



Ratified at April 16, 2025 meeting

**Board of Trustees Meeting
February 19, 2025**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Westchester Community College held on Wednesday, February 19, 2025, at 3 PM in the Student Center Event Room.

Trustees Present:

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

Trustees Excused:

Hon. Lyndon Williams.

Cabinet Members Present:

Dr. Belinda S. Miles, President, Dawn Gillins, Acting 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, Garrett McAlister, Acting Vice President, Information Technology, Ben Naylor, Chief of Staff & Vice President of Strategic Affairs.

Call to Order

Chairperson LeRoy Mitchell called the meeting to order.

Ratification of Minutes

Trustee Carnot made a motion seconded by Trustee Raizes to ratify the minutes of the January 15, 2025, Board meeting. The motion passed.

INFORMATION AND DECISION

A. President's Report

Dr. Belinda S. Miles reported:

Black History Month

- Happy Black History Month! This year's national theme is *African Americans and Labor* – our BHM committee – chaired by Professor Donnie Simmons Sr. – has created an outstanding calendar of events to celebrate the contributions and achievements of African Americans. Please check our website calendar of events for information.

Honors Classroom Dedication

- It was my pleasure to attend the dedication ceremony of our newest Honors College Classroom earlier this month located in the library.

PTK Chapter Kudos

- Dr. Lynn Tincher-Ladner, President and CEO of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society notified us last week that our Phi Theta Kappa chapter has been named a 2024 REACH Chapter. The REACH program recognizes and rewards Phi Theta Kappa chapters that excel in membership development. Thanks to Professor Robin Graff for her commitment to excellence as our PTK Chapter advisor.

Federal Legislation

- We have received information regarding many changes in federal legislation that impacts our institution. Our leadership team is very engaged in understanding and following these developments as they occur. We are working closely with various partners including SUNY Administration and Communications team, Sector groups NYCCAP, ACCT, NYCCT. We have a variety of college points of contact and communications.

Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness – Enrollment

- Enrollment for Spring 2025 is still ongoing, with the opportunity to register for the second 7.5-week session. Currently, 11,615 students are registered for Spring 2025, reflecting a 13.3% increase compared to Spring 2024. Similarly, there is a 12.9% increase in FTEs when comparing Spring 2025 to Spring 2024.
- We have finalized our IPEDS 2024-2025 Graduation Rates submission. We are proud to report that the 150% graduation rate for the Fall 2021 cohort of full-time, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students is 24.8%, an increase of 1.5 percentage points over Fall 2020, which stood at a 23.3%.

- SUNY Westchester recently received the benchmark results from the SUNY Student Satisfaction Survey administered in Spring 2024:
 - Among institutions classified as “Large Community Colleges,” SUNY Westchester secured first place in all six measures of *General College Satisfaction*.
 - Additionally, regarding *feelings of acceptance and lack of prejudice*, SUNY Westchester ranked first in all seven areas, and ranked first in seven out of eight areas for *Campus Climate*, taking second place in the remaining category.
 - SUNY Westchester was also the top scorer in numerous other areas, including student health services, mental health counseling, cultural programs, social activities, access to computer and related technology, sense of belonging, and acquiring knowledge and skills for both career needs and further academic study.

Lastly, SUNY WCC is committed to attracting and retaining outstanding talent and being proactive in our succession planning in alignment with our mission, vision, values, and goals.

We have search committees, consisting of administrators, faculty and staff, conducting interviews of prospective candidates. For example, VP Wisell is leading the search committee for the VP of Administration and Finance. I am pleased to announce that Dawn Gillins will serve in the role of Acting VP while the search is underway.

Ms. Gillins brings a wealth of comprehensive financial management experience to this assignment, including more than a decade of service at SUNY Westchester. In addition to bachelor’s and master’s degrees in finance and accounting, Dawn is also a SUNY WCC alumna, where she earned a degree in accounting.

Additionally, I’m pleased to announce the appointment of Kimberly A. Gargiulo as Assistant Dean of Assessment at Westchester Community College. Ms. Gargiulo brings extensive experience in all aspects of academic assessment including assessment training; directing assessment initiatives; analyzing and reporting on assessment findings; as well as MSCHE accreditation standards.

I look forward to introducing our new AVP of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment once that appointment is confirmed.

Dr. Miles invited Dawn Gillins to introduce the new members of her team.

Dawn Gillins introduced

- Lamont Watson, Director of Physical Plant
- Celi Monteiro, Deputy Purchasing Agent

Dr. Belinda Miles then recognized Dr. Gina Gaines, Executive Director, SUNY Westchester Educational Opportunity Center. Dr. Gaines will be retiring at the end of March. We wish you every success in your retirement. Thank you for your service to Westchester Community College.

B. Board Chair's Report

Trustee Mitchell reported:

2025 National Legislative Summit

I attended the National Legislative Summit of ACCT from February 8 – 12, 2025. The conference was well attended with over 1400 registrants.

While there, I participated in discussion at the Trustees' Advisory Committee where we discussed ways to incentivize trustees to participate in trustee professional development activities. ACCT is getting ready to roll out badging protocol in which trustee activities could be given recognition and awards. The exercise is called ACCT Excell. Trustees who complete Governance 101, Advocacy 101, and parliamentary procedures together with two modules selected from a second tier of offerings would be eligible for the level one badge. All these modules can be seen on ACCT Connect, but I have a tentative list of the modules. The system is designed so that it is not necessary to attend all the modules in person. So, there is flexibility in the method of achieving badge levels. These include participation in ACCT virtual regional meetings, service on the ACCT Board or committees, attendance at the Governance Leadership Institutes national or state level.

