



Ratified at April 19, 2023 meeting

**Board of Trustees Meeting
March 15, 2023**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Westchester Community College held on Wednesday, March 15, 2023, at 3 PM at the Yonkers Campus.

Trustees Present:

Dr. LeRoy Mitchell, Chairperson, Dr. Norman Jacknis, Vice-Chairperson, (via videoconference), Deborah Raizes, Vice Chairperson, Robin Bikkal Esq, (via videoconference), Susan Gerry, Hon. John Nonna, Lucas Peixoto, Dr. Gregory Robeson Smith, Sergio Serratto, Hon. Lyndon Williams, Yolanda Howell, Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

Trustees Absent:

None

Cabinet Members Present:

Dr. Belinda S. Miles, President, Dr. Vanessa Morest, Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs, Dr. Shawn Brown, Chief of Staff and Vice President of Strategic Operations, Brian Murphy, Vice President and Dean of Administrative Services, Dolores Swirin Yao, Vice President and Dean, External Affairs, Executive Director, WCC Foundation, Tere Wisell, Vice President and Dean, Community Education and Workforce Development, Anthony Scordino, Vice President, Information Technology, Dante Cantu, Vice President of Student Access, Involvement & Success.

Call to Order

Chairperson LeRoy Mitchell called the meeting to order.

Ratification of Minutes

Trustee Raizes made a motion seconded by Trustee Nonna to ratify the minutes of the February 14, 2023, Board meeting. The motion passed.

INFORMATION AND DECISION

A. President's Report

Dr. Belinda S. Miles reported:

We are excited to be here at our new Yonkers campus and thank Director Joe Cooke and our Yonkers staff who have worked with Yolanda in setting up today's meeting. It may seem quiet here today – spring break – but I assure you that this campus buzzes with activity. For those who have not yet had the opportunity to tour this beautiful facility, I hope you will find time today following the meeting.

Having Board meetings at Extension locations is not new. In the past, the Board has convened at our Peekskill and Mount Vernon extensions, and here in Yonkers at our former Cross County location. Seeing the breadth of SUNY Westchester Community College and the myriad services we offer in Valhalla and our extension locations enables our Trustees to fully experience our work, mission, and commitment to student excellence.

Governmental Relations & Advocacy Efforts

SUNY Chancellor Dr. John King shared that the Senate and the Assembly released their respective "One House" versions of the 2023/24 operating and capital budgets. According to the Chancellor, these One House bills are unique versus the Executive Budget and Enacted Budget in that these do not have to balance, while the Executive and Enacted do. However, these are excellent indicators of where the Legislature is thinking.

Academic Governance

- I addressed Faculty Senate regarding Budget Advocacy Efforts
- I met with our Student Government Association Executive Board regarding resources for mental health, improved academic advising, and other critical student needs. We will be continuing the conversation so that we can better advocate alongside our students on items that can make a real difference in students' lives.

Staff Excellence

Congratulations to staff members Alex Catti (Student Affairs) and Kat Peruyera (Creative Communications) as this year's Staff Excellence Award winners. Both are exemplary models of a students-first orientation to our collective work. Thanks to the WCC Foundation for sponsoring this significant peer recognition.

Enrollment Update

As of March 15, Spring 2023 enrollment is 10,205, which is a 0.4% decline compared to Spring 2022 during the same time.

However, we see a 2.4% **increase** among full-time students. Additionally, FTE is **up** 0.4%. Our final Spring 2023 session (7.5-week) begins on Monday. Summer enrollment (4 sessions starting May 18) is well underway – and registration for summer Workforce Development & Continuing Education classes begins on Monday, as well.

B. Board Chair's Report

Trustee Mitchell reported:

- The Executive Committee of the Board met last week.
- Trustee Raizes and I met with Dr. Miles to go over her annual review.
- ACCT has published quite a few things regarding education.

C. Committees

Student Trustee Report

Lucas Peixoto reported:

1. Vice President Chis is having a legal clinic in Mamaroneck that is sponsored by the Undocumented Support Committee of the SGA that is bringing free legal consultations to members of the community. Admissions and financial aid representatives will be there to help recruit prospective students who are low income and are undocumented to SUNY WCC. The Viking news, News 12 and the Mayor of Mamaroneck will be there.
2. Our conversation with President Miles on March 7, 2023
 - a. We talked about the increase of \$1 for both Student Activity Fees and Student Service Fees
 - i. Student activity funds Athletics, Student Involvement, SGA, PTK, and WEB
 - ii. Student service fees funds the Mental Health Department, Student Support Services, CARE Team, Security Department and Commencement
 - iii. The executive board of the SGA proposes a \$2 increase instead of \$1. We believe that a \$2 increase will be more beneficial for the students for these reasons:
 1. Without the \$2 increase, we would have an increase in cuts to athletics, SGA, WEB, clubs, and student involvement programs.
 2. Student services fees are funding staff positions in security. Why are student fees going towards security? In order to cover these costs, a \$2 fee increase will help cover these costs.

