



**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Tuesday, May 28, 2024
Performing Arts Center Atrium**

MINUTES

1. General Institutional Functions

- 1.1 Mr. Gewecke called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.
- 1.2 Reading of the Public Statement: Adequate notice of this meeting specifying the time and location was transmitted via fax, posted to the Sussex County Community College Website, and on the main entry doors to the Administration Building, on May 22, 2024, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-8.

1.3 Roll Call / Pledge of Allegiance

The following were present: Mr. Gewecke-Chair, Mrs. Smith-Vice Chair, Mr. Santillo-Secretary (via phone), Dr. Crowley-Treasurer, Dr. Carrick, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Hofmann, Dr. Silverthorne, Mr. Yardley, Dr. Connolly, President and Ex-Officio Member, and Mrs. Fullem-Recording Secretary.

Also present: Dr. Okay-Senior Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Homer-Vice President of Student Success and Institutional Effectiveness, Dr. Gallo-Associate Vice-President of Academic Affairs, Mr. Fruge-Dean of Technical Occupations, Mr. Kula-Executive Director of the Foundation, and Dr. Ketan Gandhi-CFO.

1.4 Mr. Gewecke welcomed the guests and stated:

All members of the public who provide public comment shall first identify themselves. Public comments may be submitted to the Board of Trustees Secretary via email or written letter if received at least (8) hours prior to the meeting. Written public comments shall be read at the meeting with the same time restrictions as all public comments at the meeting. Duplicative comments may be summarized at the discretion of the Board of Trustees Chair.

1.5 Courtesy of the Floor on Agenda Items Only (Public Session-5 Minutes per Speaker).

No one spoke.

ACTION

1.6 Approval/Acceptance of Minutes

1.6.1 Minutes from the April 23, 2024 Regular Board Meeting (Resolution No. GI05282024-1)

Mrs. Smith moved to approve minutes as noted above. Dr. Crowley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

1.6.1 Minutes from the April 23, 2024 Executive Session (Resolution No. GI05282024-2)

Mrs. Smith moved to approve the Executive Session minutes noted above. Dr. Crowley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

1.6.2 Acknowledgment of Receipt of May 21, 2024 Committee Meeting Minutes. (Resolution No. GI05282024-3)

- Personnel and Curriculum Committee – May 21, 2024
- Audit and Policy Committee – May 21, 2024
- Finance and Facilities Committee – May 21, 2024

Mrs. Smith moved to acknowledge receipt of the committee meeting minutes noted above. Mrs. Frank seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda – ACTION/RC

The President recommends items 2.1 - 2.5 for Board approval, as brought forth after discussion and review by Board Committees:

Mrs. Smith moved to approve all items on the Consent Agenda. Dr. Crowley seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Dr. Carrick, Dr. Crowley, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Hofmann, Mr. Santillo, Dr. Silverthorne, Mrs. Smith, Mr. Yardley, and Mr. Gewecke voted yes. The motion carried unanimously.

2.1 Approval of Personnel Items

2.1.1 Personnel Actions: April 9, 2024 – May 13, 2024. (Resolution No. P05282024-1)

2.2 Approval of Curriculum Items

2.2.1 Nurse Education Contract Between Passaic County College and Sussex County Community College. (Resolution No. CI05282024-1)

2.3 Approval of Policy Items

2.3.1 Policy No. 200.36 Resignation Policy- There are no changes. (Resolution No. AP05282024-1)

2.3.2 Policy No. 200.38 Inclement Weather- Changed from “Rave” to “Regroup” for the Provider (Resolution No. AP05282024-2)

2.3.3 Policy No. 200.43 Resignation Policy- There are no changes. Reporting of Convictions for Offenses or Crime for Currently Employed Faculty and Staff Policy – title changed from “Executive Director of HR” to “ Director of HR”. (Resolution No. AP05282024-3)

2.4 Approval of Finance Items

- 2.4.1 Increase to FY24 Blanket Purchase Order for Shoprite for Food Supplies (Culinary) Current PO: 17,000 Increase by \$2,500 = Total \$19,250 Operating Funds. (Resolution BFF05282024-1)
- 2.4.2 Dell Laptops – 20 Computers for Adult Students Returning to College in the Amount of \$25,670.70 SCND Grant. (Resolution BFF05282024-2)
- 2.4.3 Dell Laptops – 20 Loaner Laptops in the Amount of \$25,670.70 SCND Grant. (Resolution BFF05282024-3)
- 2.4.4 Dell Computers– 20 Computers for Adult Students Returning to College AIO Work Stations for Faculty in the Amount of \$25,670.70 Operating Funds. (Resolution BFF05282024-4)

