

**SPRINGFIELD TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Board of Trustee Regular Meeting  
Monday, November 25, 2024 at 5:00 PM  
Richard E. Neal Cybersecurity Center of Excellence/ Union Station, Springfield**

**Minutes of Meeting**

Present: Michael Knapik, Chair & Trustee  
Elizabeth Oleksak-Sposito, Vice Chair & Trustee  
Dr. William Dávila, Secretary & Trustee  
Zoya Plunkett-Brown, Student Trustee  
Laurie Martin '90, Alumni Trustee  
Tonia Butler Pérez, Trustee  
Samalid Hogan, Trustee  
Jeff Sattler, Trustee  
Anthony Moore '15, Trustee (joined at 5:27 p.m.)

Unable to Attend: Bill Johnson, Trustee  
Norman Roldan, Trustee

Also Present: Dr. John B. Cook, President  
Dr. Chris Thuot, Vice President of Academic Affairs  
Andrea Nathanson, Vice President of Administration and CFO  
Nanette Flores, Executive Assistant to the President & Board Clerk

**I. Call to Order & Roll Call**

Board Chair Michael Knapik called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

The following Trustees were present at roll call: Trustee Chair Michael Knapik, Trustee Elizabeth Oleksak-Sposito, Trustee William Dávila, Student Trustee Zoya Plunkett-Brown, Trustee Laurie Martin, Trustee Tonia Butler Pérez, Trustee Samalid Hogan, and Trustee Jeff Sattler. Eight Trustees present at the time of roll call constitutes a quorum.

After roll call, at 5:27, Trustee Anthony Moore joined the meeting.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

**a) Board of Trustee Regular Meeting – Monday, September 23, 2024**

Trustee Tonia Butler Pérez recommended an edit to the minutes: included was detail specific to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law, that while discussed, was not explicitly reviewed; she asked for this to be removed from the minutes.

Trustee Tonia Butler Pérez also asked for clarification regarding the agenda item related to the presidential evaluation process. Trustee Butler Pérez recalls that the motion was to table, and her interpretation was that meant it would be taken up at the next Trustee meeting. In response,

Chair Knapik noted that the item will be added to the agenda (January), and his response noted the seasonality for when presidential evaluations are usually conducted.

Trustee Jeff Sattler moved to approve the minutes, as amended, from the September 23 Board of Trustees meeting with amendments, seconded by Trustee Samalid Hogan, and unanimously approved.

### III. Committee Reports

- a) **Committee on Internal & External Relations: October 7, 2024**
- b) **Committee on Internal & External Relations: November 4, 2024**

Committee Chair, Trustee Will Dávila referred to the October 7<sup>th</sup> and November 4<sup>th</sup> Committee on Internal and External Relations reports included in today's meeting packet. Highlights from the October 7 meeting include a presentation by the VP of Academic Affairs, Dr. Chris Thuot, on the topics of enrollment, program discussion and course modality.

Regarding the November 4 report, Trustee Tonia Butler Pérez had a follow-up regarding the presentation and materials from Dr. Kiyota García, Assistant Vice President of Student Affairs & Interim Chief Equity Officer. Dr. Kiyota responded that professional development and diversity/equity/inclusion forums are mostly directed towards faculty and staff.

Trustee Tonia Butler Pérez moved to approve the October 7 Committee on Internal and External Relations meeting report, seconded by Trustee Laurie Martin, and unanimously approved.

Trustee Tonia Butler Pérez moved to approve the November 4 Committee on Internal and External Relations meeting report, seconded by Trustee Laurie Martin, and unanimously approved.

- c) **Committee on Ways & Means: October 17, 2024**
  - i. **Audit Sub Committee: October 17, 2024**
- d) **Committee on Ways & Means: November 21, 2024**
  - i. **Investment Sub Committee: November 7, 2024**

Committee Chair, Trustee Laurie Martin referred to the October 17<sup>th</sup> Audit Sub Committee report followed by the Committee on Ways and Means held also on October 17. Presented and discussed at the Audit Sub Committee meeting were the FY2024 Audit statements by Michael Cosgrove, Partner from WithumSmith & Brown. Auditors issued an unmodified opinion on the STCC Financial Statement noting no findings. Moved was a motion to seek approval from the Board of Trustees Committee on Ways and Means.