There was no formal meeting of the Achieving the Dream committee ACCT/ATD, however, we were informed that we received additional grant funding which will enable us to move towards the implementation stage of our mission. Accordingly, we will be meeting shortly because of the uncertainties in Congress at this time. I attended several sessions which covered some of the areas for which we receive federal funding such as WIOA, workforce development, Perkins, to name a few. It appears that there are signals indicating positive movement towards workforce training, but there is no certainty. Short term Pell, and title II are some of the programs mentioned on the edges for increased access to funding.

As expected, the DEI issue, and how it affects our colleges, was widely discussed. Indeed, the board of directors of ACCT accepted the recommendation of the DEI committee to change its name to Committee for Impact and Success. This was the result of extensive and sometimes heated discussion at the DEI committee meeting the day before. With the current anti DEI environment and mass apprehension of undocumented individuals all over the country, there is great concern about what colleges should do when approached by ICE and other Federal agents on our campuses for the purpose of detaining our students. This subject was explored extensively at a plenary session by a panel of immigration attorneys and again at the lawyers' roundtable. It was suggested that colleges should establish procedures for dealing with these situations should they occur. There should be a go to person on campus to whom all such incidents should be addressed. Campus security is usually the first point of contact on campus, and they should be instructed accordingly. Because we have open campuses, we should be alert to visitors on campus. All this information can be obtained from the slides of the respective sessions at NLS on ACCT Connect. I have some copies which can be shared. We were also cautioned to be alert for student impersonation of Federal Law Enforcement on campus.

There was also a plenary session by Doug Shapiro, Executive Director of the Research Center of the National Student Clearinghouse. He shared with us the demographic composition of the current student body and the future trends for which we should be aware. The number of adult students seeking short term credential is on the rise.

I attended the NYCCT breakfast where congressman John W. Mannion of the Finger Lakes region of New York addressed us. He is a member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. He is a Community College Graduate and supports our mission. ACCT also gave the 2025 National Education Service Awards to Gus Bilirakis and Connecticut's Joe Courtney who are reviving the community college committee in congress.

Recognition of Board Secretary Yolanda Howell

Yolanda Howell has been the Board Secretary for more than twenty-years and she will be retiring at the end of this month.

The board presented Yolanda with luggage for her upcoming trip as well as plaque for her years of service.

C. Committees

Committee of the Whole

Trustee Mitchell reported:

The Committee of the Whole had discussion on the following:

- ACCT Presentation - Special Orders – Executive Orders: A Legal Perspective for Community Colleges
- Immigration Law ICE enforcement
- DACA
- Dream Act
- Guidance on sensitive locations
- AI on campus

Student Trustee Report

Trustee Carnot reported:

- Ten new Senators have been appointed. We now have a full Senate.
- The SGA has cards (red cards) regarding how to interact with ICE for students.
- There is a Town Hall scheduled on March 7 at 4 pm regarding Accessibility.
- ACCT Legislative Summit
 - HIS institution – What would happen if we stopped receiving funding.
 - Ways to protect LGBTQ+
 - Special Student Trustee session – Connected with some of the members of Congress.

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 Acting Vice President Dawn Gillins to go over the forecast for the month ending January 31, 2025, and the contracts.

Acting Vice President Gillins 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>
25-0240-407	Artisans Fire Services LLC.	Fire alarm diagnosis and CPU replacement in Library building, baseball field house and Student Center.	2/20/25 – 5/31/25	\$14,072.70
25-0240-678	Gentech Ltd.	Preventative Maintenance on all campus generators.	4/1/25 – 3/31/26	\$29,900
24-0101-623	Resolution Economics, LLC dba Biddle Consulting Group, Inc. Bought by Berkshire Associates, LLC. Name change only.	Preparation of Affirmative Action Plan to meet compliance with Federal Contract Compliance programs requirements. Approved at May 2024 BOT.	5/1/24 – 4/30/27	
25-0240-677	Environmental Compliance Management Concepts, LLC.	Replace four fuel oil management systems in the Classroom, PE, Science/AAB, and Health Science Buildings.	3/1/25 – 8/31/25	\$34,576
25-9572-679	Nawrocki Smith LLP	Comprehensive assessment of services of the Bursar Operations	3/1/25 – 4/30/25	\$29,400 Grant funded.
25-0155-675	McAllister & Quinn, LLC.	Grants development and writing consultant services. One year with the option of three, one-year renewals.	3/1/25 – 2/28/26 Term date change only. Approved at Jan BOT.	
25-8301-038	The Bristol Assisted Living at Armonk	Provide programming for seniors in Bristol at Armonk. Bristol pays WCC for administration of the program	4/1/25 – 6/1/25	\$600 expense \$2,000 revenue

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

Public Comment

Trustee Mitchell invited members of the community for public comment.

Clara Carnot addressed the Board regarding a proposal from the SGA regarding two Adjunct Counselor positions from the office of Student Support Services.

Response from Chairman Mitchell – Most of what you are asking are items that should be taken up with the management of the college as opposed to the Board. The Board sets policy.

Response from Dr. Belinda Miles – I will be visiting with SGA tomorrow. You may schedule time to speak to me.

The Chairperson convened an Executive Session under provisions of Section 105 of Article 7 of the Public Officers Law to discuss personnel matters.

Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues.

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

Motion out of Executive Session

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

Adjournment

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

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for March 19, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Yolanda Howell

Yolanda Howell
Secretary, Board of Trustees