



**Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
Tuesday, February 25, 2025 – 5:00 p.m.
Executive Office Board Room**

MINUTES

1. General Institutional Functions

- 1.1 Mr. Yardley called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.
- 1.2 Mrs. Fullem read the Public Statement: Adequate notice of this meeting specifying the time and location was transmitted via fax and email to the County Commissioners, County Clerk, NJ Herald and posted to the Sussex County Community College website and on the main entry doors to the Administration Building on Wednesday, February 19, 2025 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. Yardley-Chair, Dr. Silverthorne-Vice Chair, Mr. Cable, Dr. Carrick, Mr. Fiore, Mrs. Frank, Mrs. Pepe, Ms. Quinn, Mr. Santonastaso, Mr. Schick, Mr. Crispino-Alumni Trustee, Dr. Homer-Interim President, and Mrs. Fullem-Recording Secretary.

Also present: Mrs. Pappan-Vice President of Finance and Administration, Dr. Gallo-Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, Mr. Fruge-Dean of Technical Occupations, Mr. Kula-Executive Director of the Foundation, Mrs. Caputo-Director of Human Resources, and Ms. Fina-College Counsel.

Mr. Yardley indicated that the Board of Trustees still needs to vote on a Treasurer, and a Secretary. He said that Mrs. Frank expressed interest in filling the position of Treasurer, and Mrs. Pepe expressed interest in filling the position of Secretary. He asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There being none, he asked for a voice vote for Mrs. Frank-Treasurer, and Mrs. Pepe-Secretary.

Mr. Cable, Dr. Carrick, Mr. Fiore, Mrs. Frank, Mrs. Pepe, Mrs. Quinn, Mr. Santonastaso, Mr. Schick, Dr. Silverthorne, and Mr. Yardley voted yes. Mrs. Frank was elected as the Treasurer of the Board of Trustees, and Mrs. Pepe was elected the Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

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

Mr. Yardley welcomed the guests and noted 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 before 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.

No one spoke and no public comments were submitted. Mr. Santonastaso

moved to close the floor. Mrs. Pepe seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

ACTION 1.6 Approval/Acceptance of Minutes

Mr. Santonastaso moved to approve/accept all minutes as presented. Mrs. Frank seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

- 1.6.1 Minutes from the January 17, 2025 Special Board Meeting. (Resolution No. GI02252025-1)
- 1.6.2 Minutes from the January 17, 2025 Executive Session. (Resolution No. GI02252025-2)
- 1.6.3 Minutes from the January 28, 2025, Regular Board Meeting. (Resolution No. GI02252025-3)
- 1.6.4 Acknowledgment of Receipt of Committee Meeting Minutes. (Resolution No. GI02252025-4)
 - Personnel and Curriculum Committee – February 18, 2025.
 - Audit and Policy Committee – February 18, 2025.
 - Finance and Facilities Committee – February 18, 2025.

2. 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:

Dr. Silverthorn moved to approve all items on the Consent Agenda. Mr. Schick seconded the motion.

Mr. Yardley thanked everyone for serving on committees.

Roll call vote: Mr. Cable, Dr. Carrick, Mr. Fiore, Mrs. Frank, Mrs. Pepe, Ms. Quinn, Mr. Santonastaso, Mr. Schick, Dr. Silverthorne, and Mr. Yardley voted yes. The motion carried unanimously.

- 2.1 Approval of Personnel Items
 - 2.1.1 Personnel Actions: January 14, 2025 – February 11, 2025. (Resolution No. P02252025-1)
 - 2.2 Approval of Curriculum Items – None this month.
 - 2.3 Approval of Policy Items
 - 2.3.1 Re-Adopt Policy No. 200.11 Faculty Absences with edits as noted. (Resolution No. AP02252025-1)
 - 2.3.2 Re-Adopt Policy No. 200.41 Compensation for Teaching by Admin Staff with edits as noted. (Resolution No. AP02252025-2)
- The following policies are presented for re-adoption. There are no changes.
- 2.3.3 Re-Adopt Policy No. 200.28 Bereavement. (Resolution No. AP02252025-3)
 - 2.3.4 Re-Adopt Policy No. 200.29 FMLA. (Resolution No. AP02252025-4)

