

NIAGARA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MARCH 26, 2020

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**A Special meeting of the Board of Trustees was held
on March 26, 2020 at noon
via teleconference call**

Board Members Present On Call

Mr. William Ross, Chairperson
Ms. Gina Virtuoso, Financial Secretary
Ms. Katherine Alexander
Mr. Kevin Clark
Ms. Sheila Smith
Mr. Jerald Wolfgang
Mr. Eric Lipps, Student Trustee

Board Members Absent

Mr. Jason Cafarella, Vice Chairperson
Ms. Bonnie Sloma, Secretary

Administration Present On Call

William J. Murabito, Ph.D., President
Ms. Deborah Brewer, Director of Foundation
Ms. Catherine Brown, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources
Ms. Barbara DeSimone, Director of Public Relations
Mr. John Eichner, Director, Business Services
Ms. Patrice Elnicki, Interim Vice President of Finance and Information Technology
Mr. Wayne Lynch, Vice President of Operations
Mr. Robert McKeown, Assistant Vice President of Enrollment Management
Mr. Dennis Michaels, Assistant Vice President of Information Technology
Ms. Julia Pitman, Vice President of Student Services
Ms. Lydia Ulatowski, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs
Ms. Barbara Walck, Assistant to the President

Chairperson Ross called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

Barbara DeSimone, Director of Public Relations stated as long as we have posted to our webpage announcing this meeting, minutes are being taken, this is then acceptable to have an open board meeting in this manner,

Foundation Report

Deborah Brewer, Foundation Director stated that the Distinguished Alumni applications are being accepted on line. We are pushing the committee decisions into May or June. Ms. Brewer has contacted area non for profits for any emergency funds for students in dire need for groceries, etc. Looking to set up on the website a donation site if anyone would want to make donations for students. Scholarship committee should continue to review their materials received and submit their results to Ms. Brewer.

John Eichner reported on dining services at Sanborn campus as being shut down, except the dining services manager is getting organized for the eventual reopening. The College Association business office will be down to two employees at the end of this week. Student housing staffing has been reduced from five to three at the end of the week. Looking at the interim, we are doing financial analysis and projections to see how our cash position can be maintained going forward with no revenue stream. We are expecting to provide some refunds and credits to students related to that.

Commencement Dr. Murabito reported on commencement and his discussions with western New York Community College Presidents. Some are doing virtual and some are doing online or postponing to fall. Important that we distinguish between commencement and graduation. Commencement is the ceremony, where graduation is when students meet their graduation requirements, and are able to apply for jobs. By next Tuesday, we need to put together a collective announcement and check with the board with their recommendations. Julia Pitman spoke with several students and they agreed they do not want a virtual ceremony, most would prefer in summer, June time after high school or early fall. Dr. Murabito and Chairperson Ross state June is not an option. Trustee Virtuoso asked if students would even attend? President Murabito stated to broadcast the ceremony. Trustee Clark suggests a ceremony off site to accommodate a larger group. Board members asked if the students could be canvassed and determine the site and how to proceed. Board agrees to postpone to fall, and have a live ceremony with ability to televise. Barbara DeSimone, Public Relations Director will write a paragraph and forward to Erie Community College.

Instruction: Lydia Ulatowski, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs reports the challenge moving to 100% online with the exception of clinicals. Lisa Dubuc and staff, along with Dennis Michaels and staff have been working and available 24/7. Courses will resume on Monday, March 30. Nursing, Allied Health and NFI are biggest challenges. Diane Roth has turned the clinicals to virtual simulation labs. Diane has submitted information to State Education and she will accomplish the online learning. Faculty are stepping up and working to make this happen. President Murabito discussed the pass – fail grade, and the end of semester testing and assessment which is a concern. We will have the last day of the semester for students to withdraw from class. Students will be case managed by their advisors. Last night, Diane Roth defended and completed her dissertation. Congratulations to Dr. Roth. President Murabito stated there has been guidance from State Education on learning outcomes.

Access to Campus: Wayne Lynch, Vice President of Operations, developed a list of essential personnel, locked down campus to a central entry point. We are very stringent on our due diligence on entering our building. Chairperson Ross spoke with Dan Stapleton, NC Health Director and he appreciates the work Wayne has done with the county. President Murabito stated they may need our parking lot as a testing site. President Murabito states there have been challenges on who is entering the building, mail has been a challenge also.

Residence Hall – Debt Service: Julia Pitman, as of yesterday we have 21 students on campus, ones that live downstate and stayed through spring break as it was safer for them. As of this week, we are notifying other students who left for spring break, that we are not allowing them to return to the residence halls right now. Working with those students who left things in their rooms over break, to determine how we can safely bring them back to campus to pick up items left behind, or have things packed up or shipped out. Transportation needs are being worked on for students. Alliance credit Union provided a donation for essential items for those students.

