

NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Garden City, New York

BOARD OF TRUSTEES' MINUTES

Meeting of June 21, 2021

The six hundred forty-seventh meeting of the Board of Trustees was held on Monday, June 21, 2021 via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Chair Gardyn at 6:15 p.m. followed by a salute to the flag.

Present: Jorge L. Gardyn, Chair
Kathy Weiss, Vice Chair
John A. DeGrace, John R. Durso, Linda H. Green,
Wanda H. Jackson, George Siberón, Donna M. Tuman

Absent: Edward Powers

President Williams, VPs Izquierdo, Kerrigan, Lausch, Muscarella, AVP Wright

Chair Gardyn requested a motion that pursuant to Section 105 of the Open Meetings Law of the State of New York, the Board of Trustees shall enter Executive Session for the following purposes: 1) to discuss matters relating to negotiations involving the Nassau Community College Administrators Association; and 2) of reviewing the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation. Trustee Green moved the motion; seconded by Trustee Tuman. Motion carried 8-0.

Chair Gardyn resumed the open meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Present: Jorge L. Gardyn, Chair
Kathy Weiss, Vice Chair
John A. DeGrace, John R. Durso, Linda H. Green,
Wanda H. Jackson, George Siberón, Donna M. Tuman

Absent: Edward Powers

President Williams, VPs Izquierdo, Kerrigan, Lausch, Muscarella, AVP Wright

1. Approval of Minutes

Chair Gardyn requested a motion to approve the minutes of May 11, 2021. Trustee Durso moved the motion; seconded by Trustee Weiss. Motion carried 8-0.

2. Trustee Durso introduced the following resolution:

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Nassau Community College Board of Trustees Academic, Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Committee, the Nassau Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the proposal by the department of Administrative Business Technology/Health Information Technology for a *Medical Assistant* Certificate and recommends the approval of this program by the State University of New York.

Chair Gardyn requested a motion to consider this item. Trustee Green moved the motion; seconded by Trustee Durso. Motion carried 8-0.

3. Trustee Jackson introduced the following resolution:

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Nassau Community College Board of Trustees Academic, Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Committee, the Nassau Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the proposal by the department of Mathematics, Computer Science and Information Technology for an *AS Degree in Cybersecurity* and recommends the approval of this program by the State University of New York.

Chair Gardyn requested a motion to consider this item. Trustee Weiss moved the motion; seconded by Trustee Green. Motion carried 8-0.

4. Trustee Siberón introduced the following resolution:

RESOLVED, upon the recommendation of the Nassau Community College Board of Trustees Academic, Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Committee, the Nassau Community College Board of Trustees hereby approves the proposal by the department of English for an *AA Degree in English* and recommends the approval of this program by the State University of New York.

Chair Gardyn requested a motion to consider this item. Trustee Durso moved the motion; seconded by Trustee Tuman. Motion carried 8-0.

5. College Vision and Mission Statements – Tabled during the Academic, Student Affairs & Enrollment Committee meeting.

6. Second Reading: Policy 7120 Gender Neutral Restrooms

Vice Chair Weiss stated the purpose of Policy 7120 Gender Neutral Restrooms is to conform with recently enacted New York State legislation requiring SUNY state-operated campuses to designate all single occupancy bathrooms as gender neutral bathrooms which the College had been doing. She asked if there were any comments. Dr. Williams certified that Policy 7120 has been reviewed and submitted for consultation to the appropriate constituencies within the College prior to submission to the Board.

Chair Gardyn made a motion under Article VIII section C(6) of the Rules of Procedure to allow for the consideration of two items that do not appear on the Calendar. Trustee Weiss seconded the motion. Motion carried 8-0.

Trustee Durso introduced the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that upon the recommendation of the Policy & Planning Committee at its meeting April 13, 2021, followed by two readings of the policy by the Board of Trustees and public discussion, the Board of Trustees of Nassau Community College adopts **Policy 7120 Gender Neutral Restrooms** and that the same be subsequently incorporated into the policy manual of the Board of Trustees of Nassau Community College.

Chair Gardyn requested a motion to consider this item. Trustee Weiss moved the motion; seconded by Trustee Green. Motion carried 8-0.

7. Trustee Weiss introduced the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees hereby authorizes the president of the College and the chair of the Board of Trustees to execute the settlement agreement and general release to cause the implementation of the terms set forth therein, and be it further

RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees accepts the irrevocable letter of resignation of the employee who is the subject of said agreement, subject to receipt by counsel to the College of a letter of resignation.

