



**Essex County College
Board of Trustees
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

February 23, 2021

4:30 pm

Via Zoom Webinar

*In Attendance: Trustees: I. Cruz; J. Grimes; L. Guyton; A. Lewis; C. Morales; B. Robinson; J. Wright;
J. Zarra; A. Boakye, Interim President; M. Townes, Board Counsel*

Excused: M. Bolden

Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 4:36pm by the Vice Chair, Trustee Lewis. Following roll call, a quorum of eight trustees was announced.

Open Public Meetings Act Announcement

Trustee Grimes was asked to read the Open Public Meetings Act. She read as follows:

In compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act of the State of New Jersey, adequate notice of this regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Essex County College was provided in the following manner:

Advance written notice of this virtual meeting was filed on January 7, 2021 and written notice for this meeting was provided to the Essex County College Community, indicating that the meeting will be held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, P.L. 1975 c 231 and the Governor of New Jersey's Executive Orders 102 and 104 regarding COVID 19 Emergency Actions. Notice of the meeting was also posted on the College website at www.essex.edu. According to records of Essex County College, we have not received written requests or prepayment from any parties for advance notice of meetings.

Minutes

Trustee Grimes moved minutes of the January 26th meetings for approval. Trustee Morales seconded her motion. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

Communications

Trustee Grimes advised that no communications had been received.

Public Comments on Agenda Items

Comments submitted by Lev Zilbermints were read into the record. His comments are attached at Appendix A.

Finance Committee Report

The Chair of the Finance Committee, Trustee Zarra, indicated that the Committee recommended the ratification of action 3-2.1/2-2021:

3-2.1/2-2021	Acceptance of Release and Hold Harmless Agreement: Essex County Vocational Technical Schools
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Trustee Lewis moved the action for ratification. Trustee Robinson seconded the motion. ***The motion carried:*** seven affirmed; one abstention.

Trustee Zarra then presented Actions 3-1.1 through 3-2.2 for approval:

3-1.1/2-2021	Authorize the Award of a Two (2) year Bid for College Vehicle Tire Replacement, Balancing, and Disposal Services Barnwell House of Tires, Inc., Newark, NJ College Funded – Operating Expense	\$22,749.92
3-1.2/2-2021	Authorize the Award of a Contract for Architectural/Engineering Services for Additional Bathroom Upgrades LAN Associates, Midland Park, NJ Chapter XII Funded – Capital Expense	Not to exceed \$35,000.00
3-1.3/2-2021	Authorize the Award of Five License Renewals for Virtual Apps and Desktops Citrix Systems, Inc., Fort Lauderdale, FL College Funded – Operating Expense	\$25,852.81
3-1.4/2-2021	Authorize the Award of Two (2) Purchases for Cisco SMART New Era Technology, Islandia, NY CRRSAA Grant Funded – Operating Expense	\$3,948.70
3-1.5/2-2021	Authorize the Award of Two (2) Maintenance Renewals for Premier Support Systems Oracle America, Inc., Dallas, TX College Funded – Operating Expense	\$6,703.95
3-1.6/2-2021	Authorize the Award of Three (3) Maintenance Renewals for Software Support Dell Computers, Round Rock, TX College Funded – Operating Expense	\$25,183.89
3-1.7/2-2021	Authorize the Award of a Contract for Legal Consulting Services Dorothy Dugue, Esq., Philadelphia, PA College Funded – Operating Expense	Not to Exceed \$30,000.00
3-1.8/2-2021	Authorize the Payment for Legal Services Genova Burns Attorneys-At-Law, Newark, NJ College Funded – Operating Expense	\$1,025.00
3-1.9/2-2021	Authorize the Payment for Legal Services Schenck, Price, Smith and King, LLP., Florham Park, NJ College Funded – Operating Expense	\$396.25
3-1.10/2-2021	Authorize the Payment for Legal Services O’Toole Scrivo, LLC., Cedar Grove, NJ College Funded – Operating Expense	\$2,380.00

3-1.11/2-2021	Authorize the Award of Additional Services for Audit of the College's Financial Statements Clifton Larson Allen, LLP., Minneapolis, MN College Funded – Operating Expense	\$10,500.00
3-1.12/2-2021	Authorize the Award of a Purchase of Computer Equipment, Web Cameras, and Internet Licenses for Students and Employees Dell Computers, Round Rock, TX Dell Computers, Round Rock, TX CDW-G, Vernon Hills, IL Altice, Long Island City, NY CRRSAA Grant Funded – Operating Expense	\$235,884.00 49,594.00 14,160.00 <u>24,000.00</u> TOTAL \$323,638.00
3-1.13/2-2021	Authorize the Award of a Bid for Optical Equipment Optical Equipment Corp, dba: Koch Optical, Fulton, MD Perkins Grant Funded – Operating Expense	\$19,782.00
3-1.14/2-2021	Authorize the Award of a Contract for Consulting Services Don Yee, Irvington, NJ College Funded – Operating Expense	\$14,800.00
3-1.15/2-2021	Authorize the Award of a Purchase of Eight (8) Computers Dell Computers, Round Rock, TX New Jersey Health Works Grant Funded – Operating Expense	\$8,292.96
3-2.1/2-2021	2 nd Amendment to May 16, 2019 Agreement with Follett	
3-2.2 /2-2021	County College Career and Technical Education Program Expansion – Securing Our Children's Future Bond Act	

