

# ISOTHERMAL

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## COMMUNITY COLLEGE

### ISOTHERMAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MARCH 25, 2025

The Board of Trustees of Isothermal Community College met on Tuesday, March 25, 2025, at 12:30 p.m. at Isothermal Community College's Rutherford Campus in Spindale, NC. The following trustees were present: Michael Benfield, Amy Jenkins, David Scherping, Seema Daigle, James Hutchins, Grady Franklin, John Condrey, Eddie Holland, Tony Helton, Jordan Barnes, Seema Daigle, and Bill Miller. The following personnel were present from the College: President Margaret Annunziata, DeeDee Barnard, Madeline Smith, Leeann Cline-Burris, Greg Thomas, Mike Gavin, Robby Walters, and Thad Harrill.

Chairman James Hutchins called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

#### Ethics Statement

Mr. Bill Miller asked Board members if they knew of any actual conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest which exists concerning any matter coming before the Board of Trustees. No conflicts were noted.

#### Agenda Confirmation

Chairman Hutchins presented the agenda. Mr. Dave Hunt made a motion to approve the agenda. The agenda was approved.

#### Consent Agenda

Chairman Hutchins presented the Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda contained the minutes from January 25, 2025 and February 04, 2025, and Budget Revisions. Mr. Hunt made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. After no objections, the consent agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

#### Naming Committee

Chairman Hutchins appointed the following Trustees to a Naming Committee: Mr. Jordan Barnes, Mr. Michael Benfield, Mr. Grady Franklin, and Mr. John Condrey. In addition to the Trustees, Dr. Thad M Harrill, Chief Development Officer and Executive Director of the Foundation, was also asked to join the ad hoc committee.

The Board of Trustees discussed the recent announcement from RHI Legacy Foundation of a challenge grant in the amount of \$1,000,000 to support the Dr. Bobby F England Health and Sciences Center. As a part of the challenge, any private donations to date may be included in the challenge.

#### Trustee Items

Mr. Bill Miller gave the Executive Committee report. Mr. Miller reviewed the policy crosswalk documenting the revision of the previous policy manual to the new policy manual. On behalf of the Executive Committee, he made a motion to rescind the following five policies and discussed how each of the policies were represented elsewhere or were no longer active.

Administrative Authority – Due to today's technology, this policy is not needed.

Writer in Residence – No Writer in residency.

Guest Speakers – This is covered in classroom management and academic freedom policies and procedures.

Letters of Intent – Letters of intent will continue with the workload policies.

Organizational Chart – The organizational charts will be located on the website under the "About" page.

After discussion regarding the Administrative Authority policy and the possibility of the President being unavailable due to an emergency, Mr. Dean Shatley informed the Board of Trustees that they must act on any appointment of an interim president. In addition, the Board of Trustees discussed the Writer in Residence policy. The motion was unanimously approved to rescind all the policies presented.

Dr. Annunziata informed the Board of Trustees that after investigation with Duke Energy regarding the main power line physically located on campus, it was determined that Isothermal Community College owns the power line and will be the party responsible for relocating the line. Dr. Madeline Smith informed the Board of Trustees that an agreement signed in 2005 states the College owns the main power line. She discussed the impact of the current location in regard to the construction of the Dr. Bobby F. England Health & Sciences Center. After discussion, Mr. Dave Hunt made a motion to authorize the President to take the necessary steps to relocate the main power line from its current location as phase one of the relocation and upgrade to the power system of campus. Mr. Michael Benfield seconded the motion. Mr. Tony Helton discussed the total cost of the project and Dr. Annunziata announced that over the entirety of the upgrades to the power system through campus, the project will cost approximately \$1,000,000. She discussed safety on campus with the relocation of the power line and box. In addition, she discussed transferring the main power line over to Duke Energy after the initial relocation of the line. The motion was approved.

On behalf of the Executive Committee, Mr. Miller made a motion to approve the nomination of Mr. Chivous Bradley as an Emeritus Trustee. Chairman Hutchins discussed Mr. Bradley's service to the Community and his years of service on the Isothermal Community College Board of Trustees. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. John Condrey gave the Facilities report. He announced that the Committee met in February and that the Committee discussed the assessment of the outer wall of the Foundation. Dr. Smith announced that REI Engineering Firm will begin the assessment at a cost of \$6600. Following their assessment, they will make recommendations on a corrective action plan to solve the leaking through the bricks of the exterior walls.



Mr. Condrey announced that the Facilities Committee will add three additional meetings to review the Facility Capital Audit Plan (FCAP) from the State to set priorities. These priorities will be based on programing and safety as the immediate priorities. The Board discussed reviewing the needs and sharing those needs with the Rutherford County Commissioners. In addition, the Board discussed not requesting the funding now or all at once, but over time. Dr. Annunziata announced that she has had a preliminary meeting with the Chair of the Commissioners and the County Manager. She discussed the FCAP in general terms since the Board of Trustees had not met since the full report was published.

Mr. Condrey informed the Board of Trustees that the Facilities Committee discussed in detail the external composite and colors of the Dr. Bobby F England facility. In addition, the Committee toured schools with newer layouts of bathroom facilities. The Board reviewed the latest renderings from the architect.

