



**Ratified at January 15, 2025 meeting**

**Board of Trustees Meeting  
December 11, 2024**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Westchester Community College held on Wednesday, December 11, 2024, at 3 PM in the Student Center Event Room.

**Trustees Present:**

Dr. LeRoy Mitchell, Chairperson, Deborah Raizes Vice Chairperson, (via videoconference), Robin Bikkal, Esq. (via videoconference), Clara Carnot, Susan Gerry, Esq., Hon. John Nonna, Dr. Gregory Robeson Smith, Sergio Serratto, (via videoconference), Hon. Lyndon Williams, (via videoconference), Yolanda Howell, Secretary to the Board of Trustees.

**Trustees Excused:**

Dr. Norman Jacknis, Vice-Chairperson

**Cabinet Members Present:**

Dr. Belinda S. Miles, President, Dr. Vanessa Morest, Provost and Vice President, Academic Affairs, Brian Murphy, Vice President and Dean of Administrative Services, Dolores Swirin-Yao, Vice President and Dean, External Affairs, Executive Director, WCC Foundation, Tere Wisell, Vice President and Dean, Community Education and Workforce Development, Garrett McAlister, Acting Vice President, Information Technology, Ben Naylor, Chief of Staff & Vice President of Strategic Affairs.

**Call to Order**

Chairperson LeRoy Mitchell called the meeting to order.

**Ratification of Minutes**

Trustee Nonna made a motion seconded by Trustee Carnot to ratify the minutes of the November 20, 2024, Board meeting. The motion passed.

## **INFORMATION AND DECISION**

### **A. President's Report**

Dr. Belinda S. Miles reported:

#### **Completion Ceremony**

- Tomorrow, we celebrate August and December 2024 graduates at our annual Completion Ceremony (4 PM, Physical Education Building.)
- 225 students graduated in August 2024 and to date, 419 have applied for December graduation.
- Appreciate Board Chair, Dr. LeRoy Mitchell joining the ceremony and offering greetings to students and their guests.

#### **Student Excellence – Bridges to the Baccalaureate Research Training Program:**

- I am very proud to share that students David Pinto and Christian Neves were selected as T34 Bridges Scholars as part of the Bridges to the Baccalaureate Research Training Program at Binghamton University. The program provides support to full-time underrepresented community college students from SUNY WCC, Monroe Community College, and Onondaga Community College and helps prepare them for transfer from community college to Binghamton University to complete a baccalaureate degree in biomedical science.

#### **Faculty Excellence**

- Professor Nicole Tschampel (Photography and Digital Filmmaking) has been named a fellow for the inaugural 2025 cohort of the SUNY Accessibility Advocates and Allies (AAA) Faculty Fellowship Program – a community of faculty leaders committed to promoting and growing accessibility practices in and out of the classroom on their campuses.
- Professor Megan Moore (Veterinary Technology) has been named as an inaugural Fellow of the Association of Veterinary Technician Educators (AVTE), a program recognizing “individuals who have shown a profound commitment to advancing the veterinary technician profession through leadership, mentorship, and innovation.”

#### **Institutional Excellence**

- I was honored to join Dr. Glenetta Phillips and Professor Blakeley Lowry at Wartburg Rehabilitation Center's Volunteer and Partnership Recognition Luncheon last week where SUNY Westchester Community College was named their 2024 Community Partner of the Year. Wartburg extends internships to our current students and employment opportunities for our graduating students.

Our students can complete their Healthcare Practicum Internships, work alongside healthcare professionals, and apply classroom knowledge to skills learned during their experiential learning opportunity at Wartburg. According to Kerry Minto, Wartburg's director of Institutional Advancement and Volunteerism, our "talented students have enriched our Adult Day, Assisted Living, and Rehab programs... Their involvement in key events, research, and initiatives... has made a lasting impact."

### **Enrollment Management**

- Enrollment for Winter 2025 and Spring 2025 is well underway. Instruction begins 12/23.
- Currently, 731 students are registered for Winter 2025, reflecting an increase of 11.3% compared to Winter 2024.
- For Spring 2025, 7,157 students have registered, with a total of 1,983 FTEs.
- Offering four sessions: 15-week (instruction begins 1/21); two 7.5-week sessions (instruction begins 1/21 and 3/25); and 12-week (instruction begins 2/11).

