



**Ratified at June 18, 2025 meeting**

**Board of Trustees Meeting  
May 21, 2025**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Westchester Community College held on Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 3 PM in the Student Center Event Room.

**Trustees Present:**

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

**Trustees Excused:**

Hon. Lyndon Williams.

**Cabinet Members Present:**

Dr. Belinda S. Miles, President, Dr. Vanessa Morest, Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs, 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, Dante Cantú, Vice President of Student Access, Involvement & Success, 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 Nonna made a motion seconded by Trustee Gerry to ratify the minutes of the April 16, 2025, Board meeting. The motion passed.

## **INFORMATION AND DECISION**

### **A. President's Report**

Dr. Belinda S. Miles reported:

#### **Greetings**

Last week we celebrated the college's 77<sup>th</sup> annual commencement, and I think many of us are still reveling in the joy and excitement that graduation brings.

#### **Commencement Highlights**

- Over 1,600 students from the 2024–2025 academic year were invited to participate in the commencement ceremonies, with more than 600 attending across the three events.
- Of the graduates, 537 had GPAs of 3.5 or higher.
- Our youngest graduate is 18 years old; the most senior is 66.
- We don't yet have formal information on where our students plan to transfer or join the workforce, but students were sharing acceptances to SUNY and CUNY colleges, NYU, Columbia, Yale, Cornell – in addition to our local colleges and universities.
- As we do each year before the 2 PM ceremony, we welcomed members of the Class of 1975 back to campus for their 50-year anniversary luncheon hosted by our Alumni Engagement Office. Michelle Schleibaum, director of that office, reports that 24 members of the Class of 1975 attended luncheon 17 of these Golden Graduates participated in the 2 PM ceremony.
- Thanks to Trustees Bikkal, Gerry, Nonna, and Serrato for attending commencement. Your presence and your greetings are appreciated, as is the Board's unwavering support of our students.

#### **Among a few of our spring celebrations:**

- Lavender Graduation
- Pepsi Scholars
- Student Leader Awards
- Athletics Awards
- Nurses Pinning Ceremony
- Veterinarian Technology celebrated its inaugural pinning ceremony earlier this month. Additionally, the Veterinarian Technology program received full accreditation. Thanks to Professor Megan Moore, Department Chair.
- Ribbon-cutting ceremony - COMM Central Multimedia Center
- Center for Teaching and Learning Symposium – celebrating the achievements of our faculty. This year's theme: *Evolved*, reflects our faculty's commitment to

growth and transformation. Keynote speaker, *Dr. Lance Eaton, Senior Associate Director of AI in Teaching and Learning at Northeastern University*, explored *“Teaching on Shifting Ground: AI, Agency, and Adaptation in Higher Ed.”*

- SUNY Chancellor Awards – Faculty, Staff, and Student Excellence – formal celebration during Fall Convocation.

### **SUNY Info**

SUNY Chancellor King has been meeting regularly with community college president to discuss legislative actions, and the budget.

At SUNY’s request, I appointed Dr. Rinardo Reddick as SUNY WCC’s Title VI Coordinator as part of SUNY’s commitment to ensuring continued compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) obligations.

### **Legislative Advocacy**

We remain focused on federal/state/local legislative actions, ensuring we are in compliance.

### **Community Relationships**

April 21: Invited by White Plains Mayor Tom Roach to discuss solar panel installations.

May 17: In celebration of Yonkers Arts Weekend 2025, SUNY WCC was invited to participate in *Fashion in Motion*, a special event featuring the designs and creations of our Fashion Design & Technology students. We deeply appreciate the opportunity for students to showcase their talent and to participate in a runway show as part of their learning experience.

### **Enrollment Management**

Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness reports the following data.

- Summer 2025 classes began on Monday, May 19. As of today, **3,777** students are registered, representing an **8.8%** increase compared to Summer 2024.
- Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) for Summer 2025 have also increased by **13.5%** over the same period.
- Enrollment for Fall 2025 is progressing well, with **2,663** students currently registered, a **29.1%** increase compared to Fall 2024.
- FTEs for Fall 2025 have similarly increased by **29.9%**.

