

SUFFOLK COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
EASTERN CAMPUS, RIVERHEAD, NY
LECTURE HALL, MONTAUKETT LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER
MARCH 21, 2024

The meeting was held on Thursday, March 21, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. in the Lecture Hall of the Montaukett Learning Resource Center, in Riverhead, NY.

PRESENT:

E. Christopher Murray	Chair
Shirley Coverdale	Vice Chair
Gordon Canary	Vice Chair
Belinda Pagdanganan	Trustee
Kevin O'Connor	Trustee (<i>via videoconference</i>)
Priscilla Zarate	Trustee
Samantha Portillo	Student 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. Patty Munsch	V.P. for Student Affairs
Kaliah Greene	V.P. / Executive Director, Office of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness
Angelica Rivera	V.P. for Human Resources

The meeting of the Board of Trustees was convened at 4:30 p.m.

Chair Murray moved to recognition of guests. Ms. Wickliffe-Campbell introduced Tom Lupo representing the Comptrollers Office, Tim Freeman representing Legislator Bontempi and Nick De Bello, Vice President of AME.

Chair Murray requested a motion to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2024 Board of Trustees meeting. Trustee Pagdanganan so moved, Trustee Zarate seconded. The motion to approve the minutes was approved unanimously.

Chair Murray introduced Sara Gorton, Interim Vice President for Business and Financial Affairs, to present the College Budget and Financial report. Ms. Gorton reported on the

FY'23 audit. She had hoped the auditors would have the audit complete and ready to present for approval, however the auditors are still doing their quality review and she hopes to have it soon for the Board's review.

For FY'24 Ms. Gorton reported that the Spring Registration period has ended. Full-time spring tuition came in over budget. There's an indication that students are coming back to campus and taking more credits. Part-time Spring tuition came in under budget; there was an increase in Beacon students, however there was not as much of an increase in matriculated. Total tuition including non-credit is less than a quarter percent off of the projected budget. With the increase in full-time students, fees are projecting \$600K over budget. Revenues from facilities usage and interest on investments are trending over budget \$1.4M. The College continues to work on reducing the fund balance usage, focusing on long term solutions for financial sustainability. The College has been diligent at managing vacancies and has been able to see some savings in salaries and benefits. The budgeted fund balance usage was \$12.8M. Through cost savings and increase in revenue, the projected fund balance usage is reduced to \$8.6M. The projected fund balance remaining at the end of the fiscal year is currently \$24.2M.

For FY'25, the Board Budget and Finance subcommittee has been meeting, and we are reviewing a lot of the different trends, working with VP Greene and VP Munsch and are reviewing different budget scenarios. They will be working on the budget over the next couple of weeks and will have the budget to present to the Board for review and approval at the April meeting.

President Bonahue provided an overview of College resolutions 2024.18 to 2024.25, calling on Vice President Rivera to summarize the two memoranda of agreement with the Faculty Association and the Guild of Administrative Officers presented to the Board for its consideration to provide for a one-time retirement incentive for a limited number of eligible employees in each union. Following discussion, Chair Murray called for a motion to approve College resolutions 2024.18 to 2024.25. Trustee Canary so moved, Trustee Coverdale seconded, the motion to approve resolutions 2024.18 to 2024.25 was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024.18 – 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 \$2,997,051.55 for the month of December 2023; \$3,432,957.18 for the month of January 2024; and \$3,133,112.54 for the month of February 2024 (*Attachment I*) is hereby approved by the Board of Trustees.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024.19 – Accepting a Grant Subaward from the Research Foundation for the State University of New York for a project entitled, “Internship Support for the Suffolk County Community College Baking and Pastry Arts A.A.S. Degree Students”

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant sub-award in the amount of \$422,000, from The Research Foundation for The State University of New York, for a project entitled, “Internship Support for Suffolk County Community College Baking and Pastry Arts A.A.S. Degree Students”, for the period of September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2026, and

WHEREAS, this project will provide internship course tuition, lab fees, and stipends for internships for students in the Culinary and Baking Pastry program to fulfill their internship course requirements, and

WHEREAS, matching funds are not required, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that a grant subaward, in the amount of \$422,000, from The Research Foundation for The State University of New York for a project entitled, “Internship Support for Suffolk County Community College Baking and Pastry Arts A.A.S. Degree Students”, for the period of September 1, 2023 through August 31, 2026, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is hereby authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including an agreement with the administering agency, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2023–2024 College operating budget be amended to reflect the Year 1 portion of the grant subaward.