2.5 Approval of Facilities Items

- 2.5.1 Grading/ Paving at the Chapel for the Adult Transition Center, from Murray Paving and Concrete LLC/Gordian, in the Amount of \$104,068.11 ATC Grant (Resolution No. BFF05282024-5)
- 2.5.2 Walkkill Group Change Order for Adult Transition Center Rear Masonry Wall, Current PO \$448,000. Increase \$41,044.58 Total \$489,044.58. ATC Grant. (Resolution No. BFF05282024-6)
- 2.5.3 ABCode Security for New Fire Panel and Detectors in the Amount of \$33,080 Chapter 12 (Resolution No. BFF05282024-7)
- 2.5.4 Weather Proofing Technologies Inc. for Roof Restoration (M- Tech) in the amount of \$238,000.00. Chapter 12. (Resolution No. BFF05282024-8)

3. Finance – ACTION/RC

- ACTION/RC** 3.1 Recommendation: Acknowledge Receipt and Review of Financial Statements – April 30, 2024 Ten Months YTD FYE June 30, 2024. (Resolution No. GI05282024-4)

Mr. Gandhi presented the Financial Statements - April 30, 2024 Ten Months YTD FYE June 30, 2024, including: April YTD FY24 - Credit Hours, Income Statement, Balance Sheet-Assets, Balance Sheet-Liabilities, and Three-Year Comparison.

Dr. Crowley moved to acknowledge receipt and review of the financial statements noted above. Mrs. Frank seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Dr. Carrick, Dr. Crowley, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Hofmann, Mr. Santillo, Dr. Silverthorne, Mrs. Smith, Mr. Yardley, and Mr. Gewecke voted yes. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Personnel

- ACTION/RC** 4.1. Promotion of Sherry Fitzgerald from Associate Professor to Full Professor. Resolution No. P05282024-2)

Dr. Okay spoke about Sherry Fitzgerald, who has also as a Dean and VP of

Academic Affairs. This is a natural next step in an incredible career. Dr. Connolly noted that when Professor Fitzgerald says it can be done, she moves forward and gets “it” done. Professor Fitzgerald has been pivotal in bringing new academic programs to fruition.

Mrs. Smith added that Sherry Fitzgerald was an incredible liaison to the Hopatcong Board of Education.

Mrs. Smith moved to approve the promotion of Sherry Fitzgerald from Associate Professor to Professor. Mrs. Frank seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Dr. Carrick, Dr. Crowley, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Hofmann, Mr. Santillo, Dr. Silverthorne, Mrs. Smith, Mr. Yardley, and Mr. Gewecke voted yes. The motion carried unanimously.

ACTION/RC 4.2 Promotion of Michael Hughes from Associate Professor to Full Professor.
(Resolution No. P05282024-3)

Dr. Okay spoke about Michael Hughes. She said he is a tremendous contributor, strong veteran’s supporter, always says “yes,” and is a wonderful speaker. Dr. Connolly added that Michael Hughes’s ability to captivate a classroom is legendary, and he is a true faculty leader.

Dr. Silverthorne moved to approve the promotion of Michael Hughes from Associate Professor to Professor. Mrs. Smith seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Dr. Carrick, Dr. Crowley, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Hofmann, Mr. Santillo, Dr. Silverthorne, Mrs. Smith, Mr. Yardley, and Mr. Gewecke voted yes. The motion carried unanimously.

ACTION/RC 4.3 Promotion of Salvatore Paolucci from Instructor to Assistant Professor
(Resolution No. P05282024-4)

Dr. Okay spoke about Sal Paolucci noting that he achieved tenure around a year ago, he is the liaison for concurrent classes, a department chair, and ran a very successful networking event for students and community. Dr. Connolly added that Sal Paolucci is excellent in classroom methodology and has an “eye for quality.”

Mrs. Smith said that when Sal Paolucci was up for tenure he was put through the coals and passed with flying colors. She knows he will continue to do the next right thing.

Mrs. Smith moved to approve the promotion of Salvatore Paolucci from Instructor to Assistant Professor. Dr. Crowley seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Dr. Carrick, Dr. Crowley, Mrs. Frank, Mr. Hofmann, Mr. Santillo, Dr. Silverthorne, Mrs. Smith, Mr. Yardley, and Mr. Gewecke voted yes. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Gewecke stated that as a board, we are very thankful for the professionalism and the passion of our faculty.

5. **Reports**

5.1 The Correspondence Report was received, reviewed, and filed.

6. **Presentations**

6.1 State of the College, by Dr. Connolly. A copy of the presentation is on file and part of the meeting packet and minutes.

7. **Courtesy of the Floor on General Matters** (Public Session-5 Minutes per Speaker.)