**Lastly**, it is my pleasure to introduce Bella DelDuco to our Board of Trustees and college community. Ms. DelDuco will serve as Student Trustee during the 2025-2026 academic year. Bella, would you like to tell us a little about yourself?

Bella DelDuco

Good afternoon, I am currently enrolled in the Honors College, and I am in my sophomore year. After I graduate from Westchester Community College, I plan to enroll in a four-year institution where I plan to study Political Science and then eventually move on to a law. I am really excited to work with everyone.

**B. Board Chair's Report**

Trustee Mitchell reported:

NYCCT (New York Community College Trustees)

- I attend the April convening of NYCCT at Mohawk Valley Community College.
- We discussed and approved the budget for the next year
- There is still no resolution on the differences between the Chancellor and the Trustees regarding governance and responsibility.
- We also had a briefing on the State budget.

ACCT (American Association of Community College Trustees)

- If "The Big, Beautiful Act" is passed we anticipated that changes will be made as they move forward.
- April has been designated as Community College month.

*Chairman Mitchell asked Ben Naylor, Chief of Staff, to give the board some highlights regarding the state budget.*

Ben Naylor reported:

- We have an enacted State Budget.
- We will still have our FTE funding flat at around \$3000.00 per student.
- We are slated to receive an additional \$534,000 in additional operating aid from an eight-million-dollar pool from the state that is meant to support high demand fields and expand programs in areas such as healthcare, cybersecurity, energy systems and AI.
- Westchester Community College along with five other community college institutions in the area will now be exempt from paying the MTA payroll tax. This will save us approximately \$200,000 per year.

- The Governors Opportunity Program – A \$28 million fund for free community college for adults aged 25 to 55 who don't yet have a degree. The program will cover tuition fees, books and supplies for those enrolled in high demand programs. The program is called *SUNY Reconnect*. We've already been in touch with SUNY with regards to this program. We received an initial slate of current Westchester Community College programs that will fit their criteria.
- With regards to the federal end, things are a little bit more concerning. There's a big budget bill in DC being negotiated right now. Higher education is one of the hardest areas hit in this particular budget proposal. The budget proposal includes a 22.6% cut to non-discretionary spending. There is a fundamental shift in the way that this proposal envisions higher education, with the belief that institutions and states and not the federal government should be funding access to education.
- There are several substantial areas where there are proposed cuts that would have an impact on our students. Starting with the federal SEOG grant (Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant), this is a grant that supplements PELL and fills financial aid gaps for our lowest income students. We have received \$377,00 in SEOG funding this year. Under President Trump's proposal this program would be eliminated. In addition, federal work study is also targeted. Westchester Community College received \$358,000 last year in federal work study funds from the federal government. This money funds campus jobs for students to earn money while attending college. These are not just paychecks. These are meaningful experiences for our students to keep them engaged and to help them reduce debt. That program is facing an 80% cut.
- In addition, our TRIO student support services grant which is our most recent TRIO grant is coming to an end. We have had that grant from 2020 to 2025 in the amount of \$1.5 million dollars. We have served 170 students annually with this program. In the current budget TRIO would be eliminated. The final item would be CCAMPUS (childcare access funds) to support student parents and pay for their childcare on campus to allow student parents to attend classes. Our current grant runs through 2027 and once again this program would be eliminated in the current budget. We support 20 to 25 students each semester with this program.
- One of the biggest changes in this federal budget proposal is with regard to the PELL program. This would increase the credit load requirement to receive the full PELL award from 12 credits to 15 credits. It would also eliminate aid to students taking fewer than six credits. There is a risk sharing component to this proposal. Colleges would be required to reimburse the federal government a

certain amount based on a portion of unpaid student loans. Essentially, we have students who have graduated, we are not paying back their student loans, the colleges would be on the hook for a portion of the student loans.