Project Director: Diane Fabian, Academic Chair; Professor

Note: No full-time personnel

RESOLUTION NO. 2024.20 – Accepting a Grant Award from the State University of New York (SUNY) System Administration for a Brightway ASAP Student-Parent Support Program

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant award in the amount of \$44,650 from the State University of New York (SUNY) System Administration as the SUNY match portion of a grant in connection with a partnership between SUNY and the Brightway Education Foundation for a project entitled, “Brightway ASAP Student-Parent Support Grant,” for the period of January 1, 2024 through August 31, 2026, and

WHEREAS, separate grant funds from the Brightway Education Foundation will go directly to the Suffolk Community College Foundation, and

WHEREAS, the funds being issued through SUNY System Administration will provide support for 38 eligible student-parents who join the ASAP program, and

WHEREAS, no matching funds from the College are required, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that a grant award in the amount of \$44,650 from SUNY System Administration, for a project entitled, “Brightway ASAP Student-Parent Support Grant,” for the period of January 1, 2024 through August 31, 2026, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is hereby authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including an agreement with the awarding and/or administering entity, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2023–2024 College operating budget be amended to reflect the Year 1 portion of the grant award.

Project Director: Dr. Irene Rios, Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs

Note No full-time positions
No in-kind contribution required

RESOLUTION NO. 2024.21 – Accepting a Grant Award from Philadelphia Press for a Scientific Authorship Grant

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant award in the amount of \$1,000 from Philadelphia Press for a Scientific Authorship Grant, for the period of March 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, and

WHEREAS, the funds being issued by Philadelphia Press will provide for the purchase of a spectrometer, fiber optic cables, emission bulbs and a power supply in order to provide students with hands-on experience observing and analyzing atomic emission spectra, and

WHEREAS, matching funds are not required, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that a grant award in the amount of \$1,000 from Philadelphia Press for a Scientific Authorship Grant, for the period of March 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is hereby authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including an agreement with the awarding and/or administering entity, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2023–2024 College operating budget be amended to reflect the applicable portion of the grant award.

Project Director: Dr. Keith Baessler, Associate Professor, Chemistry

Note: No full-time positions
No in-kind contributions needed

RESOLUTION NO. 2024.22 – Accepting a Grant Subaward from the Research Foundation for the State University of New York (Farmingdale State College) for the NYS Pollution Prevention Institute (NYSP2I)’s Community Grant Program

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College has received a grant subaward in the amount of \$3,723.17 from the Research Foundation for the State University of New York (Farmingdale State College) for the NYSP2I’s Community Grant Program, for the period of October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024, and

WHEREAS, the funds will support educational event programming on pollution prevention and reduction of environmental impact (the Long Island Sustainability Series), in partnership with Farmingdale State College, and

WHEREAS, matching funds are not required, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that a grant subaward in the amount of \$3,723.17 from the Research Foundation for the State University of New York (Farmingdale State College) for the NYSP2I’s Community Grant Program, for the period of October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024, is hereby accepted, and the College President, or his designee, is hereby authorized and empowered to execute any necessary documentation, including an agreement with the awarding and/or administering entity, in such form as shall be approved by the College General Counsel, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2023–2024 College operating budget be amended to reflect the applicable portion of the grant award.

Project Director: Melanie Carsch, Assistant Director of Sustainability

Note: No full-time positions
Reassigned/Overload Time: Melanie Carsch – 3% paid by grant

In-kind contribution: meeting space

RESOLUTION NO. 2024.23 – Amending the Timeframe for the Board of Trustees’ Annual Self-Assessment for 2024

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees’ Policy on Board of Trustees Self-Assessment provides a typical timeframe for completion of an annual self-assessment from January to March, and

WHEREAS, the 2023 self-assessment was completed later than anticipated and resulted in recommendations to enhance opportunities for new Trustee orientation and Trustee development, and

WHEREAS, there are currently two vacancies on the Board to be filled by appointment by the Suffolk County Legislature, such that the Board desires to defer the 2024 self-assessment to provide an opportunity for onboarding and informed feedback from the anticipated new Trustees, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the Board hereby waives and amends the timeframes outlined in the Policy on Board of Trustees Self-Assessment, for 2024 only, to provide for completion of the annual self-assessment by December 31, 2024.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024.24 – Approving a Memorandum of Agreement with the Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College to Provide a One-Time Retirement Incentive

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College, with the agreement of the Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College (Faculty Association), wishes to provide a special one-time retirement incentive to eligible full-time Faculty Association members in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in the attached Memorandum of Agreement (*Attachment II*), and

WHEREAS, this special one-time retirement incentive will be provided through funds available in the College’s approved 2023–2024 operating budget, and

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Suffolk County Community College hereby approves the attached Memorandum of Agreement between the College and the Faculty Association to provide a one-time retirement incentive to eligible full-time Faculty Association members.

