of the additional work so authorized.

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**ITEM 8**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023.60 - Approving the Stipulation of Agreement Among the College, the County of Suffolk, and the Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College**

**WHEREAS**, Suffolk County Community College, the County of Suffolk, and the Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College (“Faculty Association”) have reached an agreement covering the terms and conditions of employment for College employees represented in the Faculty Association for the period extending from September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2026; and

**WHEREAS**, said agreement has been set down in a Stipulation of Agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, said Stipulation of Agreement has been ratified by the Faculty Association membership; and

**WHEREAS**, the College President recommends the approval of this Stipulation of Agreement; be it therefore

**RESOLVED**, that the Stipulation of Agreement among Suffolk County Community College, the County of Suffolk, and the Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College, annexed hereto as Attachment III, be and the same is hereby approved.

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Chair Murray called for the Committee reports.

Student Trustee Portillo reported the Student Success Committee met September 5th via Zoom. They learned about the College’s athletic program and their approach to student success for student athletes through the National Junior College Athletic Association. This program funds about 240 incoming full-time students who have a GPA of at least 2.0. Last year the athletic department started a mentoring program for students within the program to give guidance, build a relationship amongst each other, and to acquire success in the classroom and on the field.

Trustee Canary reported the Governance Committee met on September 18th. General Counsel Ashley Pope advised the committee the contract with Volz and Vigliotta to provide as-needed legal services to the Board of Trustees expired and asked if they wanted to continue to have a contract for the services available. The committee agreed to have a contract for the services. GC Pope advised the committee that the Board has not yet completed their self-assessment for 2023 and recommended the self-assessment process be initiated. They would like to have the evaluation completed



before the end of 2023. Discussion was also had about the phasing out of the current Board of Trustees portal, which is old and will need to be replaced with a document management system that can be supported. The committee discussed creating College email addresses for the Board of Trustees for use when dealing with any College business. Using College email addresses would provide the Trustees with emails that would have the same up-to-date security that college employees currently have. GC Pope informed the committee that Legal Affairs is undertaking a comprehensive policy review development project. Many of the College's policies are outdated and some could appropriately be converted to a procedure instead of a policy. GC Pope reviewed the recommendation arising out of Middle State standards for policy on policy-making, and proposed to provide the committee with a draft and recommendation to the Board for eventual adoption. The final topic addressed was Board agenda format and contents. After discussion, the committee agreed it would be beneficial to include on the regular Board agenda and thereby notify the public of the possibility of a motion to enter into executive session as-needed at the beginning of each Board of Trustees meeting, before any discussion or voting on resolutions, as well as the possibility of a motion to enter into executive session as-needed at the end of a meeting. Any executive sessions would be conducted for permitted reasons, under and in accordance with the Open Meetings Law.

Trustee Canary reported the Facilities Committee met on September 14th. John DeMaio reviewed the facilities updates on all three campuses for the committee. The College currently has \$8M in the infrastructure budget, and it expects the central energy plant to cost at least \$5M. The County capital program added an additional \$5M into infrastructure for 2024. Automotive construction funds remain in the 2024 budget. South Cottage renovation at the Grant Campus in 2024 for construction equipment and supplies is anticipated. One-stop design phase will commence in 2024, and construction funds would be available in 2026. A comprehensive civil rights compliance review was conducted in 2018 on all campuses. Findings have been addressed and reported back to the New York State Education Department. Regarding the Renewable Energy and STEM Center status, the College is waiting on PSEG's approval and need the commercial operator's letter so PSEG can retest the meter and the College can then begin to benefit from solar energy. The College will not be able to complete an energy audit this year, there is a significant cost and it not included in the College's capital program. The College is exploring an opportunity in partnership for an expanded geothermal project with National Grid. This would reduce the College's carbon footprint. A concern is that being part of the pilot cannot negatively impact the College's future operating budgets. If there is transfer to a third-party after National Grid develops it, that would leave the College with unknown partners and cost. The College is seeking appropriate guarantees protecting the College in the letter of intent that is currently under consideration. The Eastern Campus warehouse drawings are almost done and the bid will go out next month. The Eastern Campus central energy plant bid was advertised September 14, 2023, with bids due on October 13, 2023. It is expected that it will take until fall 2024 to upgrade the energy plant boilers. The Automotive technology center RFP Committee has been formed, and the technical specifications have been submitted in-house to use the design RFP. It is a very specific, tailored design. The

College would like to get the RFP out and get responses back before the end of the year.