Chair Gardyn requested a motion to consider this item. Trustee Green moved the motion; seconded by Trustee Weiss. Motion carried 8-0.

President Williams reported on the following items:

Student Highlights

- Approximately 2,800 graduates participated in the virtual Commencement streaming from May 23, 2021. On May 24th, many students participated in an in-person *Drive Into Summer* event. He acknowledged all the faculty, staff, and students who worked so diligently to make these experiences successful.
- The College's Valedictorian, Karol Rubiano, has since been highlighted on several news outlets for her extremely compelling story of resilience, passion, and fortitude.
- The College also commemorated the third cohort of the Community Health Workers Program (CHWP). Community Health Workers are frontline public health workers who have a close understanding and passion for the community they will be serving. They provide health and social service support to individuals in the community and also build community capacity by increasing health knowledge and self-sufficiency through a wide range of activities such as community education, counseling, and advocacy. He thanked all the staff and faculty who have worked with community partners to create the wonderful non-credit and credit opportunities in the CHWP, as well as the generous funders who make this experience free of charge for students.

Preparing for Fall - Health and Safety Update

The number and speed of changes around COVID-19 health and safety guidance remain staggering. The College has been closely monitoring and updating guidance as appropriate, keeping health and safety paramount, as we have since the beginning of this horrible pandemic. Mindful of our commitment to advancing as a community with transparency, and of our plan to increase on-campus density for the Fall, the Reinventing Task Force, composed of various campus constituencies, continues to meet throughout the summer. He commended the group for its ongoing work.

Updates on Major Initiatives

- Enhanced Partnerships
 - Equitably Enhancing Student Access
 - Nassau-Adelphi Gateway: NCC and Adelphi's Co-Curricular Partnership for Student Success
 - NCC and Adelphi's Co-Curricular Partnership for Student Success.
 - Beginning in Fall 2021, students enrolled at NCC will be able to continue earning their Associate's degrees while being a part of campus life at Adelphi University. In addition to being able to live at Adelphi and to participate in University activities, they will gain easy access to streamlined transfer pathways for completing their Bachelor's degrees.

- A key focus of advisors is to ensure that students transfer with all their credits as juniors.
 - This partnership builds on an already existing positive relationship NCC has with Adelphi, and we look forward to advancing the College's efforts around equitable student access, completion, and post-completion success.
 - He thanked the many members of the NCC team who worked this year, starting in Summer 2020, to actualize this opportunity.
- Beginning in Fall 2021, the College and West Hempstead School District will pilot the West Hempstead Nassau Partnership (WHNP) through which students will spend their high school day at NCC taking college-level courses. Complementing the Baldwin Nassau Partnership as an additional step in the direction of equitably enhancing student access and completion, the WHNP will be the second robust concurrent enrollment program starting Fall 2021.

- **Strategic Planning Process**

The strategic planning process will continue throughout the summer within the framework of the Institutional Planning Committee. The Board provided some terrific feedback earlier in the evening. We will continue to press forward into the Fall.

He acknowledged this last scheduled Board meeting for the 2020-2021 year. Since early 2020, our world has been filled with unexpected challenges of epic proportions. We have all been impacted by COVID-19 in one way or another. Throughout this harrowing and unforgiving, once in a century, some would posit, global travesty that brought so much darkness, NCC has endeavored to equitably support students and has identified ways to persevere – all amidst racial and social injustices that engulfed our society and further highlighted historical institutional, economic, and socio-political inequities.

We have found comfort in: *Who We Are* – a community college which must meet the needs of our local communities, County, and region; *Who We Serve* – a diverse continuum of learners who deserve equitable opportunities to experience access, completion, and post-completion success; and *Why We Serve* – so that students can leave with a credential of economic value which leads to a family livable wage and social mobility. Bringing together these salient concepts has helped our community forge forward, focusing on students while keeping health and safety paramount. From faculty converting 99% of courses to remote learning in a matter of days during Spring 2020; to staff phoning all 14,500+ students who were enrolled in Spring 2020 to ask how they are and how to help; to acquiring and distributing hundreds of laptops to students in need; to mobilizing an effort that yielded tens of thousands of dollars of philanthropic funds designated to students impacted by COVID; to transitioning all student support services to be accessed remotely; and more; the NCC community vigorously and collaboratively turned challenges into opportunities and found light amidst so much darkness. Working with Academic Senate and shared governance, union leadership, students, Board members, and so many other internal and external constituents, the College has made some great strides this past year. He is grateful for the partnerships and is confident that we can build on the successes of this year to take us into the future.