The Committee on Ways and Means met right after the Audit Sub Committee meeting. Michael Cosgrove provided an overview of the FY2024 Financial Statements, followed by a motion for approval of the statements. Another topic discussed was FY2025 Enrollment update and planning outlook.

Trustee Martin provided a brief overview of the November 7 Investment Sub Committee report attached to the November 21 Committee on Ways and Means meeting report. Other

topics discussed at the November 21 Committee on Ways and Means meeting: FY 2024 4<sup>th</sup> quarter trust fund reports, and the financial update and outlook.

Trustee Will Dávila moved to approve the October 17 Committee on Ways and Means meeting report, seconded by Trustee Samalid Hogan, and unanimously approved.

Trustee Elizabeth Oleksak-Sposito moved to approve the November 21 Committee on Ways and Means meeting report, seconded by Trustee Jeff Sattler, and unanimously approved.

#### **IV. Welcome Remarks by Michael Knapik, Chair, STCC Board of Trustees**

STCC Board Chair, Michael Knapik offered welcoming remarks to Trustees and public present at the meeting.

#### **V. President's Report – Dr. John B. Cook, President**

President Cook welcomed all to the Richard E. Neal Cybersecurity Center of Excellence

##### **a) NECHE Letter – “Fifth Year” Report and visit – 2026**

Dr. Cook informed Trustees when NECHE has asked for the submission of the Interim/5<sup>th</sup> Year Report (Fall of 2026) and how a visiting team will also come to STCC.

##### **b) Program /Enrollment Outlook – Vice President Chris Thuot**

VP Thuot shared a presentation on the topic of Fall 2024 Enrollment: trends, programs, and modalities. Comparative data from 2014, 2019, 2022, 2023 and 2024 is broken down by total headcount, total credits, full-time/part-time, new first-time/first year, and by race/ethnicity. Data shows that the highest peak in enrollment was in 2014 with a headcount of 6,622. After 2014 enrollment steadily declined with the lowest in 2022 with a headcount of 3,945. In the years after COVID enrollment is trending higher with an increase of ~20% per year. The headcount for 2024 is 5,461, an increase from 2022, and 2023; however, when compared to 2014, we still have a gap. Noting also that the gap is wider when comparing total credit numbers.

When comparing percentages of full-time vs. part-time students, the percentage of part-time students has steadily increased since 2014. This is clearly one of the indicators driving the gap of total credits vs. total headcount. In addition, increasing is the number of new first-time, first-year students – in 2014, the number of new first-time / first-year is 1,304 compared to 1,680 in 2024.

In regards to race/ethnicity data, Dr. Thuot highlighted the increasing numbers of Hispanic students, with 26% in 2014 compared to 39% in 2024; noting also that STCC is going on ten years as an HSI institution. Data/modality by School was also reviewed: the School of Liberal and Professional Studies (LAPS), the percentage of online courses is predominantly high; however, in-person classes continue to increase. In the School of Health and Patient Simulation (SHPS), in-person classes is higher due to the nature of the courses, yet noted a slight increase of hybrid (from 8% in 2023, to 11% in 2024). In the School of Science,

Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), data shows that the gap between in-person and online is widening – with a slight decrease for online offerings, vs an increase of in-person. To conclude, VP Thuot highlighted the last set of data based on the ten largest academic programs by enrollment with Health Science at the top of the list with 943 students / 17.3% of enrollment.