Trustee Lewis moved the finance actions for approval. Trustee Grimes seconded the motion. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

Personnel Committee Report

Trustee Grimes, reporting for the Personnel Committee, presented action 4-1 for approval:

Resignation

4-1/2-2021 Kathryn Skrobala, Assistant Director
 Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Assessment
 Effective: January 22, 2021

Trustee Cruz moved the personnel action for approval. Trustee Morales provided the second. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

Educational Programs Committee Report

Trustee Lewis advised that the Educational Programs Committee recommended the approval of actions 7-1.1 through 7-1.3:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 7-1.1/2-2021 | Internal Review Board: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation |
| 7-1.2/2-2021 | Joint Admissions Agreement: Kean University |
| 7-1.3/2-2021 | Acceptance of Master Service Agreement between the National Student Clearinghouse and Essex County College |

Trustee Morales moved the actions for approval. Trustee Zarra seconded the motion. ***The motion carried unanimously.***

Site Facilities and Equipment Committee Report

Trustee Morales reported that the Site, Facilities and Equipment Committee met; however, there were no items to present for approval.

Policy and Governance Committee Report

Trustee Cruz advised that there was no report this month as the committee did not meet.

Community Relations Committee Report

Trustee Wright announced that the committee did not meet; therefore, she had no report.

Alumni Association Report

There was no report from the Alumni Association

Student Government Association Report

The Student Government Association report was read into the record. The report is attached at Appendix B.

Vice Chair Lewis commented, on behalf of the Board, that he was pleased and encouraged by the actions of the Student Government Association in terms of serving the broader community. He also expressed hope that they continue in service and that they are doing a very good job.

Faculty Association Report

It was acknowledged that there was no report from the Faculty Association this month.

President's Report

Dr. Boakye's Report to the Board of Trustees is attached at Appendix C.

Dr. Boakye then addressed issues raised by Mr. Zilbermint. Regarding the replacement of key employees, Dr. Boakye responded that we carefully analyze vacancies and make sure those positions are filled. With regard to the website, he advised that updates will be made as we move ahead. To Mr. Zilbermint's question as to whether we have a treasurer, Dr. Boakye advised that we do have a treasurer, Trustee Zarra, and we will make sure the website is updated to reflect that.

With that, Dr. Boakye concluded his report.

Vice Chair Lewis recalled another inquiry from Mr. Zilbermint, a request for the audit. Dr. Boakye responded that the audit is still in process.

New Business

Vice Chair Lewis called for new business. There was no response.

Public Comments

Public Comments submitted by Lev Zilbermints were read into the record. Those comments are attached at Appendix D.

Notice of Executive Session

Trustee Grimes was then called upon to read the notice of executive session. She read the following:

WHEREAS, The Open Public Meetings Act, 1975 (N.J. Law Chapter 231) permits a public body to exclude the public from that portion of a meeting at which certain topics are discussed:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees of Essex County College shall hold, following this meeting and prior to its next scheduled meeting on March 23, 2021 at 4:30 PM, an Executive Session to discuss the following topics, the general nature of which is limited to Collective Bargaining Agreements, Pending and Existing Contractual Negotiations, Litigation and Personnel Matters. The discussion of these said topics shall be disclosed to the public as soon as reasonable.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Lewis thanked everyone to their contributions to this month's business. He then adjourned the meeting at 5:07 pm.

Hello, everyone,

I hope you have weathered the snowstorms that the month of February has thrown at us. We are not out of the woods yet, but March is around the corner. Hopefully spring will arrive soon and we won't have to keep digging ourselves from under the snow over and over.

Let's start on what I have to say, shall we?

First, congratulations on additional bathroom upgrades. That is 3-1.2/2-2021. This is a very good idea that should have been done earlier. As they say, better late than never. So that is again, very good.

Second, buying all these upgrades, items 3-1.6/2-2021 et al, is a positive development. We are talking about computers, right? Okay. So here is the \$64,000 question. Your school computers are protected from the viruses, which is great. What about laptops that students use in the Cafeteria and the library? Are these protected from viruses? I believe I raised this question previously at an earlier board meeting a year or two back. Any update? Because you know, a college has to have all its nooks and crannies and rooms protected against computer viruses.