He thanked the Trustees for their continued support of the College, and all the individuals at the College who work hard to support students and to advance the College. He remains excited and thankful to serve as President of Nassau Community College.

Vice Chair Weiss, on behalf of the Board, shared several items that it considers important and of which staff may not be aware. Dr. Williams and members of the administrative team have been keeping us informed about the decline in enrollment and the efforts to reach out to local high schools and other groups to share the exciting programs at the College. We have also been informed about the effects that enrollment declines have on faculty positions and the methods that are being used to reassign staff to avoid layoffs. As part of

this evening's agenda, the Board approved three course programs, i.e., Medical Assistant certificate, an English degree, and a Cybersecurity degree. They are enthusiastic that these and other opportunities will be available to meet the needs of the students at the College and in the community and County. The Trustees are continuously learning. Last week and this morning, consultants from ACCT (Association for Community College Trustees) engaged them in training on student success and diversity, equity, and inclusion. President Williams advocated for both training sessions in striving to ensure that we have an informed Board. They look forward to the 2021-2022 year, anticipating our return to campus, approving a strategic plan to help us all prepare for the next several years, instituting new and exciting programs, and working with all members of the staff, President Williams, and his administrative team.

Speakers

Donna Hope, NCCFT President, acknowledged that, while it has been a difficult year, we have survived. We will be facing another challenging year, requiring all of us to work together as we act in the best interests of our students. She thanked the Board, Cabinet, and President Williams for leading the way in what can be a thankless job in some ways and yet amazingly thankful in others in moving our College forward. She expressed hope that the Fall 2021 Semester will be the start of our recovery. It is critical that we find a way to join forces with a positive attitude and a focus on building a more supportive and inclusive community to ensure a successful future for NCC. NCC means too much to our students, our community, and to every member of our faculty and staff who work at this institution. She wished all a healthy, happy, and peaceful summer.

Liz Hynes-Musnisky introduced herself as the recently elected Chair of the Academic Senate (AS) and one of three of the four members of the AS Executive Committee (ASEC) who are proud alumni of NCC. Having previously taught in the Department of Critical Reading and Academic Advancement (DCRAA), she is an Associate Professor who will be joining the English Department in the Fall 2021 semester and is also the coordinator for the Honors Program since 2015. She pledged to do her best to support all members of the College community. She attended a National Collegiate Honors Council workshop on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at which she heard the term "coalition building". Enamored with the idea of doing more than collaborating, she shared what resonates most from her research on the phrase: "Coalition building is an art. More than anything else, it requires individuals and groups to be willing to rise above their feelings of separateness and to actively collaborate in a spirit of mutual understanding, patience, and flexibility. When members share responsibility, goals, decisions, and leadership, and energetically and enthusiastically work toward a common goal, the coalition has the potential for great success." [from *Coalition Building Primer*] Eager to work together, she invited us to join her in building a coalition that will benefit all who love and serve NCC.

Stefan Krompfer, AFA President, volunteered to be the first to join Academic Senate Chair Hynes-Musnisky in building a coalition. Earlier during committee meetings, the Trustees had decided to table their vote on our Mission Statement after reviewing the statement more critically by applying what they had learned in a recent DEI training session. A Mission Statement provides a guideline on who and what we want to be, and so he is pleased that the Board is returning it to the committee. Mission Statements are excellent, but "Mission Accomplished" is more important. A Mission Statement never achieves full completion without a series of accomplishments. He thanked all for their contributions, reiterating that he is gratified to be part of this coalition.

Chair Gardyn remarked that we are emerging from a strange and astounding year of the pandemic with signs that we are returning to more normal life. He wished all a good summer, emphasizing the importance of being able to enjoy time with family and friends.

Chair Gardyn announced the next Capital and Finance BOT Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. followed by the Full Board meeting. The Board will open the public session between 6:15 and 6:30 p.m. and resume the public session approximately 7:30 p.m.

Chair Gardyn requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Weiss moved the motion; seconded by Trustee Jackson. Motion carried 8-0.

Meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathy Weiss
Secretary Pro Tem