RESOLUTION NO. 2024.25 – Approving a Memorandum of Agreement with the Guild of Administrative Officers to Provide a One-Time Retirement Incentive

WHEREAS, Suffolk County Community College, with the agreement of the Guild of Administrative Officers (Guild), wishes to provide a special one-time retirement incentive to eligible full-time Guild members in accordance with the terms and conditions outlined in the attached Memorandum of Agreement (*Attachment III*), and

WHEREAS, this special one-time retirement incentive will be provided through funds available in the College’s approved 2023–2024 operating budget, and

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

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Suffolk County Community College hereby approves the attached Memorandum of Agreement between the College and the Guild to provide a one-time retirement incentive to eligible full-time Guild members.

Chair Murray called for the Committee reports.

Trustee O’Connor reported that much had been covered already, but the Budget and Finance Committee had a number of constructive meetings and thanked all involved in working to get the College to a balanced budget.

Trustee Pagdanganan reported the Student Success Committee met and Dr. Carol Hernandez, Assistant Dean for The Center for Teaching and Learning presented on the College’s Learning Management System. She shared how students can access their course information within the system, the ways faculty can communicate with students and how the goal of the system is to provide access and transparency to course information. Student assessments include papers, quizzes, and tests. Discussions can all be held within the platform, and faculty can grade the assessments within it as well. They can even record and send verbal feedback to the students in the system. The Learning Management System promotes principles of good teaching, assisting the faculty with advancing the level of their craft.

Trustee Canary reported that the Governance Committee had planned to meet on March 18 but was being rescheduled due to a conflicting meeting of the Budget and Finance Committee.

Chair Murray provided a brief report on the Personnel Committee in the absence of Trustee Lopresti, indicating the President’s evaluation process was moving along in accordance with the timeline.

Trustee Zarate reported for the Advocacy Committee report. Trustee Zarate, said the committee is working with the College to replace Drew Biondo as the liaison for the committee. Trustee Zarate reported on funding requests to the state and federal government for bilingual programs and partnering with institutions such as the College to support funding for students to earn a credential. She asked Ben Zwirn to give a summary on the latest College's advocacy efforts. Mr. Zwirn reported that on February 26th the College travelled to Albany with 12 students including Student Trustee Portillo. The students had the opportunity to meet with and share their stories with legislators, as well as the Speaker of the New York State Assembly, Carl Heastie, and Assemblyman Fred Thiele. On Wednesday, February 28th, Dr. Bonahue was joined by Trustee Canary and presented to the County Legislature's Education Committee an overview on the College. They will be going back before the Education Committee on April 3rd to give an overview on the workforce development programs at the College. On March 19th, Dr. Bonahue met with the County Executive and his team to discuss budget issues the College is facing and how the County can be helpful. The call letter came out the day of the meeting and the County has committed to a 2% increase in their operating support for the College which is what the College had anticipated. The County Executive was informed at the meeting of the two vacant positions on the Board, he said he had some thoughts on people that he could recommend to the Legislature if they couldn't find somebody. The meeting was very productive. Mr. Zwirn also noted one-house bills had been released, floor funding for community colleges was proposed, and enhancing student grant aid remained a priority.

Trustee Canary reported that the Facilities Committee had not met but would be seeking to meet on a quarterly basis.

Trustee Pagdanganan reported for the Foundation. Chair Belinda Alvarez-Groneman announced last week that, in light of her new position with SCPD, she will be stepping down as Foundation Board Chair; however, she does plan to remain as a Board member. To fill the immediate Chair vacancy, Edward Boughal had agreed to step into the Chair role until a vote can be scheduled. Also, Brian Petersen, who has for years served as Treasurer of the Foundation Board, announced that due to a recent promotion at his firm, he also needs to step away from the Board entirely. In his place, Millie Nieves, has agreed to step into the Treasurer position, and Todd Johnson has agreed to fill the vacancy as Vice Chair, which occurred following the passing of Leslie Anderson. The Board of Directors is also exploring recruitment of new Board members. The Foundation has announced that Suffolk alumnus, Dr. Jeffrey Vacirca, and his company, New York Cancer and Blood Specialists, have agreed to be the honoree at the Foundation's 40th Annual Golf Classic, taking place on Wednesday, June 5, 2024 at the Westhampton Beach Country Club.