Mr. Dave Hunt gave the Finance Committee report. He announced that the Board received the audit for year ending 2024 and there were no findings. He congratulated the College and staff for the good audit report. He announced that the Board received the month end report from Atlanta Consulting Group regarding the Powers and Furchess Scholarship funds. Mr. Hunt announced that the reports were not great with the current state of the stock market.

Mr. Hunt announced that the College will make a change to the Student Activity Fees with a flat fee of \$40.00 across the board regardless of the student's credit hours. He informed the Board of Trustees that the fee has not changed since 2017.

Mr. Hunt informed the Board of Trustees of the communication issues with Bank of THE Ozark since the Board approved the financial institutional change back in the fall. He announced that Truist has granted discounts to the College in an effort to retain the accounts. He made a motion for the College to remain with Truist and rebid the banking services. After discussion, the Board of Trustees approved the motion.

Mr. Hunt announced that Isothermal Community College was granting bonuses to employees based on the Performance Funding in the amount of \$1,133. He made a motion to include Dr. Margaret Annunziata in the bonus and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Hunt presented the local budget requests for Rutherford and Polk County for operations. In addition, he presented the request for capital funding from Rutherford County. On behalf of the Finance Committee, he made a motion to approve the local budget requests. After discussion, the Board unanimously approved the requests.

Mr. Jordan Barnes gave the report from the Personnel Committee. He announced that the President's evaluation is underway. He requested that each Board Member complete the evaluation by April 04 and that the Personnel Committee will meet again on April 29 to review the evaluation results.

Mr. Grady Franklin gave the Programs Committee report. Mr. Franklin announced that the Committee focused on programing revisions. He announced that the Dental Hygienist program was recently



accredited, and graduates of the program will be able to enter into the workforce with a starting salary of approximately \$70,000.

Mr. Franklin discussed the importance of the programs to assist students with their educational goals. He announced that guided pathways are an excellent component for students' success. Dr. Thomas discussed the pathways as an initiative for the College's quality enhancement plan that is a requirement for the accreditation with Southern Association of Schools and Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Dr. Thomas discussed the clustering of programs that breaks the divisions into seven major categories for students to establish a focused career goal. As the students' progress, these pathways will allow students to make changes without delaying their completion. Dr. Annunziata announced that a group of faculty and staff is leading the Quality Enhancement Plan with support from Dr. Thomas and Mrs. Leeann Cline-Burris.

Mr. Franklin informed the Board that the College reviews programming to determine if the course offerings meet the needs of the students and the community. He announced that there is a process in place at the College to review programming and determine their effectiveness. Dr. Thomas informed the Board that the System has a designated process for establishing new programming. Mr. Franklin announced that Isothermal is adding more credentialed condensed courses as part of its programming to meet the workforce needs of the community.

#### President's Report

Dr. Annunziata gave the President's Report. She welcomed Mr. Alan Langley from Cleveland Community College. She announced his involvement in the national and state trustee associations and his 15 years of service on Cleveland Community College's Board. Mr. Langley addressed the Board and discussed the state and national support for Community Colleges.

Dr. Annunziata discussed her recent trips along with some representatives from the Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff.

Mrs. Amy Jenkins and Mr. Dave Hunt attended the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) for the 2025 National Legislative Summit in Washington, D.C. Mrs. Jenkins discussed the benefit of meeting with other Community College Trustees and meeting with Congressman Tim Moore. Mr. Hunt discussed the opportunities of meeting with the staff of Representative Chuck Edwards' office and with Congressman Moore.

Dr. Seema Daigle attended the Bellwether Award Consortium. Dr. Daigle discussed the impact of the eight-week program and how Isothermal's transition to eight-weeks gained the interest of the other Community Colleges that were in attendance. Dr. Annunziata announced that the Bellwether Award Consortium was a group of 30 community colleges who were deemed finalists from a large group of applicants in the United States. Isothermal Community College was one of seven NC Community Colleges competing for an award. She discussed the College's entry in the Instructional Programs & Services. She announced that she was very proud of Isothermal's presentation on the eight-week program "Great in Eight" and that NC Community College Forsyth Technical won the award.

Dr. Annunziata announced that last week, the NC Association of Community College Trustees (NCACCT) met in Raleigh for a Community College Legislative visit to the state capital. Mr. Tony Helton and Mr. Michael Benfield attended the NCACCT. Mr. Benfield discussed the presentations and hearing from representatives from the General Assembly. Mr. Tony Helton informed the Board of Trustees that the session presented by Dr. Dean Shatley was very informative and impressive. In addition, he discussed the presentation on My Future NC and the goal of two million degrees or credentials by 2030. Dr. Annunziata informed the Board that she met with NC Legislators on Wednesday and there is strong support for the workforce programming with the Community College System. In addition, she announced that there was a strong message of the possibility of limited funding with the issues from Hurricane Helene in the western part of the state.

Dr. Annunziata announced that she has been participating in the Aspen Institute with 24 other community college presidents across the US. She discussed the focus of the program that has been on transforming and refocusing community colleges on how to meet the needs of the community, connecting to careers, and lifting the community to choose a path for individuals to earn a self-sustaining wage. She announced that the Aspen Institute provides funding for some of the travel expenses.

Dr. Annunziata announced that Isothermal Community College's Science & Technology Expo and Paint the Campus Blue are on April 25 & 26.

The meeting adjourned by consensus.



CHAIRMAN  
MR. JAMES HUTCHINS



ACTING PARLIAMENTARIAN/SECRETARY  
MR. BILL MILLER