### **Strategic Planning Update**

- The Strategic Planning Committee will meet on Friday (12/13) to discuss the findings collected during their information gathering process. The Committee will be drafting a one-page Strategic Plan draft and will be setting a calendar and deadlines for the Spring. The draft plan will be discussed at length with senior administration, Board of Trustees, and wider college community for their review, edits, and suggestions.

### **MSCHE Update**

- Administrative units are on target to meet a mid-December deadline for providing their 2024-25 mission, goals, objectives, and data methods. Middle States mandates that each department of the College submit this information annually, and a small campus review team will provide feedback to the departments on their submissions. In Spring '25, the departments will measure how well they have done in meeting their objectives and submit an annual report outlining their results and what they have learned. This information will be used both to inform the following year's goals as well as provide strategic institutional insight regarding the administration of the College.

In closing and as we bring the semester and 2024 to a close, I extend thanks to our faculty and staff for helping students achieve their goals and to our Board members and the Cabinet for their diligent and focused service to the college.

## B. Board Chair's Report

Trustee Mitchell reported:

New York Community College Trustees (NYCCT) and the Chancellor had a disagreement regarding who has the responsibilities of hiring college presidents.

The New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) has written a letter supporting the Community College Trustees.

*Dear Chancellor John B. King, Jr.:*

*For nearly seventy-five years, New York's community colleges have distinguished themselves by meeting the educational needs of sixty counties through a model that emphasizes affordability, vocational training, and seamless transfer pathways to four-year SUNY institutions and private colleges. This decentralized system was intentionally designed to foster a partnership between the state, local communities, and SUNY, with counties serving as essential sponsors responsible for funding a significant share of the colleges' operational costs and infrastructure needs. Community colleges are, by their very nature, locally governed institutions within the SUNY system, and for over seven decades, they have exercised autonomy over essential operating decisions. This governance model has allowed local boards of trustees the flexibility to address unique community needs, from the appointment of college presidents and performance reviews of college leadership to contract negotiations and other critical governance matters. This autonomy has been foundational to the community colleges' success and vital to their local missions. Historically, in the event of a presidential vacancy, the local board of trustees has been entrusted to conduct an independent search process, culminating in a single nomination for the Chancellor's endorsement and SUNY Board of Trustees' final approval. This balanced approach respects both the local insight of trustees and the oversight role of the SUNY system. However, recent centralizing actions by the SUNY Chancellor and SUNY System Administration constitute an alarming overreach, undermining the autonomy of community colleges and disrupting the finely tuned balance among the supporting stakeholders. Such interventions threaten to erode the local governance model that has been crucial to the success of community colleges, alienating local trustees and diminishing counties' roles as sponsors*

*More specifically, SUNY Board of Trustees Resolution, dated November 12, 2024, and affecting community college presidential appointments and contracting, is an unlawful attempt by SUNY, through its own forced policy change rather than legislation by the New York State Legislature, to exercise control over each local community college appointing and contracting with its president. During the SUNY Board of Trustees meeting held on November 12, 2024, you stated in support of the Resolution that "I know that this Board believes one of its important responsibilities is to appoint campus presidents." This statement in support is wholly inconsistent with Education Law Section 6306, which grants the board of trustee of each community college, not SUNY, the authority to appoint a president for such community college.*

*On behalf of the New York State Association of Counties (NYSAC) and all county governments, we unequivocally support the continued authority of local community colleges over all operational decisions. We call for the reaffirmation of the longstanding practice whereby community colleges make their own decisions regarding the appointment of presidents, performance evaluations, faculty and staff contracts, and other governance matters essential to their missions. Toward this end, while each community college board of trustees will make its own decision whether to participate in the presidential search pilot project and new presidential contracting procedure purportedly adopted by SUNY under the Resolution, NYSAC will not encourage its members who sponsor community colleges to do so.*

*To preserve the integrity of community colleges and their ability to serve their communities effectively, we urge SUNY to recommit to the principles of local governance that have historically served New York well by rescinding the Resolution as soon as possible so that current and future community college presidential appointments and contracting may continue under the partnership in place between the state, local communities and SUNY prior to the Resolution.*

### SUNY Board of Trustees

The SUNY Board of Trustees will be having their December meeting on our campus on Tuesday, December 17. The meetings are open to the public so feel free to attend.

## C. Committees

### Governance Committee

Trustee Nonna reported:

The Governance Committee had discussion on the following:

- Board of Trustees Evaluation
  - We received 36 responses from the survey.
  - Some people may not be familiar with the work of the Board of Trustees.
  - We will add additional questions to the survey next year.
  - Several comments were related to the transparency in the budget process.