### **C. Committees**

#### Governance Committee

Trustee Gerry reported:

- State Budget and Federal Actions/WCC Grants
- Naming Opportunities Policy – we will have a resolution to present to the full board later today.
- Election of Board Officers – we will have a resolution to present to the full board later today.

#### Program Committee

Trustee Jacknis reported:

- Update on Administrative Assessment
- Scheduling reform as a strategy for enrollment management
- Article: Leveraging AI to Predict and Reduce College Dropout Rates
- Master Plan Amendment - we will have a resolution to present to the full board later today.
- Academic Program Approvals
  - Criminal Justice, AAS proposal
  - Fashion Design and Technology, AAS proposal
  - Business Management, AS proposal

#### 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 April 30, 2025, capital projects, 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>
25-0101-683	Dr. Rachel Fester	Collaborating on developing Middle States Commission on Higher Education Monitoring Report; Administrative, Educational, and Student Support Unit assessment; and Strategic Planning	4/21/25 – 8/2/25	\$20,000
25-0245-680	Arco Protection Systems, Inc.	Annual inspection and testing of fire sprinkler systems, fire pumps and fire hydrants for Main Campus and two extension centers (Mt. Vernon and Peekskill)	6/1/25 – 12/31/26	\$31,000
25-0240-414	Evergreen Mechanical Corp.	Furnish and install rooftop air handler #1 bearing and motor and air handler #4 motor chillers in AAB/Science buildings. Needed for proper cooling in the buildings.	6/1/25 – 8/31/25	\$14,900
25-0505-415	National Fit Testing Services	To establish an agreement with a vendor to perform mask fit test for clinical students	8/27/25 – 8/28/25	\$6,080
25-011-682	Computer Si Corporation	OnBase system upgrade and support services expertise needed to utilize additional features and ensure protection from security vulnerabilities.	6/1/25 – 5/31/26	\$30,800
25-0835-681	Steris Corporation	For labor and service of two autoclaves for the Microbiology labs. Includes 4 service visits per year for each autoclave.	6/1/25 – 5/31/29	\$67,093.31
25-0410-041	Empire State Library Network c/o LILRC (Long Island Library Resources Council)	Statewide delivery service maintained by ESLN. It supports statewide resource sharing between Connect NY, Information Delivery Services project and other libraries.	7/1/25 – 6/30/26	\$3,900

<u>CONTRACT #</u>	<u>CONTRACTOR NAME</u>	<u>CONTRACT DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>TERM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
25-8221-042	Environmental Leaders of Color (ELOC)	Five-week summer experience for students in grades 7-12 with an interest in clean energy and protecting the environment.	7/8/25 – 8/6/25	\$714 (Revenue)
25-8102—416	Dun and Bradstreet Corporation	Provide licensed access to a comprehensive real-time company data business intelligence platform.	5/30/25 – 5/29/26	\$5,200

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

Trustee Gerry reported:

### **RESOLUTION: APPROVAL TO ADOPT THE NAMING OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

**WHEREAS**, SUNY Westchester Community College (SUNY WCC) recognizes the need for a clear, consistent, and transparent process for naming College facilities, spaces, and units; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed policy establishes guidelines for honoring individuals who have provided exceptional service or made significant financial contributions to the College, and for recognizing contributions that support specific physical spaces; and

**WHEREAS**, the policy outlines the role and composition of a Naming Advisory Committee to ensure that naming decisions reflect the College’s mission, values, and long-term interests; and

**WHEREAS**, the policy includes provisions for funding expectations, stewardship responsibilities, naming durations, and procedures for removal of names under defined circumstances; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Trustees Governance Committee has reviewed and endorsed the proposed Naming Opportunities Policy;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the SUNY WCC Board of Trustees hereby adopts the **Naming Opportunities Policy**, a copy of which is attached hereto.

