



**Ratified at October 16, 2024 meeting**

**Board of Trustees Meeting  
September 18, 2024**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Trustees of Westchester Community College held on Wednesday, September 18, 2024, at 3 PM in the Student Center Event Room.

**Trustees Present:**

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

**Trustees Excused:**

Deborah Raizes 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, Garrett McAlister, Acting Vice President, Information Technology, Dante Cantú, Vice President of Student Access, Involvement & Success, Ben Naylor, Chief of Staff & Vice President of Strategic Affairs.

Chairperson LeRoy Mitchell called for a moment of silence for former Trustee Chairman and Regent for the State of New York Harry Phillips who passed away last month.

**Call to Order**

Chairperson LeRoy Mitchell called the meeting to order.

**Ratification of Minutes**

Trustee Gerry made a motion seconded by Trustee Nonna to ratify the minutes of the July 17, 2024, Board meeting. The motion passed.

**INFORMATION AND DECISION**

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

Dr. Belinda S. Miles reported:

Welcome to the new academic year. We had an outstanding welcome to the new and continuing students during the first week of classes.

We kicked off Latin American Heritage Month on Monday of this week. Be sure to check the website Event Calendar for ways to celebrate the diverse cultures and achievements of Latin Americans and our Latin American communities.

Today we celebrate Blue & Gold Day. We celebrate our Viking Spirit and support for students.

As Chairman Mitchell mentioned sadly, we learned earlier last month of the passing of our dear friend Harry Phillips. His family hosted a very moving celebration of his life in the Gateway building earlier this month. Harry served as Chair of our Board of Trustees and as a New York State Regent. He was a true friend to the college and a staunch supporter of community colleges and access to higher education.

### Convocation

Earlier this morning the Faculty Senate hosted our annual Convocation. Many awards were given out. We congratulate those who were recognized. Thanks to Professor Kamil Hamaoui for his leadership and the Senators for their participation in shared governance.

### Enrollment

- Our current Fall 2024 enrollment is 8,734 – a 3% increase over Fall 2023 during the same period. We also see a 3% increase in FTEs.
- During the 2023-2024 academic year, 1,285 degrees were awarded, a 1.2% increase compared to 1,270 degrees in 2022-2023.

### Student Data Highlights

SUNY WCC recently administered the Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS), which is given to all undergraduate students throughout the State University of New York (SUNY) system, and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), which is given to member colleges across the nation.

Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness will provide a summary report for both surveys shortly, but here is a snapshot of highlights from the SSS to start the academic year:

- 85.3% of SUNY WCC students reported that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the college.

- More than three-quarters (77.4%) responded that SUNY WCC either completely met or mostly met their expectations.
- Students overwhelmingly (82.5%) indicated that if they could start over, they would attend the college again (either “probably yes” or “definitely yes”).

More than three-quarters of the students indicated that their classes at the college made either a large contribution or a very large contribution to their:

- acquiring knowledge and skills for further academic study (80.4%)
- acquiring knowledge and skills needed for a career (79.3%), and
- developing problem solving skills (75.3%).

Also, a very high percentage of students reported feeling safe, respected, and having a sense of belonging at SUNY WCC. Students expressed the highest levels of satisfaction (either satisfied or very satisfied) with their perceptions of:

- personal safety/security (89.3%)
- racial harmony (89.2%), and
- student respect for other students (87.7%)

#### Other Updates

- Hankin Way Naming
  - I intend to meet with Professor Sheldon Malev regarding how we honor individuals around our spaces.