*Comment from Chairman Mitchell regarding the Board of Trustees Evaluation*

- *Some persons may not be aware of what the Board of Trustees does.*
- *Committee meetings are open*
- *Public comment is available at 3 pm Board meeting.*
- *The survey is meant to be a learning experience for the Board of Trustee process.*

*Comment from Trustee Nonna*

- *The is not the first time the Board did a self-evaluation. This year the Board decided to send the survey to the campus community.*

### Program Committee

Trustee Raizes reported:

The Program Committee had discussion on the following:

- Online Learning
  - Online synchronous
  - Online asynchronous
  - In person
  - Hybrid
- We will not become an online college
  - It is important that students have options
- Extension centers were created for accessibility

## Student Trustee Report

Trustee Carnot reported:

- SGA Resolution – Implementation of four mental health days per semester
  - Students must be enrolled full-time
  - They will need to notify faculty 24 hours prior
  - These days are intended to promote student well-being
- We would like heaters at bus stations to be installed
- SGA hosting a children’s book drive for the holiday season
  - The goal is to promote education and inspire a love for reading.
  - SGA has partnered with the Child Care Council of Westchester as well as the Virginia Marx Children’s Center, Scarsdale Women’s Club and St. Gregory’s church
  - We have approximately 100 books
  - Still accepting books donations until December 20
- Phone charges on campus
  - There is a current need for phone charges on campus.
  - We currently have charging stations on campus, but you must be near the station to charge your phone.
  - We would like to have a proposal passed that will allow students to borrow chargers from the library.
- SUNY Chancellors Award
  - I have been nominated for a SUNY Chancellor Award for Student Excellence.

## Finance/Facilities

Trustee Robeson Smith reported:

The Finance committee had discussion on the following topics.

- Operating Forecast
- Capital Projects Update
- Contracts

Trustee Robeson Smith asked Vice President Brian Murphy to go over the forecast for the month ending November 30, 2024, 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>
25-0305-397	The United States Army – Acting by and Through the NYC Army Recruiting Battalion	Establish a partnership between SUNY WCC and the Army Recruiting Battalion to provide information about Army career opportunities. Facilitate on campus.	1/1/25 – 12/31/25	No cost
25-9572-676	MN8 Creative, Inc., Db a College App	Provide access to database that identifies Prospective adult learners who are Likely to enroll at WCC	1/1/25 – 12/31/27	\$87,000 (\$29,000 Grant funded)
25-9461-301	National Fit Testing Services LLC	Establish an agreement with a vendor to perform Mask fit test for clinical students	1/15/25 – 1/17/25	\$2,620 (Grand funded)

**\*\*Motion: Robeson Smith/Nonna – all in favor**

Resolution: Approval of Non-Represented Managers Pay Scale Effective September 1, 2024

WHEREAS, Westchester Community College values the contributions made by its Non-Represented Managers and their continued leadership.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Westchester Community College herewith approves the attached Pay Scales for Non-Represented Managers effective September 1, 2024.

**\*\*Motion: Robeson Smith/Nonna – all in favor**

Pay Scale III (Effective September 1, 2024)  
Westchester Community College Managers

Group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
I	85,227	90,362	95,496	100,630	105,763	110,897	116,032	121,165	126,298	131,432
II	104,194	110,489	116,785	123,080	129,377	135,672	141,969	148,264	154,561	160,856
III	123,671	130,208	136,744	143,280	149,818	156,354	162,890	169,426	175,962	182,499
IV	143,116	150,843	158,569	166,297	174,024	181,749	189,475	197,204	204,927	212,655

Presidential Contract

WHEREAS, the College’s Board of Trustees has conducted extensive reviews of Dr. Miles’ performance during her time as President of Westchester Community College; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees has determined that her performance has been exemplary.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of Westchester Community College recommends that the existing agreement with Dr. Belinda S. Miles be revised to include provisions for wage adjustments.

**\*\*Motion: Robeson Smith/Nonna – all in favor**

Public Comment

Trustee Mitchell invited members of the community for public comment.

No public comment.

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

Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss legal issues.

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

Motion out of Executive Session

**\*\*Motion: Robeson Smith/Gerry – all in favor**



Adjournment

**\*\*Motion: Nonna/Carnot – all in favor**

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for January 15, 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

*Yolanda Howell*

Yolanda Howell

Secretary, Board of Trustees