Trustee Pagdanganan reported for the Student Association Liaison for the Board of Trustees. The Student Association Board of Directors met on February 28, 2024. Financials as of January 31st were reviewed and again are showing that all departments, other than the Peconic Café, are trending positively. The Peconic Café was briefly discussed as far as promoting the café and choosing that site as a place for

future events. The audit review meeting took place on Monday, March 4th; it was a clean audit with no material findings. A resolution will be created and presented to the BOD at the March 27th meeting for acceptance. The first four sections of the by-laws were reviewed as a group. Many adjustments will coincide more with our SGA terms and pay special attention to conflicts of interest where budgeting and voting is concerned. Roles within the BOD will be further discussed and defined. Questions that were presented that could not be immediately answered, will be brought to our legal department for clarification. By-laws review will continue.

Student Trustee Portillo gave the Student Trustee report. She reported she attended a General Assembly hosted by SGA on the Grant campus. President Valery Marquez and her SGA officers welcomed her with open arms as this was her first official meeting of the semester with them. The meeting started with every student introducing themselves around the room, and they discussed issues and concerns students had about the campus. A major student concern was cafeteria food. This resulted in SGA planning to advocate for more gluten free option items. The blood drive on the Grant campus took place on March 13th from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Suffolk Federal Credit Union Arena. There was a total of 93 pints of blood donated. Student Trustee also had the opportunity to meet the two candidates running for the Student Trustee position for the 2024-2025 academic year. During the meeting, she answered questions about campaigning and any concerns they had. She also shared her experience in the role and what her responsibilities. On March 20th she stopped by the College's transfer fair that took place on the Grant campus. She plans on attending Chalk the Walk on April 2nd at the Grant Campus and Take Back the Night on April 11th on the Grant campus. She reported that on February 26th she joined eleven students on a trip to Albany for Advocacy Day. This gave her and the students the opportunity to have heartfelt discussions sharing their stories with elected officials. They were able to meet with Carl Heastie, Speaker of the New York State Assembly, Steve Stern, State Assemblyman, Mario R. Matera, State Senator, Monica R. Martinez, State Senator, Fred Thiele, Assemblyman. She added it was a phenomenal experience for students' voices to be heard and make a change not just within the walls of Suffolk County Community College but for the community as well. Lastly, she thanked Ben Zwirn, Dr. Munsch, and Christina Vargas for assisting in organizing the trip to Albany and making it a memorable experience for the students.

Chair Murray moved to the Chair's report. Chair Murray discussed the budget process and some of his concerns with regards to the State's support efforts. He said this year is a little different because over the last two to three years the College had received substantial federal assistance, which made the budgetary process a lot easier. This has now ended and the College is back to the cold reality of trying to establish a balanced budget. He added there has been a little bit of wiggle room because of the large fund balance; however, the College has had to spend that down over the past couple of years in order to keep things affordable. One of the issues that gives him concern is the level of State support for community colleges, where they are ignoring their obligations under the law. He noted that every decrease in the percentage of support from the

State falls on either the County, which has been very supportive, or the students through their tuition.

He said the State seems most concerned with the four-year SUNY schools, which seems counterintuitive because the students that go to the community college are often the ones with more challenges. He added the State should recognize that community colleges are a way for people to expand their contribution to society. The community college is more than just a school--it provides a lot of services to a lot of people, and he wishes the State would see to it that they are appropriately funded. He acknowledged that the Speaker of the Assembly has been very supportive toward the community colleges. However, the last couple of years, the State budget being proposed by the Governor has fallen short for the community colleges. He asked anyone with any connection to the State legislature, whether a Senator or Assemblyman, to raise this issue and push the issue because it's only through the collective weight of the people that the College can push back on being ignored by the Governor.

Chair Murray moved to the President's report. President Bonahue acknowledged and thanked labor and faculty governance leaders present at the meeting. President Bonahue began with an update on enrollment. SUNY's census date for monitoring Spring enrollment was March 15th. As of the census date the College reported 14,462 students enrolled in the Spring semester. That was up 1% from last spring's census report. The end of term figures, which include enrollment in all spring classes including those beyond the census date, the headcount number was 14,821, and the FTE calculation, done internally was 10,419. As with the Fall semester, the headcount number was up over last year but fell short of the goal of a 2% increase. However, when looking at the FTE number, which is the measurement for all students taking all classes in all terms, the number did hit target of 2% growth. He thanked VP Greene and the OPIE Office for continuing to crunch the enrollment numbers.

