

**SPRINGFIELD TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**REGULAR MEETING**

Monday, January 25, 2021

Zoom/Live Streamed via STCC YouTube Channel  
5:00 p.m.

**Minutes of Meeting**

Present: Marikate Murren, Chair  
Jynai McDonald, Vice Chair  
Maurice Lindsay, Alumni Trustee  
Alessande Anderson, Student Trustee  
Vicky Crouse, Trustee  
Eric Hagopian, Trustee  
William Johnson, Trustee  
Elizabeth Oleksak-Sposito, Trustee  
Jeff Sattler - Trustee  
MacArthur Starks, Jr., Trustee

Unable to attend: Steve Grande, Trustee

Also Present: Dr. John B. Cook, President  
Ken Tashjy, Esq.  
Suzanne Smith, Dean of Institutional Research (NECHE Co-Chair)  
Christina Atwater, Prof. of Business Admin. (NECHE Co-Chair)

**I. Call to Order**

Trustee Chair Marikate Murren called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

**II. Roll Call**

The following Trustees were present at roll call: Trustee Chair Marikate Murren, Trustee Vice Chair Jynai McDonald, Alumni Trustee Maurice Lindsay, Student Trustee Alessande Anderson, Trustee Vicky Crouse, Trustee Eric Hagopian, Trustee William Johnson, Trustee Elizabeth Sposito, Trustee Jeffrey Sattler, and Trustee MacArthur Starks. Ten out of eleven present, constituting a quorum.

**III. Discussion with Chief Legal Counsel – Ken Tashjy, Esq.**

Chief Legal Counsel, Attorney Ken Tashjy was introduced by Trustee Chair Marikate Murren. Atty. Tashjy was invited to discuss the topic of Program reinstatement as it

relates to collective bargaining. He proceeded by first sharing context about the effort and engagement done regarding the discontinued programs and what is terms “impact bargaining” with MCCC. He discussed the multiple and lengthy meetings held during the summer, led by the Office of Legal Counsel, between MCCC and college administrators. Further, he described how a great deal of information was shared and discussed with MCCC as part of that process including enrollment, retention and graduation data, budgets, and sustainability of each program was discussed and considered.

Attorney Tashjy noted that if the Board makes the decision to support reinstating one or more of the discontinued programs, then it is President Cook, or the President’s designee, given the authority conveyed by Trustees, as to what follows specific to employees, and appropriate staffing decisions. This is done on a case-by-case basis, and at other community colleges engaging in reinstatement, this is generally what the process includes: the President or designee makes a determination as to the level of recall. It may be a reduced number given demand, graduation history, as well as budgetary concerns. The process of reinstatement (“recall”) is largely dictated by the MCCC collective bargaining agreement. Recall will involve a notice to the union, with rights that exist for up to four years for faculty, and will include a timeline for orderly reinstatement, and implementation via recall of faculty. Attorneys from the Legal Counsel’s Office will assist with guiding college administrators through the process. Some of the dynamics for Trustees to understand are that early retirement incentives for example, were issued to some retrenched faculty, and would need to be repaid. Attorney Tashjy cautioned that discussion of any particular personnel given Open Meeting Law, is not advisable: recommendation is to steer clear and generally, Boards don’t discuss specific personnel because that is confidential information.

#### **IV. Budget context related to federal/CRRSSA funding**

Dr. Cook updated the board on the federal/CRRSSA funding. Noted was that guidelines as to how funds can be used are uncertain at this time.

#### **V. [MOTION] in support of Program Reinstatements**

Biomedical Engineering Technology  
Biotechnology  
Civil Engineering Technology  
Landscape Design and Management  
Dental Assisting

Vice Chair Jynai McDonald moved motion 2021-05:

*That the Springfield Technical Community College Board of Trustees, as recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee on Program Discontinuations, and the Committee on Ways and*

*Means, supports reinstatement of the following programs: Biomedical Engineering Technology, Biotechnology, Civil Engineering Technology, Landscape Design and Management, and Dental Assisting. Further, in support of reinstatement in Fiscal Year 2022, the Board of Trustees, pursuant to the provision of Section 22, Chapter 15A, authorizes the President of the College and/or his designee(s) to take any and all prudent steps necessary to reinstate programs with the use of unrestricted funds.*

Trustee Vicky Crouse seconded the motion.

Discussion commenced, with Chair Murren reiterated the process of reaching a motion to reinstate five of seven discontinued programs. This included an Ad Hoc Committee meeting several times, as well as Ways and Means reviewing and recommending to the full Board. Other points of discussion illustrated by the following outlook:

Trustee Johnson: “I think part of the Trustee responsibility is fiduciary. Nobody has told me where the money is going to come from to put these programs back [Trustee Starks responded with a description of Ways & Means consideration within the operating budget]”

Trustee Hagopian: “I feel very similarly... most of these programs are in the red ... what happens if [programs don’t snap back]... I respect Dr. Cook for having made these tough decisions ... I commend you for doing the hard work.”

Trustee McDonald: “It’s been awesome to watch this process and for the community to be patient.”

Trustee Oleksak-Sposito: “I remember way back, about a year ago, talking with Dr. Cook when COVID hit: none of us had a book to go and reference ... we didn’t know what was going to happen... I think we did our due diligence...”

Motion 2021-05 was approved via roll call, with 3 nay and 7 yea.

## **VI. Approval of Minutes – Board of Trustees Regular Meeting – November 23 2020**

Trustee Bill Johnson moved to approve the minutes from November 23, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting, seconded by Trustee Eric Hagopian and approved by nine out of ten Trustees present at the moment of roll call.

