

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES BI-MONTHLY MEETING**  
**Southwestern Community College**

**November 16, 2021 – SCC Jackson Campus**

**Attending:**

Trustees

Sue Bartlett	Mark Jones
Vance Davidson	Beth Lofquist
Jean Ellen Forrister	Heber Najera
Ken Henke	Brett Rogers
Jeremy Hyatt	Gary Shields
Luke D. Hyde	Lambert Wilson

College Staff

Don Tomas
Thom Brooks
William Brothers
Nan Coulter
Megan Nicholson
Lisa Sizemore

**Absent**

Jeff Cloer, Cory McCall

The Board of Trustees of Southwestern Community College (SCC) met for their bi-monthly meeting on November 16, 2021 in the Charles Siler Slagle Board Room of the Conrad G. Burrell Building on the Jackson campus.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Lambert Wilson called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m. and read the Conflict of Interest Statement. A quorum was present for the meeting.

**AMENDMENT TO AGENDA**

Mr. Wilson made an amendment to the meeting agenda, adding an Action Item to section VIII.B. for Vaccination/Testing for COVID.

**PREVIOUS MEETINGS' MINUTES**

Mr. Wilson asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting of September 28, 2021. Mr. Hyde made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, and Mr. Davidson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Tomas reported that the College has been invited to compete for the 2023 Aspen Prize by the Aspen Institute. This is a prestigious national award for community colleges.

Dr. Tomas reported that the proceeds from the SCC Foundation Gala and Silent Auction, which was cancelled due to COVID-19, were approximately \$85,000 without holding an actual Gala. He thanked the Trustees for their support, and Tyler Goode for the work of the Public Relations department in publicizing and promoting the Gala.

Dr. Tomas announced that SCC will host a regional strategic planning listening session conducted by the State Board of Community Colleges on January 5, 2022.

Dr. Tomas reported that the 3-1 for the Fire Rescue Training Facility has been sent to the state construction office and the state board of community college for consideration at the December 16 meeting of the state board.

Dr. Tomas reported that the professional development session for faculty and staff on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion was well-attended and well-received.

Dr. Tomas and Mr. Wilson announced that the Board will hold a retreat for all Trustees on February 25, 2022 at the Jackson campus. More information will follow.

Dr. Tomas reported that the SCC Paralegal Program has been ranked 25<sup>th</sup> in the nation – this ranking includes universities as well as community colleges.

Dr. Tomas announced that the annual budget for 2021-2022 has finally been posted and will hopefully be signed by the Governor by the end of the week. He shared the Presidents' Association budget priorities, and high points of the budget with the Board, including changes to the community college minimum wage, salary increases for community college employees, and non-recurring premium pay bonuses, as well as rural broadband funding for 25 community colleges this year, including SCC. Once the budget is signed and approved, the Board may need to hold a Special Called meeting to approve the College budget.

## **CURRICULUM AND STUDENT SERVICES**

Curriculum and Student Services Committee Chair Jean Ellen Forrister asked Dr. Thom Brooks, Executive Vice President for Instruction and Student Services, to report to the Board. Dr. Brooks reported to the Board on the Fall 2021 Curriculum enrollment and reviewed division updates.

Under Action Items, Dr. Brooks presented the proposed 2022-2023 academic calendar for review, discussion, and approval. The calendar adds 2 days to the Fall Break in 2022 and adjusts the start of the Spring 2023 semester to align with Western Carolina University. Following discussion, Mr. Davidson made a motion to approve the 2022 – 2023 academic calendar as proposed, and Mr. Hyde seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

## **FINANCE AND CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT**

Finance and Campus Improvement Committee Chair Mr. Luke Hyde asked Vice President for Financial and Administrative Services William Brothers to give a report on Local Revenue Analysis and State Budget Expenditures.

Under Action Items, Mr. Brothers presented the Budget Allocations and Transfers for review and discussion. Following discussion, Mr. Hyde made a motion to approve the Budget Allocations, which was seconded by Ms. Forrister and passed unanimously.

Mr. Brothers then presented proposed revisions to Policy 7.01.02 – Optional Fees. Following review and discussion, Mr. Hyde made a motion to approve the revisions as presented, which was seconded by Dr. Lofquist and passed unanimously.

## **FACILITY UPDATE**

Mr. Brothers gave an update on Facilities, reporting on the status of the Firing Range and the Fire Rescue Training Facility. Works remains on the gate and wall at the Firing Range, and the light pole has been installed. Mr. Brothers reported that the 3-1 Form for the Fire Rescue Training Facility has been submitted to the State Construction Office.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Under Action Items, Chairman Wilson presented the Full Time and Part Time Employees Lists and the 2022 Board of Trustees meeting schedule for review and approval. Following review, Mr. Hyde made a motion to approve the Full Time and Part Time Employee Lists and 2022 meeting schedule, which was seconded by Dr. Lofquist and passed unanimously.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Under Action Items, Mr. Wilson reported that pursuant to proposed Federal mandates for government contractors and entities receiving federal funds, the Executive Committee recommends that the College require all employees to either voluntarily report their vaccination status or undergo weekly COVID testing if they are unvaccinated. A stay is currently in effect

on this Federal mandate in the 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit, but the College must be ready to comply at any time if the stay is lifted and the Federal mandate goes into effect. Following discussion, Mr. Hyde made a motion to approve the recommendation of the Executive Committee to require COVID vaccination for employees or require weekly testing of unvaccinated employees. The motion was seconded by Mr. Davidson and pass unanimously.

Dr. Tomas reminded the Trustees that in-person commencement will be held on December 10, 2021 at 5:30 and 7 p.m., and all Trustees are encouraged to attend.

Dr. Tomas commended the work of Lisa Sizemore and Megan Nicholson on their management of COVID efforts for both students and employees.

With no other business before the Board, Ms. Forrister made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Hyde seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:07 p.m.

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Lambert Wilson, Chairman  
Board of Trustees

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Don Tomas, Secretary  
Board of Trustees