Trustee Pagdanganan reported for the Foundation. She announced that Chairwoman Belinda Alvarez Groneman and the Foundation invited the Board to the Education Without Limits Luncheon on October 27th at the Smithtown Landing Country Club. This luncheon will witness the soft launch of the Education Without Limits Campaign, a multi-year major gifts campaign raising funds for scholarships, student fellowships and hardship funds to support Suffolk's promising students. The Foundation is also proud to announce the establishment of the Harborview Medical Services Medical Assistant Career Program. Providing the Harborview employees with full tuition scholarships to advance their career goals with the completion of the medical assistant program at the College. The Foundation partnered with colleagues from throughout the College to produce the Alumni Beacons Video series, which captures the spirit of Suffolk Sharks Alums who have achieved success throughout their region. The video series is located on YouTube.

Student Trustee Portillo gave her Student Trustee report. The fall semester began on Wednesday, August 30th, and there have been college-wide events on all campuses. She was able to attend some events, such as the Welcome Fun at the Grant Campus and the Club Fair on the Ammerman Campus. Both events were a success, with many students participating, engaging with one another creating an open, calm and diverse atmosphere. She hopes to attend some events on the Eastern campus before the end of next month.

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Chair Murray moved onto the Chair's report. Chair Murray reported the he along with Trustee Canary and Trustee deLeon-Lopresti met with four members of the Legislature's Education & Labor Committee. He felt it was a positive meeting with free flow of ideas of what needs to be done to have more communication and a positive working relationship.

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Chair Murray moved to the President's report. President Bonahue thanked the Trustees for their commitment of service and time for the Board and the students. He then recognized employee union leaders that were present at the meeting: Professor Dante Morelli, President of the Faculty Association, Professor Sean Tvelia, President of the Guild of Administrative Officers, and Ms. Josephine Makowski from AME.

President Bonahue gave an update on Enrollment. Currently, onsite courses are once again significantly outpacing enrollment in online classes. The College is also beginning to see some high school dual enrollment coming in, the Beacon enrollment. The College set a 2% goal for increasing enrollment. Enrollment is still coming in for

late-start terms; the College is confident that it will meet the 2% goal and possibly exceed it for this semester.

In regards to Academic Affairs, ACEN, the national accreditor of the nursing program is wrapping up their three-day visit to the College. Their preliminary findings recommend the full eight-year reaffirmation of accreditation. The College looks forward to any recommendations they have for improvement going forward for the program.

The College has received guidance from the contractor working with the US Navy that the College will be able to offer the scholarships in welding and advanced manufacturing without having to meet certain government contractor requirements. The College received a revised a contract which has removed all the language that requires the College to be a government contractor. The College looks forward to starting those scholarship awards as soon as possible.

Last month, President Bonahue had his first briefing on the Middle States reaffirmation of accreditation cycle. The cycle will begin with an appointment of a self-study steering committee this year, the committee will provide leadership for writing the comprehensive self-assessment document. The reaffirmation project culminates with a visit from a visiting peer committee. The process of completing this reaffirmation is enormous, and with three years away the College is starting this academic year.

Last week, during Professional Development Day, President Bonahue shared with the College some long-term graduation data indicating that there are persistent gaps in graduation rate of white, black and Hispanic students. The College has a long tradition of trying to meet students where they are and having a variety of task forces that seek to promote student success for everyone, but many of these have been focused on very specific populations. He has asked the College to come together in a College-wide Equity Council. He charged the Council with conducting research on the kinds of professional development the College can embrace as a community in order to improve equitable academic excellence for all students. Also, at Professional Development Day he shared with the College community that although progress was made on projected budget shortfall, it still represents a 5-6% deficit. He emphasized the highest administrative priority this year needs to be to continue working that number down.

In regards to development, he encouraged Trustees to participate and invite others to attend the Education Without Limits Campaign on Friday, October 27th. Lastly, he reminded the Trustees of the upcoming New York Community College Trustees conference and awards dinner where former Trustee Morgo and Trustee Pagdanganan will be honored. He asked any Trustees interested in attending to please RSVP to his office before the deadline of October 2nd.

Discussion continued in regards to the Beacon Program and graduation rates.

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Chair Murray called for Roundtable. There were no comments for roundtable upon which Chair Murray called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Coverdale so moved, Trustee Zarate seconded, and with all in favor, the meeting was adjourned a 11:50 a.m.

The Board of Trustees next meeting is October 19, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. in the Lecture Hall of the Montaukett Learning Resource Center on the Eastern Campus, Riverhead, New York.

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Respectfully submitted,  
Gemma deLeon-Lopresti  
Secretary