



Ratified at March 15, 2023 meeting

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

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Westchester Community College held on Wednesday, February 15, 2023, 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 video) Susan Gerry, Hon. John Nonna, Lucas Peixoto, Sergio Serratto, Yolanda Howell, Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

Trustees Absent:

Hon. Lyndon Williams, Dr. Gregory Robeson Smith

Cabinet Members Present:

Dr. Belinda S. Miles, President, Dr. Shawn Brown, Chief of Staff and Vice President of Strategic Operations, Brian Murphy, Vice President and Dean of Administrative Services, Tere Wisell, Vice President and Dean, Community Education and Workforce Development, Anthony Scordino, Vice President, Information Technology, Adam Frank, Interim Vice President of Student Access, Involvement & Success.

Call to Order

Chairperson LeRoy Mitchell called the meeting to order.

Ratification of Minutes

Trustee Nonna made a motion seconded by Trustee Raizes to ratify the minutes of the January 18, 2023, Board meeting. The motion passed.

INFORMATION AND DECISION

A. President's Report

I am happy to report that my voice is getting stronger every day – still overcoming damage to vocal cords.

Black History Month

Halfway through our celebration of Black History Month. Robust programming and events almost daily. Thanks to our 2023 committee led by Prof. Donnie Simmons, Sr. for such insightful coordination and facilitation following the national BHM theme of Black Resistance. Our celebration concludes on February 24 with our annual reception and awards ceremony at 12 noon in the Student Center Event Room. Information and all events SUNYWCC website – Events Calendar.

Institutional Excellence

- **Congressman Jamaal Bowman** toured new Yonkers campus – spent time with students and staff.
- New **SUNY Chancellor Dr. John King, Jr.**, toured our Valhalla campus, the Yonkers campus, and WEOC with SUNY Vice Chair Cesar Perales. SUNY WCC was the first community college on the Chancellor’s tour of the system’s 64 campuses.
- **Westchester Delegation Luncheon**
 - privilege to host our Westchester County State Delegation for a special lunch prepared and served by our culinary arts students.
 - It was an excellent platform for our SUNY WCC team to educate and advocate on essential state budget appropriations for SUNY and its community colleges. It is critical to get the word out about the importance of public higher education.
 - We have a commitment to remain accessible and affordable, and this year, SUNY community colleges are asking state leaders to continue the “floor funding” model and provide a 4% increase to cover the inflationary pressures that are impacting all sectors.
 - Following the release of the Governor’s Executive Budget Proposal and in advance of public hearings – February 27 – Higher Education.
- Scheduling meetings with County leadership to discuss the colleges position and our needs.

Enrollment Update

- I am pleased to report a 2.1% increase among full-time students, and 0.3% increase in FTE.
- Meeting students where they are – one additional spring 2023 session open for registration – 7.5-week session begins March 20.
- Summer registration begins 2/27 - offering four sessions

B. Board Chair’s Report

Trustee Mitchell reported:

- I would like to highlight some points in my report regarding the 2023 National Legislative Summit that I attended in Washington, DC in early February.
 - At the president’s advisory committee, we continued the conversation from the Fall conference on the concerns with the mental health of the students, and the various ways in which colleges are dealing with the issue. We explored ways in which it would be easier to identify at-risk students and how to direct them to available help.
 - Robin Mattros-Helms, a Vice -President at ACCT, introduced the new ACCT Connect Platform which will give ACCT members access to online courses, a resource library, news feeds, online events and group space for various committees and other ACCT affiliated units. There will also be an *APP* for members to access the platform. She indicated that the first module Governance 101 should become the cornerstone for new trustee orientation and should be ready by the end of March. It could be used as part of a Board meeting. The conversation then pivoted to trustee education. We learnt that several states, with New Jersey being the latest, have legislation requiring trustee education.
 - There was another Policy Focus Session on Supporting Student Wellness, Navigating Mental Health Challenges on Campus. There were five panelists in this session. They agreed that students identified mental health as the most important factor affecting their success in the State of Maryland. This situation places an increasing demand for healthcare professionals. It was indicated that according to the US Health and Human Services the 18-25-year-olds had an increase of 33% in mental health challenges, and that 11-12 % had serious mental health problems; 13% seriously thought of suicide, and about 2.7% attempted suicide. Among other issues mentioned were stress, anxiety, access to and mistrust of providers. Data showed that as a national trend, 50% of Community College students are screening positive for mental health problems, and this is worse among students from marginalized backgrounds. Few seek help because of lack of trust. The speakers emphasized the greater need but fewer staff to assist the students. Other issues highlighted were depression, and financial stress, lack of low-cost transportation, and a lack of childcare.
 - I had the opportunity of meeting with Alexis K. Holmes, Executive Director, White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence and Economic Opportunity for Black Americans. We spoke about the Biden Administration’s efforts in this regard, and that she is ready to assist. I invited her to our campus, and she has already responded positively.

- I also invited Noah Brown, past President of ACCT, who is now Senior Advisor, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education, in the Department of Education to visit us.
- There was discussion regarding the Tax-Free Pell Grant Act.

C. Committees

Student Trustee Report

Lucas Peixoto reported:

- The Student Government Association (SGA) met on February 2nd.
- We started two Ad-Hoc committees
 - SUNY WCC Dining Services Committee
 - Academic Advisement Review Committee
- C-Step Survey (Students in the STEM field)
 - We will gather data and bring the resolution to the Board.
- The SGA Eboard went to SUNY SA in Albany yesterday.

Finance/Facilities

Vice President Murphy reported:

The Finance committee had discussion on the following topics.

- Operating Forecast
- Capital Projects Update
- Contracts

Vice President Brian Murphy went over the forecast for the month ending January 31, 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>
23-0240-338	ThermoDynamics Corp.	Provide parts and labor to replace one compressor in condenser 3 at Hartford Hall	2/20/23 – 8/31/23	\$10,495
23-0240-339	ThermoDynamics Corp.	Provide parts and labor to Replace VFds in Physical Education and Science Buildings	2/20/23 – 8/31/23	\$15,405

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

Public Comment

Trustee Mitchell invited members of the community for public comment.

No public comment

From Chairman Mitchell

ACCT is requesting nominations from colleges for awards that ACCT gives annually.

From Dr. Belinda Miles

I just wanted to comment on the mental health concerns that came up today. We have been very frank with the State Legislators that this is a critical concern.

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

Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss real estate matters.

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

Motion out of Executive Session

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

Adjournment

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

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for March 15, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Yolanda Howell

Yolanda Howell
Secretary, Board of Trustees