**\*\*Motion: Gerry/Raizes– all in favor**

### **Naming Opportunities Policy**

#### ***(A) PURPOSE, PROPRIETY, AND DUE DILIGENCE***

*The Board of Trustees of SUNY Westchester Community College ("WCC") establishes this policy to provide clear, consistent, and transparent procedures for the naming of College facilities, spaces, and units. The goals of this policy are to:*



1. Honor individuals who have demonstrated exceptional service to the College, the community, the state, the nation, or society.
2. Recognize long-term and significant financial contributions to the College.
3. Acknowledge financial contributions that directly support the physical spaces being named.

*This policy also:*

- Provides clarity, consistency, and transparency to the naming process;
- Authorizes guidelines and/or procedures for the naming of College units, buildings, roads, and physical spaces; and
- Serves as a reference document for the College's Board of Trustees, President, Foundation Executive Director, and College administration.

*All naming decisions will be made with careful consideration of the potential long-term impact on the College community. Due diligence will be exercised to ensure that the proposed name aligns with the College's mission, traditions, and values.*

*Furthermore, multiple naming opportunities will only be considered in connection with significant financial contributions.*

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#### **(B) NAMING RESPONSIBILITY**

*The responsibility and authority for naming a unit or facility rests with the Board of Trustees, acting upon the recommendation of the Naming Advisory Committee ("Committee"), which is chaired by the President. The Committee shall:*

1. Ensure that naming decisions align with the College's interests, are commensurate with the contribution, and maintain equity across similar naming actions.
2. Seek advice and input from representative faculty, staff, and students who may be directly affected by the proposed naming action.
3. Establish appropriate parameters for naming opportunities, including financial expectations and specific plans for new or renovated facilities and spaces.
4. Include, at minimum, the President (Chair), the Executive Director of the WCC Foundation, a trustee (to be appointed by the Board Chair), a faculty representative, a staff representative, and a student representative. Additional members may be invited by the President as circumstances warrant. The Committee is advisory in nature and holds no independent policy-making authority.
5. Ensure that any gift associated with a naming opportunity is documented through a written gift agreement between the donor and the College, specifying the terms of the gift, duration of the naming, and recognition after the naming period concludes.

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#### **(C) DEFINITIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUNDING AND RECOGNITION**

##### **1. General**

*While facilities will generally be named after individuals, corporations or organizations may be considered in select circumstances. The President and the Foundation will partner to secure financial gifts that are appropriate to the project scope and aligned with the College's mission. Naming opportunities may also honor individuals whose exceptional service to the College merits recognition, regardless of financial contribution. Such service may include extraordinary leadership, commitment to student success, longstanding academic or civic contributions, or other distinguished achievements directly benefiting the College and its community.*

##### **2. Facility**

*A "facility" encompasses every building, road, space within a building, outdoor area (such as a garden, plaza, or marker), or other significant physical asset located on College property.*

*For example:*

- Construction or renovation costs
- Location prominence
- Frequency of use
- Age and life-cycle value of the facility

*In-kind gifts may be accepted, provided the value is commensurate with life-cycle maintenance costs.*

**3. Duration**

*Naming rights will endure for the useful life of the facility, or a minimum period of years as determined by the College. If a facility is substantially altered, removed, or replaced, the original naming will be appropriately commemorated.*

**4. Term Naming**

*In certain cases, especially for corporate donors, naming rights may be established for a fixed term. Term durations will be specified in the gift agreement and may be renewed with additional contributions.*

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**(D) STEWARDSHIP**

*The Committee shall designate a steward for approved naming opportunities. The steward will ensure that naming rights and gift agreements are properly administered, communicated, and implemented according to established College procedures.*

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**(E) RIGHT OF REMOVAL**

*To safeguard its reputation, WCC reserves the right to remove any name from a unit or facility if the College determines, at its sole discretion, that the name adversely impacts or could adversely impact the institution. Donors will be notified of such actions, but no financial restitution will be provided.*