Third, I see you still are paying Genova Burns Attorneys-at-Law for the Lisa Durden case. That is 3-1.8/2-2021. I told you earlier that these cases will take up time and resources that could have been used more productively. How much has been spent on the Gale Gibson, Rasheedah Hasan and Lisa Durden cases together since 2016? A million dollars? Two? Three? Five? You got a black hole there that is sucking resources and money by the month. I think you should contact the opposing parties' lawyers and start negotiating a settlement. Otherwise this will keep sucking money and resources like a bottomless pit. That's just my opinion.

I think neither party admits culpability, but a settlement is paid. That is how it works in the legal profession.

Fourth, 3.-1.11/2-2-2021. An audit of the college's financial statements is a very good idea. Where can I see these statements?

Fifth, 4-1/2-2021. The Assistant Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Planning and Assessment has resigned. I suppose you will hire a replacement soon?

Sixth, you have a joint admissions agreement with Kean University. Just a thought. If you have any students from Union County applying here or vice versa, the coronavirus factor must be considered. Now that vaccination is happening, I think we should ask for proof of vaccination against the coronavirus. Kean is likely doing the same thing. It is a medically responsible thing to do.

Seventh, when I attended ECC in the early 1990s there was a doctor available on campus. Not anymore. There has not been a doctor on campus in a quarter-century. Makes you think, doesn't it?

This concludes my agenda comments.

Lev D. Zilbermints
Class of 1993

Good Afternoon Members of the Board of Trustee, Dr. Boakye, and Essex Students, Faculty and Staff.

UPDATE ON SGA SPRING 2021 ENDEAVORS

FOOD PANTRY DISTRIBUTION

We've held **two** successful food distributions on Friday, February 12th and on Saturday, February 20th. Below is the combined data from both events;

- SGA served 38 Essex students in need
- Over 1 TON (1,000 lbs) of pre-bagged food was distributed

- Water, juice, & jumbo items were distributed separately

The next task is to find new ways to procure supplies to restock the pantry and hold at least 2 additional giveaways before end of the semester as demand appears to be high for this event.

NJ COMMUNITY COLLEGE SGA FORUM

Essex County College's SGA officers will participate in the NJ Community College SGA meeting on Tuesday, March 2nd @ 4pm. We plan to get feedback from our counterparts on what has worked for their respective institutions this semester.

VIDEO MESSAGE TO STUDENTS

The SGA team will record a video intro for SGA's COVID outreach.

AUNT FLOW PROJECT

Our secretary, Manuel has been in discussions with a program called "Aunt Flow" that seeks to expand access to sanitary supplies in women's restrooms on campus. We look forward to discussing this with President; Dr. Boakye and examining how programs such as this can be implemented once we return to in-person learning.

Respectfully,

Student Government Association

Memorandum

To: Dr. M. Bolden & the Board of Trustees
From: Dr. Augustine A. Boakye, Interim President, Essex County College
Date: February 23, 2021
Re: President's Report

General:

The College continues to implement precautions for preventing spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

- ❖ Our records indicate that 4 individuals working for the College tested positive with mild symptoms in the month of February, 2021. We continue to use the self-guided Contact Tracing Log to help keep everyone alerted to the amount of time spent in-person interaction for those on campus. We have ordered plenty of face shields for additional protection of employees working on campus.
- ❖ We continue to encourage all employees and students to participate in the multiple free COVID-19 testing exercise as well as the vaccinations as they become available. ECC Gymnasium is a site for COVID-19 vaccination.

Academics:

The Spring 2021 semester registration ended and as of 02/19/2021, our total unduplicated headcount is 5,751 students and total of 57,883 credit hours. We truly appreciate all the effort from the staff members who worked very hard for this to happen especially the academic chairpersons and Welcome Center staff.

The College has successfully secured a Bloomberg Terminal for Business programs to prepare our students for high profile jobs upon graduation. ECC is one of only two Community Colleges in NJ to have the Bloomberg Terminal on site. This project will be funded through the Perkins grant.

Two of ECC students, **Anne Alabson** and **Joseph Rivera**, are the College's 2021 representatives on the All USA-New Jersey Community College Academic Team. Anne and Joseph will be recognized by the New Jersey Council of County Colleges in the Spring.

Finances

A team of staff were put together to review, develop an approach, and disburse the CARES ACT II (CRRSAA) funds to the students. It must be noted that the College has received in total, an approximately \$5.2 million from the Federal government to support eligible students during this pandemic period.

Projects:

The College is still working on multiple capital projects. Both the sidewalk project and the renovation of the bathrooms are moving at a fast pace and it is anticipated that the completion will be ahead of schedule. We also completed the seating space in front of the Center for Learning and Teaching Excellence (CLTS) with beautiful furniture and cell phone charging stations.

