

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES BI-MONTHLY MEETING

Southwestern Community College

May 20, 2025 – SCC Jackson Campus

Attending:

Trustees

Howard Allman
Toby Allman
Sue Bartlett
Joyce Cooper
Ken Henke
Luke D. Hyde

Brett Rogers
Betty Waldroup
Cynthia Womble (virtual)
Zyla Young

College Staff

Dr. Don Tomas
Scott Baker
Lisa Kim Fisher
Tyler Goode
Dr. Barb Putman
Kathy Posey

Guests

None

Absent:

Jeff Cloer Jack Debnam Mark Jones Cory McCall Gerald McKinney

The Board of Trustees of Southwestern Community College (SCC) met for their bi-monthly meeting on May 20, 2025, in the Slagle BoardRoom of the Conrad G. Burrell Building on the Jackson campus.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Luke D. Hyde called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m. and read the Conflict-of-Interest Statement. A quorum was present for the meeting.

ADDENDUM TO THE AGENDA

Dr. Tomas proposed moving action items to the beginning of the meeting due to a board member needing to leave early. The board approved the agenda with an addendum to approve revisions to the bylaws regarding the president's authority to hire part-time and full time employees without board ratification (Item IX.B.3).

PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

Vice Chairman Hyde asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting of March 25, 2025. Mr. Brett Rogers made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Howard Allman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

CURRICULUM AND STUDENT SERVICES (Action Items)

Committee Chair, Ken Henke asked Dr. Barb Putman to report. Dr. Putman presented the recommendation to terminate the curriculum program for Outdoor Leadership, explaining it would transition to a workforce continuing education program due to decreasing enrollment and changing workforce needs. Dr. Putman assured that the one enrolled student would have the opportunity to complete the Outdoor Leadership program. Ms. Waldroup made a motion to

terminate the Outdoor Leadership Program as recommended. Mr. Henke seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Dr. Putman presented several minor policy changes related to the Student Grievance Policy 6.03.05, Student Conduct Review Policy 6.03.06 and the Student Clubs and Organizations Policy 6.04.05. These changes primarily involve title updates and aligning with the current student club council structure. Changes to honor society membership criteria were also proposed to align with national standards. Ms. Betty Waldroup made a motion to approve all proposed changes to said three policies as presented. Mr. Howard Allman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

FINANCE AND CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT (Action Items)

Vice Chairman Hyde called on the Vice President of Financial and Administrative Services, Lisa Kim Fisher, to present to the Board.

Ms. Fisher presented the action items including Budget Allocations and Transfers, approval of a new policy, Combating Human Trafficking Policy 4.04.13, which is required for a NASA grant application and approval of several optional fees over \$500. Following review and discussion, Mr. Brett Rogers made a motion to approve the Budget Allocations and Transfers as presented, as well as the Combating Human Trafficking Policy 4.04.013 and the optional fee updates which were all seconded by Ms. Joyce Cooper and passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (Action Items)

Dr. Tomas presented the full-time and part-time employee lists for review and approval. Mr. Howard Allman made a motion to approve the full-time and part-time employee lists which was seconded by Mr. Toby Allman and passed unanimously.

Dr. Tomas presented the Executive Committee's recommendation to approve all revisions to the bylaws. The revisions include increasing the quorum from seven to nine due to the larger board size, updating language regarding electronic participation in meetings based on recent case law, generalizing the timeline for the annual board self evaluation and removing the requirement for board ratification of personnel employed by the college. Attorney Dean Shatley recommended all these revisions. After review and discussion, Mr. Brett Rogers made a motion to approve all the revisions to the bylaws as presented. Ms. Betty Waldroup seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS (Action Items)

Dr. Tomas introduced the possibility of joining the National Junior College Athletic Association for esports as a club entry to gauge interest and potentially expand later. The board discussed potential costs, including initial equipment and part-time coach and suggested increasing student activity fees from \$2 to \$4 per credit hour to help offset these costs and ensure program sustainability. Dr. Putman stated that the Student Life Fund could cover the initial costs. Mr. Howard Allman made a motion to become a member of the National Junior College Athletic Association Esports. Ms. Joyce Cooper seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Mr. Howard Allman made a motion to increase the student activity fee from \$2 to \$4 per credit hour. Mr. Toby Allman seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

RECOGNITION OF LUKE D. HYDE AND SUE BARTLETT

In recognition of service to the Board of Trustees, Mr. Hyde and Ms. Bartlett were presented with an appreciation certificate. This will be their last meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Tomas reported on the successful commencement ceremonies held on May 17 with strong attendance across all three ceremonies. Dr. Tomas provided an update on the House and Senate budget proposals from the General Assembly. He also highlighted an authorization for the State to discuss increasing tuition rates. Finally, Dr. Tomas informed the board of his upcoming trip and arrangements for campus leadership in his absence.

CURRICULUM AND STUDENT SERVICES

Dr. Putman provided updates on health science program accreditations, noting successful site visits for the radiography program and the respiratory therapy program. Both programs anticipate reaccreditation, with minor and already addressed recommendations. Dr. Putman also highlighted the success of the ADN (Associate Degree in Nursing) program with all 40 starting students being pinned.

FINANCE AND CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT

Ms. Lisa Kim Fisher provided information on local revenue, stating that all counties were up-to-date with payments for both operational and capital funds. Regarding state expenditures, Ms. Fisher reported no red flags.

FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

Dr. Tomas provided an update on several ongoing capital projects, including the burn prop and the Learning Commons. There is a pause on the indoor firearms training facility project. There is an upcoming pre-construction meeting for the dental assisting/hygiene renovations in Founders Hall.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dr. Tomas reported that the Executive Committee discussed a potential change to the May board meeting date, considering moving it from the third Tuesday to the fourth Tuesday for greater consistency. After discussion, this item was deferred for further discussion at the July board meeting to allow more board participation.

OTHER BUSINESS

Dr. Tomas reported on a positive meeting with the Swain County Commissioners, where they discussed funding and the college's activities.

The board agreed to move the July Finance Committee meeting from Monday, July 7th to Wednesday, July 9th. There is a planned field trip collaboration between Jackson County Public Schools and SCC to visit a program at Blue Ridge Community College. Rescheduling the Finance Committee meeting will allow Dr. Tomas to attend this meeting. All members agreed.

Dr. Tomas stated the need to identify a Nominating Committee for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Following a conversation with Chairman Jones, Dr. Tomas recommended Mr. Howard Allman, Mr. Toby Allman and Mr. Jeff Cloer to serve on the committee to ensure representation from all three counties. Mr. Brett Rogers made a motion to appoint Howard Allman, Toby Allman and Jeff Cloer to the Nominating Committee. Ms. Joyce Cooper seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

With no other business before the Board, Mr. Cloer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chairman Jones adjourned the meeting at 6:07 p.m.

Mark Jones, Chair
Board of Trustees

Don Tomas, Secretary
Board of Trustees