## **VII. Trustee Committee Reports**

### **a. Committee on Internal and External Relations– Monday, January 4, 2021**

Committee Chair Jynai McDonald referred to the Committee on Internal and External Relations report to update the Full Board on topics discussed. The NECHE Accreditation Co-Chairs, Christina Atwater and Suzanne Smith discussed the Standard 3 projections pertaining the Board of Trustees to be included in the self-study. Other presenters included the VP of Student Affairs, Darcey Kemp; Dr. Dave Buonora, AVP of Workforce Development; and Denise Hurst, VP of Advancement and External Affairs.

President Cook provided a Personnel report. He introduced the most recently hired VP/CFO Andrea Nathanson, and mentioned the hiring of Douglas Slavos, as Senior Director of Enterprise Applications in Information Technology (IT).

Trustee Vickie Crouse moved to approve the minutes from January 4, 2021 Committee on Internal and External Relations, seconded by Trustee Elizabeth Sposito and approved by nine out of ten Trustees present at the moment of roll call.

### **[Motion] Renewal Theresa Przybylowicz Sabbatical**

Board Chair Marikate Murren moved motion 2021-07:

*That the Springfield Technical Community College Board of Trustees approve an extension of sabbatical period for Theresa Przybylowicz, Professor of Nursing, until the end of spring 2021 term, contingent upon the Senate budget for Springfield Technical Community College.*

Motion 2021-07 was seconded by Trustee Bill Johnson and unanimously approved by nine out of ten Trustees present at the moment of roll call.

### **b. Committee on Ways and Means – Monday, January 11, 2021**

Committee on Ways and Means Chair Mac Starks updated the full board on regular budgetary reports which include Cash Flow, FY 2021 Revenue and Spending Report through December 2020 noting the following two key points: the FY 2021 State appropriation amount has been confirmed and will be level to the FY 2020 budget amount of \$27,976,804, and that the student fee revenue is down 20.6%. Other topics discussed included the FY 2021, 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Trust Fund and Vendor Expenditure, and follow-up questions from the November 2020 meeting. In regards to the FY 2022 Preliminary Outlook, the committee will follow the same budget building process as in past years.

The Committee on Ways and Means included a discussion in regards to the Ad Hoc Committee/Programs discontinuations. Trustee Eric Hagopian moved the motion to reinstate discontinued programs also presented at tonight’s meeting. The motion passed with six “yes”, and one “abstained”.

Trustee Bill Johnson moved to approve the minutes from January 11, 2021 Committee on Ways and Means, seconded by Vicki Crouse and approved by nine out of ten Trustees present at the moment of roll call.

### **VIII. Old Business**

Board Chair Marikate Murren provided a brief overview of the motion presented at tonight’s meeting in regards to Trustee Endorsement of STCC NECHE Accreditation Self-Study. The self-study presents an opportunity to Trustees to work together on the projections as a community. Trustees are committed to full participation at the accreditation visit. Chair Murren noted that a question came up in regards to deadlines of projections. She clarified that it is okay to move deadlines forward. The Board will work on projections at the next Board re-treat. Co-Chairs Chris Atwater and Suzanne Smith offered to answer any questions before voting on the motion.

#### **[MOTION] Trustee Endorsement of STCC NECHE Accreditation Self-Study**

With no further questions, Trustee Eric Hagopian moved motion 2021-08:

*That the Springfield Technical Community College Board of Trustees endorses the Self Study, as prepared and presented, for the upcoming accreditation visit by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE).*

Seconded by Trustees Vicky Crouse and Jynai McDonald.

Opened for further discussion: Dr. Cook acknowledge the arduous work of NECHE Co-Chairs Chris Atwater and Suzanne Smith in the past two years on this significant project that happens once in a decade. Thank you so much.

The motion was unanimously approved by nine out of ten Trustees present at the moment of roll call.

### **IX. New Business: Nomination and Vote on Board Secretary**

Board Chair Marikate Murren moved that the Springfield Technical Community College Board of Trustees endorse and approve Trustee Elizabeth Sposito as the Board Secretary.

Motion was seconded by Trustees Jynai McDonald and Bill Johnson, and unanimously approved by roll call.

**X. Chair's Report – Trustee Marikate Murren**

Chair Murren seconded the words of Dr. Cook in regards to Christine Atwater and Suzanne Smith and their work as NECHE/Accreditation Co-Chairs. It is important for Trustees to review key findings and Trustee commitment. The intention is to work together on our central focus, which is our students. Chair Murren asked Board Secretary to work on schedules for the upcoming accreditation visit.

Chair Murren also acknowledged the work of the Ad Hoc Committee Chaired by Trustees Vicky Crouse and Jynai McDonald. The Committee implemented a robust and collaborative process which brought everyone up to the table. Trustee McDonald again expressed the earlier sentiment specific to patience within the process.

**XI. Date of next Board of Trustees meeting – Monday, February 22, 2021**

**XII. Adjournment** – Meeting called to adjourn at 6:00 p.m. moved by Trustee Eric Hagopian, seconded by Trustee Mac Starks, and unanimously approved through roll call: Trustee Chair Marikate Murren, Trustee Vicky Crouse, Trustee Eric Hagopian, Trustee William Johnson, Trustee Maurice Lindsay, Trustee Jynai McDonald, Trustee Elizabeth Sposito, Trustee Jeffrey Sattler, and Trustee MacArthur Starks

  
Marikate Murren  
Chair, STCC Board of Trustees

  
Elizabeth Oleksak-Sposito  
Secretary, STCC Board of Trustees