- Rich Linden, former full-time psychology professor at Sussex County Community College noted that he had been full-time faculty since 1989. He congratulated his “outstanding colleagues” who were promoted today. He then spoke about the College and how it was before and after Dr. Connolly became president. He noted that Dr. Connolly was really different from any of the past presidents, and that he really reached out to faculty in ways that no one had ever done before. He spoke highly of everyone at SCCC.
- James Gaddy, Chief Operating Officer at SCCC, currently on administrative leave, addressed the Board of Trustees. He began by congratulating the faculty members who were promoted earlier in the meeting. Mr. Gaddy commended Dr. Connolly’s presentation, describing it as a “great summary” of the college’s recent history and accomplishments.

He then spoke about the allegations made against Dr. Connolly and the College administration. Mr. Gaddy highlighted that he has repeatedly contacted the Board via email and in public session during board meetings, without receiving a response. He claimed his administrative leave resulted from being linked to an online petition, an accusation he denies. Gaddy emphasized that, despite this being a clear case of retaliation, he has not filed a lawsuit. Instead, he is seeking a thorough and genuine investigation into the matter.

- Mr. Gewecke stated that the Board’s “lack of response” has come up a few times. He asked Mr. Gagliardi, college counsel from Porzio Bromberg & Newman, to reply.
- Mr. Gagliardi addressed a concern regarding the Board's response to public comments. He explained that when citizens, including employees, bring accusations before the Board and the Board does not respond, it can unfairly suggest disinterest, lack of information, or lack of respect on the Board's part. He emphasized that this is not the case.

He clarified that, like any organization, this Board does not discuss employment issues in a public forum. Just as individuals would not discuss their employment reviews publicly, it is not appropriate or constructive for the Board to do so, as it can create liability. The Board has listened respectfully to public comments without responding, not out of disrespect, but to handle matters appropriately.

Mr. Gagliardi noted that both a survey referenced in public comments and an investigation are being conducted. He reminded the attendees that there are established processes in handbooks and Board policies for handling such matters. The Board's ethical obligations involve setting policies, not getting involved in day-to-day operations. This does not mean the Board does not care or is unaware of the importance of the issues raised. They rely on administrators and outside professionals to guide investigations, seek out facts, and make recommendations.

He assured that the Board will consider these matters within the bounds of the law and their ethical obligations. There will be a time and place to inform the public of the Board's decisions, but this process does not occur publicly. He urged not to mistake the Board's

silence for lack of diligence or caring. The Board is committed to handling matters responsibly and in line with their ethical obligations.

- Dr. Aaron Fictner, President of the New Jersey Council of County Colleges provided updates regarding what the NJCCC does, their role in the state budget, and areas where the NJCCC “is going.” He provided an overview regarding the different committees and affinity groups, the new funding formula. He provided a handout of the Executive Summary for the New Jersey’s Opportunity Agenda: Building Pathways to Equity and Economic Prosperity, noting the key pillars of the report. The full report is available on the NJCCC website.
- Sal Paolucci thanked the Board, Dr. Okay, Dr. Gallo, college administration, and his parents for all of the support.
- Michael Hughes expressed his gratitude to the Board and college administration. He shared his journey with the college, starting as a non-traditional student, transitioning to a full-time position in 2008, and culminating in his promotion tonight.

8. **Other Business**

Discussion / Reports / Announcements:

8.1 Trustee Activity Update – None this month.

- Dr. Carrick commented how wonderful it is to hear about the quality of the people working here. She noted that she ran into former trustee and county superintendent Dr. Andrews, who took her through the history of the college’s finances, from catastrophe to where we are today.
- Mrs. Smith shared her enthusiasm about the College’s commencement ceremony, and thanked everyone involved with putting it together.

8.2 President’s Report – The president presented “The State of the College” earlier in the meeting. There was nothing additional for the President’s Report.

8.3 Chair’s Comments – Mr. Gewecke noted that the Institutional Climate Survey and interviews have been completed. The Board will receive a preliminary report in June and the full report in July.

8.4 The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will take place Tuesday, May 28, 2024, location TBD.

9. **Executive Session** – Pending Litigation, Attorney-Client Privilege, and Personnel Matters

Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees will now go into an Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to pending litigation, attorney-client privilege, and personnel matters. The matters discussed will be made public if and when the circumstances requiring confidentiality no longer exist, however it is not presently known if and when that will be.

It is expected that the Executive Session shall last approximately 60 minutes and no action will be taken after the Executive Session.

At 6:39 p.m. Mrs. Smith moved to enter into Executive Session. Dr. Crowley seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

The Executive Session ended at 7:30 p.m. upon a motion made by Dr. Carrick and seconded by Mrs. Smith. The motion carried unanimously.

10. Adjournment

At 7:38 p.m., Mrs. Smith moved to adjourn the public meeting. Mrs. Frank seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved:



John Santillo, Secretary – Board of Trustees