*Additionally, names may be removed if:*

- *The donor fails to fulfill their pledge obligations;*
- *A planned gift does not materialize as expected; or*
- *The named property is sold, demolished, or otherwise retired from use, in which case the College may act upon recommendation of the Committee or Board Chair, with Board approval and donor notification.*

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**(F) ADMINISTRATION**

*The President may establish procedures and guidelines to administer this policy effectively.*

*The President shall ensure that the local sponsor is informed of any proposed naming or renaming of College buildings or major facilities, in recognition of the partnership between the College and the County of Westchester and the importance of transparency in institutional decisions. Where legally required, naming or renaming actions will be subject to applicable approval state or county approval processes established by law.*

Trustee Nonna reported:

Election of Board Officers

Nominating Committee members: Trustees Gerry, Nonna, and Bikkal

**Resolution**

ELECTION OF OFFICERS OF THE  
WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**WHEREAS**, the annual meeting of the Board of Trustees for the election of Officers of the Board of Trustees shall be held in May every two years; and

**WHEREAS**, a nominating committee consisting of three members of the Board (Susan Gerry, Esq., Hon. John Nonna, Robin Bikkal, Esq.) was appointed by the Board; and

**WHEREAS**, the nominating committee met to consider the proposed slate of officers for the term beginning July 1, 2025.

**NOW THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the nominating committee of the Board of Trustees hereby present the following slate of officers for the following positions:

Chairperson – Dr. LeRoy Mitchell  
Vice Chairperson – Dr. Norman Jacknis  
Vice Chairperson – Deborah Raizes  
Acting Secretary – Yolanda Howell

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this slate of Officers will take office on **July 1, 2025** and will hold office until their elected successors take office.

**\*\*Motion: Nonna/Gerry – all in favor**

Trustee Jacknis reported:

**RESOLUTION: APPROVAL OF MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT AND ACADEMIC PROGRAMS FOR YONKERS BRANCH CAMPUS**

WHEREAS, SUNY Westchester Community College seeks to designate a Branch Campus in Yonkers, New York, to expand access to high-quality, affordable public higher education in one of the state’s largest and most underserved urban areas; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with New York State Education Department (NYSED) requirements, the College must submit and receive approval for a Master Plan Amendment (MPA) to formally designate the Yonkers location as a Branch Campus; and

WHEREAS, three academic programs—Associate in Science (A.S.) in Business Management, Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Criminal Justice, and Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Fashion Design & Technology—are proposed to be offered at the Yonkers Branch Campus, enabling students to complete entire degree programs at that location; and

WHEREAS, the proposed MPA and academic programs have been reviewed and approved by the College’s Faculty Senate, Academic Leadership Council, Cabinet, and are recommended by the President for adoption; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of the Yonkers Branch Campus and these programs aligns with the College's mission to serve the educational and economic needs of the region and expand equitable access to degree completion opportunities;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the SUNY Westchester Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the submission of the Master Plan Amendment and the associated academic program proposals for the Yonkers Branch Campus to the New York State Education Department.

**\*\*Motion: Jacknis/Raizes – all in favor**

#### Recognition of Retirees

Dolores Swirin-Yao reported:

We have a new tradition of honoring retirees with two decades or more of service! We will now annually recognize retirees at the May meeting of the College Board of Trustees who have been at SUNY WCC for more than twenty years and who have retired during the previous year.

The retirees that are present for our meeting today are:

Elizabeth Gaffney  
Patrica Richards  
Yolanda Howell

*(Each retiree was given a certificate, a 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary booklet and a plaque thanking them for their years of service to Westchester Community College)*

#### Public Comment

Trustee Mitchell invited members of the community for public comment.

No public comment.

**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: Nonna/Gerry – all in favor**

Motion out of Executive Session

**\*\*Motion: Jacknis/Nonna – all in favor**

Adjournment

**\*\*Motion: Gerry/Raizes – all in favor**

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for June 18, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

*Yolanda Howell*

Yolanda Howell  
Secretary, Board of Trustees