- 2.3.5 Re-Adopt Policy No. 200.46 Presidential Evaluation. (Resolution No. AP02252025-5)
- 2.3.6 Re-Adopt Policy No 200.47 Reimbursement for Expenses. (Resolution No. AP02252025-6)
- 2.4 Approval of Finance Items
 - 2.4.1 Appointment of Nisivoccia as the Auditing Firm for the Sussex County Community College Audit Engagement for FY 2025 through FY 2028, in the Amount of \$48,000. (Resolution No. BFF02252025-8)
 - 2.4.2 Dykstra Walker Design Group - Engineering, Environmental and Survey Services - Exploration of Health Science Lab Expansion for \$39,700.00. Chapter 12. (Resolution No. BFF02252025-1)
 - 2.4.3 USDA Rural Business Development Grant Application – Resolution approving and authorizing the college to submit a grant application, which if successful commits the college to undertake and implement a project consisting of upgrades and equipment, and authorizing the financing of all or a portion of the project through the Rural Business Development Grant Program made available by the USDA. Dr. Cory Homer, Interim President of Sussex County Community College, is authorized to sign any grant applications, documents, and agreements. The project paid and/or financed through all sources in an amount not to exceed \$50,000. (Resolution No. BFF02252025-2)
- 2.5 Approval of Facilities Items
 - 2.5.1 Unitemp/MDI - furnish and Install a New Rooftop Package for RTU-2, for \$56,163. Chapter 12. (Resolution No. BFF02252025-3)
 - 2.5.2 Hannon Floors - Abatement and Installation of Building C Faculty Flooring for \$83,679.88. Chapter 12. (Resolution No. BFF02252025-4)
 - 2.5.3 HQW - Architectural Service for Renovations at MTEC Building B. Reserves (Resolution No. BFF02252025-4), as follows:
 - Construction Documents - \$18,900.00
 - Bidding and Award - \$7,500.00
 - Construction Admin (Billed Hourly) Estimated - \$20,000.00
 - Reimbursable Expenses- Estimated \$500.00
 - 2.5.4 KI – Training tables and chairs at the PSTA for \$89,278.50. Chapter 12. (Resolution No. BFF02252025-5)
 - 2.5.5 Planet Networks - PSTA Fiber Connection to College Main Campus for \$1,199.95/Month, 5 Year Agreement \$71,997.00. PSTA County Funded. (Resolution No. BFF02252025-6)
 - 2.5.6 J. Kramer Landscaping and Snow Plowing – Snow services as follows: The original blanket purchase order under Garme (PB 101716) was \$200,000.00, with a balance carried over from Garme blanket purchase order for \$115,000.00. Operating. (Resolution No. BFF02252025-7)

3. Finance – ACTION/RC

ACTION/RC 3.1 Recommendation: Acknowledge Receipt and Review of Financial Statements: Financial Statements – Results as of January 31, 2025. (Resolution No. GI002252025-5). Key highlights included:

- Enrollment Growth: Up 8% over budget.
- Revenue Variances: COVID-era CARES funding no longer received.
- Expenses: Healthcare costs increased 17%.
- Software Licensing: Costs expected to rise significantly.

Mr. Cable moved to acknowledge receipt and review of the financial statements as presented. Ms. Pepe seconded the motion.

Roll call vote: Mr. Cable, Dr. Carrick, Mr. Fiore, Mrs. Frank, Mrs. Pepe, Ms. Quinn, Mr. Santonastaso, Mr. Schick, Dr. Silverthorne, and Mr. Yardley voted yes. The motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Carrick offered all the staff and faculty kudos for the enrollment efforts.

There were quick comments about enrollment:

- 2,300 headcount per semester.
- Running about a 50:50 percent full time/part time mix.
- We enroll about 400 unduplicated students a year through the college, which equals around 51,000 credit hours.

4. Reports

4.1 The Correspondence File was received, reviewed, and filed.

- Letters of appreciation for LACE Program and the Adult Transition Center.
- Acknowledgment of the STEM faculty's efforts.
- Press release on alumna Sarah Ransom completing her BFA at William Patterson.

5. Presentations – Student Spotlight - Aleah McCormick

For 3 years we have run an Automotive Jump Start program for eligible HS seniors. To date, we have served close to 24 HS seniors, and they worked toward the HS diploma and earned 12 credits in the SCCC Automotive Program. These students can complete these courses at a reduced tuition rate, and further financial assistance is supported through grants such as Perkins. The total cost to the students and family was just over \$1200 for two semesters and 12 credits in 2024. Aleah McCormick from High Point HS and Brian Drelick, Supervisor of STEM, will attend to say a few words. Aleah's experience in the electrical-focused automotive courses has steered her passion for applying to NJIT and pursuing a degree in engineering. Jessica Kuntz (Director of Guidance) from Newton HS will briefly describe this ongoing initiative. In spring 25, we will have our first cohort of students graduating from SCCC who started this program.

Mr. Yardley introduced Mr. Fiore to the Board. He apologized for not doing it sooner in the meeting.