In Student Affairs, President Bonahue reported the highest priority right now is to get ready to package financial aid awards with the new FAFSA changes. The financial aid offices have been collaborating daily with the IT team to build the needed infrastructure to package awards. To date, they've built and confirmed the College's connection with the federal database and have imported about 400 files of raw data as they have become available. The number of applications for financial aid nationwide has been down due to the difficult FAFSA rollout, and to support students, the campus teams are hosting virtual workshops to assist students in completing the FAFSA, and also meeting all the high schools' requests for in-person financial aid workshops.

Over the past couple of weeks, the College has successfully completed two compliance surveys for the student veterans' program. First, the New York State approving agency reviewed all of the College's academic programs, college catalog and academic policies and confirmed that Suffolk remains a strong option for student veterans. Secondly, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs completed an onsite and in-depth review of 60

individual student files, both veteran and non-veteran students, including applications, placements, scheduling, billing, and overall college policies. The College received no findings, which is very rare. The auditors left early because of the good job done with record keeping. He thanked, Director Shannon O'Neill and her team on a job well done.

President Bonahue noted the College was blessed to have so many students who are going to cap off their career at Suffolk with statewide and national recognition. He congratulated Student Trustee Portillo for being named for the Norman McConney Award. This award is given each year to an outstanding student who started their journey in the EOP program. Joseph Gonzalez from the Grant campus has been named to the PTK All-U.S.A. academic team, one of only twenty students in the country to receive that designation. He has also been selected as the person who will speak on behalf of that team at the PTK recognition event at the AACCC Annual meeting next month. Additionally, three Suffolk students have been named PTK Coca Cola scholars, and five more are designated as PTK All New York State scholars.

President Bonahue noted that as they heard in the financial report, the College is now seeing the impact of savings from position vacancies. This has brought down projected use of fund balance an additional half-million dollars from last month. He thanked the Board for supporting the voluntary retirement incentive program with the Faculty Association and the Guild. As he previously reported, the College will always replace mission critical positions, whether inside or outside the classroom.

For Academic Affairs President Bonahue reported the College has begun difficult and sensitive conversations with academic departments and individual programs about the data that they can see with respect to student interest, enrollments, scheduling and completions. The commitment of the administration will always be to work with faculty and staff in individual programs to be sure that they have their input as they review programs before making any decisions about.

As he shared last month, President Bonahue said the College's efforts in cost savings will extend to all areas of the College including support and administrative areas. The budget presentations from the Deans and the VPs have helped to identify nearly a half-million dollars in additional savings outside personnel costs. In some instances, they were immediately able to put some new savings initiatives into motion. For example, VP Azam-Gomez's budget presentation included an appropriate dollar figure for the cost of replacing hundreds of computers in the IT stock. After some consultation, they realized there might be opportunity to review utilization of all of the machines in the inventory. In partnership with the Executive Deans and other stakeholders on all three campuses, ITS staff identified 144 computers and an additional 84 office computers which were either underutilized and could be reassigned, reducing costs by \$200,000 a year. He thanked VP Azzam-Gomez and said the College will continue to review efficiencies throughout the College.

President Bonahue noted the meeting on March 19th with County Executive Romaine, where the College provided an overview of operations and initiatives. He said the

County Executive had great questions and observations about enrollment and facilities utilization and also understands the long-term demographic changes that are being seen in Suffolk County. The College also shared with him information on current and potential cost saving measures, including the agreement with the FA and the Guild. They shared with him the College's current capital projects plan and he seemed to be very supportive to hear that the College will continue to include support for infrastructure needs and deferred maintenance as a priority. The College was delighted to have the opportunity to meet with him and appreciates his support.

Chair Murray called for Roundtable. With no comments for Roundtable Chair Murray requested a motion to enter into Executive Session, to discuss proposed pending or current litigation and to seek/receive legal advice, which is made confidential by law Trustee Coverdale so moved, Trustee O'Connor. The motion to enter into Executive Session was approved unanimously.

With no further business to be conducted after Executive Session, the meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

The Board of Trustees next meeting is April 18, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the Alumni Room of the Brookhaven Gymnasium on the Ammerman Campus, Selden, New York.

Respectfully submitted,
Gordon Canary
Secretary