Finally, Looking ahead:

- Town Hall – Thursday, 9/26, Common Hour (4:00 PM) – Gateway – Davis Auditorium

#### Middle States Update

Dr. Vanessa Morest reported:

- In early July we received a letter from the Middle States Commission of Higher Education stating that we were non-compliant on Standard 5, Educational Effectiveness Assessment and two items within Standard 2 and 7 which relate to administrative assessment, and some specific policies and procedures.
- Regarding Standard 5
  - We are in the process of preparing a response
  - We have one year to demonstrate that we can be as a college in compliance in these areas. This is essentially a redo of that part of our Self-Study, which will be due on August 1, 2025.
  - We have assembled a Task Force that was charged by the Faculty Senate, comprised of faculty and administration. They are getting ready to meet to put together a plan for academic assessment. That will be submitted

to the Senate within this semester to make sure that we get going on implementation.

- We are putting together an Assessment Platform which will manage all of the information that is needed in order to have an effective academic assessment program.
- The college also has two new positions (*based on retirements, these are not new positions*). Assistant Dean of Assessment to support assessment with the faculty and a position to oversee Institutional Effectiveness.
- Ryan Hartnett, Vice President for Institutional Field Relations (*a representative of the Middle States Commission*) will be visiting us on Tuesday, October 15.
- We will also have a Monitoring Report committee who will meet and start to gather the evidence for the report. That report is due August 1, 2025.
- We will then have another visit in the Fall to confirm the contents of the Monitoring Report, that report will be provided to the Commission which will put us back in good standing.

## **B. Board Chair's Report**

Trustee Mitchell reported:

- I attend a NYCCT Meeting to set their budget and fees for the coming year.
  - There was Meeting with NYCCT to discuss the Chancellors Authority. I attended as well as Trustee Raizes. The Chancellor wanted authority to evaluate all Presidents and he also would like to recruit the President
- BOT Retreat
  - Saturday, October 19, from 10 am – 2 pm. We will have a pre-planning meeting to discuss topics and issues.
- Washington
  - Title IX issues
  - There is a national move towards not needing a bachelor's degree for a certain hiring position
  - State funding model for Community College based on enrollment type
- Call for Advocacy
  - For the increase in Pell
- ACCT
  - I will be coordinating the tellers at the October ACCT conference.

## **C. Committees**

### Governance Committee

Trustee Gerry reported:

The Governance Committee discussed the following:

- Revisions to the Student Code of Conduct
- Approval of Grievance Procedures for Complaints of Sex Discrimination Other Than Sex-Based Harassment, and Grievance Procedures for Sex-Based Harassment Complaints for Students
- Employment Supervisory Authority of the Board of Trustees Over the President of Westchester Community College
- 2025 Board Meeting Dates

### Program Committee

*Trustee Jacknis recognized former Regent Harry Phillips. Harry was responsible for my appointment to the Regent Advisory Committee to Technology which I still serve on.*

Trustee Jacknis reported:

The Program Committee discussed the following:

- Middle States update
- Strategic Plan
- KPIs

### Student Trustee Report

Trustee Carnot reported:

- Registration has opened to welcome Senators
- We will begin the election process soon
- Once elected we will all go on a retreat on September 26 to begin training.
  - I will be attending the NYCCT conference in October

### Finance/Facilities

Trustee Robeson Smith reported:

The Finance committee had discussion on the following topics.

- Operating Forecast
- Capital Projects Update
- Contracts
- Facilities/Capital and other projects completed over the summer