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

Mr. Santonastaso moved to open the floor. Mr. Cable seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Former Dean of Arts and Humanities, Daniel Cosentino, addressed the board, raising concerns about past leadership practices at the college and proposing several actions. Cosentino urged the board to:

1. Open all interim positions to public competition within three months to ensure transparency.
2. Reevaluate faculty tenure granted outside standard review processes.
3. Restructure academic affairs to replace entrenched leadership with a more transparent, faculty-driven governance model.
4. Investigate past misconduct and abuses of power within the executive team.
5. Reinstate his position as Coordinator of Visual and Performing Arts, as he was not fired but not renewed under the prior administration.

He detailed his rigorous hiring process, contributions to the arts program, and professional achievements. Cosentino emphasized that public institutions should resolve issues transparently. He expressed a desire for a fair resolution without harming the institution and signaled his intent to continue pursuing accountability.

Dr. Dahlia Philips, an infectious disease physician, addressed the board to support her husband, Daniel Cosentino, and voiced concerns about Sussex County Community College's decline. She highlighted Daniel's success in building the Alpha Arts Institute into a thriving arts hub but noted a troubling shift—faculty departures, secrecy, and questionable decisions leading to its deterioration. Comparing it to diagnosing illness, she urged the board to act with transparency and integrity to restore the institution's mission and accountability.

Mr. Crispino, Alumni Trustee, provided an update on the Alumni Association Project:

- Website development
- Membership benefits (library, fitness center)
- Events planning

Mr. Santonastaso moved to close the floor. Mr. Cable seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

7. Other Business

Discussion / Reports / Announcements:

7.1 Board Chair's Appointment of an Alternate to the Board of School Estimate.

Mrs. Frank cannot make the scheduled date of March 12, 2025. Mr. Yardley appointed Mr. Schick.

7.2 Trustee Activity Update

Ms. Quinn reported that she and Mr. Santonastaso attended the Athletic Hall of Fame unveiling for Mr. Kuntz. She commended the facilities team and everyone who worked to put it together.

Mr. Santonastaso noted that he has been speaking with the SGA. They want the Board to know that they are currently working on their bylaws. He also noted that he is working with them to create a Trustee Open Office Hour.

- 7.3 The President's Report is on file in the Office of the President. Highlights include:
- Academic and Community Partnerships:
 - Partnered with Pope John for theater performances and Sussex County Technical School for an Allied Health program.
 - Hosting a horticulture conference with Rutgers.
 - New Programs:
 - Introduced a dispatcher course to address local shortages.
 - Launched an AI task force to guide ethical AI use.
 - Student and Athletic Success:
 - One of our female wrestlers qualified for nationals
 - Baseball had a strong season start
 - The College hosted its first Female Athletic Leadership Summit to encourage student-athlete participation.
 - Research and Innovation:
 - Partnering with Rochester University and Brookhaven Labs on a fission project.
 - Securing NSF grant funding.
 - Alumni and Fundraising Efforts:
 - Expanding the Alumni Association
 - We have raised \$12,000 in scholarships through the college radio station underwriting.
 - Preparing for the upcoming 100 Women event.
 - Dr. Homer emphasized the college's commitment to student engagement, community outreach, and institutional growth.

7.4 Chair's Comments

Mr. Yardley noted that he is still familiarizing himself with his role and the board's responsibilities, which include finance, personnel, and various programs. He commended the board members for their dedication and hard work.

He acknowledged the new president's efforts in addressing concerns, particularly improving outreach and communication with schools, the public, and the board to highlight the college's positive impact. He appreciates the new initiatives like the newsletter to spread awareness.

Regarding budget negotiations, Mr. Yardley mentioned that financial decisions are influenced by county funding and that the college is just one of many programs under review. He assured that updates would be shared as more information becomes available.

He expressed his openness to communication, encouraging people to reach out with questions and promises direct and honest answers.

- 7.5 The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will take place on Wednesday, March 26, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. in the Executive Office Board Room.

8. **Executive Session** – Mr. Yardley read, "Be it resolved that the Board of Trustees will now go into an Executive Session to discuss 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.

“The Executive Session is expected to last approximately 60 minutes. No action will be taken after the executive session.”

At 6:00 p.m. Mr. Santonastaso moved for the Board to enter Executive Session. Mr. Schick seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

At 7:26 p.m. Mr. Santonastaso moved for the Board to adjourn the Executive Session. Dr. Silverthorne seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

9. Adjournment

At 7:26 p.m. Mr. Santonastaso moved for the Board to adjourn the public meeting. Dr. Silverthorne seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Approved: 
Herbert Yardley, Chair – Board of Trustees