**c) Fiscal/Budget Outlook – Vice President Andrea Nathanson**

VP Nathanson shared an update to the unrestricted net position (reserves) slide presented in September. The purpose of the slide is to show how we manage to keep healthy investments. As highlighted in the slide, the FY2024 unrestricted net position is at its highest peak with \$49.8m, with cash and investments at \$61.8m. Conservatively looking ahead, after expenses, the balances are still projecting higher than in FYs 2018 & 2019.

**d) November 15<sup>th</sup>: Open Registration for Spring Semester 2025 (including Winterim)**

Enrollment for the spring semester continues. We are already at about 200 new students for the spring semester, in addition to the many continuing student enrollments.

**e) Overview of IT/Cyber Systems & Initiative at STCC - Vice President Mary Kaselouskas**

VP/CIO Mary Kaselouskas welcomed all to the CCE and started her presentation by defining what the CCE is and its purpose and focus areas. Also highlighted are the funding sources and a breakdown of use of funds. Under funding update, Mary noted that construction, design and project management are complete, with the exception of punch-list items as we are experiencing (i.e. HVAC noise). Under project status, on staffing status: Gene Kingsley was hired for the position of Cyber Range Manager, and Austin Bushey for the position of Technical Operations Administrator. After the September 16 ribbon cutting, classes started on September 18 with six fall classes offered at the CCE. The SOC is expected to start operations later in 2024.

Trustee Martin asked about plans for funding after 2026. Dr. Cook shared that as a Community College, we are not in the position to fund the center ourselves, and we will seek public funding where and as necessary. Trustee Sattler asked, how many students are enrolled in the 6 classes running at the CCE? Professor Candido, who was present at the meeting, shared that there are ~60-75 students enrolled, just in those courses being held in the Center. Dr. Cook noted that no other colleges/universities have chosen to offer classes at the Center.

Also shared was an IT Division Overview focused on infrastructure, applications, user support and data management. The slide lists all of the areas serviced by IT, highlighting notes such as 28 IT staff supporting 16,000+ users. In regards to student accounts, VP Kaselouskas spoke about the five-semester rule. Student accounts are disabled after five consecutive semesters of inactivity. With free community college, STCC is now using the SAFE applications, which helps with weeding out fraudulent applications. With security at the top of the infrastructure list, it is imperative to keep ahead to provide a secure IT environment. The top two IT initiatives focused on Security are Multi Factor Authentication and Cybersecurity Training, noting that these two are required for Cyber Security Insurance coverage. Also covered in IT initiatives is the area of business processes. This area focuses

on better management of systems implementation for efficiency and optimization of operations.

To conclude, VP Kaselouskas provided a projection of the IT 5-year Capital plan starting with FY25.

f) MassMutual Foundation/ \$1M (\$1.5M including matching) Formally Announced

Shared with Trustees and audience present, some of the media coverage for the largest philanthropic gift from the past 15 years.

**VI. Chair's Report – Chair Knapik**

Thank you to tonight's presenters. Grateful also for the Legislators' support. Chair Knapik spoke about the importance of Legislative support towards the complexity of what we do here at STCC. At the Legislative level, the Fiscal 26 Budget planning begins on Monday (12/2) and unveiled in January. We have to keep up front showing the importance of the work at the college.

**VII. New Business/Old Business**

a) STCC Holiday Party: December 18<sup>th</sup> (afternoon)

Nanette will follow up with additional information.

**VIII. Concluding Remarks, Chair Michael Knapik**

Thank you all!

**IX. Campus/Program Tour**

Reminder as noted on the agenda, upon conclusion of the meeting, Trustees are invited to an informal tour of Richard E. Neal Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (quorum likely remains and tour is open to the public); the Board will not reconvene to otherwise adjourn.

**X. Date of Next Meeting:** Monday, January 27, 2025

**XI. Roll Call & Adjournment**

At 6:24 p.m., Chair Knapik called for a motion to adjourn the meeting, Trustee Will Dávila moved the motion, seconded by Trustee Samalid Hogan, and unanimously approved.

Michael R. Knapik  
Chair, STCC Board of Trustees

Dr. William Dávila  
Secretary, STCC Board of Trustees