Trustee Robeson Smith asked Vice President Brian Murphy to go over the forecast for the month ending August 31, 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>
25-8301-653	Huaxia Chinese School	Provide Chinese Cultural and language educational programming for Chinese-American children and adults	9/8/24 – 6/30/25 <b>Change start date to 9/8/24.</b> <b>Original start date of 9/10/124 approved at July BOT</b>	
25-9525-389	National Academic Advising Association	In person training plus 2 follow-up virtual workshops for Academic Counselors on integrating academic and career advising funded by Title V Grant	11/8/24 – 12/20/24	\$10,840 Grant Funded.
25-9110-658	Silver Star Limo.com (\$8400) Comfort Express, Inc. (\$8400) J&R Tours, Ltd. (\$8610)	Provide Bus Transportation for WEOC students to visit SUNY Cobleskill, SUNY Morrisville, SUNY Buffalo, Buffalo State University, and SUNY Brockport.	10/28/24 – 10/30/24	NTE \$8,610 Grant Funded.
<b>(one of these vendors will be chosen; listed lowest to the highest bidder)</b>				
25-0240-390	Paramount Plumbing and Heating NY, Inc.	Student Center Book Store underground heating pipe needs to be replaced. Miscellaneous additional work included.	10/1/24 – 12/31/24	\$14,900
<u>CONTRACT #</u>	<u>CONTRACTOR NAME</u>	<u>CONTRACT DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>TERM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
25-0240-655	Thermo Dynamics Corp.	Furnish and install 1 new 26-ton compressor in the Physical Education Building	9/23/24 – 2/1/25	\$28,670
25-0240-391	Everon, LLC	Upgrade outdated panel in Academic Arts Bldg. Needed to test fire sprinkler system.	9/1/24 - 12/31/24	\$10,770
25-0105-656	Assured Partners	Healthcare consultant Services. Evaluate College's current providers, cost; prepare/distribute/evaluate response to RFP.	10/1/24 – 9/30/25 with 1 year option	\$27,500
25-0130-657	Pleasantville Union Free School District	For academic and support services for Pleasantville Lab School.	9/1/24 – 8/31/25	\$98,161 Revenue

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

**RESOLUTION: APPROVAL TO ADOPT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR COMPLAINS OF SEX DISCRIMINATION OTHER THAN SEX-BASED HARASSMENT, AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR SEX-BASED HARASSMENT COMPLAINTS FOR STUDENTS**

WHEREAS, earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Education released its final rule to fully effectuate Title IX's promise that no person experiences sex discrimination in federally funded education; and

WHEREAS, the final regulations will help to ensure that all persons, including students and employees, receive appropriate support if they experience sex discrimination in schools and that schools' procedures for investigating and resolving complaints of sex discrimination are accurate and fair to all involved; and

WHEREAS, to remain in compliance with Department of Education regulations, the College must enact policy changes which consider the language in the final rule; and

WHEREAS, based on the final rule, and in consultation with the State University of New York, the College has developed grievance procedures to implement Title IX regulations, specifically Grievance Procedures for Complaints of Sex Discrimination Other Than Sex-Based Harassment; and Grievance Procedures for Sex-Based Harassment Complaints for Students;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the WCC Board of Trustees hereby approves the Grievance Procedures for Complaints of Sex Discrimination Other Than Sex-Based Harassment, and Grievance Procedures for Sex-Based Harassment Complaints for Students which are attached.

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

**RESOLUTION: APPROVAL TO REVISE THE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

WHEREAS, earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Education released its final rule to fully effectuate Title IX's promise that no person experiences sex discrimination in federally funded education; and

WHEREAS, the final regulations will help to ensure that all persons, including students and employees, receive appropriate support if they experience sex discrimination in schools and that schools' procedures for investigating and resolving complaints of sex discrimination are accurate and fair to all involved; and

WHEREAS, to remain in compliance with Department of Education regulations, the College must enact policy changes which consider the language in the final rule; and

WHEREAS, based on the final rule, the College has removed references to Title IX in the Student Code of Conduct and instead will implement Title IX regulations using the Grievance Procedures for Complaints of Sex Discrimination Other Than Sex-Based Harassment; and the Grievance Procedures for Sex-Based Harassment Complaints for Students;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the WCC Board of Trustees hereby conditionally approves the revisions to the Student Code of Conduct.

**\*\*Motion: Gerry/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 personnel issues.

**\*\*Motion: Mitchell/Serratto – all in favor**

Motion out of Executive Session

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

Adjournment

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

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is scheduled for October 16, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

*Yolanda Howell*

Yolanda Howell  
Secretary, Board of Trustees