Community Relations:

Dr. Boakye has been participating in all NJ Presidents Council Meetings to advocate for funds and contribute to the success of our state colleges. He also participates in regular meetings with the County leaders to share key updates on the College.

The College Social Justice Council and others affiliates have celebrated the Black History Month in a spectacular manner with workshops on important topics including: *The Radical King - Dr. MLK Jr.*; *The Power of One*; *Awakening: From Personal Consciousness to Collective Action*; and *the Power of the Vote*.

Our Board of Trustees Chairperson, Dr. Bolden, Trustee Cruz, Dr. Boakye and other College staff and students participated in the National Legislative Summit (NLS) as part of the Annual Conference of ACCT and AACC. One key topic heavily discussed was “Free Education for Community College Students”.

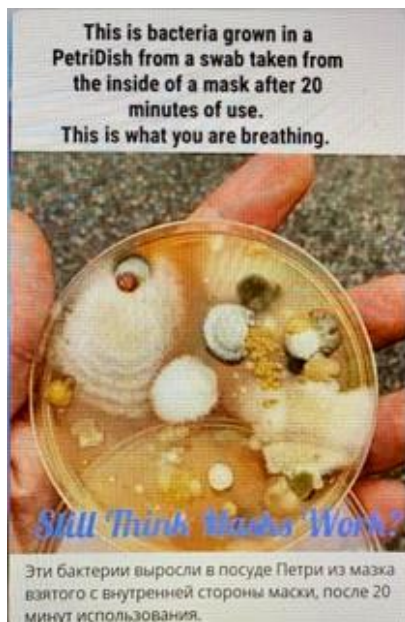
Dr. Boakye joined the Board of Commissioners President - Hon. Wayne Richardson on a visit to support the staff vaccinating the County residents at the ECC Gym site. The residents have provided great feedback on the experience, dedication, and orderly distribution of the vaccines.

Dr. Boakye participated in a fruitful discussion with the Newark Anchor Collaboration (NAC) Higher Ed. leaders on “*Impact of COVID-19 in reference to Social Equity*”.

Middle States:

Led by Mr. John Runfeldt, the Middle States’ Steering Committee members completed an orientation on the Self-Study Design (SSD). Faculty and staff are meeting and beginning to review the research questions on the study. On the same note, a series of successful Middle States meetings took place with the college-wide community and Dr. Paul Starkey, the College’s Middle States Commission VP Liaison. This is the beginning of the Self-Study process for ECC culminating on an on-site visit in April of 2023.

Thank you.



Greetings, everyone,

Have something important to tell you. It has to do with the coronavirus. Recently I received an email from a family member. The email said that you should change the masks you wear often enough, like, after 20 minutes. The reason is that bacteria grows from the inner side of the mask, where you are breathing. The mask assists in the development of mushroom spores.

The mushroom infection can affect the internal organs. According to the email I received, if a mushroom infection gets into the blood, sepsis occurs.

The original email is in Russian, but I translated it into English.

Now let me focus on ECC matters.

First, who is the treasurer of the Board of Trustees? The online site gives a president, vice president and secretary, but no treasurer. Weird...

Second, I bring to your attention that a lot of the information on the college website has not been updated in at least two years or more. For example, student organizations. As memory serves, much of the information there is out of date. For example, the Student Government Association website shows President Nelson Ejezie and his team. But he has not been president since 2017-2018.

Other student organization websites show similar outdated information. The Student Government Association website on Facebook has not had new posts since June 2020. Point is, if you want more enrollment, you should have the college websites updated with current information.

There is no Student Representative on the Board of Trustees since the Alumni Association is dormant. I told you before, if you had a working alumni association, you could get more money and resources. We at Bloomfield College Alumni Association do this all the time. Rutgers, same thing. Ditto for Seton Hall University, NJIT, Montclair State... Not here. That is sad, really. You really need to get that addressed.

When a school gives its students autonomy and does not try to impose tight control, things go well. Such was the case at Bloomfield College in the 1990s and to a certain extent, here in the 1990s, and Rutgers-Newark as well. But now, anything that could question whether decisions are good or bad has been shut down. The student newspaper, ECCO. The Alumni Association. Urban Issues Institute. I could go on, but the pattern is there. If you want to have a prosperous college like we did in the 1990s, you must restore programs that attracted students.

The student newspaper, with an online version. ECCOLOG, the yearbook. The Alumni Association. Urban Issues Institute. Student Support Services. Freshman Center. These were programs that allowed ECC to have over 8,000 students in the 2000s. And now? We keep laying off people because our enrollment has decreased!!

Our school's 55th anniversary is coming up. We should make plans to celebrate it properly. I am good at history, so if you want my ideas, let me know.

Lev D. Zilbermints
Class of 1993