John Eichner discussed the debt service with Citizens Bank. Because of changes to federal tax law in 2017, Student Housing Village Corporation renegotiated bond terms with Citizens Bank. Under the modified agreement, Citizens Bank has tender option provisions. Citizens Bank notified SHVC it is exercising their tender option rights; however, Citizens Bank will waive this right if the NCCC Foundation, Inc. or College agrees to become a guarantor of payment for a two (2) year period ending May 16, 2022. A guarantee request made by SHVC to NCCC Foundation was not acted upon. The College seeks to perform due diligence with the County of Niagara and others to determine options available to assist SHVC. Matter to be discussed in further detail at next Board meeting.

Employees: Catherine Brown, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources, stated employees are doing a great job in making sure the plan is being followed. Our employees continue to work from home. Dennis Michaels and his staff have done a tremendous job. Currently all ESPA and faculty are online, administrators work remotely. Essential employees are the mail personnel, TSPA and Security. Working on the Part Time Technical Assistant staff and determining the needs, and if not working remotely, will be laid off. Such as servers at Savor, back of the house at Savor, clinical coordinators, as they are not able to work. Currently we have three employees who are quarantined, one working remotely, others being paid. Chairperson Ross asked about SBDC. Lynn Oswald, Director is working remotely with individuals open for business. Trustee Clark asked if those laid off would collect unemployment, and Catherine said yes, they are eligible and that they have waived the seven-day waiting period.

Finances: Patrice Elnicki, Interim Vice President of Finance and Information Technology commends Dennis Michaels and his IT staff for keeping the College operating from home. The first payroll run was completely successfully. Employees with direct deposit is almost 100%, Checks need to be mailed to those employees without direct deposit. Vendor checks have been mailed out to keep operations running. Next week health insurance providers will also be paid as normal. SUNY has issued guidance for credits and refunds for students. SUNY would like to refund\credit students who vacated housing. Currently working on the budget process, as this year has provided unknowns more than in previous years. Putting costs together, looking at FTE estimates for headcount for next fall along with revenues for the budget. President Murabito will look for board guidance on refunds. Our proposal of any student not in the residence hall, we will prorate, and fees will prorate, then refunds or credits will be issued as soon as we get guidance from SUNY. Fees need to be looked at individual.

It was moved by Trustee Clark and seconded by Student Trustee Lipps that the board approve the proposal presented above. Motion carried unanimously.

President Murabito states we have more expense than revenue. We need to model some different scenarios. Trustee Virtuoso asked about accrued expenses related to COVID-19 during this time. Patrice stated that SUNY has provided a template with requested costs, and then send to SUNY at the close of business every Wednesday. Possibly at the end of all this the expenditures may be refunded to use. Trustee Wolfgang discussed applying for community college funds from legislation.

Discussion with Niagara County: President Murabito spoke with Dan Stapleton, Director of Public Health for Niagara County and Wayne Lynch has been in contact with him regarding use a parking lot on the Sanborn campus as a testing site. The county will let us know by end of the week. County Manager, Rick Updegrave was also updated by President Murabito and complimented us on our work at the college.

Trustee Wolfgang asked about graduating healthcare students, whether students could work in hospitals, mental health workers to go to hospitals, etc.

Dennis Michaels, Assistant Vice President of Information Technology discussed that technology is ever evolving and moving everything online. Six students have contacted him for laptops. SUNY purchased 5000 Dell laptops, some will be shipped campuses. We asked for 150 laptops.

Julia Pitman, Vice President of Student Services discussed that advising services are contacting all current students stating that the college is here for them. Online registration begins on Monday, orientation will also be online. Students have received a wellness newsletter and will continue weekly. Student activities and student government are working on virtual activities. Blood drive was cancelled but students can donate

elsewhere. Athletic department is developing workout videos for students' access. Prospective students are being contacted, also reaching out to high school counselors to work with graduating students remotely. wellness center is working with immunization forms online. Mental health counselors are reaching out to any student who approached them during the year and working on a product through Blackboard for virtual counseling. Financial Aid has been working with students are to let students know what the federal government is advising us. Federal work study students have been advised they are not able to work on campus, but will still receive their federal work study award. Contacted veterans that there should not be any interruption on their payment along with an email listing restaurants offering discounted meals for takeout. Childcare Center has reached out to parents/children who are acclimating at home.

President Murabito states we are very proud of our college staff, and we will be better and different after this is all done.

The next teleconference board meeting will be Thursday, April 2 at noon.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

GOOD & WELFARE

It was moved by Trustee Clark and seconded by Trustee Alexander to adjourn at 1:20 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairperson Ross thanked President Murabito for his knowledge and experience through all this.

Barbara A. Walck
Secretary to the Board