- b. As a student body, we are concerned that the board is responsible for mentioning the fee increase to the students. President Miles, “that the responsibility is shared between the college, SGA and other organizations like the Viking News.” In contrast, the Student Government believes that it is the board’s responsibility to communicate the reasons to the students for the fee increase.
- c. Mental Health and Student Support Services (HEERF)
 - i. HEERF is going to be ending in the summer of 2023 and we are going to be losing 4 part-time employees at the college if HEERF is not extended. The Department of Mental Health currently has 2 full-time and 2 part-time staff. In our meeting with President Miles, she expressed that there was no contingency plan set in place for what would happen after HEERF ended.
 - ii. Importance of the Mental Health Department on Campus
 - 1. Data collected from the Healthy minds Study (445 respondents, which is statistically significant with a 95% confidence interval).
 - a. Over 80% student respondents felt that their emotional or mental difficulties have hurt their academic performance in the last month.
 - b. Over 28% of respondents stated that their academic performance was impacted by 6 or more days due to emotional or mental difficulties
 - c. **16% of WCC student respondents disclosed having seriously considered attempting suicide within the last year.**
 - 2. The mental health support currently has a partnership with the Jed Foundation which is a nonprofit that protects emotional health and prevents suicide. Their strategic plan in 2020, for our staff-to-student ratios needed to be 1:1600 to meet the recommendations of International Accreditation of Counseling Services. **That means that we would need to have a team of 5 full-time employees to adequately support the mental health needs of students on campus.** As a reminder, we currently have only 2 full-time and 2 part-time staff in the department. The 2 part-time positions will be laid off in the summer of 2023.
 - iii. Importance of Student Support Services on Campus
 - 1. Student Support Services assists students that have barriers that prevent them from graduating or continuing their education. Student Support Services help approximately 300 students each semester.
 - a. Types of Barriers:
 - i. Problems w/housing

- ii. Food insecurity
- iii. Bus passes
- iv. Emergency aid funding
 - 1. The Emergency Aid Grant was given to over 30 students in the Fall 2022 semester. The graduation rate of these recipients was 100%
- v. Lack of technology
 - 1. Since the beginning of the pandemic, over 1000 students have received loaner laptops
 - 2. **Students who did not qualify for emergency aid funding, but have used other services from Student Support Services have a graduation rate that is over 80%.**
 - 3. With the loss of HEERF, Student Support Services is losing two part-times counselors. This means that there will be fewer staff to address the growing demand of students who are in dire need of assistance due to the barriers that are negatively impacting their academic careers.

Students are in dire need of support. We need to have a plan in place.

Response from Dr. Miles – we do have contingencies in place

Finance/Facilities

Trustee Robeson Smith reported:

The Finance committee had discussion on the following topics.

- Operating Forecast
- Capital Projects Update
- Contracts

Trustee Robeson Smith asked Vice President Brian Murphy to go over the forecast for the month ending February 28, 2023 and the contracts.

Vice President Murphy presented the contracts to the Board.

Resolution: Contract Ratification

WHEREAS, *Westchester Community College is required to enter into agreements for the continued operation of the College; and*

WHEREAS, *the attached schedule represents those agreements approved by the College since the last meeting of the Board of Trustees; therefore*

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Westchester Community College hereby ratifies the aforementioned agreements.

<u>CONTRACT #</u>	<u>CONTRACTOR NAME</u>	<u>CONTRACT DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>TERM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
23-0240-342	Healy Electric Contracting, Inc.	Emergency contract: repair 45Kva transformer, replace 3 amp HV fuses, and transformer bushing. Contractor is on approved County Emergency Contractors List.	2/7/23 – 3/31/23	\$8,110
WCC-22-928	OLA Consulting Engineers, PC	Generate design drawings and specifications for upgrade of APC silicon 80KVA UPS in the Technology building. No cost extension. Extend project term date. Extension needed due to long lead time on equipment	9/21/21 – 9/1/2 Term date change only (original term 9/6/21-9/5/22) (Approved Sept. 2021 BOT for \$11,500) (And May 2022 BOT increase of \$7500)	\$0
23-8102-565	NYS & CSEA Partnership For education and Training	Provider agreement for tuition voucher program with NYS & CSEA Partnership for Education and Training credit and non-credit courses.	4/1/23 – 3/31/24	\$15,000 (Revenue)
23-8102-566	BDI Datalynk, LLC	Provider agreement for Revenue sharing program With BDI Datalynk, LLC. For non-credit courses on fiber optics generating tuition in partnership for education and training	4/1/23 – 8/31/24	\$46,242 (Est. Revenue) \$31,050 (Est. Expenses)

****Motion: Robeson Smith/Serratto – all in favor**

Committee of the Whole

Trustee Mitchell reported:

The Committee of the whole had discussion on the following topics:

- Our Extensions Sites – How are we serving students? The importance of Extensions and roles.
- WCC is affordable
- New ways of delivering programs
- Integrating new sources of revenue
- Public/private partnerships

Nominating Committee:

Trustee Gerry reported:

The Nominating Committee had discussion on the following topics:

- The nominating committee which consists of trustees Nonna, Gerry and Robeson Smith will recommend the following trustees/secretary for election at the May 2023 Board meeting:
 - Dr. LeRoy W. Mitchell – Chair
 - Deborah Raizes – Vice Chair
 - Dr. Norman Jacknis – Vice Chair
 - Yolanda Howell – Secretary

Public Comment

Trustee Mitchell invited members of the community for public comment.

1. Christopher Japinga (Westchester Community College student) – addressed the Board regarding:
 - undocumented students and placing some items on the college website.
2. Fiona O’Hare-Brini (Westchester Community College student) – addressed the Board regarding:
 - Concerns about the Mental Health counselors on campus. Many students are not aware of resources that are available to them.
 - Concerns regarding academic advisement
 - Concerns regarding the disabilities office & TRIO
3. Moses Khur (Westchester Community College student) – addressed the Board regarding:
 - Concerns with academic counseling

Adjournment

****Motion: Nonna/Serratto – all in favor**

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for April 19, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Yolanda Howell

Yolanda Howell
Secretary, Board of Trustees